

Impact of Career Self-Efficacy Beliefs on Educational and Career Aspirations of Bachelor Students

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Abstract

Different researches were conducted on the relationships of self-efficacy with academic performance, motivation for future ambitions and achievement behaviours. Although a few researchers find out the impact of self-efficacy beliefs linked to a career on educational and career aspirations. The present research aimed to explore the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on educational and career aspirations of university students. Gender differences between students of SE beliefs were also identified. Occupational Aspiration scale developed by Garewal in (2002) was adapted, and career decision making self-efficacy scale developed by Tyler and Betz (1983) was used in this study. The study was conducted following survey method by taking a sample of 2635 students of B.S. studying in different universities of Punjab, Pakistan. Data were analyzed by using the different statistical measures such as mean score, standard deviation, t-test and ANOVA. About the different parameters of occupational self-efficacy beliefs and overall self-efficacy beliefs, it was found out that the mean scores of males and females had significant variances.

Keywords: Aspirations, educational aspirations, career aspirations, career self-efficacy

Introduction

Students' aspirations can be changed due to the effects of different factors which influenced them at the university level but these aspirations can be modified due to the students' surroundings, from their experiences and environment. Aspiration is described as a strong wish to attain high goals (Kaur, 2012). It is also defined as what students think to achieve in future. It is also viewed that aspirations are related to students' desires and dreams about their future life. All the factors effect on educational & career aspirations of students and their self-efficacy beliefs perform an important role to create or direct students' aspirations. So, the level of aspiration is defined as a point

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of reference towards a goal, context and experiences. It means that the level of aspiration can be decided by the students' decisions about their career goals so that the students can be able to decide their careers to perform their tasks and achieve the goals.

Career aspiration is expressed in term of the wishes and wants of a person related to any occupation (Grubb & Lazerson, 2005). Regardless of the limits enforced by the reality career aspiration is purely confirmed by imaginations whereas vocational choice needs to be more reality-based, therefore, only a few theories have framed particularly for vocational aspiration (Sirin, Diemer, Jackson, Gonsalves, & Howell, 2004). Theoretically, in a democratic set up an individual has the fundamental right to adopt any vocation which a person aspires for the most of times. Students' knowledge of career choices, their awareness of ways to career attainment, and their perceptions of self-efficacy to complete their vocational goals need to observe.

An individual's confidence supports the individual to decide how much efforts, a student has to make for a specific task (Hendricks et al., 2015). An important factor which affects an individual's career aspiration is related to the self-efficacy. The definition of self-efficacy relates to the judgment of knowledge and belief about persons' potentials and abilities. Self-efficacy is defined as an individuals' confidence and beliefs related to strengths and capabilities and is concerned how people perform in given behaviours (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 2001; Bindu & Padmanabhan, 2016). It is related to achieve assigned targets and required performance.

Self-efficacy remains very important sphere of human behaviour which is investigated in the field of education and psychology measured by the self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1997; Lemons, 2011). It is related to our beliefs on how better we judge our abilities instead of referring to our abilities. It's not an inborn ability or trait and it is not related to specific people who have high or low self-efficacy (DiRenzo, Weer, & Linnehan, 2013). Rather, it is related to people judgment and beliefs about their precise aims and spheres of life. For instance, if you have firm beliefs about the expertise to perform better in university education and have faith you can utilize your skill to polish, it means you have better academic confidence.

A person's self-efficacy can determine, whether an individual will select to perform or avoid to perform a task (Carpenter, 2014). People's beliefs related to their abilities; mostly determine how they will interact with their outer environment or world. People, who have high self-efficacy, positively perform better responsibilities and people who have low self-efficacy feel it hard to complete the tasks.

People who have low self-efficacy are often fighting with doubts. All the activities people believe to choose has great influence are affected by their positive and negative self-efficacy beliefs. Different researches quoted the association of self-esteem and confidences with career aspirations. Austin, Sutherland and Gilbert (2013)

described positive link between self-efficacy and target settings intentions of African American school students at a high level. Bindu and Padmanabhan (2016) found that there was an impact of self-efficacy on entrepreneurial attitudes concerning college of education students. As self-efficacy beliefs affect educational and career aspirations. Sinclair, McKendrick and Scott (2010) reported that educational aspirations are also influenced on the career development process and educational aspirations which refer to more self-efficacy, strong self-esteem and extreme educational aspirations refers to the achievement of a career. Bindu and Padmanabhan (2016) mentioned the important role of self-efficacy for better future career choice. The self-efficacy is considered as a significant determinant of career aspirations. It was reported that girls take a greater interest and have higher self-efficacy level for their careers they perceive as employing many persons of their gender. So the counselors' should be careful throughout career guidance process with different genders (Hellenga, Aber, & Rhodes, 2002) different environmental forces develop the sense of self-efficacy like parents' socio-economic status, parental self-efficacy and perception about the attainment of their career.

