

FACTORS AFFECTING THE CAREER CHOICES OF HIGH SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to examine the factors affecting career choices among high secondary school students. Objectives of the study were to explore the influence of factors determining on the career choice decisions of High secondary School Students. The research is descriptive in nature. The population of the study was all the government high secondary schools in district upper and lower Chitral. Samples of 100 research participants were selected for data collection from the higher secondary schools through stratified sampling technique. To analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures (Mean, standard deviation and T-test) were used. The study found significant differences between male and female student's career choices based on gender and the influence of various career choice factors. The study revealed that in career choices more than half of the respondents mentioned that their parents & family and socio-culture does not influence on their career choices of high secondary schools students. The study recommends that for the effective career planning of students at high secondary level, guidance must be given. Without guidance students don't know about their capacity, skills, interest, aptitude etc. Therefore they confused to select their career just because lack of proper guidance and counseling. The school administration must hire qualified career counselor to help students in their career development.

Keywords: Factors, Career Choices, High Secondary School

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Secondary Education is training for life. According to the education policy 2009 of Pakistan it helps two chief roles by providing trained people into the occupation place for advanced qualified learning. Pupils select carrier at this stage, which defines their upcoming careers. Selection of carrier according to the interests, aptitudes and available career opportunities, can confirm exact career choices for pupils and may draw a route between suitable and un-suitable occupations for them in future; therefore, the selection of a proper career choice at this stage is a vital issue for the pupils of secondary schools (Watson, McMahon, Foxcroft & Els, 2010).

Young pupils are played with the task of building proper career choice decisions at the stage of secondary schools. Career choices, structures of education and topics' assemblage which affect the future careers of them are a problem for the youngsters (Issa & Nwalo, 2008). How effectively, young people face the tasks and carry the responsibilities of the next day depend upon the preparation at the secondary school stage. (Salami, 2013). With the importance of students' career choices at this stage in mind, Pakistan's National Education Policy (2009) suggested the providing of career guidance services for secondary school students in order to state the career choice problems of young students and to boost them to choose

Subjects based on their skills rather than the outmoded ones.

The career choices of secondary school pupils are influenced by a variety of factors. Personality, aptitude, the environment in which kids living, educational success, and accessible employment prospects all influence secondary school students' decision to pursue a vocation (Perry, 2006). Due to a lack of information about vocations, inexperience, ideas from peers, advice from professors and parents, and the socioeconomic standing afforded by the professions, young pupils choose the wrong professions (Salami, 1999).

According to Swift (2009), secondary school students' career choices are affected by a variety of elements including personal, socio-cultural surroundings, and service predictions that might open or close successful future career routes.

The academic success of students is intimately linked to their educational and career goals. Reed, Bruch, and Hasse (2004) found that students with higher professional desires have higher career motivation. (Asfahani, 2006)

Young children's desires and service choices are affected by their home environment, family, parents, and guardians. Young people are more interested in jobs that are approved by their families (Mau & Bikos, 2000). Small and Mclean (2002) discovered that parents and families sustained some vocations while disapproving of others, forcing their children to obey their commands. Family, educational level of parents, and socioeconomic status all affect pupils' career choices and educational ambitions (Otto, 2000). Families and parents can help their children make professional options by providing evidence and direction (Kniveton, 2004). Secondary school students' profession choices are influenced significantly by the environment of the school where they are educated. They are social service administrations dedicated to instilling gender-appropriate behavior, social skills, and career planning (Garrahy, 2001).

Teachers and parents, play a major role in secondary school students' job choices (Barnett, 2007 & Khan, 2011). Teachers assist students in choosing their school subjects who is based on their abilities, aptitudes, and interests, which decide students' eventual professional routes (Falaye & Adams, 2008). According to Maree (2009), many students done their secondary education without

Receiving sufficient career counseling at school, causing in them being without entry into their favorite careers and higher education choices. Society, the environment, the context in which kids live, peers, and friends are all key effects on secondary school students' occupation choices (Kniveton, 2004).

