



Exploring career maturity of senior secondary adolescents

Nirmal Kaur

Research Scholar, Department of Education, Panjab University, Chandigarh, Punjab, India

Abstract

Adolescence is the most important period of human life and Secondary education which is a critical period for the development of career maturity, when students are faced with ongoing academic and occupational decisions over the course of their study. These educational decisions pave the way for future decisions to be taken by any individual in the world of work. The present study aimed to explore the career maturity of secondary school adolescents, by gender. The results were collected by using the descriptive survey technique. A representative sample of 200 adolescent students including males and females was selected from senior secondary schools in Chandigarh as respondents. For data collection, an Indian version of the career maturity inventory by Gupta (2018) was employed. The appropriate statistical measures such as mean, standard deviation and t-test were applied for analysing the data. The quantitative analysis of data revealed that girls are found to possess higher career maturity than their boys' counterparts. The findings of the study have strong implications for the Students, Teachers, Researchers, Counsellors and Parents.

Keywords: Career maturity, secondary school adolescents, gender, education

Introduction

Even though civilisation is advancing rapidly and mankind has been fantastic achievements at global level, the competition among youth particularly during adolescents has been growing in order to attain most suitable career through education. It would be relevant to refer here that Right to Education has been recognised as a fundamental right of a citizen under the constitution of India. Education is the corner stone of economic growth, social development and welfare of individuals. One of aims of education is to make the individual to understand one's self and to be able to decide upon one's future. Choosing a career depends on what one's want to do. The growing rate of change in the world of work increases the dilemma of adolescents in making sensible career choices (Sivakumar, 2016).

Adolescents refer to the period of development and adjustment during the transitional period between childhood and adulthood. This period emerges from childhood and merges into adulthood. During this period, the establishment of childhood goes away and a revolutionary process of change starts. In fact, it is period of revolutionary change. It is markedly a period of growing up, during which the child develops into a man or woman. As the term is used today, it has a broader meaning than it had in earlier years. Instead of limiting the adolescence period to the time when the individual grows to maturity sexually, it is now extended until the individual is expected to be intellectually, emotionally and socially mature (Super, 1957) ^[21].

Career

The problem of choosing, preparing and entering into any career have existed since the dawn of civilization. The process of vocational development denoting psychological, sociological, cultural and economic ingredients across time results in outcomes which are effective in vocational behaviour, decision-making ability and vocational maturity. Just as physical and intellectual development can be stunted if appropriate interventions are not applied, so can the normal developmental process of vocational development

be stunted if appropriate interventions are not available in a planned, systematic way. There are specific skills that should be constructed and maintained throughout the life span in order to deal with career choice and management tasks at any given point in time (Super, 1996) ^[22]. A set of skills individual proposed to develop include: knowledge of self-attributes (e.g., interests, skills/abilities, and work-related values), a well-defined self-concept, broad knowledge of the world of work, detailed knowledge and reality testing of occupations under consideration, awareness of the need to plan ahead, decision-making skill, knowledge and use of appropriate resources for career decision making. This set of skills, indicative of career maturity, can be used again and again in the changeable 21st century work environment. (Crites, 1976).

The conventional idea of career deals with progression of an ordered hierarchy within an organisation or profession. Traditionally, the term has subscribed to the belief that is associated with paid employment and identified as a single occupation. In the recent years, the term career is seen as a continuous process of learning and development. Over the course of a persons' lifespan, it is the association between work roles and other life roles, including labour that is paid and unpaid.

