RESEARCH ARTICLE

CAREER MATURITY AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS IN AIZAWL CITY: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Career maturity among adolescents is of overriding concern so as to live a happy and contented life. Choosing the right kind of profession or career in accordance to an individual's interest and preference is very much crucial in ensuring self-adequacy and self-assuredness. The present study aims to examine the level of career maturity among college students in Aizawl District of Mizoram. For the present study, stratified random sampling was used on a total sample of 300 college students from 5 degree colleges in Aizawl city. For the data collectionCareer Maturity Inventory (Indian adaptation) developed by Dr. Nirmala Gupta. (1989) was used to measurethe level of career maturity of college students. For data analysis mean, t-test and Anova were used. The results indicated that out of 300 college students, 222 (74%) college students were found to have an average level of career maturity. It was also found that the level of career maturity between male and female college students have no significant difference. Out of 100 respondents from each stream, students from arts streams only 5% have scored high level of career maturity, 74% of arts students have an average level of career maturity and 21% of arts students have low level of career maturity. The result also indicated that only 14% of commerce students have high level of career maturity, whereas 80% of commerce students scored average level of career maturity and only 6% of commerce students have low level of career maturity. Furthermore, only 21% of science students have high level of career maturity and majority of 69% science students have an average level of career maturity and only 10% of college science students have low level of career maturity.

INTRODUCTION

College students usually ranges from 18-22 age group. They just pass their adolescence and are at the start of adulthood. These stages are equally important as other stages of development. 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 a 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.

It is that stage when one has to make an appropriate choice that fits the subject abilities, interest and occupational preferences. The role of occupation in the life of an individual has much broader psychological importance than has generally been recognized. Young men and women leaving the educational institutions and entering the world of work are faced with various problems about their career. Those leaving educational and training institutions are already under the impact of numerous variables in matters of choice-educational, vocational, social and personal. These variables appear to play an important role in the educational choices of the students which in turn become instrumental in their career choices.

Concept of Career Maturity: Career maturity is said to change according to time and an individual's career maturity exhibits several characteristics such as capability,

knowledgeable, efficiency, skilfullness, adaptability, highly motivated and having a successful career. It was found to be related to the ability to make realistic choices as well as combining self-concept with a vocation (Super, 1957). Career maturity is conceptualized as an individual's readiness to make well informed, age appropriate career decisions and to shape one's career carefully in the face of existing societal opportunities and constraints. Selection of a career and setting in it is an important task and a source of personal gratification. In the modern age of science and technology, hundreds of vocations have been thrown open to an individual. The choice of a right vocation is becoming increasingly difficult in these days. An adolescent is the period when a major turning takes place in the life of a student because the career will depend upon the subject selected at this level. Many a time, a student is forced to choose a career that is against his/her wishes viz.

John O'Crites (1978) 'Career maturity is the ability to make appropriate occupational choices that fits the subject abilities, occupational interests and occupational preferences. Because of this maturity long term adjustment is considered to be more likely'. Age and maturity can bring a new level of passion, ability and insight for creative expression. Although some areas that depend on physical performance, or accumulating and processing vast amounts of information, may become less easy or available as we age, many creative endeavours flourish with increasingly varied life experience and the kind of vitality adult development can nurture.

Rationale of the Study: An increasing rate of changes, uncertainties, challenges and problems characterizes today's world. It is an epoch of complexity, disorder, ambiguity. The internet and the new media have shortened time and distance. The labour market is increasingly competitive, demanding employees who can successfully meet the workplace challenges, innovate, act quickly and present effective solutions to unexpected problems. In this scenario, creativity is of utmost importance, a survival skill that needs to be nurtured in different contexts. Scholars from various fields highlight the need of a great attention to the development of the creative capacity across the various levels of education, especially in higher education. The benefits of creativity to individuals and societies, as well as the key role of higher education for the development of a knowledge society have been recognized. Governments of several countries, such as China and England, have taken initiatives aiming at the implementation of educational policies that ensure the development of creativity through education, Paradoxically, despite the recognition of the importance of boosting children to grow vocationally mature, not only in early education but also in higher education, as a condition to prepare students to succeed in an uncertain future, there is agreement that vocational subjects and courses has not received the adequate attention in university courses. At present, the future prospect of every country rest on the educational system and vocational set up of it. The advancing countries have to look forward in their educational and vocational plans to adopt suitable practices to cope with the present and future needs of the individuals, social groups and nations. The stereotype systems in educational and professional spheres deliver little goods and hamper extensively. The present world is growing in complexity in almost every direction. Fruitful decisions on educational and vocational issues need valid and reliable findings of intensively carried-out researches on related matters.

