



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Career Maturity Of Senior Secondary School Students In Relation To Gender And Self-Confidence

Rajender Singh

Ph.D. Research Scholar, School of Education, Abhilashi University, Chailchowk, Mandi

Dr. Promila

Professor & Dean, School of Education, Abhilashi University, Chailchowk, Mandi

ABSTRACT

Career maturity refers to an individual's readiness and ability to make informed, realistic, and appropriate career decisions at different stages of life. It reflects how well a person understands themselves, their interests, strengths, values, and the world of work, as well as their capacity to plan and make career-related choices. Career maturity and self-confidence are positively related; individuals with higher self-confidence are better equipped to make informed and realistic career decisions. Self-confidence enhances one's ability to explore options, set goals, and commit to a chosen career path. Hence, the present investigation was carried out to study the career maturity of senior secondary school students in relation to gender and self-confidence. Descriptive survey method of research was used for the study. A sample of 819 senior secondary students was selected by employing random sampling technique. Data were collected by using standardized research tools i.e. Career Maturity Inventory by Nirmala Gupta and Self-Confidence Scale by Madhu Gupta and Bindiya Lakhani. Descriptive statistic and Analysis of Variance were used to Analyze the data. There was no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender. Senior secondary school students with different level of self-confidence differed significantly from each other with regard to their career maturity. Gender and self-confidence taken together have no significant interactional effect on career maturity of senior secondary school students.

Key words: Career Maturity, Gender, Self-confidence

Introduction

In today's dynamic and competitive world, making appropriate career choices has become increasingly critical, especially for students at the senior secondary level. This period in an individual's life is marked by significant psychological, emotional, and social changes. At this stage, students are required to make crucial decisions about their future academic and professional paths. The ability to make such decisions effectively is referred to as career maturity. According to Super (1990), career maturity is a multidimensional construct that includes an individual's readiness to cope with the developmental tasks of career decision-making and planning. It involves cognitive and affective components, such as awareness of one's interests, understanding of available career options, and the ability to set achievable goals. One of the psychological factors closely linked with career maturity is self-confidence. Self-confidence refers to an individual's belief in their own abilities to perform tasks and achieve goals (Bandura, 1997). A student with

a high level of self-confidence is more likely to explore career options actively, overcome challenges, and commit to decisions. Conversely, a lack of self-confidence may result in indecisiveness, avoidance behavior, or poor career planning. As such, self-confidence plays a vital role in facilitating or hindering the development of career maturity among adolescents. In the context of India's educational system, senior secondary students (typically aged 16 to 18) face intense academic pressure and societal expectations to choose career paths that align with perceived notions of success. This decision-making process often occurs in a high-stakes environment, where students may lack sufficient guidance and self-assurance. In this scenario, their level of self-confidence can significantly influence their career maturity and readiness to take informed steps toward future occupations. Several studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between self-confidence and career maturity. **Sharma, S. (2021)** revealed a significant positive relationship between self-confidence and career maturity. Gender differences were also observed, with girls showing higher maturity and boys showing higher self-confidence. Further, **Arul, R., & Manimekalai, S. (2022)** studied role of academic self-confidence in career decision-making among high school students. Academic self-confidence was found to be a significant predictor of career maturity. Students who felt confident in their academics were more proactive and goal-oriented in career decisions. In addition to this, **Mehta, K., & Bansal, R. (2023)** found that private school students scored higher in both career maturity and self-confidence. A strong correlation between a positive self-concept and career maturity was observed. **Verma, A. (2024)** found a direct relationship between high self-confidence and career planning. Supportive family environments further enhanced both self-confidence and career maturity. **Rao, V., & Pillai, M. (2025)** found that self-confidence strongly predicted career adaptability, which significantly influenced career maturity. The authors suggested integrating confidence-building modules in school career counseling.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the gender-wise difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students.
2. To study the difference in career maturity of senior secondary students with respect to their level of self-confidence.
3. To study the interactional effects of gender and self-confidence on career maturity of senior secondary school students.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There exists no significance difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender.
2. There exists no significance difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their level of self-confidence.
3. There exists no significant interaction between gender and self-confidence with respect to career maturity of senior secondary school students.

