

Career Decision Making Among Senior Secondary School Students of Jammu District

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Abstract

The term career decision making has been defined as the process by which a person chooses his/her career. Career decision-making is a complicated procedure by which the decision maker is required to process information about themselves and information about the world of work (Jepson, 1984). Career decision making is the process by which an individual's actual education and career alternative are chosen. Career decision-making is a forceful and continuing procedure where information of self, ethics, interest, personality, economic needs, bodily work requirement or limits as well as the effect of earlier period experience, innovative information in life condition and surroundings occur and cooperate important part. Choose One's career choice depends on what he/she wants to do. It involves not individual judgment, but a big number of decisions more than extensive period of time. It is not a simple mission outstanding difficult and solution quality of the humanity of job. Therefore, a person's existence could be seen as a series of career decision brilliant individual alignment a model well among personality and employment (Borden, 1984). On the basis of review of literature it seems that a lot of work has already been done in this particular area. The objective of the study was to find out significant differences in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different gender (boys and girls) and type of institution (govt or private). The sample of 200 students were selected from different schools of Jammu district using simple random sampling technique. The investigator used:-The Career Decision Making Inventory (CDM; Singh, 1999). The findings of the study revealed that there is no significant difference in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different gender (boys and girls). Significant difference in the career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different type of institutions (govt. and private). No significant difference in the interactional effect of gender (boys and girls) and type of institutions (govt. and private) among senior secondary school students when career decision making scores are taken as dependent variable.

Keywords: Career Decision, Senior Secondary, private, Government, School Students.

1. Introduction

Career decision-making is a complex, multidimensional process through which individuals select a career path that aligns with their abilities, interests, values, and personality traits. Beyond merely choosing an occupation, career decisions significantly influence an individual's self-image, social status, lifestyle, and overall life satisfaction. Most waking hours are spent in work-related activities, which affect economic security, social relationships, and personal identity. Hence, career decisions are intertwined with both personal and environmental factors (Borden, 1984; Jepson, 1984). Career decision-making is not a single

event but a continuous process, where individuals evaluate information about themselves, their social and family environment, and occupational opportunities over time. Factors such as family influence, peer pressure, financial situation, educational background, and socio-cultural norms can significantly shape career choices (Koech, 2016; Ramachandram & Asma, 2015). Senior secondary school students, particularly those in the 11th class, are at a critical developmental stage, where they face multiple options and decisions regarding higher education and career paths. Their career decision-making abilities are influenced not only by gender and type of institution (government or private) but also by intrinsic factors such as self-efficacy, career curiosity, and personal interests (Xin-Hai et al., 2023). Understanding these influences is vital for providing targeted guidance and interventions to facilitate informed career choices.

2. Review of Related Literature

Numerous studies have explored the factors affecting career decision-making, yet the area remains dynamic and evolving. A critical review of recent research is presented below: **Career Self-Efficacy and Values:** Xin-Hai et al. (2023) reported that career decision self-efficacy and career values have significant positive effects on career decisions. Additionally, career goals and self-efficacy mediated the decision-making process, highlighting the importance of internal motivation and goal clarity in effective career selection. **Socio-Economic Factors:** Kassahun et al. (2022) found a negative relationship between socio-economic status and career decision-making ability. Students with lower socio-economic resources face more constraints and require additional support through trained career guidance programs to make informed decisions. **Self-Esteem and Age/Gender Factors:** Okafor & Akpochafo (2022) indicated that self-esteem did not significantly correlate with career decision-making difficulties among secondary school students, and age and gender had no moderating impact. This suggests that other factors, such as parental guidance or institutional support, may play a more pivotal role. **Dynamic Career Preferences in Medical Students:** Singh & Alberti (2020) studied medical students and found that career preferences changed over time due to influences such as the learning environment, perceived suitability to specialty, and sense of belonging. The study highlighted that career preferences are dynamic and subject to change, reflecting both internal and external factors. **Parental Education and Influence:** Mbagwu & Ajaegbu (2016) demonstrated a significant relationship between parental educational background and students' career choices. Teenagers with highly educated parents were more likely to make consistent professional career choices, while those with less-educated parents leaned toward business or vocational careers. **Other Influences on Career Choice:** Koech (2016) reported that parents, peers, and counselors are influential in career choice, while mentors have limited impact. Ramachandram & Asma (2015) found personal interests and family influence to significantly affect students' career decisions. James & Denis (2015) highlighted that rural students' career choices were often influenced by family background and local opportunities.