Career maturity has been found to be influenced differently in different culture. The reason for the differences varies on our value system. Creativity is no doubt an innate potential, yet it is also influenced by many factors such as home environment, society and value system. Similarly, maturity of a person is influenced by the surrounding environment and value system. In many cases, the vocations of a student are chosen by their parents without knowing the child's ability, interest and potentials. It is important to know the creative ability of the child in order to develop his creativity for future preferences. Selection of career and setting in it is an important task and a source of personal gratification. In the modern age of science and technology, hundreds of vocations have been thrown open to an individual. The choice of a right career is becoming difficult in these days. Adolescent is the period when a major turning takes place in the life of a student because the career will depend upon the subjects selected at this level. After the 10th class school curriculum has been diversified into Art, Science and commerce. In adolescents age career maturity is very important. Therefore, it was considered relevant to study this aspect namely career maturity among college students. Till today, many research has been conducted in relation to career maturity/vocational maturity. No such studies have yet been conducted in relation to career maturity on college students of Aizawl City. The investigator felt the need to conduct research in relation to career maturity of college students of Aizawl city to find out whether students are vocationally matured in choice of career. Keeping all this in mind, the following research questions were raised:

- What is the level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District?
- Is there a significant difference in level of career maturity with reference to gender?
- Is there a significant difference in level of career maturity with reference to stream of study?

Objectives of the study

- To find out the career maturity level among College Students of Aizawl District.
- To compare the career maturity level with reference to their gender.
- To compare the career maturity level among college students with reference to their streams of study.

Hypotheses

Based on the above objectives, the following hypotheses was formulated

- There is no significant difference in career maturity level among college students of Aizawl District with reference to their gender.
- There is no significant difference in career maturity of college students of Aizawl District with reference to streams of study.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling: In the present study, the population is very large and scattered over all the colleges of Aizawl district. Stratified random sampling was used for the present study.

Out of the total fourteen(14) colleges in Aizawl City, only six (6) colleges viz. Pachhunga University College, Govt. Zirtiri Residential Science College, Govt. Aizawl North, Govt. J.Thankima College (Arts),Govt. Hrangbana College and Govt. Aizawl College (Commerce) were randomly selected for investigation.Out of the six(6)colleges, a total sample of 300 college students, 150 male and 150 female were randomly selected, out of which 100 college students were randomly selected for each stream viz. arts,science and commerce.

Toolused for collection of data: The earnest efforts were made to choose appropriate standardized tools to measure Career Maturity. Career Maturity Inventory (Indian adaptation) developed by Dr. Nirmala Gupta. (1989) was used for collection of data.To assess the maturity of these career behaviours, the CMI provides two types of measures: the Attitude Scale and the Competence test. The Attitude Scale elicits the feelings, the subjective reactions, the dispositions that the individual has toward making a career choice and entering the world of work. Five attitudinal variables being surveyed by Attitude Scale are:

⟩ Decisiveness in career decision making.
⟩ Involvement in career decision making.
⟩ Independence in career decision making.
⟩ Orientation to career decision making.
⟩ Compromise in career decision making.

The scale thus maps the conative aspects of decision making. The Competence Test measures the cognitive variables in choosing an occupation. These include appraisal of the individuals job related capabilities (strengths and weaknesses), knowledge about the world of work, aptness in matching personal characteristics to occupational requirements, foresight in planning for a career and effectiveness in dealing with the problems which arise in the course of career development. In all, then, there are five parts of the Competence Test.

Part 1-Self Appraisal (SA) (Knowing yourself)
Part 2-Occupational Information (OI) (Knowing about jobs)
Part 3-Goal Selection (GS) (Choosing a Job)
Part 4-Planning (PL) (Looking ahead)
Part 5-Problem Solving (PS) (What should they do?)

Taken together, the Attitude Scale and the Competence Test provide both an extensive inventory of the critical behavior in mature career decision making and development.

Statistical Techniques used for Analysis of Data: Statistical techniques are very essential for research. It helps the investigator to analyse and interpret the data systematically. In this study, data were analyzed using quantitative method such as:

⟩ Mean and standard deviation to study the level of career maturity among the college students in Aizawl city.
⟩ 't'-test to find out the significance of difference between male and female college students in their level of career maturity.
⟩ ANOVA to find out the significance difference among the three streams viz. arts, science and commerce in their level of career maturity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Objective 1. The first objective was to find out the career maturity level among college students of Aizawl City: In order to find out the career maturity level among college students of Aizawl District, Career Maturity Inventory (Indian adaptation) developed by Dr. Nirmala Gupta was administered to all the 300 respondents and all the scores were tabulated and analyzed.

The students whose score range in between 80 - 120 were considered as high level, scores ranging between 40 – 79.99 were considered as average level and scores ranging between 0 - 39.99 were considered low level of career maturity.