Methodology

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

Sampling

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

Research Tools Used

In the present study, following research tools were used;

1. Career Maturity Inventory by Nirmala Gupta (2013)
2. Self-Confidence Scale by Madhu Gupta and Bindiya Lakhani (2018).

Analysis of Data

For analysis and interpretation of data, descriptive statistics 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 level of self-confidence on career maturity 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 self-confidence i.e. high, average and low, 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 level of self-confidence are given in Table1.

Table 1:

Means and Standard Deviations of Career Maturity with Respect to Gender and levels of Self-Confidence

Sr. No.	Levels of Self- Confidence		Mean Career Maturity Scores			
			High	Average	Low	Total
1.	Male	Mean	78.10	70.93	68.12	71.60
		S.D.	10.916	11.207	10.180	11.376
		N	68	302	69	439
2.	Female	Mean	74.95	72.59	68.04	72.50
		S.D.	12.334	11.812	12.160	380
		N	75	259	46	380
3.	Total	Mean	76.45	71.70	68.09	72.02
		S. D	11.748	11.510	10.963	11.708
		N	143	561	115	819

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

Table 4.2

Summary of the Results of Analysis of Variance for Career Maturity Scores of Senior Secondary School Students with Respect to Gender and Self-confidence

Sr. No.	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom (df)	Mean Squares (Variance)	F-Ratios
1	Gender (A)	34.750	1	34.750	0.265 ^{NS}
2	Self-confidence (B)	4641.781	2	2320.890	17.677**

3	Gender X Self-confidence (AXB)	670.156	2	335.078	2.552 ^{NS}
4	Error Variance	106744.52 ₂	813	131.297	
5	Total	112121.687	818		

**

Indicates significant at 0.01 level of significance

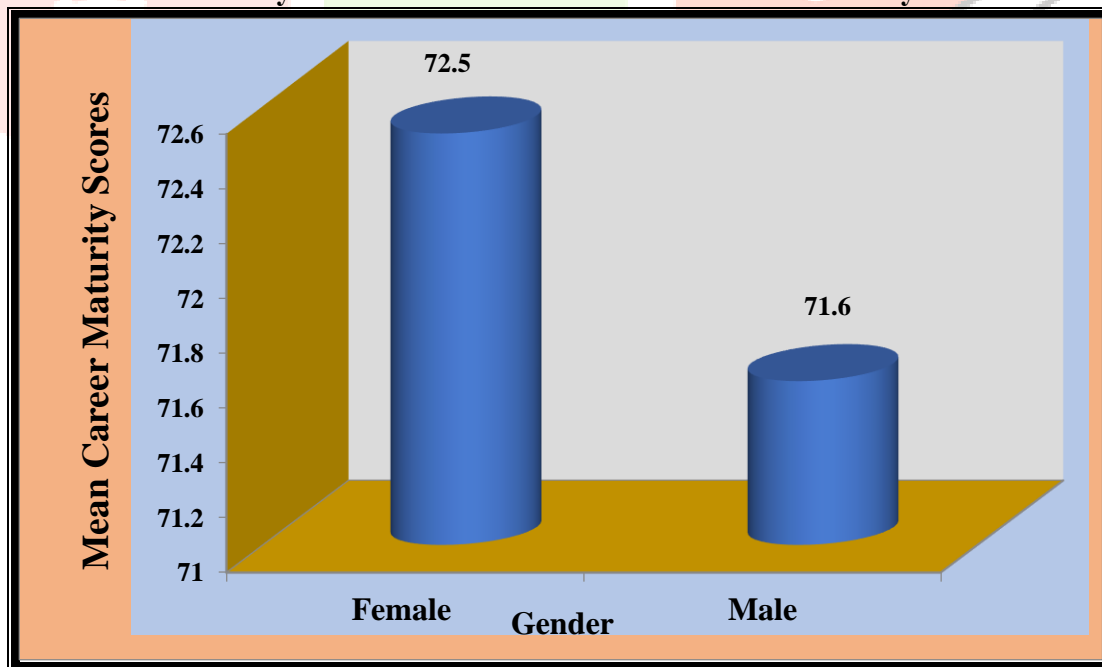
NS-- Indicates not significant

(1) Main Effects

(a) Gender (A)

