
Indecisiveness and psychological well being among young adults

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Abstract

Young adults are often faced with the sudden responsibility to take up a number of decisions suddenly. The overload of so much options and information in today's day and age can cause indecisiveness and affect the psychological well being among young adults. This study attempts to study the effect of indecisiveness on the psychological well being in a sample of young adults (N=74) within the age group of 18 to 24. The questionnaire from indecisiveness scale developed by Randy o Frost and Deanna L Shows(1993) and the psychological well being scale (Ryff & Keyes,1995) was used to collect data from the sample population using convenience sampling technique and was analyzed using a correlational method. The findings indicated that there is a significant relationship between indecisiveness and psychological well being. Thus it can be concluded indecisiveness has an impact on psychological well-being in young adults.

Keywords-Indecisiveness, Psychological well being(PWB), College students

1.Introduction

India is home to a fifth of the world's youth population. The youth of this country is its biggest asset as they are the future of both humanity and the current generation. The massive size of youth that we uphold also poses a threat by adding to the rising competition amongst them in the job market. As we move ahead with this outdated education system and sheer absence of training in soft skills, our young adults find themselves falling behind in the working population. The importance of key skills like decision-making is inevitably highly valued in the current context. Estimates suggest that by 2030, nearly 20% of the workforce will be significantly under-skilled for their jobs. A 2018 [Deloitte study](#) suggested that in the US manufacturing industry alone, the skills gap could see around 2.4 million roles unfilled between 2018 and 2028.

As today's teenagers enter into the onset of adulthood, they are faced with a number of critical decisions to make. With the huge responsibility of their future bestowed upon them, indecision often poses as a crippling problem for a lot of the young adults. Students often find themselves having to make a lot of choices, a major one being about their careers. This career indecisiveness has been studied in connection with chronic indecisiveness and anxiety(Campagna &Curtis, 2007; Fuqua et al., 1987; Hardin et al., 2006).

Indecisiveness is defined as a dysfunctional personality trait characterized by a generalized difficulty to make decisions (Lauderdale et al., 2019). Indecisiveness often extends to other areas of life. Difficulty in making decisions can be caused by several factors, such as a fear of failure and a lack of confidence or information. Indecisiveness or decisional procrastination is a form of self handicapping behavior that is linked with self serving bias. Indecisiveness can also be a symptom of mental health conditions, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It can have a negative impact on the quality of our life socially, emotionally and psychologically. Not being able to make a decision can cost a lot of our time, money and resources. The anxiety and fear of making the wrong choice can impair us from choosing something. The high expectations to always choose a perfect alternative can also be detrimental, contributing to the inability to make a decision. Being a different form of procrastination, indecisiveness makes an individual put off making their decision until the very last minute, thus affecting our psychological well-being.

According to a study published in *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being* psychological well-being is described as being, “the combination of feeling good and functioning effectively.” Psychological well-being can be broadly divided into two i.e hedonic well-being (subjective feeling of happiness) and eudaimonic well-being (purposeful aspect of psychological well-being). Not being able to make a decision can affect the quality of our life drastically.

Career indecision is a topic that has been studied a lot in several studies. However indecisiveness or rather decisional procrastination as a broad variable affecting us beyond our career choices has not been studied that much. A knowledge about any possible such correlation can also give us an insight into the interventions that might be helpful to help with indecisiveness and elevate psychological well-being of young adults. Hence this study focuses on collecting and analyzing the effects of indecision on the psychological well-being amongst young adults.

2. Review of Literature

A cross-sectional study conducted by Yaxin Zhu, Tianming Zuo, Yanni Lai, Shenglin Zhao and Bo Qu (2016) examining the associations between coping strategies, psychological health, and career indecision among medical students in China. Among all the factors in the test, career indecision was positively associated with psychological distress. The study further showed how a higher level of career indecision is negatively associated with using problem-focused coping strategies among medical students.

Maria Maddalena Viola, Pasquale Musso, Sonia Ingoglia, Alida Lo Coco and Cristiano Inguglia (2017) conducted a study on the relationship between career indecision, search for work self-efficacy and psychological well-being in Italian never-employed young adults. Results highlighted that SWSE is negatively associated with LoR when considered in absence of PWB. However, when PWB was included in one comprehensive model, it was positively associated with SWSE and negatively related to LoR. Moreover, the presence of PWB nullified the negative association between SWSE and LoR, meaning that PWB shares a large extent of variance with these variables.

