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Career Indecisiveness and its Impact on Social Adjustment and Anxiety among Adolescents

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Abstract: A lack of education, experience, and exposure to diverse job alternatives may lead to professional indecisiveness, which is described as a condition of doubt or bewilderment in making career selections. This research aims to better understand how teenage career uncertainty affects their levels of anxiety and their capacity to form healthy social relationships. Anxiety, despair, tension, and poor self-esteem are only some of the negative effects linked to teenage career indecision.

Keywords: Career decision, social adjustment, anxiety, academic anxiety, etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescent career indecisiveness has been related to anxiety and poor social adjustment, among other negative results. A lack of education, experience, and exposure to diverse job alternatives may lead to professional indecisiveness, which is described as a condition of doubt or bewilderment in making career selections. This research aims to better understand how teenage career uncertainty affects their levels of anxiety and their capacity to form healthy social relationships.

A. Factors That Contribute To Career Indecisiveness Among Adolescents

Adolescents' inability to choose a career path may have several root causes, including those at the individual, family, and society levels. Adolescents' indecision over a future occupation may be attributed to a number of different causes:

- 1) *Lack of Knowledge and Exposure:* Adolescents may lack knowledge and exposure to different career options and may not have a clear understanding of what they want to do in the future.
- 2) *Family Influence:* Pressure from parents to pursue a specific career or to follow in their footsteps can cause confusion and indecisiveness.
- 3) *Personal Factors:* Adolescents may be unsure of their interests and strengths, which can make it difficult to make a career choice.
- 4) *Peer Pressure:* Adolescents may feel pressure to choose a career based on what their peers are choosing, rather than what they are truly interested in.
- 5) *Socio-economic Factors:* Socio-economic factors such as financial constraints, lack of access to resources, and limited job opportunities in certain areas can also contribute to career indecisiveness among adolescents.
- 6) *Cultural Factors:* Cultural factors such as gender roles and societal expectations can also contribute to career indecisiveness..

B. The Relationship Between Career Indecisiveness And Anxiety Among Adolescents

Career indecisiveness and anxiety are strongly linked among adolescents. Adolescents who experience career indecisiveness are likely to experience anxiety related to their future career prospects. The following are ways in which career indecisiveness can lead to anxiety among adolescents:

- 1) *Uncertainty About the Future:* This uncertainty can lead to anxiety about their ability to support themselves and their future prospects.
- 2) *Fear of Making the Wrong Decision:* They may worry about the consequences of making a poor choice, such as being stuck in a career they do not enjoy or being unable to achieve their goals.
- 3) *Pressure From Parents and Society:* This pressure can create anxiety about making the wrong decision or disappointing others.
- 4) *Negative Self-Evaluation:* They may feel inadequate or unable to make a decision, which can lead to feelings of anxiety and self-doubt.
- 5) *Limited Opportunities:* They may feel trapped or unable to pursue their interests and passions, which can lead to anxiety and feelings of hopelessness.

It is important to note that the relationship between career indecisiveness and anxiety is bidirectional. Anxiety can also contribute to career indecisiveness by causing adolescents to avoid making decisions or taking risks. In turn, career indecisiveness can lead to anxiety, creating a vicious cycle. It is essential for parents, educators, and mental health practitioners to recognize and address the relationship between career indecisiveness and anxiety among adolescents.

C. Strategies for Helping Adolescents Overcome Career Indecisiveness

Helping adolescents overcome career indecisiveness requires a holistic approach that takes into account their unique needs, challenges, and goals. The following are strategies that can be helpful in supporting adolescents to overcome career indecisiveness:

- 1) *Encourage Exploration:* Encourage adolescents to explore a range of career options through internships, job shadowing, and other experiential learning opportunities. Exposure to different careers can help adolescents to develop a better understanding of their interests, skills, and values.
- 2) *Provide Guidance and Support:* Adolescents may benefit from guidance and support from parents, educators, and mental health practitioners. This can include helping them to identify their strengths and interests, providing information about different career paths, and offering emotional support and encouragement.
- 3) *Address Anxiety:* Career indecisiveness can often be accompanied by anxiety, and it is essential to address both issues simultaneously. This may involve teaching adolescents coping strategies for managing anxiety, such as mindfulness, deep breathing, or relaxation exercises.
- 4) *Focus on Skills:* Instead of focusing solely on career goals, encourage adolescents to develop and strengthen transferable skills such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. This can help them to build confidence and feel more prepared for a variety of career paths.
- 5) *Foster Self-awareness:* Help adolescents to develop self-awareness by encouraging them to reflect on their values, strengths, and interests. This can help them to make more informed career decisions that align with their personal goals and values.
- 6) *Promote Positive Decision-making:* Encourage adolescents to make decisions based on their own needs and interests rather than external pressures or expectations. This can involve helping them to weigh the pros and cons of different options and to consider the potential outcomes of their decisions.

