



Career Maturity Of Senior Secondary School Students In Relation To Gender And Family Climate

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ABSTRACT

The present study explores the relationship between **career maturity, gender and family climate** among senior secondary school students. Career maturity is defined as an individual's degree of readiness to navigate, plan, and execute vocational decisions. Career maturity is the on-going developmental readiness required to make informed and appropriate occupational decisions. Gender refers to male and female senior secondary school students. The familial atmosphere acts as a key determinant in fostering adolescent career maturity. Constructive familial environments characterized by emotional backing, dialogue, and independence heavily foster adolescents' career readiness. On the other hand, environments that are restrictive, unsupportive, or conflicted can hinder the development of essential career-related skills. Therefore, the present investigation was carried out to study the career maturity of senior secondary school students in relation to gender and family climate. A descriptive survey method of research was employed for the study. A sample of 819 senior secondary school students was selected by employing random sampling technique. Data were collected by using standardized research tool i.e. career maturity inventory by Nirmala Gupta and family climate scale developed by investigator himself. Descriptive statistic and Analysis of Variance were applied to analyze the data. Female senior secondary school students demonstrated higher level of career maturity as compared to their male counterparts. Senior secondary school students belonging to good, average and poor family climate do not differ significantly from each other with regard to their level of career maturity. Gender and family climate have a significant interactional effect on career maturity of senior secondary school students.

Keyword: Career Maturity, Gender, Family Climate

Introduction

The family climate plays a crucial role in shaping a person's professional path. It involves various factors such as parental support, parental expectations, shared family values, and communication patterns etc. Family climate significantly impact both vocational decision-making and the progression of career maturity. Fostering a nurturing home life provides essential guidance and support, enabling individuals to effectively navigate career choices. Conversely, when families are negative or unsupportive, they create barriers that obstruct healthy career development. The family climate plays an important role in shaping various aspects of an individual's life, such as- intelligence, personality, adjustment, lifestyle, behaviour and habits etc. An unhealthy or adverse family climate can result in behavioural issues and poor adjustment. Family climate includes things like the home environment,

support from family members, living conditions of the family and how the family interacts with each other and the home atmosphere and the overall way of life in the family. This study aims to understand how career maturity is related to gender and family climate among senior secondary school students. The findings of this study can help teacher, parents and counsellors to better support students in making career decisions during the important stage of life. **Katoch, S. (2017)** investigated the career maturity among senior secondary school students. Study found that the government and private senior secondary school students do not differ significantly in their level of career maturity. Study also found that the male and female senior secondary school students do not differ significantly in their career maturity. Further, study revealed that rural and urban senior secondary school students do not differ significantly in their career maturity. **Saher,N., & Alim,F. (2023)** conducted a study on career maturity level among adolescents at senior secondary school stage. Result of the study indicates that most of the adolescents have below average level of maturity in regard to attitude towards career selection, self-appraisal, knowing about jobs, and choosing a job. Further, in the aspects of career planning and problem-solving, an average level of maturity was found among adolescents. The result also indicates that among the six aspects of career maturity, significant gender differences were found on four dimensions namely self-appraisal, goal selection, planning, and problem-solving. Other results of the study found no significant gender differences in respect of attitude towards career selection and occupational information. **Sharma, A. (2024)** explored career maturity among adolescents studying in secondary schools: A Review. The review concluded that career maturity among adolescents is influenced by various factors including gender, school type, intelligence, home environment, school environment, socioeconomic status, and self-efficacy. Findings show that mixed results on gender differences, higher career maturity in private school students, and significant impacts of intelligence and socioeconomic status. The study highlight the importance of a comprehensive approach involving educators, parents, and policymakers to support adolescents in making informed career choices, ensuring their successful transition from school to further education or work. **Singh, M. (2025)** studied the career maturity of secondary school students in relation to family environment using a sample of 200 students from the Ludhiana district. Study found no significant difference between male and female secondary school students in career maturity. Study also found a significant difference between male and female secondary school students in family environment. In addition to this, **Yadav,P., Thakral ,A .,& Deepika. (2025)** carried out the study on career decision-making among rural senior secondary students: The Role of Parental Encouragement across Three Indian States. The study revealed that students in Punjab, particularly in the Doaba zone, showed the highest levels of parental encouragement across all dimensions. Haryana displayed more at moderate levels, with Khadar and Nardak zones reporting relatively higher support than others. Further, in Uttarakhand, students from Kumaon and Garhwal zones showed moderate to high parental encouragement, especially in decision-making and verbal support. Punjab demonstrated the intense parental involvement, while other states showed variability across zones and different dimensions. The study found significant gender differences in different dimensions of parental encouragement over the selected zones. Generally, female students received higher levels of support in dimensions like decision-making and overall encouragement, particularly in Doaba (Punjab), Bagar and Mewat (Haryana) and Kumaon (Uttarakhand). On the other hand, male students, tended to receive more encouragement at moderate levels. However, no significant gender differences were found in Majha and Malwa (Punjab), and Ahirwal and Khadar zones (Haryana), indicating variability in parental engagement patterns across regions.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender.
2. To study the difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their family climate.

