

## Summary

The aim of the present research was to understand the career planning process of youth. How the antecedents of this process affect career planning? What could be the consequences of career planning as such and what if this process is mediated through certain constructs? The study was conceptualized in the context of following objective data:

1. In India youth comprised of 27.5% of the population. It is predicted that by 2020 India will be the world youngest work force with 64% of its population in the work front.
2. It was observed that about one-third of the youth population was attending some educational institution in India from the period of 2007-2011.
3. Latest study pointed out “that people in India spend a lot of time getting various degrees and realize later that these don’t provide them an assurance for a lucrative job in the private sector” and in the government sector. This was rightly pointed out in the labour ministry youth unemployment scenario (2014).
4. One in three graduates up to the age of 29 were unemployed.
5. Only 2.7 million jobs have actually been added in the years 2004 to 2010 versus 60 million during half a decade ago before the period of 2004-2010.

The facts above made the researcher contemplate on how the process of such an important developmental stage of a youth life takes place. All the facts were related to career planning of the youths in India. Career planning has great implications for one’s career, health, happiness and has implications for the organizations as well. Keeping in mind the complexity of the career planning process, the study was conceived in three stages. In the phase 1 the researcher wanted to test the most conventional means of assessing career planning. Hence certain antecedents

(personality, interest, work motivation, social support system, socio economic status, gender and work experience) were selected and their effect on career planning was studied. In the next phase of research, the researcher wanted to explore the role of certain constructs which would indirectly carry the effect of career planning on the consequences of career planning. It was assumed for this stage that the mediators (the constructs which would indirectly carry the effect of career planning on the consequences) would have varying effects on the two groups of youth (explained later). And in the final phase the researcher wished to see the direct impact of career planning on the consequences such work engagement, happiness and career satisfaction. It was also assumed for this stage the direct effect of career planning on career consequences would have varying results in the case of both the groups. To analyze and derive meaning from the data collected regression as a statistical analysis technique was used: multiple regression and parallel multiple mediation model process by (Hayes, 2013) was run. The sample of the study were youth from the age group of 19-32 years and were bifurcated in the two groups, group1 constituted of youth with (0-2 years) of work experience and group2 constituted of youth with work experience of (4-6 years). The findings or the results obtained have been discussed at length in the chapter on results and interpretation as well as in the discussion chapter. A quick recap of what have been done in the each chapter of this thesis until the discussion can be found below:

The chapter one on introduction and literature review has an in-depth sketch of all the constructs of this present research work. Along with supporting studies, to show the direct relationship between career-planning its antecedents and consequences. There have been also efforts made to incorporate certain studies that show the indirect effects relevant in the context of career planning its mediators and consequences.

Plenty of relevant literature is quoted from government and development reports along with academic empirical research to understand the current state of career planning and identify the areas of gap. The identification of research question and the generation of hypothesis have been done after a thorough analysis of the major factors impacting career planning.

In chapter two on methods sample, design, tools, as well as the statistical analysis to be used in the study are described. The regression techniques: backward stepwise regression method and the parallel multiple mediation regression method have been explained in this chapter well. Also one can find the CFI tables and PFA factor loading with the cronbach alpha values pertaining to each scale in this chapter.

The chapter on results and interpretations is divided in three phases. First the results obtained about the antecedents of career planning are presented, followed by phase 2 where the indirect relationship through the mediators is shown. And in the final section direct relationships between career planning and its consequences were presented. The first section begins with the descriptive statistics table for all the variables used in the study followed by table of correlation and then a table for depicting values obtained after the backward stepwise regression method is run. The second section has tables and figures of parallel multiple mediated models. In the last phase one can find the descriptive statistics tables along with the correlation tables and figures depicting the direct relationship between career planning and the consequences.

In the chapter on discussion one can find the detailed interpretation of results obtained substantiated by empirical finding existing in literature. The results obtained are summarized briefly below:

1. The results of the first phase of the research depicted that the regression model produced; had medium effect size. All the antecedents explained 14% of the variance in the career planning process. Some of the predictors also depicted a positive relation with career planning extroversion, investigative, social, and conventional, affiliation motive, significant other and gender depict a positive relation with career planning.

2. The total effect is positive in the case of both the groups and the 95% BC bootstrap CI is above zero for all the equation of career planning on criterion variables through the mediators.

The total indirect effect is positive in the case of both the groups however the 95% BC bootstrap CI is above zero only in the case of group 2 for all the equations. In the specific indirect effect organizational career management and career network were the only mediators through which positive effect of career planning were exerted on all the criterion variables. However, the 95% BC bootstrap CI is only achieved in the case of group 2 that is career planning is able to exert its positive effect on criterion variables through organizational career management system in group 2. Because of this the path of influence generated can also said to be statistically different from zero. This same effect is also evident in the case of group 2 for the specific indirect ‘who do you contact in your career network and why’ wherein the path of influence generated here also is above zero and significant. Though some of the specific indirect effects are positive but the path of influence generated by them are not different from zero so it could be concluded that organizational career management is the mediator mainly through which career planning affect the criterion variables in the study.