Career self-efficacy make the person face new challenges with confidence and judge the events as worse external circumstances before time. (Pinquart, Juang, & Silbereisen, 2004). A persons' making career decisions is also an important concept of career self-efficacy. Mostly self-efficacy is assessed by applying concerning different five aspects namely (1) precise self-appraisal, (2) collecting occupational information, (3) selecting goals, (4) constructing future plans, and (5) challenging problems. Different studies have shown that parameters of career and educational aspirations career identity academic and socials adjustment.

In the previous investigation, it was found that boys worked performed well than girls on most of the certain variables. Same results are also described by Betz, (2006) explained that for self-efficacy and occupational aspiration. Concerning the male and female results, the degree of self-efficacy supports the boys. The occurrence of gender difference might be due to boys' real outlook which produces personal accomplishment and lead them to work hard and persist in the face of hindrances. Bandura (1997) and Flammer (1990) explored that people with strong self-efficacy beliefs show the strong state of mind and high self-esteem. But the low self-efficacy girls readily hint to a sense of weakness about one's competence to handle more efficiently with the tasks and demands of effort. With respect to femininity, males and females have the same aspirations, throughout young age with females devising somewhat higher aspirations, in spite of observing more fences to attainment (Mello, 2008).

It was mentioned in previous studies that females do not have strong self-efficacy (e.g., (Pinquart, Juang, & Silbereisen, 2003) and weak career aspirations than the males, (Halecker, Bickmann, & Hölzle, 2014) and higher levels of self-efficacy

beliefs can greatly solve a math problem. Students' self-efficacy affects their motivation and real academic ability which interacts with self-efficacy to influence academic performance.

It is important to analyze and make reflections on aspirations for many reasons because they are important in making career decisions in future. So it can be concluded that family, personal identities, self-efficacy beliefs and external environment also shape students' career aspirations (Frome, Alfeld, Eccles, & Barber, 2006). Bandura (2001) claimed that young children among numerous further changes which happen in the start of their life develop aspirations about their future that is linked with their positive aspects of personality and educational outcomes as well as self-efficacy.

Bandura (2001) mentioned in the social and cognitive theory that career beliefs are related to the development of personality, through observational learning which is based on social experience. This theory relates to the concept that every individual's actions and reaction depend on the behaviours which an individual observes in others. So this theory supports the study because all the outdoor activities and self-perceptions developed the self-efficacy of individuals is influential in deciding the future desires and goals which are major features of career social cognitive theory.

Self-efficacy develop the individuals own awareness of outdoor and societal elements (DiRenzo et al., 2013). All the individuals who have high career self-efficacy have confidence that they can participate in problem-solving activities related to their careers. Bandura, (2001) reported that perceptions about the impact on career choice were determined in different studies. The self-efficacy of students have a great impact on their educational aspirations, motivation, vocational interests, and career abilities (Chang, Soetikno, Bastas, Tu, & Nguyen, 2003). The benefits of career self-efficacy prepare the people in their whole life with strong self-efficacy beliefs toward performing well in an institution, tend to perceive a wider range of career options (Lent, Paixao, Da Silva, & Leitão, 2010). In addition, people who have a successful career have high self-efficacy beliefs about their professional work. So, it would be important to study the need of confidence in making future educational and career decision.

