The Impact of Temperament, Personality Traits And Motivation on Youth’s Interest to Join Armed Forces as A Vocation

Dr. Nishi Misra
Defence Institute of Psychological Research, Defence R&D Organisation, Delhi, India

Ambika Dutta
Deptt of Psychology, Manav Rachna International University, Faridabad

ABSTRACT
India is a country where every fifth individual lies in the age group of 15-24 years which is identified as “youth”. This population, which was the focus of the present study, is critical for a nation’s continued economic development and demographic evolution. There is a long list of vocational choice available for this group but when one asks them about their interest in armed forces, they are likely to give forces the last priority in their list of aspirations, thus pointing towards other factors that determine a youth’s career choice for Armed Forces. The present study focused on the impact of temperament, personality traits and motivation on the youth’s interest to join armed forces as a vocation. Sample size comprised 140 students (70 under-graduates and 70 post-graduates). Results revealed significant gender differences on armed forces as a career choice. On the dimensions of personality, there was a significant difference found on agreeableness between those who wanted to join Armed Forces and those who did not. No significant difference was found on temperament and intrinsic motivation between the two groups.

Key Words: Youth, Career Choice, Temperament, Personality, Motivation, Armed Forces

INTRODUCTION

According to the 2011 Census of India, populace aged 15-24 years represents 430 million of the 1,029 million of India's populace (The Hindu, population and census). As such, every fifth individual in India fits within the age aggregate 15-24 years. This population, which is referred to as ‘youth’ is critical for the country’s continued economic development and demographic evolution.

Even though career trajectories no longer may be singular, linear or necessarily stable (Bakshi, 2011); the choice of a career represents a coming of age for youth. Right career choice is a very important decision of this age-group. In a study conducted by Bakshi, Gandhi, Shah, & Maru (2012) on “Influences on Career Choices as Perceived by Youth in Mumbai”, it was found that in choosing one career over another we select to optimise certain characteristics and competencies over others. Each choice allows the building of particular strengths; at the same time each choice precludes other competing choices.

An examination of the Indian scenario (Nagle, 2005) reveals that financial status or Socio-economic status (SES) could separate between singular's vocation investments, goals and accomplishments and that SES could firmly impact profession decision conduct. It has been reported that young individuals from lower SES groups scored low on measures of career maturity when compared to those from higher SES groups (Gupta, 1986; Mohan, 1999).

Factors in Career Choice
A. Temperament
Temperament is the latent or the hidden aspect of one’s personality which is genetically based. As per the study done by Oakland, Stafford, Horton and Glutting (2001), there was a strong relationship between temperament and vocational interests which was noticeable in youngsters as youthful as 8 to 10 years. Those with extroverted styles were keen on being a rock star. Those with contemplative, instinctive, and feeling styles are keen on being an essayist. Those with speculation styles were keen on being a technician. Those with feeling styles were keen on being an advisor. Those with adaptable styles are keen on being a plane pilot. In another study done by Vaidya, Sierles, Raida, Fakhoury,
Przybeck & Cloninger (2004), students choosing surgery, emergency medicine, and obstetrics and gynecology were higher on novelty seeking than other students.

B. Personality
Most of the careers demand that one should have the personality to match the qualities of the occupation. For example, sales people have to be outgoing and extrovert to accomplish their target. There are five dimensions of personality namely- Openness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. They are used because these dimensions are considered to be the underlying traits that make up an individual’s overall personality and as per the researches personality traits do influence one’s choice of career. Nagle (2005) in a study found candidates opting for Army and Navy to be more adventurous, energetic, optimistic, self-confident, talkative and pleasure-seeking type whereas candidates opting for Air Force were more analytical, critical, curious, cautious, intellectual, rational and introvert.

C. Motivation
Motivation is the essence for academic excellence. Without motivation, learning becomes difficult. There are two types of motivation-Intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to performing an activity for oneself, in order to experience pleasure and satisfaction inherent in the activity. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation pertains to a wide variety of behaviors where the goals of action extend beyond those inherent in the activity itself (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Entwistle (1981) and Elton (1988) argue that intrinsic motivations have large potential benefits, as students are more likely to work enthusiastically and independently, engage with material, understand meanings, make connections with previously studied material and with real life situations.

In a study done by Kniveton (2004), the researcher saw a great deal of motivation to work was found primarily to involve money, and liking for the job. Very low on the list were long term goals, such as personal development, career advancement, and pensions. This clearly shows the interest of the youth is towards extrinsic factors.

Over the years it has been noted that there is a shortage of personnel in armed forces despite the fact that we are having the second largest army. Moreover, India is a county where unemployment is the biggest problem of today’s youth but still they are not attracted towards armed forces as a career. The princedom to soldiering has veritably vanished, leaving the commendable calling of arms as only one more profession for the not really high classes of society or may be a career alternative for youth.

