

Self-Esteem and Decision Making Styles of School Teachers

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A teacher is the focal point in an educational system. Kothari Commission (1964 - 66) emphasized in its report that the teachers are having crucial role to play in educational reform. It also stressed the importance of professional development of the teachers at various levels. The conflict model of decision making is of recent origin. We do not have adequate investigative results to definitely prove the relationship between self-esteem and decision making styles. The present study was conducted to examine the relationship between self-esteem and decision making styles of school teachers. 132 teachers of various higher secondary schools (male 82 and female 50) have participated in the study. Leon Mann's Decision Making Questionnaire I and II were used to collect the data. The findings of the study revealed that (i) there is a significant positive relationship exist between self-esteem and vigilant style of decision making, (ii) there is a significant negative relationship exist between self-esteem and non vigilant styles such as hyper vigilance, defensive avoidance, rationalization, buck passing and procrastination styles of decision making.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Vigilance, Decision making styles

Decision making is a cognitive process to make decision among the available alternatives. Burnett (1991) studied the decision making styles and self-concept. He used the conflict model of decision making to investigate further the influence of self-concept on decision making behaviors. The findings empirically validated Janis and Mann's (1977) link between decision making self-esteem and decision making style. Modest relationships, in the predicted direction, were found between decision making self-esteem and the three decision making styles. Modest relationships, in the predicted direction, were found between decision making self-esteem and the three decision making styles (vigilance, defensive avoidance, and hyper vigilance). Specific facets of self-concept were related to self-reported decision making behaviors. Radford, Mann, Ohta, and Nakane (1991)

examined the importance of cultural influences on self-reported decision making styles, with particular emphasis on the dominant cultural pattern (i.e., group orientation vs. individual orientation).

Burnett, Mann, and Beswick, (1989) examined the construct validity of the Flinders Decision Making Questionnaire (DMQ). The relationship between 4 DMQ scales (vigilance, defensive avoidance, hyper-vigilance, and decision self-esteem) was tested with the measure of independence of choice, satisfaction, and "planfulness" relating to their university course and on planfulness and options relating to their future employment. Beatty, and Clair, (1990) examined the relationship between rule orientation (RO) and communication apprehension (CAP) in a public-speaking context among 41 undergraduates. Low CAPs were maximum (the largest potential

payoff under a best-case scenario) or maximum expected utility (MEU) [the highest average payoff across all future conditions) in RO. Moderately apprehensive (MAP) and highly apprehensive (HAP) speakers were MEU or random in decision RO. Regardless of general decision RO, HAP Ss abandoned their usual RO in selecting speech introduction strategies. Low CAP and MAP Ss selected speech introduction strategies in a manner consistent with their decision RO.

Radford et al (1991) in a cross-cultural comparison between Australian and Japanese normal controls (N = 309 and N = 743, respectively) and clinically depressed patients (N = 59 and N = 45, respectively), examined the influence of culture on illness and decision making behaviors, and the relationship of deficits in decision making to culture. It was found that depression had a greater effect on decision making in Australian and Japanese non-depressed students; a few differences were found between Australian and Japanese depressed patients.

Burnett (1991) studied the decision making styles and self-concept. He used the conflict model of decision making to investigate further the influence of self-concept on decision making behaviors. The findings were empirically validated by Janis and Mann's (1977) to establish link between decision making self-esteem and decision making style. Modest relationships, in the predicted direction, were found between decision making self-esteem and the three decision making styles. Modest relationships, in the predicted direction, were found between decision making self-esteem and the three decision making styles (vigilance, defensive avoidance, and hyper vigilance). Specific facets of self-concept were found to be related to self-reported decision making behaviors. Radford, Mann, Ohta, and Nakane (1991) examined the importance of cultural

