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## DEVELOPMENT OF DECISION MAKING STYLE SCALE FOR SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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**Abstract:-** *Decision making is one of the core activities of education and is an essential element in any process to be executed. Decision making can be considered as a cognitive process that results in the selection of a certain belief or a course of action among some alternative possibilities. Every decision making process produces a final choice that may or may not inspire our actions. The present study is aimed at developing a tool on Decision Making Styles. After consultation with various experts in different fields of education, 44 items were selected initially from a draft of 50 items. Sample of 100 students were selected randomly for preliminary tryout from Sirsa district. In preliminary tryout 26 items were selected from 44 items. Second sample of 300 students were randomly selected for final tryout from the same population of Sirsa district. The main purpose for the development of this tool was to check the ability of students that how they make decisions about their career, educational decisions or decisions about their life. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 18) was employed for the purpose of data entry, manipulation and analysis. Validity and reliability of the items were also checked.*

**Keywords:** Decision making ability, decision- making styles and senior secondary school students.

### INTRODUCTION

The word decision has been derived from the Latin word ‘decider’: which means ‘a cutting away or a cutting off in a practical sense’. Thus a decision requires a cut of alternatives between those that are desirable and those that are not desirable. Decision making is an important skill at all stages in life. More importantly, learning is a part of the decision making process (Geogorc, 1982 a; Sproles & Sproles, 1990). Decision making involves some logical steps: determining the problem, considering multiple alternatives, and choosing the best alternative based on the particular situation (Deacon & Firebaugh, 1975; Garman, 2002; Goldsmith, 1996; Maynes, 1976; Rice&Tucker, 1986). Decision making is the process of sufficiently reducing uncertainty and doubt about alternatives to allow a reasonable choice to be made from among them. Some have argued that most decisions are made unconsciously. **Jim Nightingale** states that “we simply decide without thinking much about the decision making process.” Stoner, Yetton, Craig and Johnston (1994) defined decision making as the process by which a course of action is selected as the solution to a specific problem. **Huber (1980)** distinguishes decision making from ‘choice-making’ and from ‘problem-solving’. Huber suggests that choice making refers to the narrow set of activities involved in choosing one option from a set on alternatives.

The usefulness of decision making styles lies in telling us something about the decision maker. Researchers look for how people differ in arriving at a certain choice. (Epstein, Pacini, Denes- Raj. V & Heier, 1996; Scott & Bruce, 1995), how satisfied people are with their choice (Crossley & Highhouse, 2005) and how people arrive at good decisions (Franken & Muris, 2005; Parker & Fischhoff, 2005; Singh & Greenhaus, 2004). Decision making is also an important part of planning. In order to make effective decisions, planning is necessary. Without planning

decision does not often end well. Planning makes decision-making simpler than it is. According to B. Aubrey Fisher, there are four stages or phases that should be involved in all styles of decision-making: **Orientation, Conflict, Emergence and Reinforcement**. Decision making usually begins with the identification of a problem. Decision making and problem solving are used in all educational activities, although commonly they are considered a part of planning stage. It is necessary to gather information before making a decision and cross check the information sources for agreement, in order to make good decisions.

There are different kinds of decisions that need to be taken in routine activities of our life. Some decisions are easy to take, others are difficult and some are extremely important because they involve our educational, vocational careers and even life partners. It is more important to find ways and means which will help decision-makers in handling the various complexities inherent in today's society and in making choice of better alternatives that will eventually result in better outcomes and experiences. By organizing relevant information and following the steps of decision-making process, an individual is helped in taking more rational and thoughtful decisions. People use different styles of decision making and it depends on the types of circumstances and which particular style of decision making is needed to handle the particular situation which an individual faces. Keeping in mind the various situations decisions can be rational, irrational, dependent, directive, conceptual, analytical, avoidant etc. These are some of the styles that we use in decision making process. **Directive decision making** relies on a rational and autocratic style which means that individual is using his/her own knowledge or experience in choosing the best alternative. **Conceptual decision making** is used in group where students are provided with relevant information and together they generate and evaluate many possible solutions. **Analytical decisions** are often taken after analysis of the whole situation or problem. **Logical decision making** is an important part of all science-based professions, where experts use their knowledge in a given area to make well-read (wise) decisions. **Avoidant style** is related to low self-regulation ability, low self-esteem, and problems with taking initiative (Thunholm, 2004). In other words, people with avoidant style do not want to study different alternatives, and thereby fail to undertake the right decision.

