



## **PREDICTORS OF CAREER DECISION MAKING AMONG INDIAN ADOLESCENTS**

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### *Abstract*

*Making decisions regarding a career is an important task for young people. Many young people experience episodes of indecision before settling on a career path. The main objective of the present study was to explore social maturity and self-efficacy as predictors of career decision-making among adolescents. The study was conducted on a stratified random sample of 356 eleventh grade secondary school students (Mean age=17.65 years, Female=182, Male=174) using descriptive method of research. The adapted versions of Career Decision-Making Profile (CDMP) Questionnaire developed by Gati (2011), A Comprehensive Scale of Social Maturity (ACSSM) developed by Pal (1986) and Self-Efficacy (SE) Scale developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) were used to collect data from the secondary school students. Step-wise multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the data. The results of the study revealed that social maturity and self-efficacy emerged to be the significant predictors of career decision-making and its different dimensions among adolescents. Implications of the results are discussed in the context of adolescent development perspective.*

Keywords: career decision-making; social maturity; self-efficacy; adolescents

### **Introduction**

Choice of a career is not only central to one's lifestyle, but is also a vital aspect of the physical and emotional well-being of the individuals themselves and their families (Walsh et al., 1980). Career choice is a developmental process that extends throughout life rather it involves not a single decision but a series of decisions. It is a known fact that those persons who make career choice according

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to personal interests and abilities, they enjoy significantly higher levels of job satisfaction and are more productive in their services. Career decision is not just a matter of selecting an occupation that is good match with person's characteristics, but in reality, the process is lot more complicated. Making decisions regarding a career is an important task for young people. Many young people experience episodes of indecision before settling on a career path (Fouad, 1994).

Career planning is the first step in the course of career development which helps in the process of vocational decision making (Gunkel et al., 2010). In order to attain career decisiveness, one requires a huge amount of preparation and a level of capability that is considered by an examination of one's skill, familiarity and awareness of obtainable careers, employment, and training opportunities (Gottfredson, 1981). A very critical aspect in career planning is making the right career choice or deciding on a career that is most appropriate for one self. Career decision forms a major consequence of effective career planning. Research in the area of vocational psychology has especially focused in the understanding the reasons behind career decision making (Gunkel et al., 2010). One of the most desired outcomes of career decision making is career decisiveness. It has become a very important matter to study career decision-making because of changing nature and complexity of the economy and market in the country. Career decision-making includes a complex process by which one selects an occupation (Zunker & Osborn, 1994). Readiness to engage in career exploration varies from individual to individual. Some factors that may account for this variability includes self-esteem, ego, strength, openness (Kracke, 1997) and decision-making style (Blustein, 1989). The persons who are cognitively oriented and systematic in making the decisions are more likely to engage in career exploration process (Blustein, 1989).

The success, satisfaction and happiness of an individual depends upon how accurately and carefully he/she chooses his/her career. The adolescents and young adults support responsible vocational decisions which help to nurture them personally. But the students face significant barriers to career planning. Improper selection of the career or changing the job frequently is very harmful for psychological health. Making career decisions is influenced by several factors such as family environment, mental ability, social maturity, personality, self-esteem, economic and political and industrial policies of the country. Thus, it becomes a matter of concern to recognize and explore the factors that predict and promote career decision-making among individuals. Hence, the present study

was undertaken to study the predictors of career decision-making among adolescents.

### **Objectives**

To study social maturity as a predictor of career decision-making among adolescents.

To study self-efficacy as a predictor of career decision-making among adolescents.

### **Method**

Descriptive method of research was used to conduct the present study.

#### *Participants*

The population of the study was secondary school students studying in eleventh grade studying in Government and Private Schools of Punjab. A stratified random sample of 356 adolescents (Mean age=17.65 years, Females=182, Males=174) was selected to conduct the study giving due weightage to gender and locale.