OBJECTIVES
- To investigate the role of gender on the interest of the youth to join the armed forces
- To investigate the role of temperament on the interest of the youth to join the armed forces
- To investigate the role of personality traits on the interest of the youth to join the armed forces
- To investigate the role of motivation on the interest of the youth to join the armed forces
- To investigate the difference in the temperament, personality and motivations between the students who want to join armed forces and the students who don’t want to join armed forces.

Hypothesis
H1-Male students will be more interested in joining armed forces as compared to female students.
H2-Students who are interested in joining armed forces will be having high potential for appearing for SSBs/AFSBs.
H3-Students who are interested in joining armed forces will be high on openness to experience and conscientiousness.
H4-Students who are interested in joining armed forces will be high on intrinsic motivation.

METHODOLOGY
Sample
The sample for the present research study comprised 140 students (70 undergraduates and 70 postgraduates) from Manav Rachna International University. Age range of the sample was 18-25 years.
Care was taken to ensure representation of both male and female respondents. Total number of male respondents were 92 and female respondents were 48.

**Measures**

Temperament Test (Kaur, G. 2007)
The present test was taken from the technical manual- Military Aptitude Test (MAT) and it measures whether the candidate is having the potential to appear for SSBs/AFSBs or not. This test comprises 21 statements. Each statement has five options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These items are scored from 1 to 5 with strongly agree as 1 to strongly disagree as 5. Because there are tendencies to give responses in affirmative, statements are designed in such a manner that some of the statements are reverse scored. The maximum score the subject can have on this test is 105 with minimum score being 21. Cronbach alpha has been calculated for this subtest for recommended candidates and screened out candidates. Internal consistency for recommended and screened out candidates were 0.34 and 0.65 respectively.

Predictive validity of the self-assessment tool for recommended and non-recommended candidates was calculated. Wilkes Lambda (0.56) was found to be significant at 0.01 level revealing that the two groups are significantly different from each other.

The Big Five Inventory (John et al., 1991)
The Big Five Inventory (BFI) (John et al., 1991) is a 44-item inventory that was developed to assess the Big Five personality domains of Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness. The BFI also contains 10 facet scales, two for each domain, that are used to examine personality characteristics within each domain (Soto & John, 2009). Respondents indicate their level of agreement with each of the 44 items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = disagree strongly, 5 = agree strongly); 16 items are reverse-scored. The items are described in behavioral, cognitive, and affective terms.

What do you look for in a job? (Udai Pareek, 2007)
This test measures intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. There are 14 items, seven related to intrinsic and seven related to extrinsic motivation. It is self-administered and respondents are asked to rank order the fourteen items depending on their importance to them: from 1 (highest rank) to 14 (lowest rank).

Split-half reliability (N=108) was found to be 0.88. The factor analysis has partially validated the two factor classification. When intrinsic and extrinsic motivations were correlated, in one case (N=65), the correlation was 0.87 and in the other (N=43), it was 0.99.

**Procedure**
The data were collected in a classroom setting with 30 students in each class. After establishing rapport the instructions were given to them. Once they were made to understand the instructions, the tests were given to them. The participants also provided demographic information (e.g., gender, age and grade level and so on). After the completion of the test students were thanked for their cooperation. The software used for statistical calculation was SPSS version 16. t-test was used to compare the means of two groups of students, i.e. those opting for military as a career choice and those not opting on temperament, personality traits and motivation between the two groups of student, i.e. students who wanted to join armed forces as a career and those students who don’t want to join armed forces as a career. Inter-correlation was computed to find the relationship between gender, armed forces as a career, temperament, personality traits and motivation.

**RESULTS**
The results of two groups of candidates: those opting for army as a career choice and those not opting for it, are presented as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>AFC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-3.191</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1 depicts that there was a significant relationship ($r=0.002$) between gender and armed forces as a career at 0.01 level, whereas there was no significant relationship between gender and other domains of the present study.

Table 2: Difference on temperament, personality traits and motivation of the students who want to join Armed Forces and those who don’t

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>AFC</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>TEMP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>44.96</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>-0.934</td>
<td>0.352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46.36</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.70</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25.65</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29.55</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>-1.974</td>
<td>0.050*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31.41</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27.91</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>-2.019</td>
<td>0.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30.01</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22.45</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1.079</td>
<td>0.282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21.55</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32.64</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>-0.865</td>
<td>0.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33.45</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>52.36</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52.20</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ex</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53.16</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52.60</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

1 is for those students who want to join armed forces
2 is for those students who don’t want to join armed forces
Table 2 shows the difference in the temperament, personality traits and motivation of the youth who wanted to join armed forces and who did not want to join armed forces. It was found that Agreeableness had significant relationship with armed force as a career at 0.05 level of significance.

**Fig.1: Vocational choice of total no. of students**

- Manager/ CEO: 48%
- Computer programmer: 17%
- Defence Services: 13%
- Accounting/ Auditing & CA: 14%
- Dental care: 1%
- Others: 7%

Fig.1 depicts the career choice of total no. of students. It can be seen that 48% were interested in becoming managers and CEO, followed by 17% interested in becoming computer programmer. Defence services came fourth on their list of vocational choice with only 13% choosing this as a career and the least picked up choice was dental care with only 1% choosing this as a career.