Peers and friends have a considerable effect on one another's professional choices and play a vital role in the career decisions of their associated learners. Because of gender, social values, culture, and traditions, male and female pupils have different employment choices (Ogunkola & Olatoye, 2005). According to Denga (2004), socio-cultural elements shape an individual's societal obligations, which set the road for his or her future professional options; thus, culture and religion views affect female students' occupation choices. Occupation outcomes, such as the budget, job market, salary, job options, and result prospects, show a significant effect in secondary school students' occupation choices, and they typically provide those jobs that will meet their result prospects (Ma & Yeh, 2005). According to Sutherland (2008), people choose career decisions based on work possibilities and labor market conditions. In order to handle the high number of pupils, the job market has newly become much more modest. On the bases of aforementioned factors and challenges researcher selected this particular area.

Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the influence of parents & family factor on the career choice decisions of high secondary School students.
- To find out the influence of socio-cultural factor on the career choice decisions of high secondary School students.

Hypotheses

- There is no significant difference among parents & family on the career choices of High Secondary School students.
- There is no significant difference among socio-cultural on the career choices of High Secondary School students.

Affecting the career choices of high Secondary School students.

Method and Procedure

The nature of the study is quantitative and descriptive. This means that it involves collecting numerical data that can be analyzed using statistical techniques. This helps to provide a more precise and accurate description of the phenomenon.

Population and Sample of the Study

All the high secondary schools boys and girls in upper and lower Chitral were the population of the study. There were total six secondary schools in district upper and lower Chitral (EMIS, 2023-2024). With the help of stratified sampling techniques researcher selected four secondary schools for datacollection. Total 100 participants in which form

each school 20 respondents, one head teacher, five teachers and fourteen (14) students were selected.

Research Instrument

The tool which is used for data collection from the respondents is called research instrument. In this study research tools were the closed ended Likert five point's scales: Strongly Disagree (SDA), Disagree (DA), Un-decided (UD), Agree (AG), and Strongly Agree (SA).

Data Collection Procedure

Proper permission has been taken from concerned authorities to collect data. The data were collected through questioners.

Data Analysis

After data collection data were analyzed with the help of Statistical package for social sciences SPSS version 23. The data were presented into frequency and percentages.

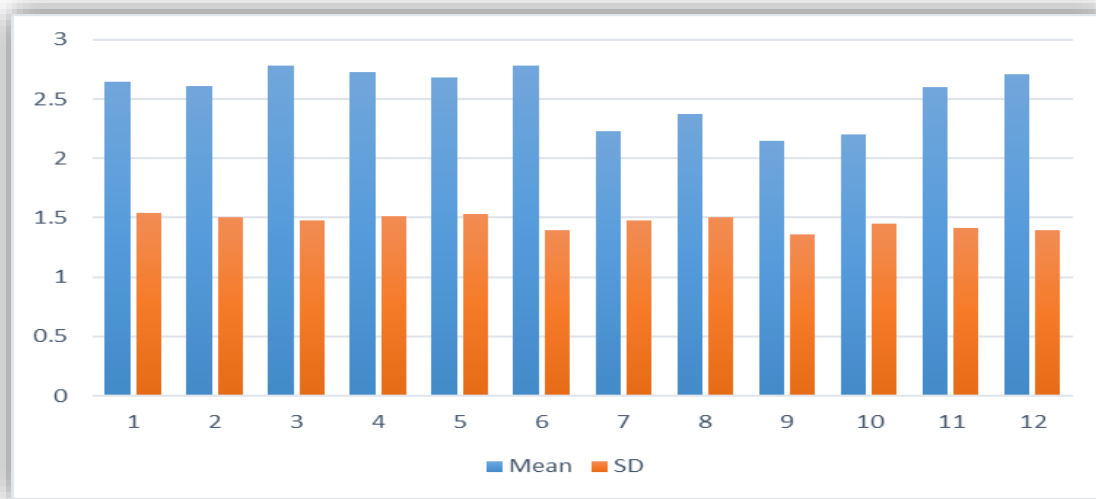
Table 1 Factors Affecting Career Choices.

