

CAREER MATURITY, VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS OF RAICHUR DISTRICT: A GENDER PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine **Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations, and Academic Achievement among Higher Secondary Students of Raichur District: A Gender Perspective**. The study adopted a survey research design, and data were collected from a sample of 900 higher secondary students of Raichur District. The researcher developed five-point Likert scales to measure career maturity and vocational aspirations with the help of the research guide and subject experts. The data related to academic achievement were obtained from college records. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used for data analysis. Under descriptive statistics, percentage analysis, mean, and standard deviation were computed, whereas an independent sample t-test was employed to test the formulated hypotheses. The findings of the study revealed significant gender differences in career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement among higher secondary students. The mean differences indicated that male students possessed higher levels of career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement compared to female students.

Key Words: Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations, Academic Achievement and Higher Secondary.

Introduction:

Education is a fundamental process that develops students' abilities, interests, aspirations, and prepares them to make appropriate decisions related to their future careers. The higher secondary stage is considered one of the most significant periods in an individual's life because students begin to identify their interests, select academic streams, and plan their occupational goals. Career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement are important factors that determine students' educational and professional success. Career maturity refers to the readiness of individuals to make realistic and appropriate career decisions based on their abilities, interests, and awareness of occupational opportunities. Super (1957) explained career maturity as an individual's ability to accomplish career developmental tasks suitable to their age and

stage of development. Similarly, Crites (1978) described career maturity as the cognitive and attitudinal preparedness required for effective career decision-making. Vocational aspirations represent the occupational goals and expectations that students develop regarding their future profession. Gottfredson (1981) emphasized that vocational aspirations are shaped by self-concept, social environment, gender roles, and available opportunities, while Holland (1997) stated that students' career choices are influenced by the relationship between their personality characteristics and occupational environments. Academic achievement is another essential component of students' development, reflecting their learning outcomes, knowledge, and educational progress. According to Steinmayr et al. (2014), academic achievement indicates the extent to which learners have successfully achieved specific educational objectives. Previous studies have shown that career development and academic success are closely associated, as students with higher academic achievement often demonstrate greater career awareness, motivation, and confidence in making occupational choices (Lent et al., 1994). Therefore, the study of career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement among higher secondary students provides a better understanding of their readiness for future educational and occupational challenges.

The significance of the present study, "Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations and Academic Achievement among Higher Secondary Students of Raichur District: A Gender Perspective," lies in understanding how male and female students differ in their career-related attitudes, occupational goals, and educational performance. Gender plays an important role in shaping students' aspirations and career decisions because social expectations, family influences, cultural factors, and educational opportunities may create differences between boys and girls. Bandura et al. (2001) highlighted that self-efficacy beliefs and environmental factors influence adolescents' academic and career aspirations. Patton and Creed (2001) observed that career maturity varies among students due to individual and social factors, including gender differences. Similarly, Savickas (2005) explained that career development is influenced by personal experiences and contextual factors that shape individuals' future decisions. In the Indian educational context, understanding gender differences in career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement is highly relevant for promoting equal career opportunities and effective guidance services. Raichur District represents students from varied educational, social, and economic backgrounds; therefore, examining these variables helps identify students' career preparedness and areas requiring support. The findings of the study may assist teachers, parents, counsellors, and educational planners in designing appropriate career guidance programmes, improving students' decision-making abilities, enhancing academic performance, and reducing gender-based differences in career development. Hence, investigating career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement from a gender perspective is essential for empowering higher secondary students to make informed career choices and achieve their future goals.

Statement of Aim:

The main objective of the research is to study the Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations and Academic Achievement among Higher Secondary Students of Raichur District: A Gender Perspective

Objectives of the Study:

1. To find the gender wise distribution of levels of career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement level among higher secondary students of Raichur district.
2. To find gender wise differences in career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement level among higher secondary students of Raichur district.

Hypothesis of the study:

Hypothesis-1: There is no significant difference in the career maturity of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district.

Hypothesis-2: There is no significant difference in the vocational aspiration of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur District.

Hypothesis-3: There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur District.

Research Design:

The present study used a **survey design**, and data were collected from students studying in higher secondary of **Raichur District**. A total of **900 students** were surveyed for the study.

Tools Used in the Study:

In the present study, the researcher developed five-point Likert scale tools for measuring Career Maturity and Vocational Aspirations with the help of the research guide and subject experts to collect data from the students. The data related to academic achievement were collected from the academic records of the students.

Statistical technique:

In the present study both descriptive and inferential statistics considered. Under descriptive statistics percentage analysis, mean and SD computed. Whereas independent sample t-test was computed to test the hypothesis of the study.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

1. Interpretation of the Distribution of Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations, and Academic Achievement level among Secondary School Students of Raichur District

Table-1: Distribution of levels of career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement level among higher secondary students of Raichur district.

