

Career Choice of Girl Child in Contemporary India

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Abstract

The current paper attempts to outline the pervasive cultural beliefs that contribute to gender socialization of women's career-choices in India. Cultural beliefs along with actual ability influence an individual's perceptions of its competence at various career-relevant tasks. To the extent that individuals then act on gender-differentiated perceptions when making career decisions, cultural beliefs about gender channel men and women in substantially different career directions. For the purpose of developing a coherent perspective, articles from both eastern and western perspective were included. A careful review of existing literature suggests the role of internalization of gender stereotypes on the part of women in shaping their explicit and implicit career preferences. Furthermore, an outline of the trajectory of career choices of women indicates factors like parenting, maintenance of work-life balance, and familial obligations to transform and contribute to their career-decision making. Based on the review, this article recommends (a) the development of more robust theoretical perspectives that better suit the eastern cultures, and (b) a reconceptualization of "career counselling" to include a holistic understanding of the factors that contribute to (or alternatively hinder) the career or vocational choices made by girls.

Keywords: career decision-making, academic gender segregation, career counselling, parenting, empowering women.