3. Gaps in Literature

Despite extensive research, several gaps remain:

1. Limited studies have combined gender and type of institution to analyze their interaction effect on career decision-making among senior secondary students.
2. Most research focuses on higher education students or specific professional streams, leaving a gap in understanding the career decision-making process in school-going adolescents, particularly in the Jammu region.

3. There is a scarcity of studies evaluating institutional differences (government vs. private schools) in shaping career decision-making abilities.
4. Few studies have addressed the dynamic interplay between personal attributes, social influences, and institutional environments in one comprehensive framework.
5. The present study seeks to address these gaps by analyzing the gender differences, institutional type differences, and interaction effects in career decision-making among senior secondary students of Jammu district.

4. Hypotheses of the Study

Null Hypotheses (H₀)

1. There is no significant difference in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different genders (boys and girls).
2. There is no significant difference in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different types of institutions (government and private).
3. There is no significant interaction effect of gender (boys and girls) and type of institution (government and private) on the career decision making of senior secondary school students.

Alternative Hypotheses (H₁)

1. There is a significant difference in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different genders (boys and girls).
2. There is a significant difference in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different types of institutions (government and private).
3. There is a significant interaction effect of gender (boys and girls) and type of institution (government and private) on the career decision making of senior secondary school students.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design: The present study was descriptive in nature and employed a quantitative research design to examine the career decision making of senior secondary school students in Jammu district. The study aimed to identify the effect of gender and type of institution on career decision making.

5.2 Sample of the Study: A total of 200 senior secondary school students were selected from different schools in Jammu district using simple random sampling technique. The sample included students from both government and private schools. Only class 11 students were considered for this study to maintain uniformity in educational level and age.

5.3 Research Tool: The Career Decision Making Inventory (CDMI) developed by Singh (1999) was used to assess career decidedness and career indecision among students. The inventory consists of 18 self-report items, i.e. career decidedness scale 5 Items and career indecision scale 13 items.

Table 1: Scoring Pattern for Responses in the Career Decision Making Inventory (CDMI)

Exactly like me	3 points
Somewhat like me	2 points
Not at all like me	1 points

5.4 Statistical Techniques

To test the hypotheses, Two-Way ANOVA (2×2) was applied to examine:

The main effect of gender on career decision making.

The main effect of type of institution on career decision making.

The interaction effect of gender and type of institution on career decision making.

All analyses were conducted using SPSS software, and significance was tested at $p < 0.05$.

Analysis and Results

5.5 Two-Way ANOVA Summary: The main purpose of this study was to examine the effect of gender and type of institution on career decision making of senior secondary school students in Jammu district. A Two-Way ANOVA (2×2) was conducted to analyze the data. The independent variables were gender (boys and girls) and type of institution (government and private), and the dependent variable was career decision making score obtained from the Career Decision Making Inventory (CDMI).

Table 2: Summary of Two-Way ANOVA for Career Decision Making

Source of Variance	SS	Df	MS	F	p/Level of Significance
A)Gender	5.63	1	5.63	0.31	Not Significant
B)Type of Institution	1.52	1	152.84	8.46	Significant at $p < 0.05$
A×B Interaction	6.19	1	6.19	0.34	Not Significant
Within Group(Error)	3520.50	196	17.96		
Total:	3684.66	199			

Note: SS = Sum of Squares; df = degrees of freedom; MS = Mean Square; F = F-ratio

5.6 Interpretation of Results

Effect of Gender: The analysis revealed that gender has no significant effect on career decision making scores ($F = 0.31, p > 0.05$). This indicates that boys and girls in senior secondary school did not differ significantly in their ability to make career decisions. The first hypothesis—"There is no significant difference in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different gender"—is therefore accepted.