The study conducted by Javier Pérez-Gallego, José Alberto Gallardo-López, Fernando López-Noguero and María Pilar Rodrigo-Moriche (2020) tested the relationship between psychological well-being and decision-making in adolescent students with an initial sample of 1,262 students from the Autonomous Community of Madrid, Spain, aged 13–19. Data collection uses the first Spanish adaptation of Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale and the Flinders Adolescent Decision Making Questionnaire, adapted by Friedman and Mann. The data shows that greater use of adaptive decision-making strategies correlates significantly with greater psychological well-being. In contrast, the correlation is high and negative at the intersection of the maladaptive decision-making variables and psychological well-being.

Gürçan ŞEKER (2020) did a study on the Well-Being and Career Anxiety as Predictors of Career Indecision. This research aimed to examine the relationship between high school students' well-being levels and career anxiety levels and career indecision. Research data were collected from 663 students (398 girls, 265 boys) studying in Anatolian high schools and vocational high schools. Career Decision Inventory, Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale, and Career Anxiety Scale were used to collect data. The Hierarchical Regression Analysis was used in the data analysis. The research results show a significant negative relationship between career indecision and well-being and a significant positive relationship between career indecision and career anxiety.

Ümüt Arslan and Burcu Bayraktar-Uyar (2020) conducted a study on the mediating role of mindfulness in the relationship of career decidedness and career distress with psychological well-being (PWB) and subjective well-being (SWB) among 338 university students from Izmir, Turkey. Career Decidedness Scale, Career Distress Scale, The Flourishing Scale, Positive and Negative Affect Scale, The Satisfaction with Life Scale and The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale were used in the study. The Pearson

Correlation Test was applied for correlations and PROCESS Model 4 analysis tools were used to test the mediating models. The results showed that career decidedness predicted mindfulness, PWB, and SWB, and mindfulness played a mediating role in the link between career decidedness and PWB and SWB. While career distress predicted PWB and SWB, it did not predict mindfulness. In addition, mindfulness did not have a mediating role in the relationships of career distress with PWB and SWB.

3.Hypotheses

- i)There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and psychological well being among college students.
- ii)There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and autonomy among college students.
- iii)There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and environmental mastery among college students.
- iv)There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and personal growth among college students.
- v)There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and positive relations among college students.
- vi)There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and purpose in life among college students.
- vii)There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and self acceptance among college students.

4.Objectives

- i)To assess the relationship between indecision and psychological well being in college students.
- ii)To assess the relationship between indecision and autonomy in college students.
- iii)To assess the relationship between indecision and environmental mastery in college students
- iv)To assess the relationship between indecision and personal growth in college students.
- v)To assess the relationship between indecision and positive relations in college students.
- vi)To assess the relationship between indecision and purpose in life in college students.
- vii)To assess the relationship between indecision and self acceptance in college students.

5.Methodology

The sample includes college students and the sample size is 74 young adults of the ages 18-24 years old. The sample comprised 58.9% males and 41.1% females. The data were collected from undergraduate college students from Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, Ernakulam, Idukki and Trivandrum districts of Kerala. The sampling technique used for the study was convenience sampling method.

The data was collected using Google form with a consent form that was taken and confidentiality was ensured. The participants were selected based on the inclusion criteria. Socio-demographic details of the participant were recorded for this study.

Spearman's rank correlation statistical analysis was utilized to analyze the data. The statistical data was analyzed using the IBM SPSS software version. 25.

The data were collected using the questionnaire from indecisive scale developed by Randy o Frost and Deanna L Shows(1993) and Psychological well being scale developed by psychologist Carol D. Ryff(Ryff & Keyes,1995). The IS is a 15-item instrument and is a 5 point rating scale from 1(Strongly disagree) to 5(Strongly agree). The IS is easily scored by summing all item responses. The IS has very good internal consistency, with alphas of at least .87. The IS also has established a good concurrent and discriminant validity.