**Fig.2: Motivating factors which influence the total no. of students career choice**

- It’s my passion: 54%
- Parents/ relatives: 8%
- High perks: 14%
- Job security: 5%
- Job satisfaction: 19%

Fig.2 shows the various motivating factors which influences total no. of students’ career choice. 54% of the students choose their respective career because it’s their passion or area of interest, followed by 19% choosing job satisfaction and high perks (14%). The factor which least influenced these students was job security with only 5% choosing this as a motivating factor.
Fig. 3: Motivating factors which influence total no. of students' armed forces as a career choice

Fig. 3 shows the motivating factors which influenced total no. of students to join armed forces as a career. 37% of students chose armed forces as a career because of the status and respect that they will be getting from society, followed by 34% of students choose armed forces as it was their passion or area of interest and the least picked up factor was their parents/relatives (3%).

Discussion

Armed forces as a career for today’s youth is unattractive as they are inclined towards the materialistic world around them. The present study aimed to find out the impact of temperament, personality traits and motivation on youth’s interest to join armed forces as a vocation.

The first hypothesis in the study was that male students would be more interested in joining armed forces as compared to female students. The hypothesis was accepted as the results showed that the total number of female respondents were 48 and out of these only 7 respondents wanted to join army while the total numbers of male respondents were 92 and out of these 37 respondents wanted to join army. Whether we want to admit it or not, women across all professions still shoulder the bulk of childcare responsibilities, and military life is no different. In an ideal world, all women would be able to balance home and work and that would include women in the military. Unfortunately, we do not live in an ideal world, and one can say with certainty that while women get into and stay in the military for the same reason that men do, women get out of the military for a more specifically female issue: the impact on their families (Scott, 2010).

The second hypothesis in the study was that students who are interested in joining armed forces will be having high potential for appearing for SSBs/AFSBs. Mean and Standard deviation of temperament test on armed forces as a career were 44.96 and 8.786 respectively. This further depicts the low potential for appearing for SSBs/AFSBs of the youth which also indicates the low level of interest in joining armed forces. With this result, present hypothesis was accepted. To be an armed force personnel one needs to have certain abilities and the present temperament test measures all the fifteen abilities that are needed, namely, effective intelligence, reasoning ability, organizing ability, power of expression, social adaptability, cooperation, sense of responsibility, initiative, self-confidence, speed of decision, ability to influence group, liveliness, determination, courage and stamina.

The third hypothesis in the present study was that students who are interested in joining armed forces will be high on openness to experience and conscientiousness. In a study done by Nagle, 2005; results indicated that candidates who were high on conscientiousness and openness to experience were more interested in joining armed forces as compared to other personality traits. Results showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups of students on agreeableness. Thus, the present hypothesis was rejected as the students who were high on agreeableness were more interested...
in joining armed forces as compared to other personality traits. The findings are in contrast to the findings of a study by Menon (2011) who found that military men were significantly lower than their civilian counterparts on measures of “agreeableness”. The agreeableness trait reflects individual differences in general concern for social harmony. They value getting along with others. They are generally considerate, kind, generous, trusting, helpful, and willing to compromise their interests with others. Results shows that the students who did not want to join armed forces scored higher on agreeableness as compared to their counterparts.

The fourth hypothesis in the present study was that students who would be interested in joining armed forces will be high on intrinsic motivation. Howorth (2001) suggests that “Students who choose out of interest learned more, enjoy more and as a bonus they may also get higher grades because they will have a better understanding of the subject or field they chose.” The study "reveals that intrinsic motivation was powerful, but it was also fragile," says Adam Grant, a psychologist at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania said that "Even when cadets found their work interesting and meaningful, if they were also strongly motivated by extrinsic rewards," such as a good salary or the respect of their peers, "they were less likely to complete their studies, continue their service, and get promoted early." (cited in Science, 2014). Results showed that there was no significant relationship found between intrinsic motivation and armed forces as a career. Therefore, this hypothesis was rejected. Fig.2 shows the motivating factors which influenced the youth to join armed forces as a career. Students had to choose a point on a scale for "It’s my passion"—which by definition is an internal motivation—and also for "My parents wanted me to go," which is an external one. 37% of students choose armed forces as a career because of the status and respect that they will get from the society, which is the extrinsic motivation. Therefore one can say that today’s youth is inclined more towards extrinsic motivation.

Thus, agreeableness was the only dimension of personality traits where a significant difference was found between the group of students who wanted to join armed forces as a career and those who did not. There was no difference on intrinsic motivation between the two groups. Furthermore, male students were more interested in joining armed forces as a career as compared to female students. The reason because of which the youth is not interested in forces can be the risk involved, inclination towards materialistic world, unsettled life in forces, lack of awareness and less pay as compared to other jobs.

References