3. To study the interactional effects of gender and family climate on career maturity of senior secondary school students.

Hypothesis of the study

1. There exists no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender.
2. There exists no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their family climate.
3. There exist no significant interaction between gender and family climate with respect to career maturity of senior secondary school students.

Methodology

In the present investigation, descriptive method of research was used to achieve the objectives of the study.

Sampling

A representative sample of 819 senior secondary school students were selected from schools of Mandi, Kullu, Kinnaur and Shimla districts of Himachal Pradesh by employing random sampling technique.

Research Tool Used

In the present study, following research tool was used;

1. Career Maturity Inventory by Nirmala Gupta (2013).
2. Family Climate Scale developed by researcher Himself.

Analysis of data

For analysis and interpretation of data descriptive statistic and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used, details of which is given below;

In order to study the main and interactional effects of gender and family climate of senior secondary school students, Analysis of Variance (2x3 factor design) having two types of gender i.e. male and female and three levels of family climate i.e. good, average and poor was applied on the mean scores of career maturity of senior secondary school students. The means and standard deviations of career maturity scores with respect to gender and family climate are given in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Means and standard deviations of career maturity scores of senior secondary school students with respect to gender and family climate

Sr. No.	Levels of Family Climate Gender		Mean Career Maturity Scores			
			Good	Average	Poor	Total
1.	Male	Mean	75.92	71.20	71.28	71.60
		S.D.	11.154	11.132	12.076	11.376
		N	36	315	88	439
2.	Female	Mean	69.78	72.72	72.68	72.50
		S.D.	13.437	12.092	11.463	12.076
		N	27	287	66	380
3.	Total	Mean	73.29	71.92	71.88	72.02
		S. D	12.463	11.615	11.799	11.708
		N	63	602	154	819

From the mean career maturity scores of senior secondary school students with regard to gender and family climate, 'F-Values' were calculated. The results are summarised in the Table 2 follows:

TABLE 2

Summary of the results of analysis of variance for career maturity scores of senior secondary school students with respect to gender and family climate

Sr. No.	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom (df)	Mean Squares (Variance)	F-Ratios
1	Gender(A)	105.826	1	105.826	0.775 ^{NS}
2	Family Climate (B)	44.725	2	22.362	0.164 ^{NS}
3	Gender X Family Climate (AXB)	831.612	2	415.808	3.045*
4	Error Variance	11009.569	813	136.543	
5	Total	112121.687	818		

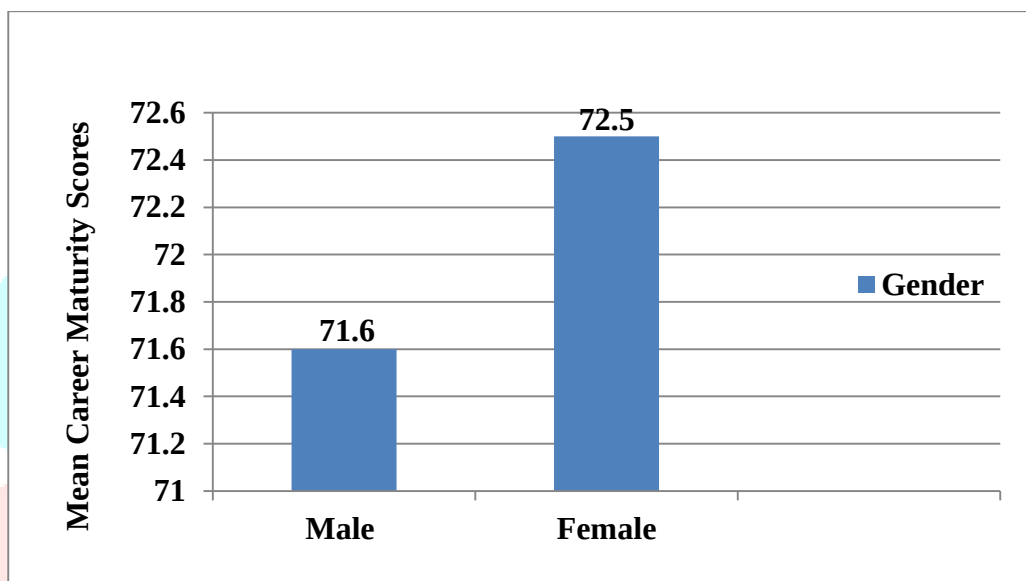
NS-Not Significant.

*Significant at 0.5 level of significance.