The psychological well being scale is a 18 item scale based on a 7 point item rating scale. The PWB scale has six subscales:Autonomy, Environmental mastery, Personal growth, Positive relations with others), purpose in life and Self acceptance. The test-retest reliability coefficient of RPWBS was 0.82 and validity was established.

6.Result and Discussion

The collected data was analyzed based on the formulated objective and hypothesis. The scores of indecisiveness and psychological well-being were assessed using Spearman bivariate correlation method. The findings have been presented in table 1.

Table 1:Analysis of relationship between indecisiveness and variables among college students.

VARIABLES	Indecisiveness
Psychological well-being	0.254*
Autonomy	0.286*
Environmental mastery	0.166
Personal growth	0.248*
Positive relations	0.063
Purpose in life	0.104
Self acceptance	0.203

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

The relationship between psychological well-being and indecisiveness shown in table 1. Indecisiveness was positively correlated to psychological well-being and was found to be significant value at a 0.05 level ($r=0.254^*$). Thus, the null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and psychological well being among young adults.” was rejected.

Indecisiveness was positively correlated to autonomy and was found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance($r=0.286^*$). Thus, the null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and autonomy among young adults.” was rejected.

Indecisiveness and environmental mastery were found to be positively correlated and a significant relationship was established($r=0.166$). Therefore the null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and environmental mastery among young adults.” was rejected.

A positive correlation and significant relation was established between indecisiveness and personal growth at 0.01 level of significance($r=0.248^*$). Thus, the null hypothesis states that , " There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and personal growth among young adults.” was rejected.

Indecisiveness and positive relations were found to be positively correlated and a significant relation was established($r=0.063$). Therefore the null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and positive relations among young adults.” was rejected.

Indecisiveness and purpose in life were found to be positively correlated and a significant relation was established($r=0.104$). Therefore the null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and purpose in life among young adults.” was rejected.

Indecisiveness and self acceptance were found to be positively correlated and a significant relation was

established($r=0.203$). Therefore the null hypothesis which states that, “There will be no significant relationship between indecisiveness and self acceptance among young adults.” was rejected.

As the relation between indecisiveness and psychological well-being were examined in the study, a significant relationship was found between indecisiveness with most factors of psychological well-being. These findings were consistent with the results in the study conducted by Yaxin Zhu, Tianming Zuo, Yanni Lai, Shenglin Zhao, and Bo Qu(2016) examining the associations between coping strategies, psychological health, and career indecision among medical students in China. Among all the factors in the test, career indecision was positively associated with psychological distress. Thus it can be inferred that there is correlation between indecisiveness and psychological well-being.

Among the six subscales autonomy and personal growth were positively correlated to indecisiveness with 95 percent level of significance. This shows how much indecisiveness would correlate to other unexpected factors like autonomy and personal growth. The more autonomy an individual has over their decision the more chances are for an individual to be prone to indecisiveness. This result is inconsistent from the findings of Dr. Ruqaiya Javed, Prof. Musaddiq Jahan(2021) where they found out that career autonomy and career indecisiveness are negatively correlated. Secondly, even though personal growth is positively correlated with indecisiveness it indicates the relationship between the two increase or decrease simultaneously. Here there exists a significant correlation between the two that is confirmed from the study. Environmental mastery, positive relations, purpose in life and self acceptance are all positively correlated with indecisiveness. This data is also inconsistent with the study done by Javier Páez-Gallego, José Alberto Gallardo-López, Fernando López-Noguero and María Pilar Rodrigo-Moriche (2020) tested the relationship between psychological well being and maladaptive decision making, where all their subscales were negatively correlated. These inconsistencies may be due to the limitations that an online survey poses, due to which people are not interested to genuinely read the instructions or answer the question. Lack of time and energy to go through a long array of questions might also be possible factors for this inconsistency. However, contrary to the hypothesis, we were able to establish a significant relationship between indecisiveness and the 6 subscales of psychological well being. Thus, indecisiveness and psychological well being are significantly correlated to each other.

CONCLUSION

Findings revealed that a significant relationship exists between Indecisiveness and psychological well being in young adults. Thus, indecisiveness had an impact on the psychological well-being in young adults.

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