Item	Parents & Family	SDA	DA	UD	AG	SA	Mean	S. D
		f	f	f	f	f		
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)		
1	influenced of myfather	38 (32.5)	29 (25.8)	4 (4.2)	22 (19.2)	21 (18.3)	2.54 (M)	1.432
2	influenced of mymother	37 (30.0)	36 (30.8)	7 (6.7)	15 (13.3)	22 (19.2)	2.51 (M)	1.407
3	socio-economic status influencedmy career choice	35 (30.0)	18 (15.8)	17 (15.0)	28 (24.2)	17 (15.0)	2.67 (M)	1.362
4	level of education influenced mycareer choice	39 (33.3)	17 (15.0)	15 (13.3)	26 (22.5)	19 (15.8)	2.62 (M)	1.512
5	Occupation/profession influencedmy career choice	44 (37.5)	14 (12.5)	6 (5.8)	38 (32.5)	13 (11.7)	2.587 (M)	1.417
6	Career awareness influenced mycareer choice	35 (30.0)	14 (12.5)	16 (14.2)	42 (35.8)	8 (7.5)	2.67 (M)	1.286

7	Family members influenced my career choice	56 (47.5)	24 (20.8)	7 (6.7)	13 (11.7)	15 (13.3)	2.12 (M)	1.364
8	guardians influenced my career choice	52 (44.2)	22 (17.5)	13 (10.0)	16 (14.2)	18 (14.2)	2.26 (M)	1.405
9	siblings influenced my career choice	57 (48.3)	21 (16.7)	19 (15.0)	15 (11.7)	11 (8.3)	2.24 (M)	1.247
10	My family cast influenced my career choice	57 (48.3)	23 (18.3)	12 (10.8)	13 (10.0)	16 (12.5)	2.30 (M)	1.336
11	Background influenced my careerchoice	37 (30.0)	34 (27.5)	4 (4.2)	36 (29.2)	12 (9.2)	2.50 (M)	1.322
12	my professional interests and goals	34 (16.4)	24 (20.7)	22 (17.5)	25 (21.7)	16 (12.5)	2.61 (M)	1.488
Total		43.91	23.41	12.33	24.58	15.75	30.49	17.557

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, UD = Un-decided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree
 Note. Mean, 1.00-1.80 = Very Unsatisfied (VUS), 1.81-2.00 = Unsatisfied (US), 2.10-3.40 = Moderate (M), 3.41-4.20 = Satisfied (S), 4.21-5.00 = Very Satisfied (VS).

Mean and Standard Deviation of Students Regarding Parent's & Family



Factors Affecting Career Choices.

The data in table and Figure 4.1 shows the factors affecting career choices on 5 constructs. Item 4.i indicates that (32%) of the respondents "SD", (25%) responses were "D", (19%) of the respondents "A", (18%) of the responses were "SA", while only (4.1%) of the responses selected "UD". Item 4.ii indicates that (30%) responses were "SD" and "D", (13%) responses were "A", (19%) of the responses were "SA", whereas only (6%) of the responses selected "UD". Item 4.iii indicates that (30%) responses were "SD", (15%) of the responses were "D", (24%) responses were "A", (15%) of the responses were "SA" and "UD". Item 4.iv indicates that (33%) responses were "SD", (15%) of the responses were "D", (13%) responses were recorded for "UD", (22%) responses were "A" and (15.8%) of the responses were "SA". Item 4.v indicates that (37.5%) of the respondents "SD", (12.5%) responses were "D", (32.5%) of the respondents "A", (11%) of the responses were "SA", while only (5%) of the responses selected "UD". Item 4.vi indicates that (30%) of the respondents "SD", (12.5%) responses were "D", (14%) of the respondents "UD", (35%) of the responses were "A", while (7.5%) of the responses selected "SA". Item 4.vii indicates that (47%) of the respondents "SD", (20%) responses were "D", (11%) of the respondents "A", (13%) of the responses were "SA" and (6%) of the responses selected "UD". Item 4.viii indicates that (44%) of the respondents "SD", (17.5%) responses were "D", (10%) of the respondents "UD", whereas (14%) of the responses selected "A" and "SA".

