

Cognitive differentiation and Emotional Intelligence as factors in career decision making of school students

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Abstract The present study is an attempt to find out the career decision making of School students in relation to their emotional intelligence and cognitive differentiation. Career decision making is a cognitive process which is influenced by rational and emotional brain of an individual. Thus, present study is aimed at examining the effect of emotional intelligence and cognitive differentiation ability of career oriented boys and girls in career decision making ability. The study was conducted on 160 students of science and commerce stream by using 2x2 factorial design with fixed effect model consisting randomized sampling technique. They were asked to fill the questionnaires regarding emotional intelligence inventory by Thomas & Shushma (2003), Cognitive differentiation grid by (Manchanda and Hasan 1998) and finally career decision making questionnaire of Gati (1996). Contribution of these factors in generating variance upon career decision making have been done through multiple regression analysis.

Index Terms—career decision making, cognitive differentiation, emotional intelligence

I. INTRODUCTION

Career decision making is operationally defined as the acquisition of four career related behavioural steps suggested by horan (1979). These are defining the problem, generating alternatives and coming to action. If a subject has acquired these four abilities, he/she will said to be career wise decisive. Harren (1979, p. 119) defined a decision making model as a “description of psychological process in which one organizes information, deliberates among alternatives, and makes a commitment to a course of action.” This definition reflects the cognitive, analytical nature of decision models. Bettman et al., 1998 argues that needing to justify a decision may lead to the use of decision strategies which are based on easily seen and communicable relationships among options (relational heuristics). Many individuals engage in heuristic processing strategies during the course of strategic decision making (Schwenk, 1995; reviewed in

Bazerman, 2002; Das & Teng, 1999; Hodgkinson, 2001b; Maule & Hodgkinson, 2002). Another big and important reason behind this uncertainty is incomplete knowledge about a particular career as well as the complexities of the twenty-first century’s world of work and the happening constant changes that characterizes it, turns Times New Roman, Size:10] Cognitive complexity or differentiation concerns the way occupations are represented in the career decision maker’s mind. Adolescents today in high school have sufficient knowledge of the world of work and they are in a position to make a career choice (Cortes S and Schepers, 2004). Some studies focused on the relationship between cognitive complexities and congruence of vocational choice (Bodden, 1970) and vocational preference (Winer, Hasse, Gleen, Esari, & Bodden, 1979). Cognitive development has received an enormous degree of attention from cross cultures. Young and Valach (1996) reasoned that emotion has been neglected in Vocational psychology and career development literature. They asserted that career is strongly connected to emotions, and therefore, awareness of emotions in understanding career is essentials. That’s why emotional intelligence has been taken as an important factor in career development. Robert J. Emmerling (2001) studied the relation between emotional intelligence and career commitment and decision process. Emmerling, Cherniss, (2003) studied the relation between emotional intelligence and career decision making process assuming that emotional intelligence abilities as correctly perceiving, using, understanding and managing emotions to improve career decision making. Young and Valach (1996) reasoned that emotion has been neglected in the vocational psychology and career development literature. They asserted that career is strongly connected to emotions, and, therefore, awareness of emotion in understanding career is essential.

II. METHODOLOGY

The present study is an attempt to find out the career decision making ability of career oriented boys and girl students in relation to their cognitive differentiation ability and emotional intelligence. Career decision making is a cognitive process which is governed (influenced) by rational and emotional brain of an individual. Thus, present study is aimed at examining the effect of cognitive differentiation and emotional intelligence of school going boys and girls.

III. PROCEDURE

Sample

160 students were served as subjects for this study. They were drawn from the reputed schools of the city. Selection of the schools was decided on the basis of their education system which was C.B.S.E. (Central board Of Secondary Education) based education system. Subjects were matched on the quality of schooling, father's education and occupations and facilities provided to the students and some other background variables. It was decided to choose career oriented students of science and commerce subjects. It was kept in mind to keep up the homogeneity of school while collecting the sample. There were 20 subjects in each group and it was decided to choose the students of 10th to 12th because after finishing examinations of class 10th students start thinking about the career they would like to choose likewise they select the subject they find interesting that is why such a group was selected for the study.

IV. TOOLS

In this study, two tests have been used. First, Emotional Intelligence Inventory was developed by

Groups	Emotional intelligence		Cognitive Differentiation	
	Above E.I.	Below E.I	High C.D.	Low C.D.
mean	112.92	93.20	531.24	343.12
S.D.	9.57	5.23	62.81	42.91

Thomas and Shushma (2003). This is a 50 item self rating. Second test is Cognitive Differentiation Grid by (Leena Manchanda & Dr. B. Hasan,1998) which is based on Kelly's Repertory Grid technique; Cognitive Differentiation Grid constructed by Manchanda and Hasan (1998) to measure the ability of cognitive differentiation among career oriented subjects.

SCORING. The scheme of each test is according to its manual Procedure Firstly, students of science and commerce faculties were listed and randomly stratified into two equal groups Then subjects of both the groups were given emotional intelligence test (Thomas and Shushma, 2003) and Cognitive Differentiation Grid (Leena Manchanda & Dr. B. Hasan). In each cell, 20 subjects were randomly placed. These subjects were assigned in two groups using cognitive differentiation Grid (Leena Manchanda & Dr. B. Hasan, 1998) with the help of mid points technique. These finally selected subjects were put to score on career decision making scale (CDMS) constructed by (Vijya Tiwari and Dr. B.Hasan). Multiple regression and qualitative analysis method is used for the data interpretation.

V. MAIN STUDY

After the initial and final evaluation of students' age and their school's background and education system, final collection of the data was taken with the permission of the head of the respective institution. Each student was given the test one by one after giving the test and good rapport was established with the students by talking to them and explaining to them about the test and career decision making. Subjects were asked to fill their name, age and their father's occupation.

VI. HYPOTHESIS

- A. Students with above emotional intelligence would make better career decisions than students with below average emotional intelligence.
- B. Students with high cognitive differentiation ability would make better career decisions in comparison to cognitively low differentiated students

VI RESULTS

Fig.1 Variable wise mean scores and S.D.s of students on career decision making ability.

For quantifying the responses scores were assigned and statistical devices were used. The scores obtained from the scoring manuals were obtained on all the independent factors namely, emotional intelligence, and cognitive differentiation equally.

Distributed into high and low category of emotional intelligence and cognitive differentiation. Multiple regression analysis of all the independent variables on career decision making. Multiple regression was done by SPSS. SPSS was used to analyses only required analysis and thus regression analysis was completed. As evident from regression analysis (fig no.2) the main effect cognitive differentiation was the most important predictor of career decision making explaining 22.5% of variance. It indicated that as cognitive differentiation reduced career decision making improved. The second important factor was emotional intelligence explaining 20.7% variance in career decision making though the indicating as emotional intelligence increases so career decision making.

Fig 2. Multiple regression analysis of all the independent variables on career decision making

Predictors	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	F-Ratio
Cognitive differentiation	.484	.234	.225	23.87**
Emotional intelligence	.487	.237	.207	7.87**

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