The calculated value of 'F-Ratio' for the main effect of gender on the career maturity of senior secondary school students, for the degree of freedom 1 and 813, was found to be 0.265 which is below the F-table value (3.85) even at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the Hypothesis no.1 that, **"There exists no significance difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender,"** was retained. Thus, it is interpreted that there is no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender. However, on the basis of mean values, it is clear that female secondary school students (Mean 72.50) possessed high level of career maturity as compared to male secondary school students (Mean 71.60). The mean career maturity scores of male and female senior secondary school students shown in Figure 1 as follows:

Figure 1
Mean Career Maturity Scores of Male and Female Senior Secondary School Students



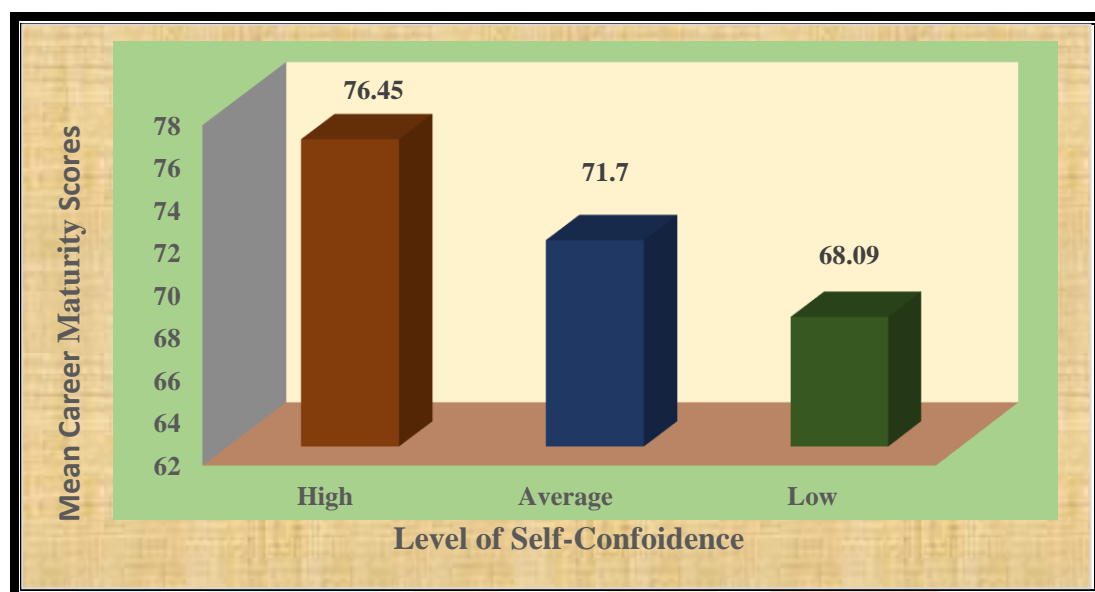
(b) Self-Confidence (B)

The calculated value of 'F' for findings the main effect of self-confidence on career maturity of senior secondary school students, for degree of freedom 2 and 813 came out to be 17.677, which is much greater than the F-table value (4.631) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the Hypothesis no.2 that, **"There exists no significance difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their level of self-confidence,"** was not accepted. Hence, it can be concluded that senior secondary school students with different level of self-confidence differed

significantly from each other with regard to their career maturity. The Figure 2 shows the mean career maturity scores of senior secondary school students with respect to level of self-confidence.