#### Review related literature:

The main purpose of surveying the review of related literature is to identify the main research issues related with decision making process.

**Blustein, (1989):** has investigated the relation between career decision-making self-efficacy and the extent of career exploratory behavior. The findings suggested that the people who are more confidence in their decision-making capacities, they will seek better information about their career options. Career exploratory behavior resembles career decision-making style in that they both involve information-processing. This similarity suggests that there are significant relations between decision-making self-efficacy and the decision-making styles.

**Nota & Soresi, (1999):** studies that decision making is particularly complex during adolescence, which is a critical period of transition. The adolescent has to undergo the evolution task of making the best choices for his future independently, in particular at school and in a constantly evolving society, without reference points. Regarding school choices, many young people appear to be undecided and insecure, tending to make external assignments and lack trust in their decision-making abilities and to use inadequate decisional strategies (for example: procrastination and avoidance of the decision).

**Finucane et al. 2000; Slovic (2000):** studied the main characteristic of the experiential system is the psychological concept of affect, defined as an emotional, feeling-state that people experience, such as happiness or sadness or the quality associated with a stimulus, such as its goodness or badness. Responses that are based on affect occur rapidly and atomically, with or without conscious thought or effort from decision-makers. Reliance on these feelings during judgment and decision making has been characterized as the affect heuristic. In other words heuristic leads to judgment about objects, activities and other stimuli on the basis of the varying degrees of affect attached to them.

**Mulford et al. (2000):** conducted a study in primary schools in Tasmania and examined school decision-making processes as perceived by principals, teachers and school council members. Their findings seem to suggest that all the stakeholders (teachers, parents and learners) need to be engaged in real decisions about teaching and learning in the school so that real improvement in education can be achieved.

**Wei-Cheng Mau(2000):** studied on culture differences in career decision-making and self-efficacy. One of the most important findings of his study is that career decision-making self-efficacy is significantly associated with career decision-making style. In general, students who described themselves as rational in career decision making tended to perceive themselves as more competent in career decision making, whereas students who described themselves as dependent in decision making tended to perceive themselves less competent in decision making.

**Holzworth (2001):** discusses judgment and decision making in terms of broader research objectives, such as decision analysis research which can focus on whether people make rational decisions, versus judgments analysis of which one focus has been to look at the accuracy of people’s judgments’. The rationality and accuracy of judgment and decision making are two topics that will be looked at in greater detail when considering key debates in the field. Holzworth (2001) outlines some of the key insights from judgement analysis research into how people make judgements. The first observation was that: people use fewer cues and less information and then they think they do when making a judgement. This idea draws parallels with the actuarial versus clinical judgement debate, which questions the added value of more labour intensive clinical judgements if actuarial judgements are comparable in terms of effectiveness. This point also shows the importance of study methodology and whether the self-report approach can accurately capture decision making if people are not aware of how to use information.

**Hastie, (2001):** argued on the research that how people make judgements or decisions that can help us to better understand behavior in different situations. As well as the development of general theories to explain decision making, there is also an interest in improving understanding of specific types of decisions such as those seen to be of some social significance. Research related to this study problem has been conducted by **Trujillo and Ross (2008)** to look at how police judge the level of risk of a repeat occurrence in cases of domestic violence. Assessment of 501 case reports from 87 police stations in Victoria, Australia, identified that there was a significant relationship between the risk assessment (the perceived likelihood of repeated violence ranging from rare, to almost certain) and the action police then took in cases of domestic violence, meaning it is important to understand judgements surrounding risk assessment. Considering judgement and decision making in the context of community issues such as domestic violence draws parallels with the proposed study of financial misuse of the aged.

**Bekker et al. (2004):** this study raises questions as to the application of utility theory to different types of decisions. Instances such as the decision of whether or not to have a particular clinical test have a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ option. Where a problem has multiple decision options or involves making a series of related decisions, a ‘global’ one comparison utility assessment would not be possible. The notion of SEU in itself is also interesting in terms of whether there is a difference between subjective probability assessment and known probabilities. I.e. even when probabilities are known, does the individual interpret probability in the same way? This leads to the question of why people do not follow the tenets of utility theory.