Career maturity

Career maturity is the ability to choose an option for a future profession and to draft a plan for the same. Consequently, it is the level that has been achieved in terms of cognitive, emotional, and other psychological aspects to carefully shape one's profession in light of the available social possibilities and limitations. (Banvariya, M., 2018). The concept of career maturity is generally used as an eligibility qualification for making a wise occupational choice and believing in continuous development. The greater the maturity, greater is the possibility of situation when a person becomes enable to cope with stages of career development. As stated by Hoyt in 1977, "Career maturity is the level of self-awareness and understanding of one's professional

environment.” Notably, “the capacity of an individual to make wise, age-appropriate career decisions, an understanding of the criteria needed to opt a career, and the extent to which decisions are long-term and realistic are all considered to be the characteristics of career maturity”. (Crites, 1978 ^[3]; Jackson & Healy, 1996 ^[9]; King, 1990 ^[11]; Levinson, Ohler, Caswell, & Kiewra, 1998 ^[12]; Luzzo, 1995; Powell & Luzzo, 1998 ^[14]; Savickas, 1984 ^[16, 17], 1999; Super, 1983) ^[19].

Considering the aforesaid definitions, “Career maturity implies that the students are optimistic about their readiness to make career decisions that are suitable for a specific age group and/or developmental period and is capable of handling the tasks of the workplace at any stage of life” (Brown & Lent, 2005; Burkhead & Cope, 1984; Niles & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2002).

“Individuals with comparatively high degrees of career maturity are more likely to succeed and find job satisfaction as they exhibit a greater comprehension of the procedure involved in choosing a career, often consider about alternative professions, connect their ongoing actions to their prospective objectives, hold a strong sense of self-reliance when choosing a profession are steadfast in their work decisions, and are determined to embrace the expectations of reality” (Savickas, 1984) ^[16, 17].

Career maturity is a constellation of physical, psychological and social characteristics thus belonging to both the domains that of cognitive and affective. It is central to a developmental approach to understanding vocational behaviour and involves an assessment of an individual's level of career progress in relation to his or her career-relevant development tasks. It refers, broadly, to the individual's readiness to make informed, age-appropriate career decisions and cope with career development tasks (Savickas, 1984) ^[16, 17]. Fundamentally, Crites's (1971) ^[2] model of career maturity consists of affective and cognitive dimensions. The cognitive dimension is composed of decision-making skills; the affective dimension includes attitudes toward the career decision-making process. Similarly, focusing on the conative aspect, Coetzee and Roythorne Jacobs (2007, 2006) ^[1] of the view that career maturity refers to a person's ability to make career decisions that reflect decisiveness, self-reliance, independence, and a willingness to compromise between personal needs and the requirements of one's career situation. Moreover, it is not uncommon to find that students choose subjects of study which have little relationship with their vocational goals, with the result that many people get a traumatic shock when they find that they have not prepared themselves for the career which they wanted to enter. Often the mistake is realized too late in life. An organized programme of vocational guidance assists students in taking decisions wisely and realistically. Vocational Guidance may be seen as a process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself, and of his role in the world of work to test this concept against reality and to convert it into a reality with satisfaction to him and benefit to society (Super, 1957) ^[21].

Career Maturity consists of career choice attitude and career choice competence.

Career maturity: A research review

Crites (1973) explored “The existing concept of career maturity among counsellors, and laymen”. This study

suggested that the obvious barriers to job maturity and career education should be clarified and emphasized. Behaviour found to be career mature during later childhood, adolescence, and adulthood are various conditions that are the result of vocational education (Marland, 1972). Theory and research on career maturity as reviewed can contribute to the assumptions and steps required for vocational education thinking and evaluating curriculum and training programs and conversely, vocational education can expose young people to the knowledge they need to develop and simplify their career. Together, job maturity and vocational education represent a combination of principles and processes that should benefit individuals and communities alike.

Hasan (2006) ^[8] examined whether self-concept, occupational aspiration and gender are capable of generating variance in career maturity of 50 Indian adolescents studying in class X. It was found significant that all the three variables were potential enough in generating variance in career maturity.

Salami (2008) ^[15] investigated the relationship between identity status and career maturity of senior secondary school adolescents studying in class XI. The findings indicate that the identity status significantly predicted career maturity of the adolescents but gender did not. No significant differences were found between the males and females in their career maturity and identity status.