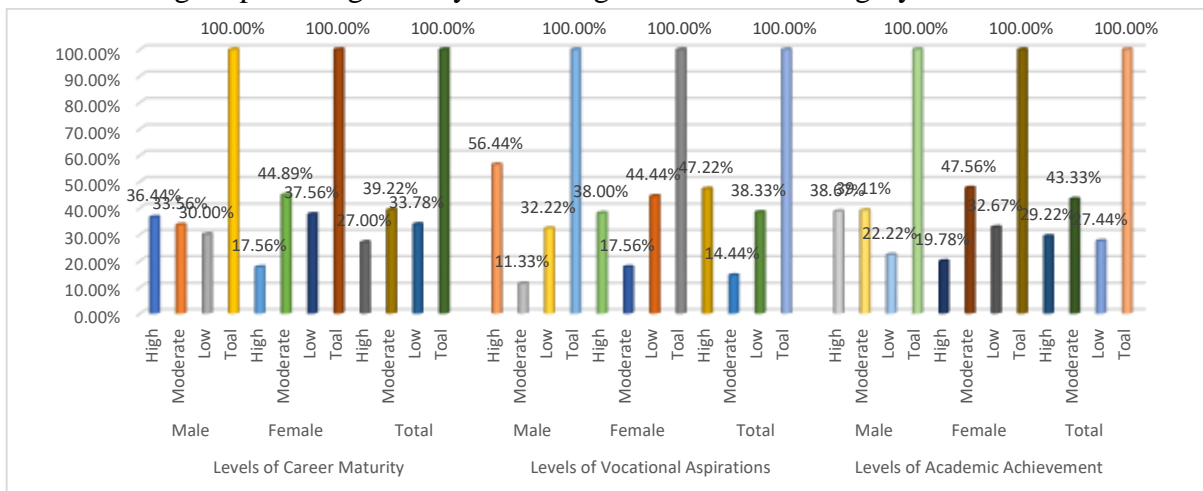
Levels of Career Maturity				
Gender	High	Moderate	Low	Toal
Male	164	151	135	450
	36.44%	33.56%	30.00%	100.00%
Female	79	202	169	450
	17.56%	44.89%	37.56%	100.00%
Total	243	353	304	900
	27.00%	39.22%	33.78%	100.00%
Levels of Vocational Aspirations				
Gender	High	Moderate	Low	Total
Male	254	51	145	450
	56.44%	11.33%	32.22%	100.00%
Female	171	79	200	450
	38.00%	17.56%	44.44%	100.00%
Total	425	130	345	900
	47.22%	14.44%	38.33%	100.00%
Level of Academic Achievement				
Gender	High	Moderate	Low	Total
Male	174	176	100	450
	38.67%	39.11%	22.22%	100.00%
Female	89	214	147	450
	19.78%	47.56%	32.67%	100.00%
Total	263	390	247	900
	29.22%	43.33%	27.44%	100.00%

The above table presents the distribution of higher secondary students of Raichur District according to their levels of Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations, and Academic Achievement. The total sample comprised 900 students, including 450 boys and 450 girls.

The findings indicate that among boys, 36.44% (164) exhibited a high level of career maturity, 33.56% (151) demonstrated a moderate level, and 30.00% (135) showed a low level of career maturity. Among girls, 17.56% (79) belonged to the high category, 44.89% (202) to the moderate category, and 37.56% (169) to the low category. Considering the total sample, 27.00% (243) of the students had high career maturity, 39.22% (353) had moderate career maturity, and 33.78% (304) had low career maturity. The results reveal that boys showed a higher proportion of high career maturity compared to girls, whereas girls were more represented in the moderate and low categories.

With regard to vocational aspirations, 56.44% (254) of boys were found in the high category, 11.33% (51) in the moderate category, and 32.22% (145) in the low category. Among girls, 38.00% (171) belonged to the high category, 17.56% (79) to the moderate category, and 44.44% (200) to the low category. For the total sample, 47.22% (425) of the students demonstrated high vocational aspirations, 14.44% (130) showed moderate vocational aspirations, and 38.33% (345) had low vocational aspirations. These findings indicate that boys possessed comparatively higher vocational aspirations than girls.

The data further reveal that 38.67% (174) of boys attained high academic achievement, 39.11% (176) attained moderate academic achievement, and 22.22% (100) attained low academic achievement. Among girls, 19.78% (89) achieved a high level, 47.56% (214) achieved a moderate level, and 32.67% (147) achieved a low level of academic achievement. In the total sample, 29.22% (263) of the students belonged to the high achievement category, 43.33% (390) to the moderate achievement category, and 27.44% (247) to the low achievement category. The findings suggest that boys performed better academically than girls, as reflected in the higher percentage of boys in the high achievement category.