#### *Instruments*

In the present study following tools were used in order to collect the required data:

*Socio-Demographic Sheet.* It was prepared by the investigators to gather data on personal variables such as age, gender and locale.

*The Career Decision-Making Profile Questionnaire (CDMP - English Version)* constructed and standardized by Gati (2011) was used to measure career decision-making of the adolescents. The scale was translated in to Punjabi language and adapted in the Indian context. Each item has a seven-point response- 'do not agree at all' to 'completely agree'. The questionnaire assessed the career decision-making over different dimensions. The questionnaire assessed the career decision-making over the following 12 dimensions:

- i.* Information Gathering- IG (compromise vs. minimal);
- ii.* Information Processing-IP (analytic vs. holistic);
- iii.* Locus of Control-LC (internal vs. external);
- iv.* Effort Invested in the Process-EI (much vs. little);
- v.* Procrastination-PR (high vs. low);

- vi. Speed of Making the Final Decision-SP (fast vs. slow);
- vii. Consulting with Others-CO (frequent vs. rare);
- viii. Dependence on Others-DO (high vs. low);
- ix. Desire to Please Others-DP (high vs. low);
- x. Aspiration for an Ideal Occupation-AI (high vs. low);
- xi. Willingness to Compromise-WC (high vs. low);
- xii. Intuitive-IN (little vs. much).

The 36-items of the questionnaire represent 12 dimensions. In addition to these items, there is one warm up item and two validity items in order to ensure that individuals respond only after reading the items carefully. The Cronbach-alpha internal consistency reliability for the 12 scales (3 items each) of CDMP questionnaire for the internet version in English ranged from .72 to .80 (median=0.80). The Cronbach-alpha internal consistency reliability for the 12 scales (3 items each) of CDMP questionnaire for the internet version in English ranged from .72 to .80 (median=0.80).

*A Comprehensive Scale of Social Maturity (ACSSM)* developed and standardized by Pal (1986) was used to study social maturity of the adolescents. The scale was translated into Punjabi language and adapted into Indian context. Each item has four-point responses ‘Strongly agree=4 to Strongly disagree=1’ for positive items, and reverse scoring for negative items *i.e.*, ‘Strongly agree=1 to ‘Strongly disagree=4’. Out of total 50 items, 46 items are positive and 4 items (2, 4, 5, and 7) are negative. The reliability co-efficient were .834 for split-half method and .79 for test-retest method which are significant at .01 level.

*Self-Efficacy Scale (SE)* developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) was employed to measure self-efficacy of the adolescents. The scale was translated into Punjabi language and adapted into local context. It contains 10 items having four options *i.e.*, not at all true, hardly true, moderately true and exactly true. Internal consistency reliability for the scale ranges from .76 to .90.

#### *Procedure*

The data was collected from the school students within their school premises. They were oriented regarding the purpose of the study. They were also assured that the information provided by them would be kept strictly confidential and will be used only for research purposes.

#### *Data analysis*

In order to study social maturity and self-efficacy as the predictors of

career decision-making among the adolescents, the data were subjected to step-wise multiple regression analysis.

## Results

The findings of step-wise multiple regression with career decision making and its dimensions as the dependent variable and social maturity and self-efficacy as the predictor variables are presented hereunder:

### *Information Gathering Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 1 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to information gathering dimension of career decision-making.

Table 1. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Information Gathering (IG) Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Self-Efficacy	0.191	0.036	3.6%	13.67**
2.	Self-Efficacy Social Maturity	0.220	0.048	4.8%	8.98**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 1 depicts that self-efficacy emerged to be the most significant predictor of information gathering dimension of career decision-making accounting for 3.6% variance. The second variable to enter the regression equation was social maturity accounting for 0.9% variance. Taken together, self-efficacy and social maturity explained 4.8% of the variance in information gathering dimension of career decision-making among adolescents.

### *Information Processing (IP) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 2 shows the contribution of self-efficacy to information processing dimension of career decision-making.