Dhillon and Kaur (2005) ^[5] tried to study career maturity among the students of public and Government schools. The results clearly indicate that the students of public schools possess a higher career maturity attitude, career maturity competence, as well as self-concept and achievement motivation. Significant relationships have also been obtained between career maturity attitude and career maturity competence, internal locus of control and achievement motivation in case of boys in public schools and between career maturity attitude, achievement motivation and self-concept scale in case of girls in public schools. On the other hand, significant relationship has been found between career maturity attitude and external locus of control, achievement motivation and self-concept in case of boys in government school and between career maturity competence and achievement motivation in case of girls counterparts studying in government schools.

Dhull (2018) ^[6] conducted a study on the career maturity among adolescents in relation to their gender and type of schools. The findings of his study was that there is significant difference between boys and girls regarding career choice, and girls students were more mature than boys in case of choosing career. They were more aware about their career than boys counterparts.

Sudha (2020) ^[20] probed the career attitudes of MBA students in the Indian context. The sample included 30 individuals who filled the Career Adapt Abilities Scale (CAAS) in Chennai. The findings from the statistical analysis (using mean and average variance) and group interview revealed that MBA students possessed excellent attitude towards their career and the 4 C's i.e., concern, control, curiosity and confidence attitudes were outstanding. Hence students had career adaptability skills and they were lively. It was further recommended in the study that career-oriented and related concepts for students need to be transmitted through primary and higher education.

Kim (2020) ^[10] conducted a study on 200 third and fourth-grade students attending university in Korea including 78 males and 122 females depicting that employment stress was statistically significantly negatively related to both satisfaction and career maturity. The satisfaction was statistically significantly positively related to career maturity. Also, multi-regression analysis showed that lower career maturity led to higher job stress and vice versa.

Lalnunsiami, Lalhriatpuii and Sailo (2021) ^[13] examined the level of career maturity among college students in the Aizawl District of Mizoram using stratified random sampling. The 300 students from five-degree colleges in Aizawl city were taken as the sample of the study. The data analysis using mean, t-test and analysis of variance indicated that out of 300 students, 222 (74%) had an average level of career maturity. No significant difference was witnessed in the level of career maturity of male and female college students. Out of 100 students from each stream, in the arts stream, only 5% scored high level, 74% average level and 21% had a low level of career maturity. In the commerce stream, only 14% had a high level, 80% average level and only 6% possessed a low level of career maturity. Furthermore, for the science stream, only 21% had a high level, 69% average level and only 10% had a low level of career maturity.

In a study by Kalita (2022) on 100 adolescent girls and boys of higher secondary school it was reported that they were differ significantly in both the measures of career maturity whereas no significant difference was observed between urban and rural secondary school adolescents.

As from the above research review, career maturity is one of the important factor in adolescent's lives who are going to select a career for their future. Salami (2008) ^[15] gave the relationship of career maturity with the identity status and found no significant differences. Career maturity relation with gender is well explained by Dhull (2018) ^[6] that girls are more mature as compare to boys. Negative relation of career maturity with satisfaction was reported by Kim (2020) ^[10]. Hasan (2006) ^[8] explored variables (self-concept, occupational aspiration, gender) were potential enough in generating variance in career maturity. So, career maturity has significant impact on different variables.

The need for a study

The adolescent's age is the most important time of life. It is full of stress and difficulty. Adolescents are worried about their career, they are always trying to find a place that is special or appropriate in the community and they want to develop their own vision. They want to be recognized in the family, in the peer group, and in the community. Career maturity is another cause for concern as it relates to the efficiency of the individual. Older people suffer from mental illness when choosing any career as their future career. Choosing the right career is a lifelong process because work is not just a way of working in career but also a way of life to live. Therefore, vocational education is essential for young people. They need proper guidance for their craft because their future depends on the direction of the opportunities they are given. It helps to provide information about jobs and develop their interests, skills and abilities. In addition, there is a high level of anxiety in children during adolescence about their career. Career maturity prepares them for the right career goals according to their abilities, interests, and personality. Therefore, the researcher makes

an effort to explore the career maturity of the adolescents. Also, it is envisaged that the current study will assist parents, teachers and school authorities in identifying and planning about career maturity for adult students.