By using these strategies, parents, educators, and mental health practitioners can support adolescents in overcoming career indecisiveness and making informed decisions about their future careers.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ain, Q.-u., & Tariq, S. (2020) A total of 250 high school seniors participated in this research that looked at how uncertainty about one's future affects their mental health. A standardized test for career-related uncertainty was used in the research. The results showed a positive and statistically significant relationship between career uncertainty and stress. Results from the research point to the potential benefits of vocational counselling treatments in easing teenage anxiety.

Cai, X., & Zhou, Z. E. (2018) The purpose of this research, which surveyed 300 high school seniors, was to find out how indecision about one's future affects people's ability to fit in. Standardized measure of professional indecisiveness and indecision is the product of indecision. Conclusions Greater career indecision was associated with worse levels of social adjustment. Results show that vocational counselling programs may improve teenagers' social adjustment.

Doshi, D., & Doshi, H. (2018) The purpose of this research was to determine whether and how parental influence affected career uncertainty among 200 high school seniors. Both parental pressure and career uncertainty were measured using a standardized instrument. The findings showed a strong correlation between parental pressure and professional uncertainty. The findings of this research highlight the need of striking a healthy balance between parental engagement and teen autonomy when it comes to profession choice.

Aydin, A. (2019) The purpose of this research was to examine the correlation between age and a lack of career direction in a sample of 200 teenagers (ages 14-19). Using a uniform scale, the researchers discovered that older teenagers had more career indecision than their younger counterparts.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Aim of the study

To assess career indecisiveness among adolescents and impact on anxiety and social adjustment

B. Objectives of the Study

- 1) To explore impact of career indecisiveness
- 2) To assess impact of career indecisiveness on anxiety
- 3) To assess effect of career indecisiveness on social adjustment
- 4) To assess relationship between anxiety and social adjustment among adolescents

C. Hypotheses

- H1: There will be a significant difference in career indecisiveness between adolescents
H2: There will be a significant difference between males and females on career indecisiveness and anxiety
H3: There will be a significant relation between career indecisiveness, anxiety & social adjustment among adolescents
H4: There will be a significant effect of career indecisiveness among adolescents on anxiety and social adjustment

D. Participants of the Study

Both men and women were encouraged to volunteer for the study's 150-person sample (75 male and 75 female), which was selected using a convenience sampling strategy.

People in the sample are mostly between the ages of 16-18.

E. Data collection instruments

The data in this particular study has been obtained with the help of the scales named "Career Decision Scale", "Adjustment inventory for school students" and "Academic Anxiety Scale for Children" as well as a demographic information form.

F. Data collection procedure

The data was gathered using the Career Decision Scale, which consists of 19 questions, and the Adjustment inventory for school students scale, which consists of 60 items, Academic Anxiety Scale for Children, which consists of 20 items. Questionnaires were being given out in the message box and other locations to recruit young folks from a wide range of backgrounds.

G. Scoring

1) Career Decision scale

Please read carefully and indicate how closely each item describes you in your thinking about a career choice by circling the appropriate number against the statement.

I am confident about my future career. If you are confident about your future career, you would circle (3) to indicate that this item describes you correctly; you would circle (2) if the item describes you in some ways; and circle (1) if the item does not describe your feelings at all i.e. you are not confident at all about your future career.

2) Adjustment Inventory for School Student's Scale

The Adjustment Inventory for School Students (AISS) is a self-report measure used to assess the overall adjustment of school students.

The AISS was developed by A.K.P Sinha and published in 2014. The AISS consists of 60 items that assess various aspects of a student's adjustment, including emotional adjustment, social adjustment, academic adjustment, and family adjustment.

The items are with two options yes or no. If the response is the same as the table in the manual for the respective question, score it 1 otherwise 0. After scoring all the items for all the individuals the scores have been summed.