Item 4.ix indicates that (48%) of the respondents "SD", (16%) responses were "D", (11%) of the responses selected "A", (8.3%) of the responses were "SA" and (15%) of the responses were "UD". Item 4.x indicates that (48%) of the respondents "SD", (18%) responses were "D", (10%) of the respondents "A", (12.5%) of the responses were "SA", while (10.8%) of the responses selected "UD". Item 4.xi indicates that (30%) of the responses were "SD", (27.5%) responses were "D", (4%) of the respondents "UD", (29%) of the responses were "A", whereas (9%) of the responses selected "SA". Item 4.xii indicates that (27.5%) of the respondents "SD", (20%) responses were "D", (21%) of the respondents "A", (12.5%) of the responses were "SA", while (17.5%) of the responses selected "UD".

The mean score and standard deviation (Mean = 30.49, S.D= 17.557) of the data also reveals that most of the male and female students had a major variation in factors affecting career choices. The overall data represents mix responses (male and female) towards variable (parent's & family) of factors affecting career choices. The data is also shown graphically in the above the figure

From the above data it is revealed that in career choices more than half of the respondents mentioned that their parents & family does not influence on their career choices. Also, the study found that less than half of the students mentioned their parents & family does influence on their career choices. Some students given neutral response, they do not know about how much their parents and family influence their career.

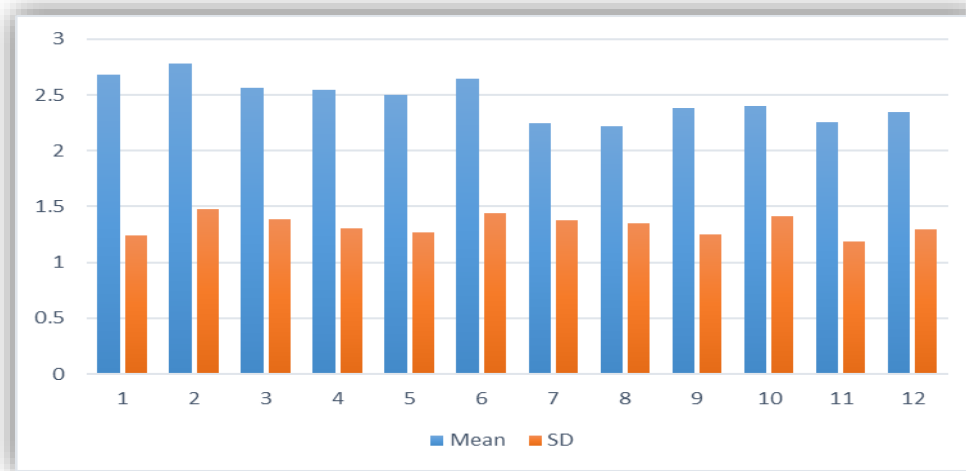
Socio-cultural Factors Affecting Career Choices.

Item	Socio-Cultural	SD f (%)	DA f (%)	UD f (%)	A f (%)	SA f (%)	Mean	S.D
1	Society influenced careerchoice	28 (23.3)	25 (20.8)	32 (26.7)	27 (22.5)	8 (6.7)	2.68 (M)	1.243
2	Models influenced career choice	32 (26.7)	30 (25.0)	11 (9.2)	27 (22.5)	20 (16.7)	2.78 (M)	1.475

3	Social media influenced	40	23	17	30	10	2.56	1.389
		(33.3)	(19.2)	(14.2)	(25.0)	(8.3)	(M)	
4	Social status influenced	36	25	24	27	8	2.55	1.308
		(30.0)	(20.8)	(20.0)	(22.5)	(6.7)	(M)	
5	Gender stereotype influenced your career choice	38	24	21	34	3	2.50	1.270
		(31.7)	(20.0)	(17.5)	(28.3)	(2.5)	(M)	
6	influenced my career choice	37	26	14	28	15	2.65	1.442
		(30.8)	(21.7)	(11.7)	(23.3)	(12.5)	(M)	
7	Friends influenced career choice	53	19	26	9	13	2.25	1.374
		(44.2)	(15.8)	(21.7)	(7.5)	(10.8)	(M)	
8	Peers influenced career choice	49	32	16	10	13	2.22	1.348
		(40.8)	(26.7)	(13.3)	(8.3)	(10.8)	(M)	
9	Culture influenced career choice	40	31	16	30	3	2.38	1.251
		(33.3)	(25.8)	(13.3)	(25.0)	(2.5)	(M)	
10	Religion influenced career choice	50	19	12	31	8	2.40	1.417
		(41.7)	(15.8)	(10.0)	(25.8)	(6.7)	(M)	
11	Ethnicity influenced career choice	37	44	16	17	6	2.26	1.185
		(30.8)	(36.7)	(13.3)	(14.2)	(5.0)	(M)	
12	Trends influenced career choices	41	32	20	18	9	2.35	1.294
		(34.2)	(26.7)	(16.7)	(15.0)	(7.5)	(M)	
Total		40.08	27.5	18.75	24	7.33	24.12	14.811