Rationale of the study

Education is a continuous and life long process. Neither it is limited to particular period of life nor to class room. There is always something to learn from the complex society as well as from the great nature of books. Hence one can say that education is that include the effect of everything which influences human personality. It enables the person to expand knowledge and helps to find new ideas, new ways of life.

These days most often the youth is at risk as they seem to be stressed and have mental disillusion about their career choices. Selecting a career is completely not an intellectual process but it also takes into account other issues related to it. The phases of encountering problems by students related to career begin at high school level extending up to senior secondary stage continues till an individual enters higher institutions i.e. colleges or universities.

Career maturity assumes great importance in the life of students for their proper future placement. It is a prerequisite ability to make a wise choice towards a particular occupation and represents development along with the career development continuum. At times inconsistency of emotions in high school students who may be inclined towards a particular subject/ career may result in deflecting and narrowing the scope of thinking, also reading and comprehending in a better way. All these in the later stages might create an impediment in the mature selection of a vocation/ career.

If the individual makes a mature decision this will not only assist in his/her successful career but also will save a lot of effort and energy from being wasted due to making incorrect career choices. It will also regulate the learning process, boost the confidence level, help in analysing the situations in a better way and above all will restrict the student from aggressive behaviours which may prevent flawed practices or situations. Education is all about helping students to know themselves more and `assisting them to choose the career they will enjoy practicing as well as excelling in their life time.

Selecting a career and effectively settling into it is crucial life task. Such a bold decision has a significant impact on lifestyle, reputation, income, stability and work satisfaction. Adjustment in modern society is very difficult as today society is dynamic and complex. In such a critical situation adolescent may face difficulty and complications in determining their career with precision. This research will enable us to make an assessment of career maturity level among senior secondary students which incorporates career attitude and career competency. Such an assessment will be beneficial to know about their standard of planning, quality of preparation for their intended career in consideration of their needs, interest and knowledge about different career. It will also be helpful to know about the fact as how to accomplish goals and make a choice regarding career. The present study will emphasize to know about differences in career maturity level among adolescents with respect to gender. It will make the parents, teachers to understand their

children and students about their abilities, interests and attitudes. By this way they are able to appreciate the significance of career counselling for students and prepare them according to their inner potentialities. Hence, in the present research an attempt is made to determine career maturity level of adolescents studying in Secondary Schools of Chandigarh.

Objectives

1. To find the level of career maturity of senior secondary school students of Chandigarh.
2. To find if gender difference exists in career maturity of adolescents.

Hypotheses

1. The sample will exhibit average level of career maturity.
2. There will be no significant gender difference in career maturity of adolescents.

Methodology

Descriptive survey method was used to for the present study. A purposive random sampling method was used to select 200 students from different Govt. Schools of Chandigarh.

Sample

The sample involved randomly selected 200 students of Govt. Senior Secondary Schools of Chandigarh.

Tool Employed

Career Maturity Inventory (CMI) by Gupta (1989).

Analysis

Section I: Descriptive analysis

The objective of analysis was to find the nature of distribution of variable under study. Accordingly, results have been analyzed and interpreted in light of mean, S.D, skewness and kurtosis of the sample.

Table 1: Showing means, S. D's, Skewness and Kurtosis for the total Sample (N=200)

Sr. no.	Variable	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Staninne	Level
1	Attitude	31.84	6.24	-.57	-.06	IV, V, VI	Average
2	SA	9.56	2.23	-.66	-.14	VII.VIII	Above, Average
3	OI	8.82	2.30	-.62	-.63	IV, V, VI	Average
4	GS	8.42	2.32	-.46	-.79	IV, V, VI	Average
5	PL	8.20	2.38	-.34	-.81	IV, V, VI	Average
6	PS	8.02	2.19	-.27	-.63	VII, VIII	Above, Average

The mean and standard deviation of career maturity attitude were found to be 31.84 and 6.24 resp. As per the manual, this mean score of attitude and competence falls under

Stanine IV, V, VI which indicated average level of attitude towards career decision making activities except for SA and PS.