Table 1 and 2indicated the overall mean score of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District. It can be seen that out of 300 respondents the mean score of college students of Aizawl District on career maturity level was 61.23 which indicated average level of career maturity. And out of 300 respondents, only 40 students scored above 80 which indicated that only 13.33 % students were high in their level of career maturity, and 38 students scored below 39.99 which indicated that 12.67 % students were low in their level of career maturity and 222 students has scored within the range between 40 – 79.99 which indicate that 74 % students were average in their level of career maturity. This indicates that, the overall average scores of college students of Aizawl district falls within the average level of career maturity.

Table 1. Overall mean of career maturity of respondents

VARIABLE	N	Mean	SD
Career Maturity	300	61.23	16.33

Table 2. Level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District

Levels of career maturity	Score N=300 (100)
High	40 (13.33)
Average	222 (74)
Low	38 (12.67)

(Figure in parentheses are given in percentage)

Table 3. Comparison of level of career maturity between male and female respondents

Range of Score	Interpretation	Gender N=300	
		Male N=150 (100)	Female N=150 (100)
80-120	High	22 (14.67)	18 (12)
40-79.99	Average	110 (73.33)	113 (75.33)
0-39.99	Low	18 (12)	19 (12.67)

(Figure in parenthesis are given in percentage)

Objective 2. The second objective was to compare the level of career maturity with reference to gender: In order to find out the level of career maturity with reference to gender, the following null hypothesis was formulated:

Table 4. Significance of difference between male and female in career maturity (dimension-wise)

Dimensions of Career maturity	Male		Female		t value	Significance
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Attitude	32.80	8.29	30.18	8.10	2.767	NS
Competence	30.68	8.10	29.41	8.96	.629	NS
Total Career maturity	62.88	16.72	59.59	15.80	1.753	NS

NS = Not Significant

Table 5. Level of career maturity with reference to streams of study

Range of Score	Interpretation	Streams of studyN=300		
		Arts (S1) N = 100	Commerce (S2) N = 100	Science (S3) N = 100
80-120	High	5	14	21
40-79.99	Average	74	80	69
0-39.99	Low	21	6	10

Table 6. Significance difference of career maturity with reference to streams of study

| Dimensions of career maturity	S1(N=100) Arts		S2(N=100) Commerce		S3(N=100) Science		S1 Vs S2	S2 vs S3	S3 vs S1	f value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Attitude	29.89	8.77	32.47	7.25	32.13	8.60	-	-	-	2.944(NS)
Competence	26.49	7.72	29.77	9.63	32.97	9.26	*	*	-	13.23
Total career maturity	56.36	15.328	62.24	15.794	65.10	16.75	*	-	*	7.789

NS = Not Significant* Significant at 0.05 level

Null hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between male and female college students of Aizawl District in their career maturity

Objective 2 (a): Level of career maturity between male and female college students of Aizawl District: This sub section includes the male and female percentage scores of level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District. In order to find out the level of career maturity with reference to gender, all the scores were computed, male scores and female scores were computed separately and analyzed using percentage. Following table 3 is the percentage representation of comparison of level of career maturity between male and female. Table 3 and figure 1 has clearly indicated the level of career maturity between male and female college students of Aizawl District. There were 150 male and 150 female. Out of 150 male respondents, only 14.67 % were found to have high level of career maturity, 73.33% male college students were found to have average level of career maturity and 12 % college students were found to have low level of career maturity. And out of 150 female respondents 12% were high in their level of creativity, 75.33% female college students were found to have averagelevel of career maturity and 12.67 % female college students were found to have low level of career maturity. Figural representation follows at Figure 1.

Some studies found that female students had a higher level of career maturity compared to male students (Patton,Creed & Muller 2002). However, some studies had found that both males and females did not show any significant difference (Ki-Hak, 2001). Notwithstanding, a few studies had stated that malestudents had higher levels of career maturity compared to female.Jawarneh.M. (2016) conducted a study on Career maturity among university students in Jordan on a sample of 284 students and found out that participants have high level of career maturity and there were no significant differences based on gender.

Objective 3. The third objective was to compare the level of career maturity with reference to stream of study: In order to find out the level of career maturity with reference to stream of study, the following null hypothesis was formulated:
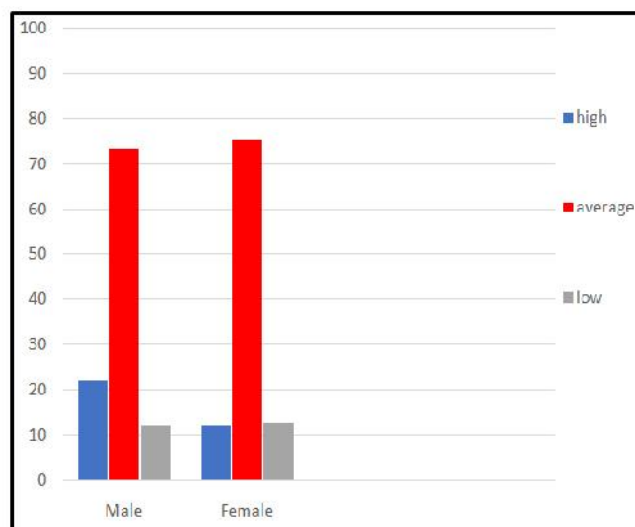
Figure 1. Comparison of level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District with reference to gender

Null hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between college students of different streams in their career maturity

Objective 3 (a): Level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District with reference to streams of study. This sub section includes level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District with reference to streams of study In order to find out the level of career maturity with reference to streams of study, all the scores were computed, each scores from the three streams were computed separately and analyzed using percentage.