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Panch Ramalingam, (1993) studied the decision making styles and found that (i) there was a significant difference exist between male and female students in their defensive avoidance decision making style, (ii) the students of government and private schools differed significantly in their vigilance, defensive avoidance, rationalization and procrastination styles of decision making, and (iii) there was a significant difference between the science and arts students in their vigilance, buck passing, and procrastination decision making styles. Sarah Manickaraj, Suresh, and Sabesan (1993) made an attempt to find the difference between male and females in decision making. Leon Mann's decision making questionnaire II was used to collect the data from 87 (55 males and 32 females) post graduate students of distance education in psychology. It was found that males and females did not differ significantly in vigilant decision making styles. However, males and females differed significantly in non-vigilant decision making styles. Amalor (1993) made an attempt to study of decision making styles in relation to some personality characteristics. He found that (i) there is a significant positive correlation between decision making self-esteem and vigilant decision making style and a significant negative correlation between decision making self-esteem and non-vigilant (hypervigilant and defensive avoidance) styles of decision making. (ii) Extraversion has a significant positive correlation with vigilant decision making style and a significant negative correlation with procrastination style and total avoidance, (iii) Neuroticism has a significant positive correlation with non-vigilant styles of decision making (iv) Psychoticism has a significant negative correlation with vigilant decision making style and a significant

positive correlation with procrastination style and a significant positive correlation with procrastination style and total avoidance.

According to Coopersmith (1968) self-esteem refers to the individual's personal judgment of his or her worth. Branden (1969) defines high self-esteem "as the integrated sum of confidence and self-respect", that is, positive self-esteem is the experience that a person is "competent to live and worthy of happiness". Self-esteem is the effective partisan of the self (Hamachek 1971). The formation of self-esteem could stem from factors like (i) reflected appraisals (ii) social comparison and (iii) self-attribution. Tiwari (1983) studied the relationship between self-esteem and risky decisions. The study was carried out with a sample of 700 adolescent girls (age 14-17 years). Self-esteem was measured by Thakur's Self-esteem Inventory. The results showed positive decision making self-esteem. Distefano, Prayor and Smith (1987) and Mann et al. (1989) found that a good decision maker tended to have a high level of self-esteem and confidence in his or her own ability. In order to confirm these results in the Indian setting, self-esteem as a decision maker has been included in the present study.

Monterior (1978) found that women generally had a low self-esteem than men. Cairns (1990) reported that gender differences favoring males were also common. Evelyn (1990) reported that initial performance expectancies were significantly correlated with skill level, indicating that performance expectancies might be related more to skill than to gender. While the studies on self-esteem with regard to sex should inconsistent results, Ormond et al. (1991) found that males scored higher than females on decision making self-esteem. It also acknowledges that individual tendencies to use some coping patterns more frequently than others may vary on the basis of cultural influences (Mann, Radford, Burnett, Ford,

Bond, Laung, Nakamura, Vaughan and Yang, 1998). The authors suggest that subjects' confidence in their own decision-making ability, and therefore their self-esteem as decision-makers, also varies from culture to culture. They predict that in Western, individualist cultures, subjects will view themselves as more competent decision-makers than in more group-orientated Asian cultures (Mann et al. 1998). In support of these Ramón, Francisco and José (2004) found that self-esteem tends to weaken the pattern-style relationship, or to put it another way, a subject with high self-esteem would be better able to separate his/her conflict styles from his/her decision patterns.

Engin Deniz (2006) found that life satisfaction positively correlated to problem-focused coping and seeking social support. It was also found that life satisfaction is significantly correlated to decision self-esteem and all decision-making styles (vigilance, buckpassing, procrastination, and hypervigilance). In addition, significant relationships were found among coping with stress, decision self-esteem and decision-making styles. These results indicate that the self-esteem significantly influence on the decision making process. The present study was undertaken to examine the influence of self-esteem in the decision making process among school teachers.

i Is there any significant relationship exist between self-esteem and decision making styles of the school teachers?

ii Is there any significant difference exist between male and female teachers on self-esteem and decision making styles.

Method

Sample:

A total of 132 teachers (male =82 and female =50) were selected from various schools in Salem district of Tamil Nadu during the year 2006-07.