Table 2. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Information Processing Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Self-Efficacy	0.165	0.027	2.7%	9.87**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 2 depicts that self-efficacy emerged to be the most significant predictor of information processing dimension of career decision-making of adolescents accounting for 2.7% variance.

*Locus of Control (LC) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 3 shows the contribution of social maturity to locus of control dimension of career decision-making.

Table 3. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Locus of Control (LC) Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Social Maturity	0.206	0.042	4.2 %	15.71**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 3 depicts that social maturity emerged to be the most significant predictor of ‘locus of control’ dimension career decision-making among adolescents accounting for 4.2% variance.

*Effort Invested in the Process (EP) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 4 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to effort invested in the process dimension of career decision-making.

Table 4. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Effort Invested in the Process (EP) Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Social Maturity	0.187	0.035	3.5 %	12.87**
2.	Social Maturity Self-Efficacy	0.251	0.063	6.3 %	11.91**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 4 depicts that social maturity emerged to be the most significant predictor of effort invested in the process dimension of career decision-making accounting for 3.5% variance. The second variable to enter the regression equation was self-efficacy accounting for 2.8% variance. Taken together, social maturity and self-efficacy explained 6.3% of variance in effort invested in the process dimension of career decision-making among adolescents.

*Procrastination (PR) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 5 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to procrastination dimension of career decision-making.

Table 5. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Procrastination Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Social Maturity	0.336	0.113	11.3 %	45.09**
2.	Social Maturity Self-Efficacy	0.363	0.132	13.2 %	26.76**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 5 depicts that social maturity emerged to be the most significant predictor of procrastination dimension of career decision-making accounting for 11.3% variance in procrastination dimension of career decision-making among adolescents. The second variable to enter the regression equation was self-efficacy accounting for 1.9% variance. Taken together, social maturity and self-efficacy explained 13.2% of variance in procrastination dimension of career decision-making among adolescents.

*Speed of Making the Final Decision (SP) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 6 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to speed of making final decision dimension of career decision-making.

Table 6. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Speed of Making Final Decision Dimension of Career Decision-Making in Relation to Social Maturity

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Social Maturity	0.228	0.052	5.2 %	19.37**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 6 depicts that social maturity emerged to be the most significant predictor of speed of making final decision dimension of career decision-making among adolescents accounting for 5.2% variance in it.

*Consulting with Others (CO) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 7 shows the contribution of social maturity to consulting with others dimension of career decision-making.

Table 7. Results of Step-Wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Consulting with Others (CO) Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Social Maturity	0.176	0.031	3.1 %	11.30**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 7 depicts that social maturity emerged to be the most significant predictor of consulting with others dimension of career decision-making among adolescents accounting for 3.1% variance in it.

*Dependence on Others (DO) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 8 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to dependence on others dimension of career decision-making.

Table 8. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Dependence on Others (DO) Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Social Maturity	0.218	0.047	4.7 %	17.61**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 8 depicts that social maturity emerged to be the most significant predictor of dependence on others dimension of career decision-making among adolescents accounting for 4.7% variance in it.

*Desire to Please Others (DP) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 9 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to desire to please others dimension of career decision-making.

Table 9. Results of Step-Wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Desire to Please Others (DP) Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Self-Efficacy	0.146	0.021	2.1%	7.68**
2.	Self-Efficacy Social Maturity	0.209	0.044	4.4%	8.06**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 9 depicts that self-efficacy emerged to be the most significant predictor of desire to please others dimension of career decision-making accounting for 2.1% variance. The second variable to enter the regression equation was social maturity accounting for 2.3% variance. Taken together self-efficacy and social maturity explained 4.4% of variance in desire to please others dimension of career decision-making among adolescents.

*Aspiration for an Ideal Occupation (AO) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 10 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to aspiration for an ideal occupation dimension of career decision-making.