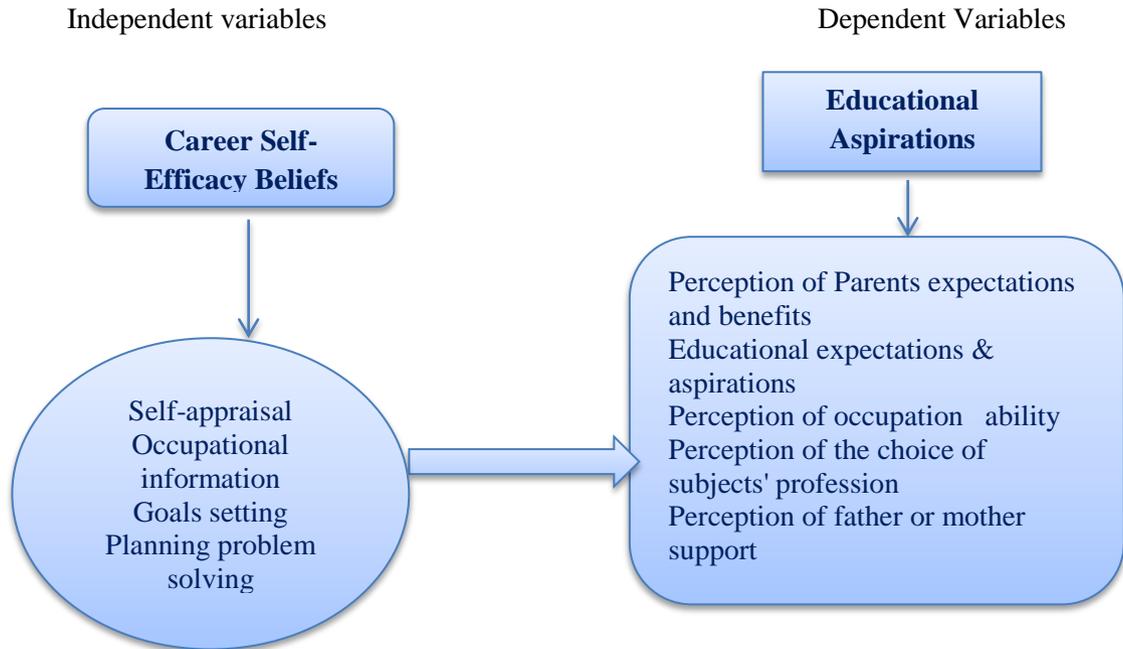


Figure 1. Framework of the relationship between Variables

The current study was targeted to identify the effect of career self-efficacy beliefs on educational and career aspirations of bachelor Students in Punjab. The researchers were interested to study the relationship of self-efficacy beliefs with the aspirations of B.S. university students in Punjab and explored gender difference regarding the self-efficacy beliefs and Career self-efficacy of the university students in Punjab.

Objectives of the Study

The current study aimed:

1. To compare male and female students career self-efficacy beliefs and educational and career aspirations of B.S. students.
2. To compare the educational and career aspirations of 1st and 8th semester Bachelor students in Punjab.
3. To evaluate the association between students' career self-efficacy beliefs with educational and career aspirations among Bachelor students.

Research Questions

1. What is the difference between the males' and females' career self-efficacy beliefs and educational and career aspirations of B.S. level university students?
2. What is the difference between the students educational & career aspirations in 1st&8th semester bachelor students in Punjab?
3. What is the relationship of students' career self-efficacy beliefs with educational and career aspirations among Bachelor students in Punjab?

Research Design

The descriptive method of research was employed in present research. All the B.S. students in public and private universities of Punjab were the population of the study. For the accomplishment of the objectives of the study, the researcher used the Career Aspiration Scale developed by Garewal (2002). This study employs a career aspiration scale and self-efficacy scale. The instrument constructed by Tyler and Betz, (1983) was applied in current research. Its reliability was checked from total score test-retest reliability correlation which is .85 and internal consistency is measured by obtaining the coefficient value of alpha which is .92.

The career aspiration scale consisted of 26 items. Each item has an assigned score (ranging from 1 to 5). For the validation of data, a questionnaire was used to determine the students' career aspirations at the university level. The Occupational aspiration scale is an instrument which focuses on idealistic and practical expression level as well as on scoring as all of the eight items was scored in a similar way. The instrument was assessed by applying the Cronbach's alpha coefficient which was calculated and put into comparison with the threshold of 0.7. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.86 that was above the brink value of 0.7 hence the research questionnaire was trustworthy adequately.

The researchers used multistage sampling for collecting the data. It comprised of three-stage sampling. At the first stage, only the general universities were selected from public and private sector universities. At the second stage, seven public and six universities private sector which represents the whole province was selected by using stratified sampling technique.