Table 2: Showing means, S. D.'s, Skewness and Kurtosis for the Boys (N=72)

Sr. no.	Variable	Mean	S. D.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Staninne	Level
1	Attitude	30.89	6.09	-.38	-.06	IV, V, VI	Average
2	SA	9.42	2.45	-.55	-.55	IV, V, VI	Average
3	OI	8.56	2.29	-.51	-.93	IV, V, VI	Average
4	GS	8.24	2.45	-.35	-.85	IV, V, VI	Average
5	PL	7.88	2.40	-.21	-.84	IV, V, VI	Average
6	PS	7.56	2.12	-.19	-.97	VII, VIII	Above, Average

Thus, the boys in this study exhibited average level of career maturity on all variables of attitude and competence scale,

except on problem solving on which they were above average in level.

Table 3: Showing means, S. D.'s, Skewness and Kurtosis for the Girls (N=128)

Sr. no.	Variable	Mean	S. D.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Staninne	Level
1	Attitude	33.25	6.24	-.93	-.79	IV, V, VI	Average
2	SA	9.77	1.85	-.71	-.34	IV, V, VI	Average
3	OI	8.23	1.75	-.66	-.41	IV, V, VI	Average
4	GS	8.70	2.35	-.64	-.64	IV, V, VI	Average
5	PL	8.70	2.29	-.54	-.70	IV, V, VI	Average
6	PS	8.71	2.13	-.41	-.20	VII, VIII	Above, Average

Thus, for the girls in this study exhibited average level of career maturity on all variables of attitude and competence scale, except on problem solving on which they were above average in level.

Table 4: Comparison between boys and girls on the variable of career maturity

Sr. no.	Variable	Mean		S.D.		t-ratio
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
1.	Attitude	30.89	33.25	6.09	6.24	2.70**
2.	SA	9.42	9.77	2.45	1.85	1.11
3.	OI	8.56	8.23	2.29	1.75	2.07*
4.	GS	8.24	8.70	2.45	2.35	1.40
5.	PL	7.88	8.70	2.40	2.29	2.45*
6.	PS	7.56	8.71	2.12	2.13	3.81**

Note: ** Significant at 0.01 level (2.58) * Significant at 0.05 level (1.96)

Section II: Differential analysis

The objective of analysis was to find the significant difference by comparison 't'-ratios was calculated to find out the differences in gender.

In the present study, girls seemed to have attained sufficient level of career maturity with respect to measure of attitude and competence scale. It means that girls were found to have more information about jobs/occupations and They were more capable of planning and problem solving as compared to their boys counterparts.

In light of observed significant difference in career maturity of adolescents with regard to gender. Thus, the hypothesis that no significant differences exist between boys and girls was not accepted.

Interpretation

The present study revealed that level of career maturity attitude was found to be at average for all the groups viz: Total sample, boys and girls and level of career maturity competence was found average on each sub-variable except planning.

Girls, in comparison to boys scored higher on the variable of career maturity scale of attitude and competence.

Educational implications of the study

The conclusions of the study will have important implications for the students, teachers, researchers, counsellors and parents.

The findings of the study indicated that, a large number of students are not able to make right decisions regarding to their career. This may be due to insufficient exposure of the students the world of work or may be due to pressure of parents, teachers and peers.

It also implied that the lack of guidance and counselling facilities in school, home and our society. Proper guidance and counselling services should be provided to senior secondary adolescents that will help them to develop career awareness. So that they can make choices, acc. to their interest and capabilities.

In our country, Parents play an important role in career decision making of their wards. This may be foremost hurdle in the way of adolescents to become career mature.

1. This study will create awareness among the students about problems related to their career development, the factors whether personal or academic, which can lead them to be more adjustable in their life.
2. This study will help the students to know about different career, and to prepare for them according to their needs, interests, attitude, environment etc. It will also provide the right direction to remove the confusion in choosing the career for themselves.
3. This study will help the teachers as well as students to know the level of cognition of the students which is very necessary aspect in choosing a career.
4. This study will help the teachers to know the difference that exists between Male and Female Secondary School students, and can accordingly guide the students to enhance their future progress.