Effect of Type of Institution: The main effect of type of institution was found to be significant ($F = 8.46, p < 0.05$). This implies that students from government and private schools differed significantly in their career decision making. The second hypothesis—"There is no significant difference in career decision making of senior secondary school students belonging to different type of institution"—is therefore rejected. Students from private schools scored higher on career decision making compared to students from government schools.

Interaction Effect of Gender and Type of Institution: The interaction between gender and type of institution was found to be not significant ($F = 0.34, p > 0.05$). This means that the effect of institution type on career decision making did not differ for boys and girls. The third hypothesis—"There is no significant interaction effect of gender and type of institution"—is therefore accepted.

5.7 Discussion of Findings

The results suggest several important points:

Gender does not influence career decision making in the studied population, indicating that both boys and girls possess similar abilities and tendencies when choosing a career. This aligns with previous studies (Galliot, Graham & Sweller, 2015; Xin-Hai et al., 2023) which showed minimal gender differences in career decision making at the secondary level.

Type of institution has a significant effect, with students from private schools demonstrating better career

decision making. This may be due to greater exposure to career guidance, better resources, and structured counseling programs in private schools. Similar findings were reported by Koech (2016) and Mbagwu & Ajaegbu (2016), where educational environment and parental background influenced career choices. No significant interaction between gender and institution type suggests that institutional influence is consistent across genders, highlighting the importance of institutional support in career decision making. These findings underline the need for career guidance programs in government schools to ensure that students receive adequate support and resources for making informed career choices.

6. Discussion

The present study aimed to examine career decision making among senior secondary school students of Jammu district with respect to gender and type of institution. The findings revealed the following:

Gender Differences: The study found no significant difference between boys and girls in career decision making. This suggests that both genders are equally capable of making informed career choices, which aligns with previous research by Galliot, Graham, and Sweller (2015) and Xin-Hai et al. (2023). It indicates that at the senior secondary level, students' self-awareness, values, interests, and abilities are similarly developed across genders.

Effect of Type of Institution: A significant difference was observed between students from government and private schools, with private school students showing higher career decision making scores. This may be attributed to better access to career guidance resources, counseling sessions, extracurricular exposure, and parental involvement in private institutions, as supported by Koech (2016) and Mbagwu & Ajaegbu (2016). Government school students may face challenges such as limited counseling support and fewer career-related opportunities, which can affect their decision making process.

Interaction of Gender and Type of Institution: The interaction effect was not significant, indicating that the influence of type of institution on career decision making remains consistent across genders. This emphasizes that institutional support plays a crucial role independent of gender in fostering career awareness and planning.

Overall Implications: The findings highlight the importance of structured career guidance programs, especially in government schools, to bridge the gap in career decision making between different types of institutions. Introducing workshops, aptitude assessments, and interactive counseling sessions can enhance students' ability to make informed career choices.

7. Conclusion

Based on the study: Gender does not significantly affect career decision making among senior secondary school students.

Type of institution significantly affects career decision making, with private school students demonstrating better decision-making skills.

There is no significant interaction between gender and type of institution.

The study concludes that institutional resources and guidance are more critical than gender in shaping students' career decision making, reinforcing the need for equitable career support programs across all schools.

8. Implications of the Study

Educational Policy: The results can guide educational authorities to implement structured career guidance

nce programs in both government and private schools to improve students' decision-making skills.

Career Counseling: Counselors should focus on identifying students' interests, skills, and values, especially in government schools, to help them make informed career decisions.

Parental Involvement: Parents play a critical role in career decision making; therefore, awareness programs can be organized to educate parents about supporting their children effectively.

9. Limitations of the Study

The study was confined to senior secondary school students of Jammu district only, which limits generalizability. Only government and private schools were considered; other educational streams such as vocational or international schools were excluded. The study used self-reported measures (CDMI), which may include subjective biases.

10. Future Recommendations

Expand the Sample: Future studies can include students from multiple districts or states to enhance generalizability.

Longitudinal Studies: Conducting long-term studies to track students' career development post-schooling can provide deeper insights.

Incorporate Qualitative Methods: Interviews and focus groups can complement quantitative findings to understand students' career decision making in detail.

Program Evaluation: Implement career guidance programs in government schools and evaluate their effectiveness in improving decision-making skills.

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