According to the enrollment rate of each university 2835 students were selected from the sample through convenient sampling method. Twenty-six items were concerned about the aspiration of students. Twenty-two items related to the self-efficacy were included in the questionnaire for students only. CSES by Tyler and Betz (1983) and Aspiration Scale by Garewal (2002) was adopted in this study. Content validity and face validity were checked in the light of experts' opinions. Reliability was determined by applying Cronbach's alpha method. Value of r was 0.811 and 0.75 for the self-efficacy scale % Aspiration scale respectively.

Data were collected about their CSE beliefs like self-appraisal, goals selection, planning and problem solving, in the aspiration scale data was collected about the students' perception about the occupation ability, their self-concept about the parent's identification, perception about parents' expectations and students' perception about future desires and plan. Data were collected about Students' SE beliefs demonstrate the connection of these variables to students' career and educational aspirations.

Results and Interpretation

The researcher entered responses of questionnaires by using SPSS software and analyzed the data. The objective which aimed to identify the gender differences between male and female occupational and educational aspirations at the university level was analyzed through t-test because t-test is mostly used to analyze the differences. To study the relationship of students' SE beliefs with educational and career aspirations was analyzed through Pearson correlation which is most suitable for this study.

Table 1

Comparison between male and female respondents related to educational and career aspiration (N=2835)

Variable	Female (n =2090)		Male (n =745)		t-test		Effect size d
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t	p	
Perception of Occupation ability	22.66	4.00	22.74	4.35	-0.460	0.646	
Self-concept of support from father or mother	16.22	2.88	16.14	3.04	0.640	0.523	0.05
Perception of financial and social support	20.01	3.90	20.00	4.41	0.079	0.937	
Parents expectations and identifications	30.65	6.11	30.81	5.95	-0.610	0.542	
Perception about the choice of subjects and educational aspirations	15.73	2.94	15.84	3.04	-0.886	0.375	

The table shows a comparison of male and female students for all the dimensions of educational and Career Aspirations. For the perception of occupation ability the average score of female students was 22.66 with S.D 4.00 and for male respondents mean score was 22.74 with S.D 4.35. The comparison shows that males have a slightly higher score as compared to females. T-score was -0.460 and p-value 0.646 show that the results were not significant. So it was concluded that there was no difference between the perception of occupation ability of male and female students. It

indicated that gender differences were not affected by the perception of occupation ability of students.

According to the results regarding the self-concept of support from father or mother, the average score of female respondents was 16.22 with S.D 2.88 and for the male mean score was 16.14 with S.D 3.04. T-score was 0.640 and p-value 0.523 shows the results were not significant at 5% level of significance. It shows similar results were found between male and female students about the self-concept of support from father and mother. Concerned the perception of financial and social support the average score of female respondents was 20.42 with S.D 3.90 and for male respondents mean score was 20.00 with S.D 4.41. T-score was 0.079 and p-value 0.937 shows that the result was significant at 1% level. About the parents' expectations and identifications, the average score of female students was 30.81 with S.D 6.11 and for male respondents mean was 19.67 with S.D 5.95. T-score was -0.610 and p-value 0.542 showing the results revealed that students' perception of occupation ability between male and female students had no variations which were also not significant at 1% level of significance. Students reported that the Perception about the choice of subjects and educational aspirations mean score was 15.73 SD was 2.94 for females and males mean score was 15.84 and SD 3.04. P value 0.375 shows the results were not significant though the d value was 0.05 in this regard. So there was not a substantial difference between the opinion of males' and females' perception of the choice of subjects.

Table 2
Comparison between male and female respondents regarding their SE Beliefs (N=2835)

Variable	Male (n =745)		Female (n =2090)		T-Test		Effect size d
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	T	P	
Self-appraisal	21.90	4.46	21.86	4.48	0.204	0.839	0.06
Occupational Information	29.75	5.98	29.20	6.02	2.144	0.032*	
Goal setting	20.42	5.21	19.80	5.12	2.857	0.004**	
Planning and problem solving	20.19	4.21	19.67	4.27	2.798	0.005**	

According to Table 2 related to self-appraisal average score of female students was 21.90 with S.D 4.46 and for male respondents mean score was 21.86 with S.D 4.48. The mean score shows that females have a slightly higher score as compared to males. So the female was more confident about their self-appraisal ability than the male students. T-score was 0.204 and p-value 0.839 shows that the results were not significant. Although occupational information the average score of female respondents

was 29.75 with S.D 5.98 and for the male mean score were 29.20 with S.D 6.02. The comparison shows females group having a slightly higher score as compared to males. T-score was 2.144 and p-value 0.032 showing the results were significant at 5% level of significance, so the female was more confident about the occupational information than boys.

