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A STUDY OF CAREER PREFERENCES OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT:

Career choice is the most important event in an individual's life. Selection of career and to set in it is an important task and a source of personal gratification. The adolescent is the period when a major turning takes place in the life of a student because the vocational decisions to be taken by any individual in the world of work are decided at this time. On this backdrop, the investigator felt the need to study the career preferences of the senior secondary students. The study was conducted through a descriptive survey

method, on senior secondary students from Delhi NCR schools, selected through random sampling. The career preferences of the sample were analyzed with special reference to Defence services as a career.

KEYWORDS: Career choice, vocational decisions, career preferences.

INTRODUCTION:

A major event in an individual's life is to choose a Career. If the right career is chosen, the individual can be happy and successful in his life. It is accepted widely that individuals who make their personal interests and abilities, the base for their career choice, show significantly higher levels of job satisfaction and proved to be more productive workers. Career planning requires proper coordination between the requirements for a job, aptitude, interest and the personality of the individual. The aspirations of the parents also play an important role in

this aspect. The career choice is not only a vital aspect of the physical and emotional well-being of the individuals themselves and their families but also central to one's lifestyle. According to Weiler (1997), a Successful career seldom happens by chance with very few exceptions, people who really get what they want in a career do so because they define their objective plans and schedules for achieving their objectives, and assume personal responsibility for implementing and following these plans. Every career requires complex chemistry of potential abilities and aptitudes from those who enter it; a certain level of achievement may also be necessary. Modern careers education recognizes the need to

match individuals, each with his or her own unique pattern of characteristics. For this, the young generation needs to understand themselves, their own personalities and characteristics should be assessed and they have to make the best decisions they can. A young person's choice of a career is one of the most important decisions of his life. A 'Career' includes concise, accurate and updated information about a wide range of occupations. The occupation of an individual affects every aspect of his Life – his attitude towards society, his friendship, the kind of place he lives in and the things he does in his leisure time. Also, his prestige in the eyes of others and his role in society are largely determined by the occupation.

In the description of the nature and meaning of the term 'career', the use of various terms having similar shades of meaning come across very commonly such as 'job', 'occupation', 'profession', 'vocation' etc.

All these terms are somewhat different in application but have a common goal. For vocational education point of view, a job is a specific assigned task which provides the media by which the student practices and develops skills for an occupation.

An occupation is the series of duties and responsibilities undertaken and related activities performed by an individual to accomplish a goal and/ or for financial reward.

The profession is an occupation usually involving relatively long and specialized preparation on the level of higher education and governed by its own code of ethics. In simple words, in a profession, an individual acquires a learned skill and he confirms to ethical standards of that occupation in which he practices the skill.

'Vocation' refers to a calling as to a particular occupation, business or profession.

Career is broader than occupation in terms of meaning. Herr and Cramer define career as 'a group of similar jobs found in different industries or organisations.'

Further, the career is the course of events that constitute a life; the sequence of occupations and other life roles. These occupations and life roles combine and reflect on the total pattern of self-development. Career also includes the series of remunerative and non- remunerative positions occupied by a person from adolescence through retirement, of which occupation is only one.

More simply, a career occupies work-related roles, e.g. those of students, employee, families and civic roles.

In 1980, during the round table conference in the United States this definition of career was defined as a pattern of decisions, transition, adjustment, related to one's roles in work education, family, community and leisure. Individual social status, income, lifestyle, choice of friends, mental and physical health is influenced by the type of work he or she does.

When more and more complexities put obstacles collectively in some other phenomenon, then the exhibition of doubt is not in vain. It is also true for entry into the career. The complex human personality, modern industrial complexity, the complexity of educational subjects and complexity of various career choices have made the vocational system so complicated that it has become almost compulsory to understand the nature of vocations, selection of vocations and entry into the vocations.

According to Alutu (2001) Career development and choice should be initiated as early as the nursery school years through the primary, secondary and tertiary school levels.