Figure 2

Mean Career Maturity Scores of senior secondary School Students with different levels of Self-confidence



In order to locate the significance difference in mean career maturity scores of three groups of senior secondary school students with high, average and low level of self – confidence, statistical technique ‘t’ test was applied, details of which are given below:

- i) **Career maturity of senior secondary school students belonging to high level of self-confidence and average level of self-confidence.**

Table 3 shows the value of mean, standard deviation, standard error of difference between means and t-value

TABLE 3

‘t’ value showing the significance of difference in mean career maturity scores of senior secondary school students in relation to high and Average level of self-confidence.

Sr. No.	Comparison Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	SE _D	t-value
1	High self-Confidence	143	76.45	11.748	702	1.083	-4.388**
2	Average Self-Confidence	561	71.70	11.510			

****Significant at 0.01 Level of significance**

The observed value of ‘t’ for finding out the significance difference in high self-confident and average self-confidence senior secondary school students with respect to career maturity, came out to be -4.388 for degree of freedom 702 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. so, it may be inferred that high self-confidence and average self-confidence senior secondary school students differed significantly with respect to their career maturity. However, on the basis of mean values, that highly self-confident senior secondary school students (Mean 76.45) possessed more career maturity as compared to average level of self-confident students (Mean 71.70).

ii) **Career Maturity of Senior Secondary School Students with respect to High Self-Confidence and Low Self--Confidence**

Table 4 shows the value of mean, standard deviation, standard error of difference between means and t-value

TABLE 4

‘t’ Value Showing the Significance of Difference in Mean Career Maturity Scores of Senior Secondary School Students in Relation to High and Low Level of Self-Confidence

Sr. No.	Comparison Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	SE _D	t-value
1	High self-Confidence	143	76.45	11.748	256	1.429	-5.853**
2	Low Self-Confidence	115	68.09	10.963			

****Significant at 0.01 Level of significance**

Table 4 shows the calculative value of ‘t’ for finding out the significance difference in career maturity of high self-confidence and low self-confidence senior secondary school students came out to be -5.853 for df256, which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, it may be said that there exists a significant difference in the career maturity of senior secondary school students with high and low level of self-confidence. On the basis of mean value, it may be interpreted that highly self-confident senior secondary school students (Mean 76.45) possessed more career maturity as compared to average level of self-confident students (Mean 68.09).

iii) **Career maturity of senior secondary school students belonging to average and low level of self-confidence.**

The value of mean, standard deviation, standard error of difference between means and t-value are given in Table 5 as follows;

TABLE 4

‘t’ Value Showing the Significance of Difference in Mean Career Maturity Scores of Senior Secondary School Students in Relation to Average and Low Level of Self-Confidence

Sr. No.	Comparison Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	SE _D	t-value
1	Average self-Confidence	561	71.70	11.510	674	1.169	-3.088**
2	Low Self-Confidence	115	68.09	10.963			

****Significant at 0.01 Level of significance**

The calculative value of ‘t’ for testing the significance of the mean score of career maturity of senior secondary school students with average level of self-confidence and senior secondary school students having low level of self-confidence, came out to be -3088, for df 674, which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, it may be interpreted that there is a significant difference in the career maturity of average self-confidence and low self-confidence senior secondary school students. However, on the basis

of mean value, it can be concluded that average self-confident senior secondary school students (Mean 71.70) possessed more career maturity as compared to low level of self-confident students (Mean 68.09).

Interactional Effect (AXB)

The obtained value of 'F' for the interactional effect of gender and self-confidence on career maturity of senior secondary school students, for a degree of freedom 2 and 813, came out be 2.552. This value is below the F- table value (3.00) even at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the Hypothesis no.3. that, **"There exists no significant interaction between gender and self-confidence with respect to career maturity of senior secondary school students,"** was retained. Therefore, it may be interpreted that the gender and self-confidence taken together have no significant interactional effect on career maturity of senior secondary school students. Therefore, it may be interpreted that the gender and self-confidence taken together did not affected career maturity of senior secondary school students in a significant manner.