4.7.1 Main Effects

(a) Gender (A)

Table 2 shows that calculated value of 'F-Ratio' for the main effect of gender on the career maturity of senior secondary school students, for a degree of freedom 1 and 813, was found to be 0.775. This value is less than the F-table value (3.85) even at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis no. 1, **"There exists no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender,"** was retained. Thus, it may be interpreted that there is no significant difference in the career maturity of male and female senior secondary school students. Although, the female senior secondary school students had shown high mean of career maturity (Mean 72.50) as compared to male senior secondary school students who had shown the mean score of 71.60. The mean career maturity scores of male and female senior secondary school students were shown in Figure 1 as follows:

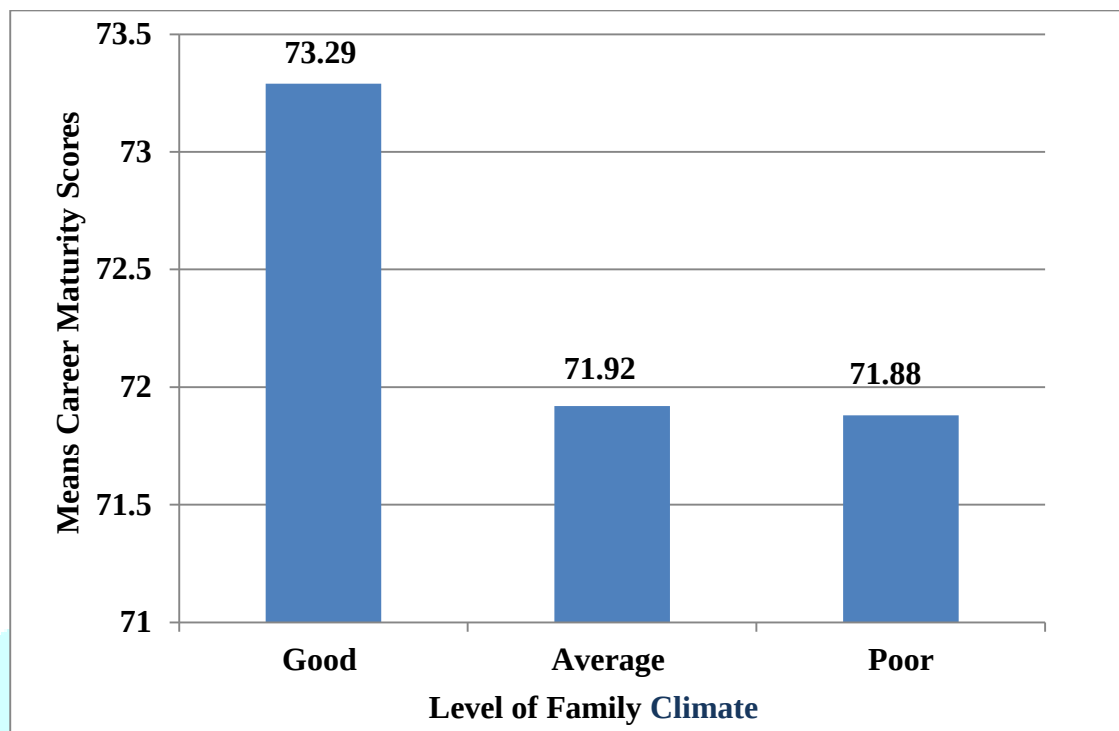


(b) Family Climate (B)

Table 2 shows that the calculated value of 'F' for the findings the main effect of family climate on career maturity of senior secondary school students, for degree of freedom 2 and 813, came out to be 0.164 which is less than the F-table value (3.00) even at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the Hypothesis No. 2 **"There exists no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their family climate,"** was accepted. Therefore, it may be inferred that senior secondary school students belonging to good, average and poor family climate do not differ significantly from each other with regard to their level of career maturity. However, on the basis of mean scores, it can be interpreted that senior secondary school students belonging to good family climate (73.29) and students belonging to average family climate (71.92) possessed higher level of career maturity as compared to senior secondary school students having poor family climate (71.88). Figure 2 shows the pictorial representation of mean career maturity scores of senior secondary school students.

FIGURE 2

Mean career maturity scores of senior secondary school students with respect to different level of family climate

