

Career Maturity of School Children

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The present investigation has been undertaken to study career maturity among the students of public and government schools. A dense sample of 500 high school students were the subjects of this study (250 males and 250 females). The Crites' career maturity inventory (CMI), self concept scale (SCS), achievement motivation test (ACMT), and Lumpkin's locus of control scale (LOC) were administered to the students to study the relationship between career maturity and self concept, achievement motivation and locus of control. On comparison of public and government schools, the results clearly indicate that the students of public schools possess a higher career maturity attitude (CMA), career maturity competence (CMC), as well as self concept and achievement motivation. Significant relationships have also been obtained between CMA and CMC, internal LOC and ACMT in case of boys in public schools and between CMA, ACMT and SCS in case of girls in public schools. On the other hand significant relationship has been found between CMA and external locus of control, achievement motivation and self concept in case of boys in government school and between CMC and achievement motivation in case of girls in government schools.

One of the most crucial decisions a young adolescent must make is the selection of an occupation. A large number of career options are available these days to the students, making it a difficult task for the youngster to make a mature choice. The concept of Career Maturity has its origin in the Super's developmental theory of career behaviour, which envisages that selection of an occupation is a process spanning a considerable number of years usually from late childhood to early adulthood. Career maturity is the term, which denotes the place reached on this continuum of career development from exploratory years to decline.

The words Career Development, Vocational Development, and Occupational Development are used synonymously, they refer to a lifelong process of developing work values, crystallizing a vocational identity, learning about opportunities and trying out part-time work situations

The literature on vocational theory and development identifies a number of correlates of vocational maturity. Included among these are social, psychological and educational variables such as vocational aspirations, needs and interests, self-concept, locus of control and so forth. Vocational development is an extended

process that has its key to construct the self concept. Self-concept is defined as the total of a person's perceptions about his physical, social and academic competence. A recurring theme is that an individual chooses an occupation which permits him / her to function in a role consistent with his / her self concept. It follows from Super's theory that self definition may be the most significant vocational development task for an elementary school age child. Several writers subscribe to this notion that a young person's self concept and career development are related (Holland, 1981; Kidd, 1984; Munson, 1992) found that subjects with high self esteem scored significantly higher on vocational identity and career salience variable.

Holland, (1981) studied the relationship between vocational development and self-concept in 6th grade students. Results indicate a significant relationship between self-concept and career maturity.

Locus of control is an attribute of personality on which individuals are distributed according to their degree of belief in their control over events in their lives. Internals believe that events occur primarily as a result of their own behaviour, while externals see events following their behaviour as primarily determined by outside forces (e.g., luck, chance, powerful others). Khan, (1983) found that higher Career maturity inventory scores were associated with himself esteem, internal locus of control and intrinsic work values. A number of other studies have also shown that an internal locus of control is more conducive to career maturity than an external locus of control (Benardelli, Stefano & Dumont, 1983). Mullis, and Mullis (1997) found that high school students with higher scores on self esteem and showing internal locus of control expressed more interests in a variety of vocational themes.

Considerable researches has been conducted in this area among the students in the western society, however very few investigations have been conducted among the Indian students, hence the present investigation is an attempt to study the nature of career maturity and it's personality characteristics among the students in government and public schools. A government school is governed by the state government's educational policy with the vernacular language as the medium of instruction. On the other hand a public school is a private institution managed by a private management committee with English as the medium of instruction.

Method

Sample

The study is conducted on a sample of 500 high school students from various public and government schools in Amritsar. The sample is equally divided among boys and girls.

Measures used

Crites Career Maturity Inventory, (Crites, 1978), Self concept scale (Sarawat, and Gaur, 1981), Achievement Motivation test (Bhargava, 1994) and Locus of control scale (Lumpkin, 1985).

Results and Discussion

Reliabilities of the measures used:

Split half reliability coefficient were computed for Crites' career maturity inventory (0.85 for career attitude and 0.93 for career competence), and the self concept scale (0.88). Test retest reliability for Achievement motivation test (0.86) and locus of control scale (0.41)

Comparison of means:

On comparing the means (Table 1), it has been found that Boys from public schools differ significantly from the boys in the government schools, in career attitude and

career competence. Thus indicating that the Boys from public schools have more positive attitude toward work behaviour and are better acquainted with career opportunities and choices. Significant differences have also

been obtained on personality characteristics such as achievement motivation and self-concept. Boys from public schools have a higher self-concept and are more achievement oriented than their counterparts in government schools.

Table 1. Mean, SD's and the statistical significance of the measured variables of boys from Public and Government schools.

Variables	Public School	Government School	t-ratio	
Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
CMA	31.39	5.62	21.15 3.96	17.06**
CMC	34.88	8.96	6.39 3.38	22.27**
LOC	3.27	0.67	3.15 0.51	1.6
ACMT	21.03	4.84	15.61 3.48	10.42**
SCS	172.39	14.46	169.04 12.29	2.01 *

Table 2. Mean, SD's and the statistical significance of the measured variables of Girls from Public and Government schools.