Regarding the goal setting ability significant results were found, average score of female respondents related to goal setting was 20.42 with S.D 4.21 and for male respondents mean score was 19.80 with S.D 5.12. T-score was 2.857 and p-value 0.004 shows that the results were significant at 1% level. So the female students can set their future goals in a better way as compared to males.

With regard to planning and problem solving, the average score of female students was 20.19 with S.D 4.21 and for male respondent's mean was 30.81 with S.D 4.27. The comparison shows that female respondents have a higher score as compared to males. T-score was 2.798 and p-value 0.005 shows that the results were significant at 1% level of significance, 0.05 d value shows the moderate effect size so it was explored that the females were more confident to plan and solve the future career problems.

Table 3
Comparison between semester 1 and semester 8 students for SE beliefs (N=2835)

Variable	Semester 1 (n =1417)		Semester 8 (n =1418)		T-Test	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	T	P
Self-appraisal	21.90	4.54	21.82	4.38	0.471	0.638
Occupational information	29.63	6.03	28.98	5.98	2.877	0.004**
Goal setting	20.17	5.21	19.70	5.06	2.374	0.018*
Planning and problem solving	19.93	4.30	19.65	4.21	1.710	0.087

Table 3 shows a comparison of overall students for all the dimensions of self-efficacy scale semester wise. T-test was used for comparison to find the significance level. For the self-appraisal, the average score of students of semester 1 was 21.90 with S.D 4.54 and for respondents of the semester, 8 mean score was 29.63 with S.D 6.03. The comparison shows that the students of semester 1 have slightly better results instead of to final semester. T-score was 0.471 and p-value 0.638 shows that the results were not significant. For occupational information, the average score of respondents of semester 1 was 29.63 with S.D 6.03 and for semester 8 students mean score was 28.98 with S.D 5.98. The comparison shows that the semester 1 students having a greater score as compared to semester 8. T-score was 2.877 and p-value 0.004 shows that the results were significant at 1% level of significance.

It was explored that the average score of semester 1 students related to goal setting was 20.17 with S.D 5.21 and for semester 8 respondents mean score was 19.70 with S.D 5.06. The comparison shows first group had a greater score than the second group. T-score was 2.374 and p-value 0.018 shows that the results were significant at 5% level. For the planning and problem solving the average score of semester 1 students were 19.93 with S.D 4.30 and for semester 8 respondents mean was 19.65 with S.D 4.21. The comparison shows semester 1 respondents having a higher score as compared to semester 8. T-score was 1.710 and p-value 0.087 shows that the results were not significant. There was no significant difference in their confidence related to the planning and problem-solving ability between the 1st and 8th-semester students' average mean score.

Table 4

Comparison between semester 1 and semester 8 students educational and career aspirations (N=2835)

Variables	Semester 1 (n =1417)		Semester 8 (n =1418)		T test	
	M	SD	M	SD	T	P
Perception of occupation Ability	22.57	3.82	19.48	4.348	1.55	.000
Self-concept of support from father or mother	31.30	5.791	30.08	6.279	2.62	.000
Perception of financial and social support	15.77	2.865	15.74	3.06	3.98	.000
Parents' expectations and identifications	16.34	2.781	16.06	3.04	5.3	.000
Perception about the choice of subjects and educational aspirations	20.31	3.822	19.70	4.22	0.274	.000

According to Table 4, all items show a significant mean difference between 1st and 8th-semester students' different aspects of education and career aspirations. Mean Score showed a slight difference between the respondents' opinions. It was indicated that occupational aspirations of students were the same in 8th as well as the 1st semester. According to this table, 1st-semester student's perceptions of occupation ability were slightly better than the 8th-semester students. As the table indicates, 1st-semester students had a more positive self-concept of support from father or mother than the 8th-semester students.