Note. SD = Strongly Disagree, DA = Disagree, UD = Un-decided, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree
 Note. Mean, 1.00-1.80 = Very Unsatisfied (VUS), 1.81-2.00 = Unsatisfied (US), 2.10-3.40 = Moderate (M), 3.41-4.20 = Satisfied (S), 4.21-5.00 = Very Satisfied.

Mean and Standard Deviation of Students Regarding Socio-cultural Factors Affecting Career Choices.



The data in table and figure 4.2 shows the factors affecting career choices on 5 constructs. Item 4.xiii indicates that (23%) of the respondents “SD”, (20%) responses were “D”, (22.5%) of the respondents “A”, (6.6%) of the responses were “SA”, while (26%) of the responses selected “UD”. Item 4.xiv indicates that (26%) responses were “SD”, (25%) of the responses were “D”, (22.5%) responses were “A”, (16%) of the responses were “SA”, whereas only (9%) of the responses selected “UD”. Item 4.xv indicates that (33%) responses were “SD”, (19%) of the responses were “D”, (25%) responses were “A”, (8%) of the responses were “SA” and (14%) of the responses were “UD”. Item 4.xvi indicates that (30%) responses were “SD”, (20%) of the responses were “D” and “UD”, (22.5%) responses were “A” and (6.6%) of the responses were “SA”. Item 4.xvii indicates that (31%) of the respondents “SD”, (20%) responses were “D”, (28%) of the respondents “A”, (2.5%) of the responses were “SA”, while (17%) of the responses selected “UD”. Item 4.xviii indicates that (30%) of the respondents “SD”, (21%) responses were “D”, (11%) of the respondents “UD”, (23%) of the responses were “A”, while (12.5%) of the responses selected “SA”. Item 4.xix indicates that (44%) of the respondents “SD”, (15%) responses were “D”, (7.5%) of the respondents “A”, (10%) of the responses were “SA” and (21%) of the responses selected “UD”. Item 4.xx indicates that (40%) of the respondents “SD”, (26%) responses were “D”, (13%) of the

respondents “UD”, (8.33%) of the responses selected “A” and (10%) of the responses selected “SA”. Item 4.xxi indicates that (33%) of the respondents “SD”, (25%) responses were “D” and “A”, (2.5%) of the responses were “SA” and only (13%) of the responses were “UD”. Item 4.xxii indicates that (41%) of the respondents “SD”, (15%) responses were “D”, (25%) of the respondents “A”, (6.66%) of the responses were “SA”, while (10%) of the responses selected “UD”. Item 4.xxiii indicates that (30%) of the responses were “SD”, (36%) responses were “D”, (13%) of the respondents “UD”, (14%) of the responses were “A”, whereas only (5%) of the responses selected “SA”. Item 4.xxiv indicates that (34%) of the respondents “SD”, (26%) responses were “D”, (15%) of the respondents “A”, (7.5%) of the responses were “SA”, while (16%) of the responses selected “UD”.

The mean score and standard deviation (Mean = 29.58, S.D = 15.996) of the data also reveals that most of the male and female students had a major variation in factors affecting career choices. The overall data represents mix responses (male and female) towards variable (socio-cultural) of factors affecting career choices. The data is also shown graphically in the above chart.