Graph-1: Distribution of Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations, and Academic Achievement level among Secondary School Students of Raichur District.

2. Analysis and Interpretation of Data using inferential statistics

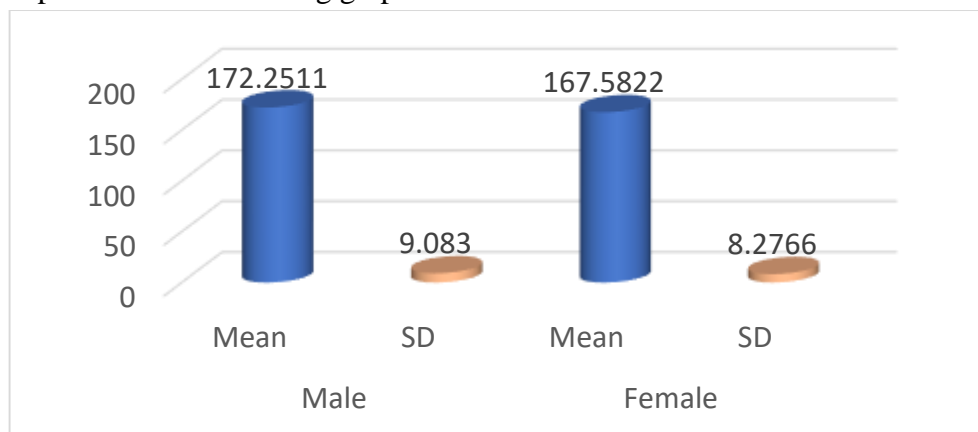
Hypothesis-1: There is no significant difference in the career maturity of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district.

Table 2: Summary of the independent samples t-test for comparing the career maturity of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	S/NS
Male	450	172.2511	9.083	898	8.059	.001	S (P < .05)
Female	450	167.5822	8.2766				

The above table indicates that the mean career maturity score of male higher secondary students of Raichur District is 172.2511 and the SD is 9.083, whereas the mean career maturity score of female higher secondary students of Raichur district is 167.5822 and the SD is 8.2766. The calculated t-value is 8.059 with 898 degrees of freedom, and the corresponding p-value is 0.001. The obtained p-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is accepted. It means that, there is a significant difference in the career maturity of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district at the .05 level of significance, $t = 8.059 (898), p < .05$.

From the comparison of mean scores, it is evident that the mean score of male higher secondary students is higher than that of female higher secondary students. Therefore, the study found that male higher secondary students have a higher level of career maturity than female higher secondary students in Raichur District. The data are also reported in the following graph.



Graph-2: Comparison of career maturity of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district

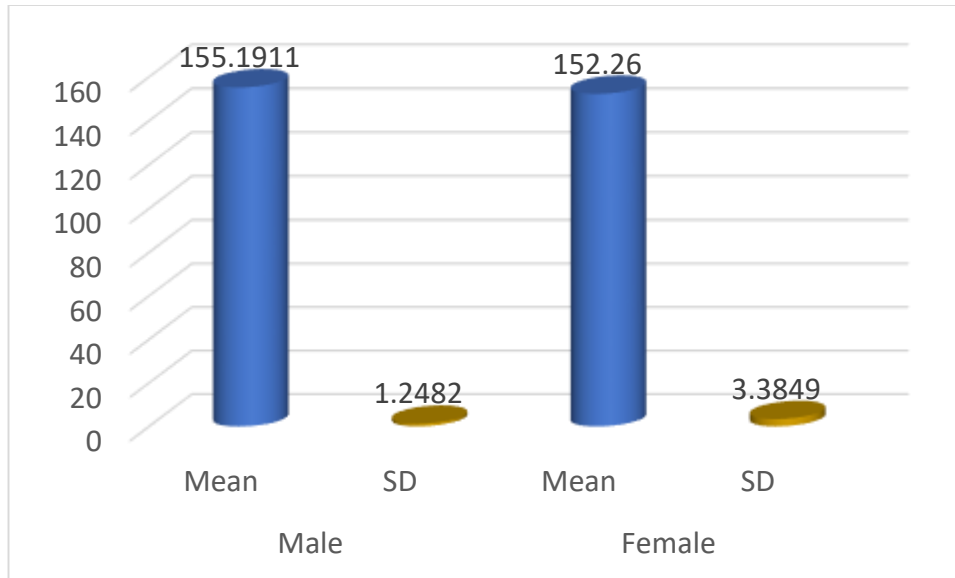
Hypothesis-2: There is no significant difference in the vocational aspiration of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur District.

Table 3: Summary of the independent samples t-test for comparing the vocational aspirations of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district.