**Ariely (2008):** studied that people are rational decision-makers. This assumption implies as a standard or theoretical benchmark, against which actual examples of decision making can be compared. He has learned much about how people actually make decisions by challenging these assumptions outside of strict economic theory development and by cataloguing the instances within which the rules of rationally and utility maximization do not apply. Despite these theoretical developments, our economic theories still generally assume that people know about the pertinent information that distinguishes decision alternatives and are also capable of making the necessary calculation for weighing the ramifications of selecting one alternative over the other.

**Enver Sari (2008):** studied on the relationship between decision making in social relationship and decision-making styles. This study aimed to examine the relationship between decisiveness in social relationship and the decision making styles of the group of university students and to investigate the contribution of decision making styles in predicting decisiveness in social relationship. Main findings of the study were that for higher level of the relationship there is a negative correlation between hyper vigilance and conflict resolution, although it is at a low level. Findings also show that decision- making in social relationship does not differ according to gender.

**Wilson (2008):** argued that we must also recognize that complex environmental management decisions of the type addressed by stakeholder groups require the integration of, and a thoughtful balance between, affective and deliberative elements. On the one hand, we want stakeholder groups to bring to the table the strong emotions and contextual factors that are essential roots of their concern; on the other hand, and particularly in cases characterized by highly uncertain but consequential risks and benefits (as is the case with climate change), we seek decisions that reflect thoughtful, deliberative modes of judgment.

**Significance of the Inventory:**

Students are always in a critical stage of their life while developing decision making ability. At this stage (senior secondary level) expectations of parents, teachers and society have made them highly confused, stressed and also influenced their decision making abilities. Decision making process is very important for their future life. Decision making suggests that students should carefully sort through information and options to choose an appropriate action that maximize their achievements. A lot of studies have been done on decision making in relation to different variables by different authors. The present study for the construction of “**Decision-making style scale**”

has a significant value in the field of education especially for senior secondary level students. In the above reviews, there are many studies on decision making, but they are not particularly for school students. So the investigator has tried to develop this inventory to measure the ability of decision making in senior secondary level students.

Tool Construction:

For the development of the “Decision making styles scale” the researcher had studied different research related topics and develop items on the similar lines. Researcher had also scrutinized the tool from expertise team. They verified it and suggestion are included by researcher.

Preliminary Tryout of the Inventory:

The present study applies the development of a new scale on decision making styles. The research study emphasizes the validity and reliability of selected items from the scale based on factor analysis. Inventory constructed by researcher consisted of 50 items initially. These items were modified and improved after the suggestions given by experts and inventory now consisted of 44 items. Preliminary draft consisted of 44 items in the inventory. Before item analysis 44 items were administered on 100 senior secondary school students from Sirsa district for pilot study. The respondents were told to respond to each item and discuss any problem for communication or otherwise.

Sample:

After the item analysis of preliminary tryout with 44 items 26 items were selected. Then for final tryout, sample of 300 senior secondary school students were randomly selected from senior secondary school students of sirsa district. **Table 1** in below indicates that sample was divided according to demographic variables.

GENDER STREAM	Male	Female	Total
Arts/Science	150	150	300
Urban/Rural			
Gov./NonGov			

Table 1

Results and Discussion:

Validity and reliability of the tool was done with help of SPSS (version 18). Reliability means that property of a measurement that gives the same results on different occasions (Mc Burney,2001). Responses of the students were collected from 5-point Liket scale that is 5-strongly agree, 4- agree, 3-neutral, 2-strongly disagree and 1-disagree. Researcher constructed a tool which consisted 50 items. To check the validity and reliability of the tool 50 items were constructed. After consultation with 9 experts of different fields 44 items were selected from 50 items. After preliminary tryout 26 items were finalized out of 44 items. Rotated Component Matrix was applied on 26 items. Table 2 shows the component matrix or factor matrix. It shows the coefficient used to express the standardized variables in the terms of the factors. These coefficients, the factor loading, represent the correlation between the factor and variables. A coefficient with a large absolute value indicates that the factor and the variable are closely related. These selected 26 items were divided into 8 factors. Out of these 8 factors, 4 factors included 15 questions having large (positive items) absolute value (@ valueabove .5) were finally selected.

Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>

	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Rational	.714	-.050	.074	.023	-.027	.023	.131	-.120
Do	.641	.102	-.106	.023	-.092	-.101	.054	-.039
Do	.680	-.003	-.096	-.067	.318	.023	.016	.135
Do	.678	.035	-.022	.105	-.118	.052	-.013	.023
Intuitive	.638	.208	-.079	-.002	-.041	.030	-.133	.008
Do	.610	-.089	-.033	.274	.073	.062	.228	.028
dependent	.574	-.012	.072	.059	.336	.015	.009	.101
spontaneous	.126	.010	.086	.843	.030	-.014	-.042	-.033
spontaneous	.131	-.008	-.151	.692	.179	-.029	.099	.159
Avoidant	-.114	.144	.841	.002	-.080	-.113	.017	.128
Avoidant	-.047	.151	.829	-.033	-.136	.001	.156	.019
Do	-.199	.697	.125	-.097	.061	.007	.152	-.073
Do	.193	.748	.174	-.050	.083	-.023	.110	.007
dependent	.047	-.178	-.155	.249	.653	.323	-.077	-.089
dependent	.263	.034	-.143	.152	.020	.686	-.237	.126
Avoidant	-.036	.072	.104	-.139	.070	.683	.034	-.348
spontaneous	-.111	.086	-.092	-.046	-.052	.618	.263	.262
Avoidant	.266	.077	-.221	.214	-.166	.079	.336	-.534
Avoidant	.207	.118	.178	-.082	.416	.088	-.037	-.547
dependent	-.094	.220	.042	.223	.257	-.009	.556	-.105
Do	.189	.332	-.021	-.043	-.046	.039	.385	.440
Do	.558	-.050	.063	.318	-.007	.124	-.363	-.074
Do	.198	-.092	.329	-.095	-.095	.046	.574	-.019
Do	.143	-.025	.167	.134	.083	.098	-.035	.500
Do	.168	.741	-.001	.180	-.145	.199	-.175	.001
spontaneous	-.027	.092	-.160	.068	.716	-.139	.099	.070

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

**Table 3: explained % of variance, factor loading and Cronbach's alpha value**

Factor	Factor Interpretation(% of variance explained)	Loading	Variables Included in the factor	Cronbach's Alpha value
F1	Rational decision making(15.965)	.714	Take decisions based on intuitions.	.806
		.641	Make decisions in logical way.	
		.680	Think rationally about achievements.	
		.678	Spend great time to make good decision.	
		.638	Check information sources double.	
		.610	Think carefully while making decisions.	
		.558	Deal efficiently with unexpected events.	
		.574	Take help of experts in decision making	
F2	Intuitive decision making(9.720)	.697	Feel that decision is right.....	.650
		.741	When I make decision, depend on instincts	
		.748	When I make decision, trust on feelings.....	
F3	Avoidant decision making (6.869)	.841	Avoid the advice of others.	.798
		.829	Not giving importance to other advice.....	

Table 4:- After the selection of 26 items in this scale, principal component analysis was also done. Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) value was **.694** in the analysis. As KMO value needs to be over 0.60, it could be accepted as sufficient as it is close to 0.90 (Nunnally, 1978). Therefore, the KMO value is acceptable for this research.



KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.694
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1742.161
	Degree of freedom	325
	Sig.	.000

**Table 5:-**To access the internal consistency or homogeneity among items available in the research instrument, Cronbach’s Alpha is applied. Because this has most utility for multi-items and dichotomous scale at internal level of measurement and is also concerned with estimates of the degree to which a measurement is free from random or unstable errors. The coefficient varies from 0 to 1 value, in case of Cronbach’s Alpha, 0.6 or less generally indicates unsatisfactory reliability. In the present scale Cronbach’s Alpha value is **0.642** and sufficient for reliability of the scale. Table 5

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.642	.710	26

**Tables 6 and 7 shows:-** that 8 factors have been extracted on the basis of prior knowledge to describe the relationship among variable in a best way. The Scree Plot associated with this analysis is given in the table 5th from the Scree Plot, a distinct break occur at eight factor. Table 6 shows cumulative percentage of variance accounted for, 57.730, percent of 8factors, contributed by first (14.30) followed by second (21.796), third (28.802), forth (35.232), fifth (41.251). sixth (47.242), seventh (52.506), eighth (57.730) of total variance.