Instruments

To measure the self-esteem and decision making styles of the school teachers, the following standardized instruments were identified and used to collect data.

Decision making questionnaire I (DMQ-I): It was designed and validated by Leon Mann in 1982 to measure self-esteem. The questionnaire is based on Tans and Mann's (1977) conflict theory of decision making.

Decision making questionnaire - II (DMQ-II): It was also designed by Leon Mann in 1982 to measure decision making styles based on the conflict theory of decision making. This questionnaire consisted of six sub-scales measuring decisional coping patterns such as Vigilance, Hypervigilance, Defensive avoidance, Rationalization, Buck passing and Procrastination. There are 31 items in the questionnaire. The subjects were instructed that these questionnaires measure the way in which people usually approach decision making and therefore the answer that was true for them was the correct response to each item. DMQ I and II are self-administering questionnaires.

Results and discussion

Table 1 Correlation coefficient between the scores of self-esteem and decision making styles (N=132)

Variables	(r)
1 Vigilance	0.386*
2 Hyper vigilance	- 0.367*
3 Defensive avoidance	- 0.485*
4 Buck passing	- 0.329*
5. Rationalization	- 0.419*
6. Procrastination	- 0.381*

*P<0.01

The above table indicates that a significant positive correlation exist between self -esteem and vigilance style of decision making ($r=0.386$), whereas the other decision making styles are found to be negatively

correlated with self-esteem. All correlation coefficients are found to be significant at 0.01 levels. The results indicate that the significant negative relationship exist between self-esteem and hyper vigilance, defensive avoidance, buck passing, rationalisation and procrastination styles of decision making. The results can be interpreted as those who are having high self-esteem thoroughly search for more alternatives and weigh them carefully. They may also consider the pros and cons of the situation and calculate the probabilities while making decisions. The findings of the present study can be corroborated by some earlier studies, Feather and Mann (1982), Tiwari (1983), Disdejano, Pryor and Smity (1987), Leon Mann, et al (1989), Burnett, et al (1991), and Ormand, et al (1991). The results also indicate that teachers, who have high self-esteem as a decision maker, do not adopt hypervigilant, defensive avoidance, buck passing, rationalisation and procrastination styles of decision making.

Table 2: Mean, SD and t-values of Male and Female teachers on self-esteem and decision making styles.

Variables	Group	Mean	SD	t- value
S	Male	8.926	2.302	2.30
	Female	5.049	7.607	
V	Male	9.074	2.284	0.026
	Female	9.066	2.172	
HV	Male	5.223	2.292	1.572
	Female	4.672	2.281	
DA	Male	5.068	2.098	1.184
	Female	4.705	1.768	
BP	Male	4.284	2.209	1.095
	Female	3.918	2.137	
R	Male	4.311	2.205	1.876
	Female	3.99	2.340	
P	Male	4.399	2.362	1.712
	Female	3.820	1.779	

Table 2 shows significant difference exist between male and female teachers on self-

esteem ($t=2.30$) which is significant at 0.05 level. This result is consistent with the findings of Leon Mann, et al (1989) and Cheryl Armond, et al (1991). Traditionally, it is believed that males have high self-esteem than females. Probably, due to increased opportunity and encouragement for females have led to overcome the tradition belief and females have high self-esteem than male teachers. In contrary to this result Ormand et al (1991) found that males scored higher than females as decision self-esteem. Monterior (1978) found that women generally had low self-esteem than men. Cairn (1990) also reported that gender differences favouring males were common. The other t -values indicate that the significant differences do not exist between the mean and SD scores of male and female teachers on the various dimensions of decision making styles such as vigilance, hypervigilance, defensive avoidance, buck passing, rationalisation and procrastination.

Since decision making in counselling is a new area, further research should examine whether the findings of this study reflect the self-esteem and the decision making behaviour of other societies. Moreover, actual decision problems should be investigated to examine the relationship between other personality dimensions and decision making.

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