During pre-school and elementary schools, the aims of providing career counselling should be to teach children about career choices, providing career counselling to stable self- perceptions, to raise levels of career awareness and to develop self-awareness, career awareness and exploration and decision making.

According to Cole (1982), at the middle and junior high school, the career guidance should be to explore work opportunities and to evaluate student's own strengths and weakness.

At Senior High School, the maturity level of the students also increases. All the career information, guidance and counseling activities should be in accordance with that maturity level. At this level, the aims of career information should be to stimulate career development, providing treatment and aiding placement. The aims should also include to crystallize the ideas regarding careers, to provide apprenticeships to High School Youths, to develop work values, to learn adaptive skills, to acquire the kinds of work, to help school leavers before completing school education.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Life without a choice is like a fruit without a seed. A variety of opportunities are provided to us in every walk of life. Making the right choice in every field is very essential for success in life. The career choices are not an exception to this. With the fast-changing pace of society and increase in its complexity, adolescents have to face many problems for their adjustment in life. They are passing through the psychophysiological stress associated with the adolescent period. Therefore, it is important

to understand their career choice and assist them accordingly. The problem of choosing a career is a real one as the number of career choices have increased. When a child reaches the age of adolescent he/she is studying in senior secondary classes, he/ she starts thinking about his relationship in the society and indirect programs of the country. Thus, there is a need to know the career preference of senior secondary students so that they may be better helped and guided in the right selection of their career choice. Selection of career and to set in it is an important task and a source of personal gratification. The number of vocations presents nowadays never existed in earlier days.

Various studies have been done in previous years to recognize different career choices at different levels.

Edwards, K. and Quinter, M. (2011) conducted a study on the factors influencing students career choices among secondary school students in Kisumu Municipality. The study revealed that career choice is a complex decision for students since it determines the kind of profession that they intend to pursue in life. However, no variance was reported for persons influencing career alternative by gender. Dastidar, Ananya G.; Sikdar, Soumyen (2015) explored the occupation choices of High School and College Students with Special Reference to Teaching and Research. The analysis, based on a sample survey carried out among high school and college students from Delhi and Kolkata suggested that for the majority of students surveyed, teaching is not a "first-best" or "most preferred" career option. Further, in their read, rather than raising salaries, it is more important to bring about changes in the nature of the teachers' job, to make this a more attractive career option.

Bassey, Offiong James; Edet, Jessie Ime (2018) conducted a research study on Counselling Services and Career Choice among Senior Secondary School Students in Uyo Education Zone in Akwalbom State. It was found out that Occupational Information, Appraisal Service, Vocation Guidance, Educational Guidance, and Career Day/Week have a significant relationship with Career Choice of Senior Secondary School Students.

Gill, Tim; Vidal Rodeiro, Carmen; Zanini, Nadir (2018) explored the Higher Education Choices of Secondary School Graduates with a Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) Background. The analysis incontestible that AN institution's status, degree subject area and distance from home play an important role in students' choices.

Nalbantoglu Yilmaz, Funda; Cetin Gunduz, Hicran (2018) conducted a research study on Career Indecision and Career Anxiety in High School Students.

It was over that career indecision had a crucial impact on career anxiety in terms of family impact and selection of profession.

Among the various studies available on career choices, there was hardly any study on choosing a career in defence services. A career in defence forces is one of the most prestigious career options. On this backdrop, the investigator felt the need to study the career preferences of the senior secondary students studying in Delhi NCR schools with reference to Defence services as a career.

Statement of the Problem

A study of Career Preferences of Senior Secondary Students.

Meaning of the various terms

Career- According to Oxford Living Dictionaries "A career is an occupation undertaken for a significant period of a person's life and with opportunities for progress."

Career Preference- According to Webster, career preference is a free opportunity to select the desired career. It is also decision-making in a confusing situation which occurs during the senior year (3rd and 4th) of high school level.

Senior Secondary Stage-According to CBSE, Senior Secondary Education in India is of only 2 years. There is uniformity on this level of education in terms of length and categories i.e.all the States/ UTs follow this 10+2 pattern.