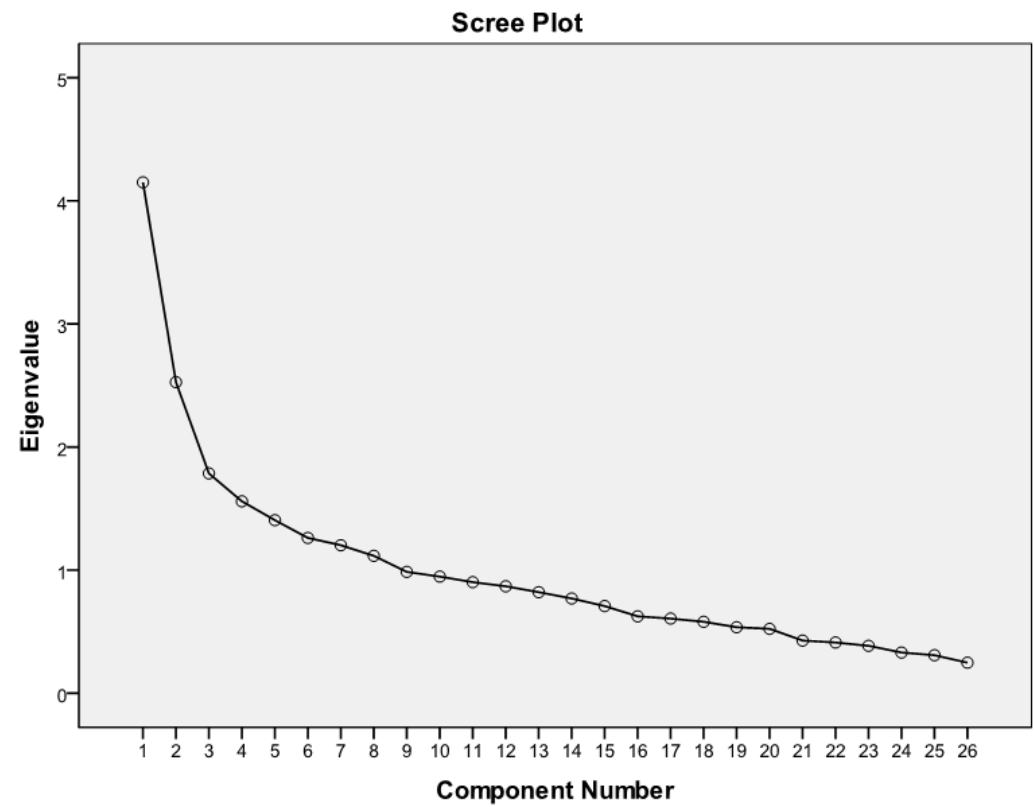


Table 7:-

Compo- nent	Total Variance Explained								
	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.151	15.965	15.965	4.151	15.965	15.965	3.719	14.306	14.306
2	2.527	9.720	25.685	2.527	9.720	25.685	1.947	7.490	21.796
3	1.786	6.869	32.553	1.786	6.869	32.553	1.822	7.006	28.802
4	1.559	5.996	38.550	1.559	5.996	38.550	1.672	6.430	35.232
5	1.406	5.407	43.957	1.406	5.407	43.957	1.565	6.019	41.251
6	1.262	4.854	48.811	1.262	4.854	48.811	1.557	5.990	47.242
7	1.203	4.625	53.436	1.203	4.625	53.436	1.369	5.265	52.506
8	1.116	4.294	57.730	1.116	4.294	57.730	1.358	5.223	57.730
9	.986	3.792	61.522						
10	.948	3.645	65.167						
11	.902	3.471	68.638						
12	.869	3.342	71.981						
13	.821	3.158	75.138						
14	.770	2.962	78.100						
15	.708	2.724	80.825						
16	.625	2.403	83.228						
17	.607	2.333	85.561						
18	.581	2.234	87.795						
19	.536	2.063	89.857						
20	.523	2.013	91.871						
21	.428	1.646	93.517						
22	.412	1.585	95.102						
23	.385	1.482	96.584						
24	.331	1.272	97.856						
25	.309	1.189	99.044						
26	.248	.956	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 8:-Split-half method was used to determine the reliability of the inventory. The total reliability (split- half) of the inventory was 0.683. Table 8th explained the total reliability:

Reliability Statistics			
Cronbach's Alpha	Part 1	Value	.469
		N of Items	13 <sup>a</sup>
	Part 2	Value	.438
		N of Items	13 <sup>b</sup>
	Total N of Items		26
Correlation Between Forms			.518
Spearman-Brown Coefficient	Equal Length		.683
	Unequal Length		.683
Guttman Split-Half Coefficient			.683

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