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	S/NS
Male	450	155.1911	1.2482	898	17.2346	.001	S ($P < .05$)
Female	450	152.26	3.3849				

The above table indicates that the mean vocational aspiration score of male higher secondary students of Raichur district is 155.1911 and the SD is 1.2482, whereas the mean vocational aspiration score of female higher secondary students of Raichur district is 152.26 and the SD is 3.3849. The calculated t-value is 17.2346 with 898 degrees of freedom, and the corresponding p-value is 0.001. The obtained p-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is accepted. It means that, there is a significant difference in the vocational aspiration of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district at the .05 level of significance, $t = 17.2346 (898), p < .05$.

From the comparison of mean scores, it is evident that the mean score of male higher secondary students is higher than that of female higher secondary students. Therefore, the study found that male higher secondary students have a higher level of vocational aspiration than female higher secondary students in Raichur District. The data are also reported in the following graph.



Graph-3: Comparison of vocational aspiration of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district

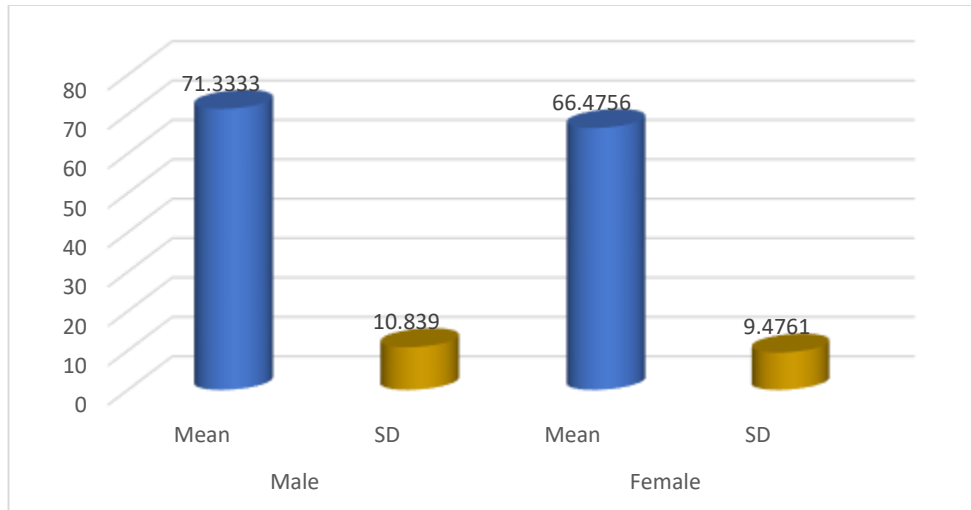
Hypothesis-3: There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur District.

Table 4: Summary of the independent samples t-test for comparing the academic achievement of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district.

Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	S/NS
Male	450	71.3333	10.839	898	7.1576	.001	S (P < .05)
Female	450	66.4756	9.4761				

The above table indicates that the mean academic achievement score of male higher secondary students of Raichur district is 71.3333 and the SD is 10.839, whereas the mean academic achievement score of female higher secondary students of Raichur district is 66.4756 and the SD is 9.4761. The calculated t-value is 7.1576 with 898 degrees of freedom, and the corresponding p-value is 0.001. The obtained p-value is less than the .05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is accepted. It means that, there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district at the .05 level of significance, $t = 7.1576 (898), p < .05$.

From the comparison of mean scores, it is evident that the mean score of male higher secondary students is higher than that of female higher secondary students. Therefore, the study found that male higher secondary students have a higher level of academic achievement than female higher secondary students in Raichur District. The data are also reported in the following graph.



Graph-4: Comparison of academic achievement of male and female higher secondary students of Raichur district

Major Finding of the Study:

- Boys demonstrated higher levels of **career maturity (36.44%)**, **vocational aspirations (56.44%)**, and **academic achievement (38.67%)** compared to girls. Girls were found to be more represented in the **moderate and low categories** of career maturity (44.89% and 37.56%), vocational aspirations (17.56% and 44.44%), and academic achievement (47.56% and 32.67%).
- Significant gender differences were found in **career maturity** ($t = 8.059, p < .05$), **vocational aspirations** ($t = 17.2346, p < .05$), and **academic achievement** ($t = 7.1576, p < .05$) among higher secondary students of Raichur District.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The main objective of the study was to explore **Career Maturity, Vocational Aspirations, and Academic Achievement among Higher Secondary Students of Raichur District: A Gender Perspective**. The analysis of the data revealed that there were significant gender-wise differences in career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement. The mean difference indicated that male students were found to have higher levels of career maturity, vocational aspirations, and academic achievement compared to female students. This indicates that gender has a significant influence on all the dependent variables considered in the study.

differences were found in **career maturity** ($t = 8.059, p < .05$), **vocational aspirations** ($t = 17.2346, p < .05$), and **academic achievement** ($t = 7.1576, p < .05$) among higher secondary students of Raichur District.

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