Senior Secondary colleges in Asian country embrace categories eleventh to twelfth, consisting students aged between 16-18 years.

At this level of education, students have the freedom to choose their preferred stream and subjects.

They can pursue Humanities, Commerce, Science (medical & non-medical).

The schools which give education up until twelfth category square measure normally called Senior Secondary Schools or Higher Secondary Schools.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the career preference of the senior secondary students, towards Defence services as a career choice.
2. To compare the career preference of the male and female senior secondary students, towards Defence services as a career choice.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is no significant difference between the career preference of the senior secondary students with reference to Defence as a career or any other career choice.
2. There is no significant difference between the career preference of the senior secondary students towards Defence services as a career choice on the basis of gender.

Delimitations of the Study

1. The present study is delimited to the senior secondary schools of Delhi NCR only.
2. The study is delimited to senior secondary students only.

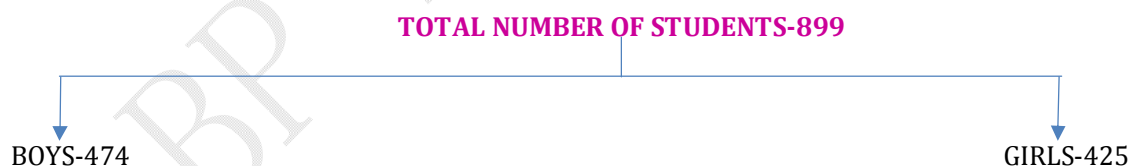
The Methodology of the Study

The type of research used for this purpose is quantitative. This is because quantitative research seeks to quantify the data and it applies some form of statistical analysis. The present study is survey type and descriptive in nature. So, the descriptive survey method was used to conduct the present study.

Sample of the Study

Probably no concept is as fundamental to the conduct of research and interpretation of its results as is sampling. It is not only difficult but impossible to study the whole student population.

In the present study, a sample of 899 senior secondary students of Delhi-NCR only, was taken. Schools were selected randomly. Students were selected from different schools through random sampling. The description of the sample is as follows.



RESULT/ DISCUSSION

On the basis of the data collected by the investigator, it was analysed that

- (i) 34.5 % senior secondary students preferred Defence services as a career choice and rest 65.5 % students preferred any other career as their career choice, which shows that a number of students are opting for Defence as a career and there is a difference in the number of students opting for Defence as a career and the number of students who are opting a career other than Defence services (Fig 1)

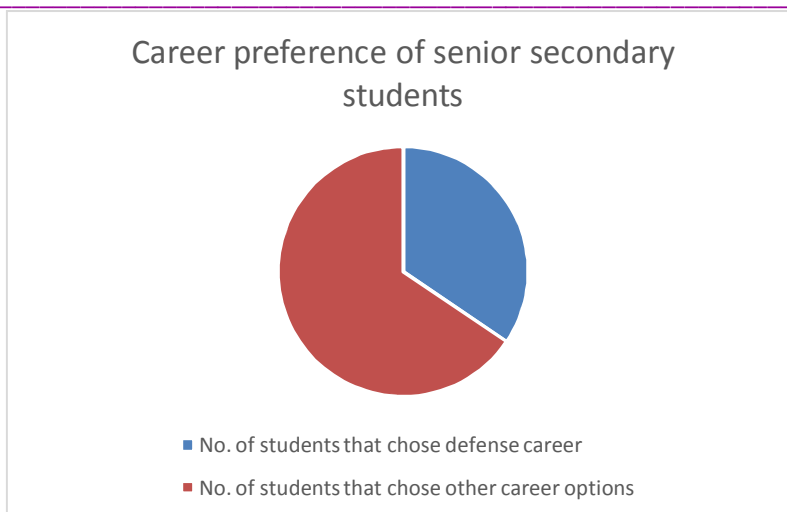


Fig 1 Pie Chart representing comparison of career preference of Senior Secondary Students

Therefore, the hypothesis 1 is rejected; which states that there is no significant difference between the number of students preferring Defence as a career or any other career of their choice.