From the above data it is revealed that in career choices more than half of the respondents mentioned that society and culture does not influence on their career choices. Also, the study found that less than half of the students mentioned that society and culture does influence on their

Career choices.

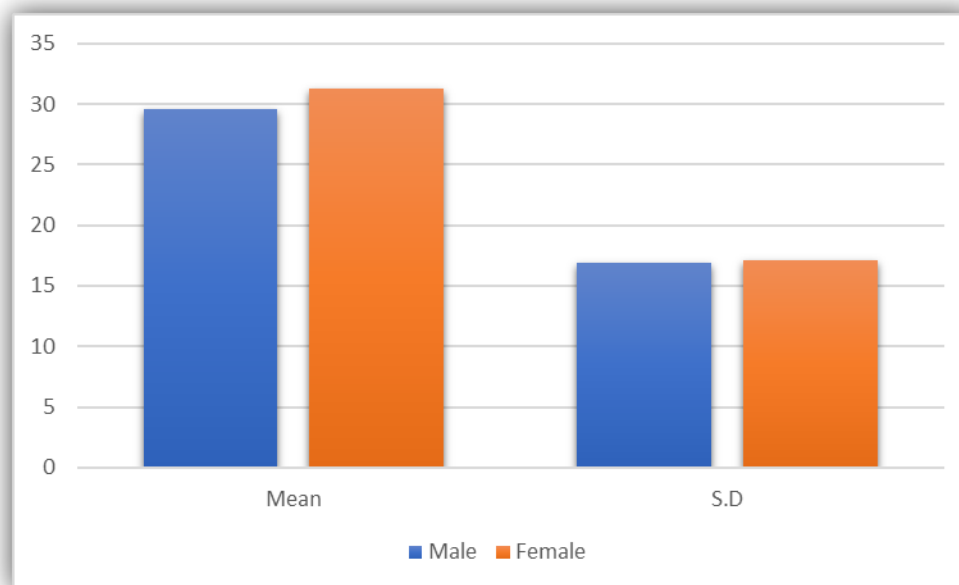
No significant difference among parents & family on the career choices of high secondary school students.

Table 01

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	T	Sig
Male	50	28.6122	15.81122	-548	.922
Female	50	30.1822	16.04721		

df = 117

Figure 1. No significant difference among the factors affecting the career choices of High Secondary students with respect to parents & family.



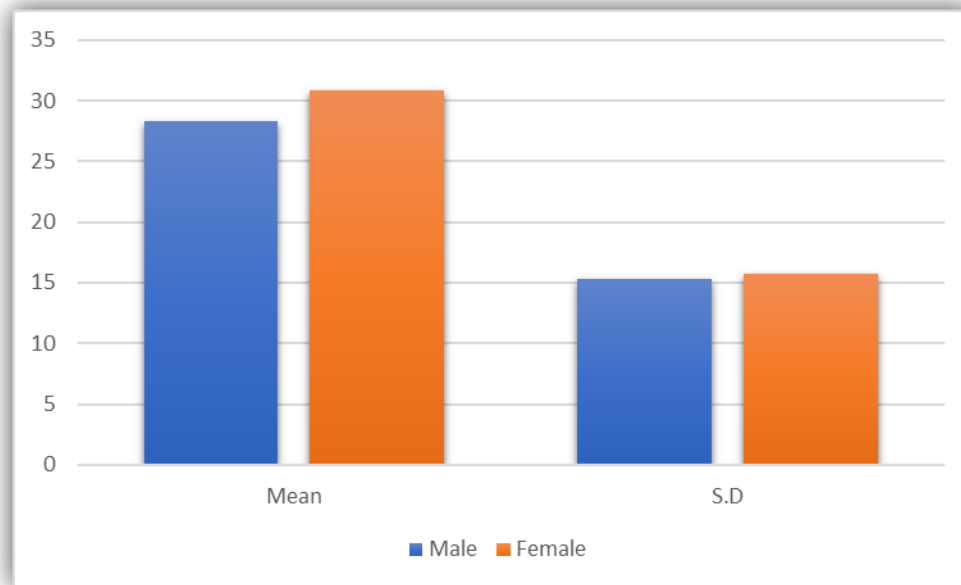
The data in the above table 4 shows that the calculated value of t was found to be -548 which is statistically non-significant ($p > 0.05$) because it is less than the tabulated value of t at 0.05 level, so the null hypothesis is “There is no significant difference among the factors affecting the career

Choices of Higher Secondary School students” is accepted furthermore, the mean score value of male students (Mean=28.6122, S.D=15.8112) and female students (Mean=30.1822, S.D=16.4721) clearly show that both male and female students had minor difference in their career choices.