Following Table 5 is the percentage representation of comparison of level of career maturity with reference to streams of study. It is evident from table 5 and figure 2, the performance of 300 respondents from the three streams i.e. Arts=100, Commerce=100 and Science=100 on their level of career maturity. The table reveals out of 100 respondents each, students from arts streams only 5% have scored high level of career maturity, 74% of arts students have an average level of career maturity and 21% of arts students have low level of career maturity. The table 4 also indicated that only 14% of commerce students have high level of career maturity, whereas 80% of commerce students scored average level of career maturity and only 6% of commerce students have low level of career maturity. It can also be seen from the given table 4 that 21% of science students have high level of career maturity and majority of 69% science students have an average level of career maturity and only 10% of college science students have low level of career maturity. Figural representation follows at figure 2.
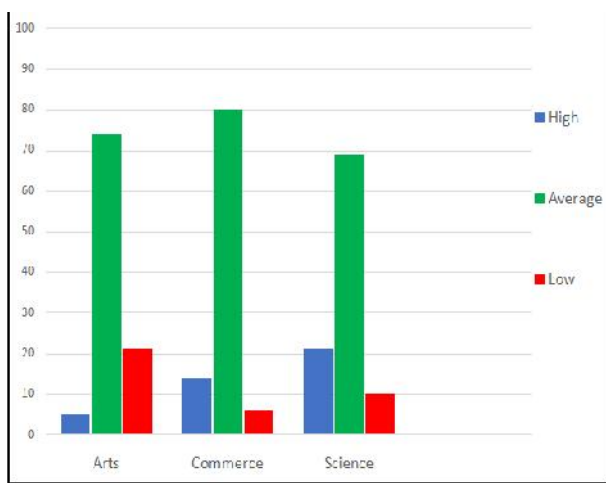

Figure 2. Level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District with reference to streams of study

This sub section includes the comparison of level of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District with reference to streams of study. In order to find out the significance of difference of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District, statistical analysis of ANOVA f-value between respondents of the three streams i.e. Arts, Commerce and Science on the level of career maturity was calculated and analyzed. Table 5 reveals that the 'f' value for the significance of difference between the three streams i.e. Arts, Commerce and Science. Out of the 300 respondents, there were 100 respondents from each stream. For dimension of career maturity viz. 'attitude' there were no significant differences betweenthe three streams viz. arts, science and commerce. Looking at the total career maturity from each stream, the mean score of Arts is 56.36, Commerce is 62.24 and Science is 65.10. The required 'f' value, with df=297 at 0.05 is 3.03 and 0.01 is 4.68. Since, the calculated 'f' value is much higher than the required 'f' value, therefore, it can be concluded that there is significant deference between these three streams of respondents with regard to their creativity.

Therefore, the null hypothesis that assumes no significant difference of career maturity among college students of Aizawl District with reference to streams of study is rejected.

Implications and Conclusion

Though the present study was restricted to only 300 students from one district of Mizoram, viz. Aizawl district, the present research findings has practicalimplications for parents, teachers, school counsellors, school psychologists practitioners, administrators as well as the stakeholders. Professional school counsellors should reinforce training programmes to parents on career guidance. School Counsellors or career master shall assist parents in learning how to provide support both emotionally and morally thereby understanding the emotions and capabilities of adolescents in choice of subjects and vocational challenges. Parents should provide opportunities that would nurture interests in vocational subject matter, and create conducive environment that would nurture and revealpotentials and aptitudes for vocational content. Parents, generally, should be cautioned against imposing their own goals onto their children and they should only act as a guide not as dictator. This is because college students at this stage need to understand and realize their own dreams and goals based on their interests and aptitudes.Parents should respect and understand that all children have individual differences. Family environments that show respect for differences and independence would enormously be helpful to the child's career development. Parents should show veritableengrossment in supporting career plans for their children. Parents and teachers should inspireand explore career options for the adolescents. It can be concluded that the existing problem that our entire educational system is going aimlessly in regard to vocational education must be addressed. That is why it may be said that school counsellors, teachers, career masters, educational administrators, curriculum planners in our country should stir an alarm toward the task of developing cross - culturalism and career oriented based curriculum.

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