Table 5
Impact of career self-efficacy on educational and career aspirations

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	Sig.
Perception of occupation ability	22.69	4.09	19.170	.000
Self-concept of support from father or mother	16.20	2.92	18.203	.000
Perception of financial and social support	20.01	4.03	14.102	.000
Perception of parents' expectations and identifications	30.69	6.04	29.967	.000
Perception about the choice of subjects and educational aspirations	15.75	2.96	19.691	.000

The results of ANOVA in Table 5 denote that career performance had a much significant influences on the educational and career aspirations of university students at B.S level. The statistically calculated value of F was 19.170 which were significant at the 0.05 level. So it was concluded in the study that career self-efficacy had an impact on the perception of occupation ability of students at the initial stage. The students' confidence related to their career also affected parents' support of education. The calculated F value was 29.96 regarding the perception about parents' expectations and identifications were significant. It was concluded that students' confidence in their professional life had a significant effect on the students thinking about their parents' expectation and their identifications. Students' perception of the choice of subjects and educational aspirations had also a significant impact on the career self-efficacy. The calculated F value was 19.69 at the 0.05 significance level.

Table 6
Correlation of career self-efficacy with the educational & career aspirations

Variables		Educational and Career Aspiration	Self-Efficacy
Educational and career aspiration	Pearson Correlation	1	.623**
	Sig.		.000
Career self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.623**	1
	Sig.	.000	
		2835	2835

A significant relationship exists between career self-efficacy and educational and career aspirations of university students. It was observed that the occupational confidence beliefs were a determinant of educational and career aspirations' of students at B.S. level. The computed r-value was .623 which revealed a significant difference at

0.05 level. All the parameters of career self-efficacy were correlated to the university students' future occupational and educational aspirations.

Discussion

Many studies have been carried out on occupational aspiration concerning various psychological variables, but very few researches gave attention towards an ideal and real job aspiration of students. As regards, the current gender and semester wise differences regarding educational and occupational aspiration at different aspects were examined. It was observed that male and female students had different views about their self-efficacy beliefs related to its all the parameters.

Differences in mean scores of males and females show that males are much confident for getting their jobs according to their interest and aptitude. A significant difference was found between 1st and 8th-semester students' different parameters of aspirations as the perception of occupation ability, perception about parents' expectations and identifications, the ability of self-concept of support from father or mother, perception about financial and social support and perception about the choice of subjects were measured as well. It is inferred from the study that students of 1st semester have higher aspirations than the 8th-semester students that are a sign of a healthy trend. To maintain their confidence teachers, parents and government should take care of their interest and need. They should give them full support and help them in bringing up their hopes in positive directions.

So it was concluded in a study that stream is not a factor associated with realistic expression of occupational aspiration of students at initial career point but it is a determinant factor in the idealistic expression of occupational aspiration at initial career point. The results show a positive link of students' competency beliefs and their aspiration.

It was concluded that occupational aspirations inspired from self-efficacy beliefs of students which was proved by the results. This positive association directed that the self-efficacy can be certainly modifying the career aspiration of students. The results are in line with the studies of Austin (2009), Scott (2010), Akanbi (2013) and Reddan (2014) who reported the substantial significant positive relationship between self- efficacy and career aspiration of university students. It is concluded that there is not any interaction between self-efficacy and career aspiration of students. So, it is said that while choosing a career at any stage, students do not give due importance to their self-esteem. They only think about their interest and capabilities during the selection of their jobs. Occupational aspiration and self-efficacy of students were significantly related to each other.

Conclusions

The paper presents the study of influences of self-efficacy beliefs and its effects related to the aspirations of B.S level students with concern to gender and semester differences. There was no significant difference between male and female students educational and career aspirations but there was a significant difference between male and female students' career competencies of university students. About the career self-efficacy beliefs, there was a significant variance among 1st and 8th-semester students and there was also a significant variance between 1st and 8th-semester students educational and career aspirations. There was a significant association among career self-efficacy with the educational and career aspirations of university students at therefore the significant impact of career self-efficacy on students related to all the parameters of aspirations was found.

Self-efficacy may affect educational and career decisions, so it is essential to motivate individuals for their future plans worked out because individuals with low self-efficacy beliefs cannot perform in a better way. Parents and teachers can perform effective practices in the development of high self-efficacy beliefs and provide them with opportunities for the promoting higher-order thinking skills for future higher aspirations. The student should provide such experiences which are helpful for their future educational and career plans. Further researches can also be conducted on the academic self-efficacy beliefs and its influences on the future demands of education. Other personality predictors, for instance, risk-taking behaviour can be considered and could be used in future studies.

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