No significant difference among socio-cultural on the career choices of high secondary school students.

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	T	Sig
Male	50	27.2000	16.17061	-728	.262
Female	50	29.1222	16.66720		

No significant difference among the factors affecting the career choices of high secondary schools with respect to social and culture.



The data in the above table and figure 4 shows that the calculated value of t was found to be -839 which is statistically non-significant ($p > 0.05$) because it is less than the tabulated value of t at 0.05 level, so the null hypothesis is “There is no significant difference among the factors affecting the career choices of Higher Secondary School

Students” is accepted furthermore, the mean score value of male students (Mean=27.2000, S.D=16.17061) and female students (Mean=29.1222, S.D=16.66720) clearly show that both male and female students had approximate same in their career choices.

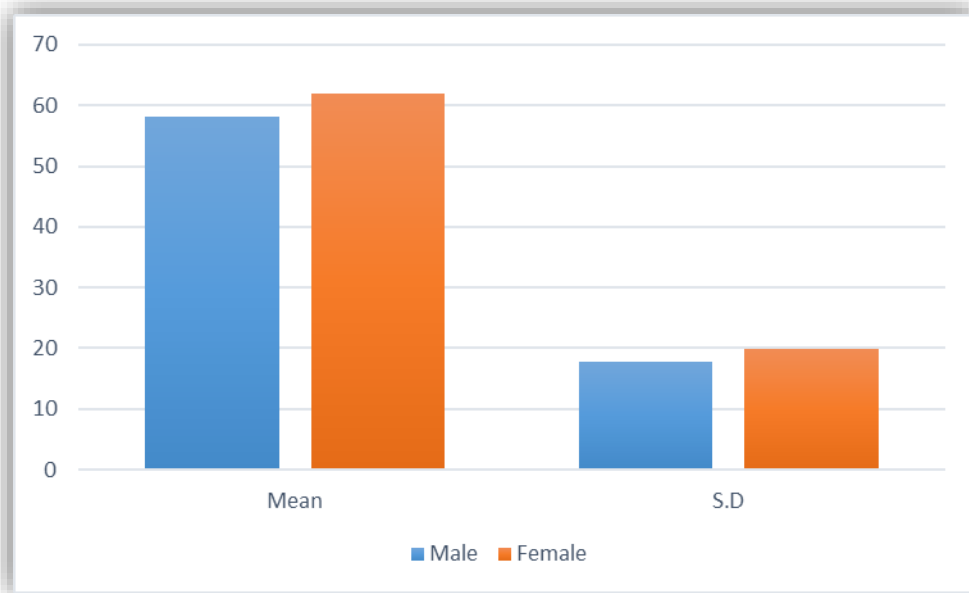
No significant difference in relation to gender wise comparison of factors affecting the career choices of high secondary school students.

Table 02

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	T	sig
Male	50	57.0400	16.64851	-1.137	.142
Female	50	60.0000	18.77162		

df = 117

No significant difference in relation to gender wise comparison of factors affecting the career Choices of high school students.



The data in the above table & figure 02 shows that the calculated value of t was found to be -1.137 which is statistically non-significant ($p > 0.05$) because it is less than the tabulated value of t at level, so the null hypothesis is "There is no significant difference in relation to gender wise comparison of factors affecting the career choices of Higher Secondary School students" is accepted furthermore, the mean score value of male students (Mean= 57.0400, S.D= 16.64851) and female students (Mean= 60.0000, S.D= 18.77162) clearly show that both male and female students had minor difference in their career choices.