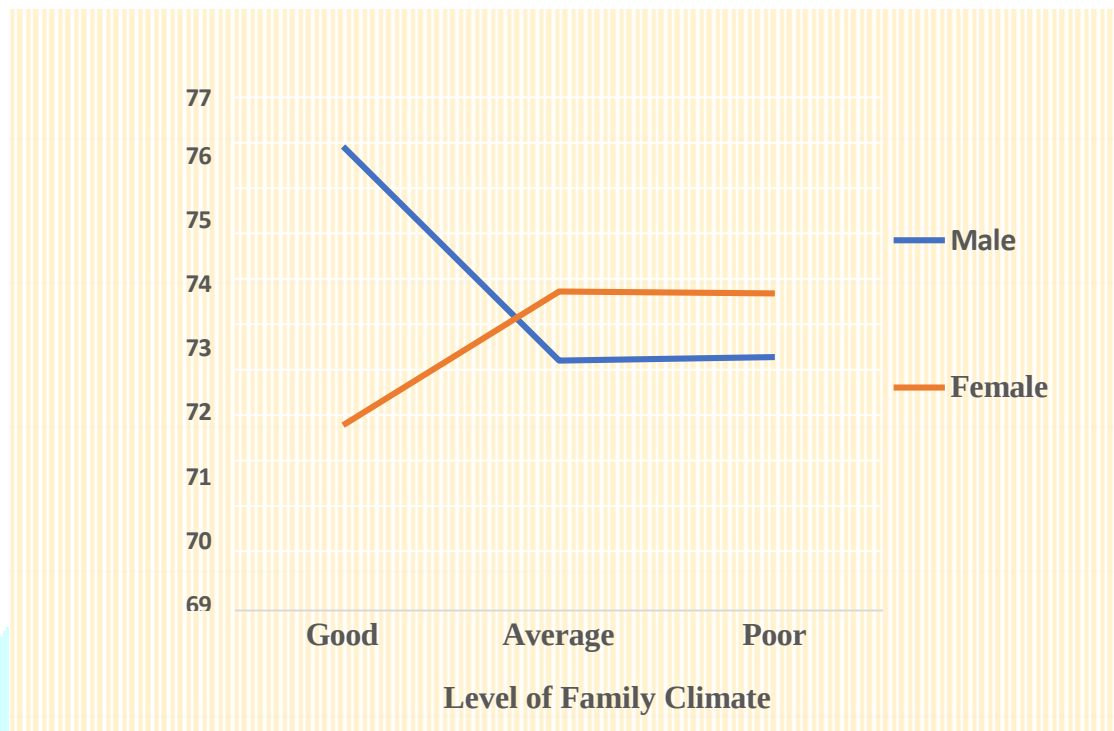


Interactional Effect (AXB)

The calculated value of 'F Ratio' for the interactional effect of gender and family climate on career maturity of senior secondary school students, for a degree of freedom 2 and 813, was found to be 3.045. This value is above the F-table value (3.00) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the Hypothesis no. 8 **"There exists no significant interactional effect of gender and family climate with regard to career maturity of senior secondary school students,"** was not accepted. It means that gender and family climate (in combination with each other) influenced the career maturity of senior secondary school students. The Figure 3 shows the significant interactional effect of gender and family climate on career maturity of senior secondary school students.

FIGURE 3

Significant interactional effect of gender and family climate with respect to career maturity of senior secondary school students



Conclusions

1. There was no significant difference in the career maturity of senior secondary students with respect to their gender. However, the female senior secondary school students had shown high mean of career maturity (Mean 72.50) as compared to male senior secondary school students who had shown the mean score of 71.60.
2. There existed no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary students with respect to their family climate. The mean career maturity scores of senior secondary school students with good, average and poor family climate found to be (73.29), (71.92) and (71.88) respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that senior secondary school students belonging to good family climate (Mean 73.29) and senior secondary school students belonging to average family climate (Mean 71.92) possessed high career maturity as compared to poor family climate (Mean 71.88).
3. There exists a significant interaction between gender and family climate with regard to career maturity of senior secondary school students. Therefore, it may be interpreted that gender and family climate (in combination with each other) influenced the career maturity of senior secondary school students.

Implications

The present study was done to investigate the career maturity of senior secondary school students in relation to gender and family climate. The findings of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender. However, on the basis of mean score, it is clear that female senior secondary school students (Mean 72.50) possessed high level of career maturity as compare to male senior secondary school students (Mean 71.60). Results indicate that educational institutions should implement unbiased career guidance programs for all genders. Further, teachers should encourage all the students to choose careers, based on their interests, choices and abilities, not on gender basis. Equal opportunities should be provide to all the students for career planning and counselling. Parents and teachers should equip to male and female with the knowledge to choose their careers wisely. The findings showed that there was no significant difference in career maturity among senior secondary school students with respect to their family climate, as students from good, average and poor family climate had similar mean scores. However, students from good and average family climates showed slightly higher career maturity compared to those from poor family backgrounds. This suggests that while family climate may not strongly affect career maturity on its own, a supportive family climate can still play a positive role in shaping students' career development. Most importantly, a significant interaction was found between gender and family climate, means that the combination of these two factors does influence career maturity. This implies that male and female may respond differently to their family climate in terms of how they plan and think about their future careers. Therefore, schools should consider both gender and family climate when planning career guidance and support activities. Counselling and mentoring programs should be customized to meet the different needs of male and female depending on their family background.

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