References

1. Coetzee M, Roythorne Jacobs H. Career counseling and guidance in the Workplace: A Manual for career practitioners, 2007. Retrieved from <http://jutaacademic.co.za/products/careercounselling-and-guidance-in-theworkplace-2e>.
2. Crites JO. A model for measurement of vocational maturity. *Journal of counselling Psychology*,1961:8:255- 259.
3. Crites JO. Career Maturity Inventory. Monterey, Calif: CTB, McGraw Hill, 1978.
4. Crites JO. *Vocational Psychology*. New York: Mc Graw Hill, Hill Book Co, 19, 570-575.
5. Dhillon U, Kaur R. Career Maturity of School Children. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*, 2005, 31(1-2).
6. Dhull K. A Study of Career Maturity among Adolescents in relation to Their Gender and Types of Schools. *International Conference on Research Developments in Arts, Social Science, & Humanities*, 2018. Retrieved from [https:// www.conferenceworld.in](https://www.conferenceworld.in) on 20th December, 2018.
7. Gupta N. Career maturity: A function of grade and sex. *Indian Psychologist*, 1987, 4.
8. Hasan B. Career maturity of Indian adolescents as a function of self-concept, vocational aspiration and gender. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology*,2006:32(2):20-23.
9. Jackson GC, Healy CC. Career development profiles and interventions for under-represented college students. *Career Development Quarterly*,1996:44(3):258–269.
10. Kim HJ. The effects of economic stress, career maturity and major satisfaction on the job stress in third and fourth grade students of university. *Medico-legal Update*,2020:20(1):1558-1563. Retrieved on January 19, 2020, from, <https://ijop.net/index.php/mlu/article/download/597/553>
11. King S. Background and family variables in a causal model of career maturity: Comparing hearing- and hearing-impaired adolescents. *Career Development Quarterly*,1990:38:240–260. [16
12. Levinson EM, Ohler DL, Caswell S, Kiewra K. Six approaches to the assessment of career maturity. *Journal of Counselling and Development*,1998:76:475–482.
13. Lalnunsiami K, Lalhriatpuii, Sailo L. Career maturity among college students in Aizawl city: A cross-sectional study. *International Journal of Current Research*,2021:13(7):18229-18233. Retrieved October 16, 2022, from, <http://www.journalcra.com/sites/default/files/issue-pdf/41917.pdf>
14. Powell DF, Luzzo DA. Evaluating factors associated with the career maturity of high school students. *The Career Development Quarterly*,1998:47:145–158
15. Salami SO, Gender Identity Status and Career Maturity of Adolescent in South West Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science*, 2008, 16(1).
16. Savickas ML. Career Maturity: The Construct and its Measurement. *The Vocational Guidance Quarterly*, 1984, 35.
17. Savickas ML. Career maturity: The construct and its appraisal. *Vocational Guidance Quarterly*,1984:32:222–231.
18. Schreuder AMG, Coetzee M. *Careers: An organizational perspective (3rd Ed.)*. Cape Town: Juta, 200
19. Super DE. Assessment in career guidance: Toward truly developmental counselling. *The Personnel and Guidance Journal*,1983:61:555–562
20. Sudha S. Career attitudes influence over career adaptability-A pilot study among MBA students in

- Chennai. In M. S. Choonker & R. Narang, Proceedings of the Conference on International Conclave on Globalizing Indian Thought. IIM Campus, Kozhikode, 2020, 455-462. Retrieved on March 8, 2020, from, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mayanka_Chhonker/publication/338937096
21. Super DE. Vocational Development: A Framework for Research. New York: Teachers. College Bureau of Publications, 1957.
 22. Super DE, Savickas ML, Super CM. The Life-Span, Life-Space Approach to Careers. In D. Brown, L. Brooks, & Associates (Eds.), Career Choice and Development (3rd ed., pp.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996.