Findings

- Regarding how parents and families affect students' career decisions, (32%) of the respondents "SD", (25%) responses were "D", (19%) of the respondents "A", (18%) of the responses were "SA", while only (4.1%) of the responses selected "UD" for the item "In my career choice there is influenced of my father".
- (30%) responses were "SD" and "D", (13%) responses were "A", (19%) of the responses were "SA", whereas only (6%) of the responses selected "UD" for the item

"In my career choice there is influenced of my mother"

- (30%) responses were "SD", (15%) of the responses were "D", (24%) responses were "A", (15%) of the responses were "SA" and "UD" for the item "My parents' socio-economic status influenced my career choice OR my parents' financial status influenced my career choice".
- (33%) responses were "SD", (15%) of the responses were "D", (13%) responses were recorded for "UD", (22%) responses were "A" and (15.8%) of the responses were "SA" for the item "My parents' level of education influenced my career choice".
- (37.5%) of the respondents "SD", (12.5%) responses were "D", (32.5%) of the respondents "A", (11%) of the responses were "SA", while only (5%) of the responses selected "UD" for the item for the item "My parents' occupation/profession influenced my career choice".
- (30%) of the respondents "SD", (12.5%) responses were "D", (14%) of the respondents "UD", (35%) of the responses were "A", while (7.5%) of the responses selected "SA" for the item "My parents'

career awareness influenced my career choice”.

- (47%) of the respondents “SD”, (20%) responses were “D”, (11%) of the respondents “A”, (13%) of the responses were “SA” and (6%) of the responses selected “UD” for the item “Other than my parents’ my family members influenced my career choice”.
- (44%) of the respondents “SD”, (17.5%) responses were “D”, (10%) of the respondents “UD”, whereas (14%) of the responses selected “A” and “SA” for the item. Guardians influenced my career choice”.

reveals that parents & family affects student’s career choices

- (26%) responses were “SD”, (25%) of the responses were “D”, (22.5%) responses were “A”, (16%) of the responses were “SA”, whereas only (9%) of the responses selected “UD” for the item “Social role models influenced my career choice”.
- (33%) responses were “SD”, (19%) of the responses were “D”, (25%) responses were “A”, (8%) of the responses were “SA” and (14%) of the responses were “UD” for the item “Social media influenced my career choice”.
- (31%) of the respondents “SD”, (20%) responses were “D”, (28%) of the respondents “A”, (2.5%) of the responses were “SA”, while (17%) of the responses selected “UD” for the item “Social gender stereotype influenced your career choice”.
- (44%) of the respondents “SD”, (15%) responses were “D”, (7.5%) of the respondents “A”, (10%) of the responses were “SA” and (21%) of the responses selected “UD” for the item “My friends influenced my career choice”.
- (40%) of the respondents “SD”, (26%) responses were “D”, (13%) of the respondents “UD”, (8.33%) of the responses selected “A” and (10%) of the responses selected “SA” for the item “My peers influenced my career choice”.
- (33%) of the respondents “SD”, (25%) responses were “D” and “A”, (2.5%) of the responses were “SA” and only (13%) of the responses were “UD” for the item “My culture influenced my career choice”.
- (41%) of the respondents “SD”, (15%) responses were “D”, (25%) of the respondents “A”, (6.66%) of the responses

statistically non-significant ($p > 0.05$) because it is less than the tabulated value of t at 0.05 level, so the null hypothesis is “There is a no significant difference in relation to gender wise comparison of factors affecting the career choices of Higher Secondary School students” is accepted.

Recommendations

- The study recommends that for the effective career planning of students at Higher Secondary level, guidance should be given. Without guidance students can't know about their talent, skills, interest, aptitude etc. Therefore, when they come at Higher Secondary level they confused to select their career just because of no guidance system in our schools.
- The government must hire qualified career advisers to help Higher Secondary School students in their career development. These advisers will help the students in their skills to select the suitable career.
- Today's world is technological world. Therefore, first the students should explore their skills then they should develop their skills through technology. Once they know about their skills, career selection will not be a difficult job for him or her.
- Students should select a role model to their skills accordingly to take the inspiration, and should follow the rules of

- The community's active participation in providing financial and technological services to address in the establishment of career guidance facilities in Higher Secondary schools.

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