3. The direct effect is positive and significant in the case of only group1 for all the three equations where the antecedent is career planning and the criterion variables are

(work engagement, happiness and career satisfaction). And is significant i.e. 95% of BC CI is above zero for all the equation.

### **Implications:**

There is no doubt that career planning is a lifelong process in today's world. There was no systematic career planning in operation until recently though few career patterns emerged overtime like: a doctor's sons/daughter would only be a doctor, if someone is good in mathematics he/she should go for engineering, management jobs pay well so everyone should appear for CAT. Career planning if at all practiced in India follows the western paradigm where one's self interest is given prime importance; concept like work motivation and personality are assessed etc. In west this process is not only well developed or standardized but at the same time imbedded in the school and the university process. A similar western paradigm of assessment of interest, personality, work motives and few more antecedents was followed in the present research work too. Certain consequences of career planning were also identified. The results obtained after the analysis are worth some attention in the context of our nation. Unlike the west, interest did not emerge as an integral antecedent of career planning. This could be verified because of two reasons: a large number of items were removed to make the RIASEC tool valid for assessment (when CFA was run) and the beta values were negative for three dimensions of interests (when regression analysis was performed). Similar findings also emerged for work motivation, socio economic status, certain component of social support and work experience. These results clearly highlight the fact that the so called mainstream conceptualization of career planning (based on western framework) may not be so suitable in the Indian context.

The sample of the study is also an important aspect of the present research. The sample of the study constituted of youth from tier 1 and tier 2 cities but mostly from tier 2 cities and also the sample of the study was bifurcated into 2 groups based on the years of experience at work place. This was a very significant contribution of the present research. It was found that career planning was positively correlated with work engagement, happiness and career satisfaction. Interestingly, these relationships varied for two groups of participants. The differences were even apparent when the mediation analysis was used. For the first group all the five mediators failed to mediate the relationship through career planning on all the three outcome variables. However, for the second group (the experienced group) two of the mediators: networking (who do you contact in your career network and why,) and OCM strongly mediated the relationship.

The findings of the present research (especially for exploring the antecedents) clearly highlight the inadequacy of western framework which needs to be taken up so that bottom up/ indigenous theory of career planning could be developed. Similarly we need more theory based conceptualization even at the level of mediators as well as for the consequences. Though the phenomena of career planning is picking up in the tier 1 cities because of mushrooming of few private vendors but it is still in its infancy stages which needs to move beyond the boundaries of metropolitan cities. This leads to a very relevant question whether the whole idea of career planning is a phenomenon relevant for metropolis cities?

However, the utility of career planning cannot be totally negated as it has been found very effective in many cases (Nelson, 2009). There are many instances of negative consequences as well when stream selection or career selection was not based on

proper assessment and career planning (Paul, 2012). Therefore, a more grounded approach is needed to really reap the benefits of career planning.

**Limitation:**

It is important to acknowledge limitation of any research work. Limitation are like introspective mirroring of one's experience that a researcher wished to have worked on; but due to the constraints of time and resources limited himself or herself.

The current research work is cross sectional and is a self report measure hence is prone to common method variance bias (Jap & Anderson, 2004). Similarly the casual inferences made because of cross sectional nature of study are not that superior unlike other methodologies eg longitudinal (Biddle, Slavings & Anderson, 1985; Einhorn & Hogarth, 1986). It is also suspected that after the cleaning of the data also some IV could be showcasing multi-co-linearity hence affecting the variance obtained. There is high a possibility of epiphenomenal and confounding association present in the mediation analysis conducted; though necessary steps had been taken to curb this but a full proof model of mediation is always a myth.

The sampling technique used for sample selection is purposive a non probability technique it has its own limitation; from the researchers bias (halo effect) to the rater's bias (social desirability).

Parallel multiple mediation as a technique is a new methodology for analysis; hence there are no references for reporting the magnitude of effect size in this technique till this movement Preacher and Kelley (2011). The judgment of the researchers is of utmost importance. It is indeed a big limitation of using this mediation technique. The scales used for the research are those used by western authors. These are a few of the

limitations that should be kept in consideration when one is making some inferences from the findings obtained.

### **Suggestion**

1. The data could be collected from different cities and should be analyzed separately which would lead the future researcher to conclude what is the level of career planning based on the exposure of the city.
2. Tools used in the current research work are those used globally for assessment of career needs like interest, personality, work motives but there is need for construction of an Indian scale for the Indian population.
3. There is indeed more research work required for referencing the mediation analysis as it is a novel and upcoming statistical analysis technique
4. Aptitude was not considered as an antecedent of career planning in this study. Though importance is given to percentage and marks in our country even at a national institute like IIT for clearing its preliminary criteria. Aptitude should be considered as an important antecedent for career planning.
5. Regular career planning session could be organized at every level from school, college to work place as career planning is dynamic and ever evolving life long process rather a onetime decision (Hall, 2004).