Conclusions

1. There was no significant difference in career maturity of senior secondary school students with respect to their gender. It is clear that female secondary school students (Mean 72.50) possessed high level of career maturity as compared to male secondary school students (Mean 71.60).
2. Senior secondary school students with different level of self-confidence differed significantly from each other with regard to their career maturity. The observed value of 't' for finding out the significance difference in high self-confident and average self-confidence senior secondary school students with respect to career maturity, came out to be -4.388 for degree of freedom 702 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. so, it may be inferred that high self-confidence and average self-confidence senior secondary school students differed significantly with respect to their career maturity. However, on the basis of mean values, that highly self-confident senior secondary school students (Mean 76.45) possessed more career maturity as compared to average level of self-confident students (Mean 71.70). Table 4 shows the calculative value of 't' for finding out the significance difference in career maturity of high self-confidence and low self-confidence senior secondary school students came out to be -5.853 for df 256, which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, it may be said that there exists a significant difference in the career maturity of senior secondary school students with high and low level of self-confidence. On the basis of mean value, it may be interpreted that highly self-confident senior secondary school students (Mean 76.45) possessed more career maturity as compared to average level of self-confident students (Mean 68.09). The calculative value of 't' for testing the significance of the mean score of career maturity of senior secondary school students with average level of self-confidence and senior secondary school students having low level of self-confidence, came out to be -3088, for df 674, which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, it may be interpreted that there is a significant difference in the career maturity of average self-confidence and low self-confidence senior secondary school students. However, on the basis of mean value, it can be concluded that average self-confident senior secondary school students (Mean 71.70) possessed more career maturity as compared to low level of self-confident students (Mean 68.09).
3. There exists no significant interactional effect between gender and self-confidence with regard to career maturity of senior secondary school students," was retained. Therefore, it may be interpreted that the gender and self-confidence taken together have no significant interactional effect on 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 their gender and self-confidence. 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 value, it is clear that female secondary school students (Mean 72.50) possessed high level of career maturity as compared to male secondary school students (Mean 71.60). The findings clearly indicates that self-confidence plays a crucial role in shaping the career maturity of senior secondary school students. Educational implications of these results suggest that schools should prioritize the development of students' self-confidence through targeted interventions such as life skills training, career guidance

programs, and confidence-building activities. Since students with higher self-confidence consistently demonstrated greater career maturity, educators and counselors should focus on identifying students with low or average self-confidence and provide them with additional support and motivation. This could include mentoring, exposure to diverse career options, and workshops on goal-setting and decision-making. Strengthening self-confidence not only enhances students' readiness to make informed career choices but also equips them to face academic and personal challenges with greater resilience, ultimately leading to improved academic and vocational outcomes. The absence of a significant interactional effect between gender and self-confidence on career maturity implies that the combined influence of these two variables does not impact students' career maturity in a meaningful way. This suggests that educational strategies aimed at enhancing career maturity can be designed and implemented uniformly for both male and female students, regardless of their level of self-confidence. Educators and counselors can focus on building self-confidence and career-related competencies without needing to tailor interventions differently for boys and girls. It also reinforces the idea that fostering self-confidence is beneficial across genders and should be a central component of career guidance programs in schools to support all students equally in their career development journey.

References

- Arul, R., & Manimekalai, S. (2022). Role of academic self-confidence in career decision-making among high school students. *Indian Journal of Psychological Science*, 14(2), 112–121.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. W.H. Freeman and Company.
- Mehta, K., & Bansal, R. (2023). Career maturity and self-concept in adolescents: A comparative study of public and private school students. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 12(1), 59–70.
- Rao, V., & Pillai, M. (2025). Self-confidence and career adaptability: A pathway to career maturity. *Indian Journal of Career Development Studies*, 3(1), 23–35.
- Sharma, S. (2021). Career maturity in relation to self-confidence and gender among adolescents. *International Journal of Educational Research Studies*, 11(1), 18–27.
- Super, D. E. (1990). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. In D. Brown, L. Brooks, & Associates (Eds.), *Career choice and development: Applying contemporary theories to practice* (2nd ed., pp. 197–261). Jossey-Bass.
- Verma, A. (2024). The influence of self-confidence on career planning among senior secondary students. *Asian Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 15(1), 78–89.