Table 10. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Aspiration for an Ideal Occupation Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-Value
1.	Self-Efficacy	0.142	0.020	2.0 %	7.25**
2.	Self-Efficacy Social Maturity	0.205	0.042	4.2 %	7.76**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

It may be observed from the table 10 that self-efficacy emerged to be the most significant predictor of aspiration for an ideal occupation dimension of career decision-making accounting for 2.0% variance. The second variable to enter regression equation was social maturity accounting for 2.2% variance. Taken together self-efficacy and social maturity explained 4.2% of variance in aspiration for an ideal occupation dimension of career decision-making among adolescents.

*Willingness to Compromise (WC) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 11 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to willingness to compromise dimension of career decision-making.

Table 11. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Willingness to Compromise Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Self-Efficacy	0.204	0.042	4.2 %	15.35**
2.	Self-Efficacy Social Maturity	0.269	0.072	7.2 %	13.76**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 11 depicts that self-efficacy emerged to be the most significant predictor of willingness to compromise dimension of career decision-making accounting for 4.2% variance. The second variable to enter the regression equation was social maturity accounting for 3.0% variance. Taken together self-efficacy and social maturity explained 7.2% of variance in willingness to compromise dimension of career decision-making among adolescents.

*Intuitive (IN) Dimension of Career Decision-Making*

The table 12 shows the contribution of social maturity and self-efficacy to ‘information gathering’ dimension of career decision-making.

Table 12. Results of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis of Intuitive (IN) Dimension of Career Decision-Making

Model	Predictor	R	R <sup>2</sup>	% Variance	F-value
1.	Self-Efficacy	0.188	0.035	3.5 %	12.98**
2.	Self-Efficacy Social Maturity	0.225	0.051	5.1 %	9.44**

Note: \*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

The table 12 depicts that self-efficacy emerged to be the most significant predictor of intuitive dimension of career decision-making accounting for 3.5% variance in 'intuitive' dimension of career decision-making among adolescents. The second variable to enter the regression equation was social maturity accounting for 1.6% variance. Taken together self-efficacy and social maturity explained 5.1% of variance in intuitive dimension of career decision-making among adolescents.

### Conclusions

The major finding of the study is that social maturity and self-efficacy influence career decision-making and its different dimensions among adolescents. These results may be seen in the light of some related researches. In a number of studies by Turner and Lapan (2002), Turner et al. (2003), and Alliman-Brissett, Turner, and Skovholt (2004), Sawyer (2008) and Jemini - Gashi et al. (2021), career decision making is found to be positively and significantly related with social support. Hou et al. (2019) effects of career decision-making self-efficacy, which functions as a significant mediator of the effects of social support on career adaptability. Qudsyi et al. (2020) observed that parental involvement, peer support, and authoritarian parenting predict career decision-making self-efficacy among high school students. In a recent study, Angeline and Rathnasabapathy (2021) reported a positive correlation between social support and career decision-making self-efficacy. However, Vijay, and Thilagavathy (2014) found no significant correlation between career decision making and social maturity. Also, Ogutu et al. (2017) found a significant relationship between self-efficacy and career decision making.

These findings suggest that self-efficacy and social maturity are critical constructs in career decision making among secondary school students in India. Therefore, measure could be taken to improve on self-efficacy and social

maturity strategies that may bear a positive impact on career decision making among secondary schools students.

### *Implications*

On the basis of the results of the present study, it is suggested that the teachers, school authorities, policy-makers and community members must provide them with such platform where they could enrich themselves with social maturity and self-efficacy. It is important so that the adolescents make career decisions in an efficient manner, according to their needs and capabilities.

Counselling sessions should be provided to adolescents by trained professionals in order to build a sense of self-confidence to deal with different situations.

There must be provisions for pre-service and in-service training programs for teachers which give them orientation regarding dealing with issues of different careers and also other problems faced by adolescents.

Parents must be made aware of issues and problems of adolescents contributing to career decisions through camps and orientation programs.

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