3) Academic Anxiety Scale for Children

The Academic Anxiety Scale for Children (AASC) is a self-report questionnaire used to measure academic anxiety in children. The AASC was developed by Ak singh and published in 1999. The AASC consists of 20 items that assess anxiety related to academic situations, such as test-taking and public speaking.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Significant difference between males and females on career indecisiveness and anxiety

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Career Decision	Female	75	42.58	6.399
	male	75	41.70	6.645
Anxiety	Female	75	15	4.868
	male	75	14.37	4.248

t-test for career decision

Grade Level	n	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Hypothesized Mean diff	df	T Stat
Male	75	41.70	6.399	0.0910	0	74	-0.87295
Female	75	42.58	6.645				

t-test for anxiety

Grade Level	n	Mean	SD	Pearson Correlation	Hypothesized Mean diff	df	T Stat
Male	75	14.37	4.248	0.24762	0	74	-0.96685
Female	75	15	4.868				

H0: There is no significant difference between males and females on career indecisiveness and anxiety

H2: There is a significant difference between males and females on career indecisiveness and anxiety

The tables present the results of t-tests comparing males and females on career indecisiveness and anxiety. The null hypothesis in both tests is that there is no significant difference between males and females in these variables, and the alternative hypothesis is that there is a significant difference. The t-test for career decision shows a t-statistic of -0.87 with a p-value greater than 0.05, indicating that there is no significant difference between males and females in career indecisiveness. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant difference in career indecisiveness between males and females.

Table 3: Correlation analysis between career decision, anxiety, adjustment

Correlations				
		Career Decision	Academic Anxiety Scale for Children	Adjustment Inventory for School Students
Career Decision	Pearson Correlation	1	.302**	.415**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	150	150	150
Academic Anxiety Scale for Children	Pearson Correlation	.302**	1	.470**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	150	150	150
Adjustment Inventory for School Students	Pearson Correlation	.415**	.470**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	150	150	150

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficients indicate that there are significant positive correlations between career decision and academic anxiety scale ($r = 0.302$, $p < 0.01$), career decision and adjustment inventory ($r = 0.415$, $p < 0.01$), and academic anxiety scale and adjustment inventory ($r = 0.470$, $p < 0.01$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relation between career indecisiveness, anxiety, and social adjustment among adolescents. The positive correlations suggest that higher levels of career indecisiveness and anxiety are associated with poorer social adjustment among adolescents.

Table 4: Regression analysis to analyze the impact of career decision on anxiety and adjustment of children

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.433a	0.187	0.176	5.871

a. Predictors: (Constant), Adjustment Inventory for School Students, Academic Anxiety Scale for Children

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1166.197	2	583.099	16.918	.000 ^b
	Residual	5066.576	147	34.467		
	Total	6232.773	149			

a. Dependent Variable: Career Decision

b. Predictors: (Constant), Adjustment Inventory for School Students, Academic Anxiety Scale for Children

The R square value of 0.187 indicates that the predictors explain 18.7% of the variance in career decisions. The ANOVA table shows that the regression model is significant ($F(2, 147) = 16.918$, $p < 0.001$), which means that the predictors (adjustment inventory and academic anxiety scale) significantly predict career decisions. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant effect of career indecisiveness among adolescents on anxiety and social adjustment. The regression model suggests that higher levels of adjustment and lower levels of academic anxiety are associated with higher levels of career decisions among adolescents.

V. DISCUSSION

The aim was to analyze the significant difference between males and females on career indecisiveness and anxiety. Finding signifies that a no significant difference has been found. So we rejected the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference in the scores of males and females in career indecisiveness and anxiety and accepted the null hypothesis. The means and standard deviations indicate that males reported slightly higher levels of career decisions than females, and females reported slightly higher levels of anxiety than males. However, the t-tests for career decisions and anxiety were not significant, indicating that the gender differences were not statistically significant. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that these gender differences, even if small, could have important implications for career development and mental health outcomes.

Higher levels of career indecisiveness and anxiety are associated with poorer social adjustment among adolescents. These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that career indecision and anxiety can interfere with social relationships, self-esteem, and psychological well-being during adolescence (Gati, Krausz, & Osipow, 1996; Hackett & Byars, 1996).

VI. CONCLUSION

The results suggest that there are significant differences between males and females in terms of career indecisiveness and anxiety, with males exhibiting slightly higher levels of career indecisiveness and females experiencing more anxiety. Additionally, The finding suggests that adolescents who experience higher levels of career indecisiveness are more likely to experience anxiety and face difficulties in social adjustment.

Overall, the results highlight the importance of addressing career indecisiveness among adolescents to promote their mental health and social well-being. The findings suggest that targeted interventions aimed at reducing career indecisiveness and promoting career exploration and decision-making skills could have a positive impact on reducing anxiety and promoting social adjustment among adolescents.

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