- (ii) 66.45 % male and 33.55 % female senior secondary students opted for Defence services as a career choice. This shows that less number of female students are opting for Defence services as a career than male students.(Fig 2)

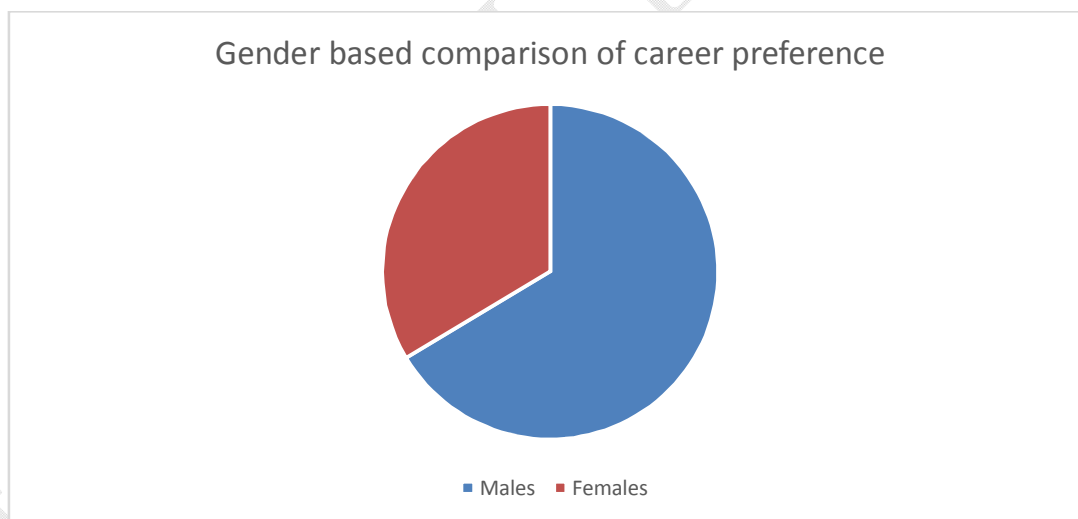


Fig.2 Pie Chart representing comparison of career preferences Defence on the basis of Gender

Therefore the hypothesis 2 is rejected which states that there is no significant difference between male and female senior secondary students' preference towards Defence services as a career choice.

Conclusion

From the present study, the following conclusions were drawn-

- (i) A number of students are preferring Defence as a career over any other career choice which indicates that Defence service is considered an interesting career choice by the senior secondary students.
- (ii) Less number of female senior secondary students have chosen Defence services as a career choice, which indicates that Defence service is a less preferable career choice by the female senior secondary students as compared to their male counterpart.

Educational Implications of the Study

1. The young generation should be made more aware of the perks and benefits of Defence services to create more interest in the females also for this career, at the primary and secondary level itself.
2. The parents and teachers must identify, appreciate and nurture the career choice of the child/student in a proper way.
3. Teachers should try to maintain good teacher-taught relations with the students so that they can understand their vocational interest properly and guide them accordingly.
4. Results of the present study may be discussed in seminars, workshops, refresher courses etc organized for teachers, parents and administrators for further reforms.
5. Results of the study may be discussed with HQ Ministry of Defence so that some policies can be suggested to include Defence studies as a subject from the secondary level to create more interest and awareness regarding this career.
6. Findings of the present study will help the parents, teachers, administrators and guidance workers to prepare them to meet the needs of the children/ students.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Research is an unending process always inspiring the people to explore further and deeper. Every piece of research which is well executed tends to provide clues to further exploration. The present study opens up certain avenues for further research which are briefly listed below:

1. A similar study with a large sample can be conducted to make findings more reliable.
2. A similar study can be replicated in different states other than Delhi- NCR to study certain regional variations.
3. A comparative study of career preference of Defence school students and Private school students can be made.
4. The investigation may be designed to explore the factors affecting the choice of Defence services as a career.

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