Variables	Public School	Government School	t-ratio	
Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
CMA	30.38	4.83	26.77 5.01	6.01**
CMC	34.53	9.89	32.18 8.83	2.02*
LOC	3.21	0.49	3.19 0.53	0.36
ACMT	21.16	4.81	20.41 5.06	1.25
SCS	167.28	13.81	176.71 12.75	5.71**

Table 2, shows the comparison of girls from Government and public schools. The girls from the public schools have scored higher on career attitude and career competence as compared to the girls from government schools. However the girls from government schools have scored higher on self-concept than the public schools. This may be attributed to the fact that the system of education in public school is co-educational whereas in the government

school it is not so. Thereby the girls in public schools have lower self-concept when they compare themselves to the boys, whereas in the government school it is not so. There is no significant difference on the variables of locus of control and achievement motivation among the two groups though the girls in public schools are slightly higher on achievement motivation.

Table 3. Mean, SD's and the statistical significance of the measured variables of Girls and Boys from Government schools.

Variables	Girls		Boys		t-ratio
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
CMA	26.77	5.01	21.15	3.96	9.89**
CMC	32.18	8.83	6.39	3.38	18.79**
LOC	3.19	0.53	3.15	0.51	0.60
ACMT	20.41	5.06	15.61	3.48	8.8**
SCS	176.71	12.75	169.04	12.29	4.85 *

Table 4. Mean, SD's and the statistical significance of the measured variables of Girls and Boys from Public schools.

Variables	Girls		Boys		t-ratio
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
CMA	30.38	4.83	31.39	5.62	1.58
CMC	34.53	9.89	34.88	8.96	0.30
LOC	3.21	0.49	3.27	0.67	0.94
ACMT	21.16	4.81	21.03	4.84	0.22
SCS	167.28	13.81	172.39	14.46	2.93 *

Table 3 compares the Girls and boys of Government schools. The girls scored significantly higher on career maturity attitude, career maturity competence, achievement motivation and self-concept. However there is no significant difference on the variable of locus of control. A number of previous studies support the above results. To date most of the studies of gender differences in career maturity (Hesser, 1981; Lokan, Boss and Patsula, 1982; Neely and Johnson, 1981; Luzzo and Antony, 1995) have focused on verifying the tendency of women to career maturity higher than men. In other studies (Fouad, 1988) females were higher on some subscales only.

Table 4 compares the girls and boys of public schools. There are no significant differences on any of the variables except self-concept, which is higher among the boys.

Correlational Analysis

For further analysis Pearson product moment correlation was compared to find the relationship among the measured variables. Table 5 shows significant positive correlation between career maturity attitude, career maturity competence and internal locus of control among the boys in public schools. Career maturity competence is also significantly correlated with internal locus of control and achievement motivation. Table 5 also indicates that CMA has significant positive correlation with CMC, ACMT and SC in case of boys in government school. However locus of control has significant negative correlation with CMA, which means that boys in government schools have external locus of control. This indicates that career maturity in this group is influenced by chance, peers and other environmental factors. Thus their attitude towards work is

influenced by external factors. Hence we can conclude that students, who have a high career maturity attitude and competence, possess a high self concept and an external locus of control and are more achievement oriented. Holland (1981), Munson (1992), Khan, (1983), Mullis, and Mullis (1997) have also obtained similar results.

Table 6 shows that career maturity attitude has significant positive correlation with achievement motivation and self-concept (girls in public schools). However in case of girls in government schools, career maturity competence is significantly correlated with achievement motivation only.

Table 5. Correlation coefficients between CM and LOC, ACMT, SC Boys from Public schools.

	CMA	CMC	LOC	ACMT	SCS
CMA	-	0.33**	0.31**	0.14	0.10
CMC	0.80**	-	0.17*	0.21*	0.13
LOC	- 0.24	0.19*	-	0.06	0.12
ACMT	0.47**	0.40**	- 0.23*	-	0.05
SCS	0.23*	0.08	- 0.03	0.17	-

* $p < 0.0$, ** $p < 0.05$

Table 6. Correlation coefficients between CM and LOC, ACMT, SC. Girls from Public schools.

	CMA	CMC	LOC	ACMT	SCS
CMA	-	0.29**	0.09	0.18*	0.36**
CMC	0.36**	-	0.05	0.09	0.07
LOC	0.06	0.06	-	- 0.01	0.18*
ACMT	0.15	0.23**	- 0.15	-	0.15
SCS	0.05	0.15	- 0.09	0.20*	-

* $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$

Conclusion

The obtained results indicate that personality characteristics play a significant role in the development of career maturity. In the light of above results, it may also be inferred that the environment of the public schools promotes career maturity and the students of public schools are better informed about career opportunities than the students of government schools. The public schools promote a healthy environment that not only lays stress on academic curriculum but aims

to develop the child's overall personality by encouraging their students to participate in debates, declamations, seminars, dramatics and games etc. The students are motivated to engage in learning activities to move towards desired goals and objectives which is reflected in their career attitude and competence. On the other hand the government schools lack such an effective learning environment, which needs to be further strengthened in this direction.

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