Negative Career Thoughts Among Pakistani and Korean College Students: Implications for the Asian Context

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Abstract

This study aimed at investigating the integrative cross-cultural perspective of negative career thoughts by comparing college students' data from Pakistan and Korea. Data obtained from 200 Pakistani college students were compared to the data obtained from 200 Korean college students. Results show a significantly higher score on negative career thoughts when compared to Korean students. Findings indicate cross-cultural differences in negative career thoughts reflective of context-based differences in policy and career guidance systems. Findings provide support to Systems Theory Framework. However, the similarities in the construct manifestation provide a theoretical basis for career guidance in the collectivist and Asian contexts. Findings suggest the importance of comparative data, indigenization of assessment tool to assess negative career thoughts, and further exploration of negative career thoughts while considering cultural dimensions.

Keywords: Cross-cultural comparison; Negative career thoughts; Career thoughts.

1. Introduction

1.1. Introduce the Problem

Theorization and investigation of negative career thoughts formally originated and crystallized with a fundamental contribution by Sampson *et al.* (1996), in the US. Their standardized inventory to assess negative career thoughts synergized cognitive, counseling, and careers literature. The context of the US which is characterized by individualism may be considered as a prerecurser for advancing exploration in the career drive of individuals' progression and hence assessment on negative career thoughts originated in the US ahead of the Asian context. The individualistic context is likely to provide circumstances that facilitate people to assess the nature of career thoughts and locate sources of negative career thoughts according to their choices and priorities. Therefore, necessary questions are raised with regards to the suitability of the measure and manifestation of the same construct in the contexts which value collectivism and where career drive is expected to be influenced by factors quite different from the individualistic context. Furthermore, varying levels of career clarity and negative career thoughts in young people may be a consequence of inadequately well-developed career services.

In light of cross-context differences, it can be said that the cultural dimension provides a viewpoint of looking into career thoughts in light of the advancement in career services. This sheds light on the importance of investigating career thoughts of youth in connection to contextual developments. This provides justification to conduct a study considering Asian context and empirically investigating manifestiation of construct *negative career thoughts* by compairing data from Asian countries.

Exploration of negative career thoughts in collectivist and Asian context can help to provide (i) understanding of the construct in the collectivist context where career drive is not purely expected to be individual's drive, (ii) understanding of the manifestation of construct in the Asian context, and (iii) theorization of career guidance relevant to the context different from the US on the basis on empirical research. In connection to this, the present study aimed to investigate negative career thoughts by analyzing and interpreting data in the connection to the contextual factors such as progress in career guidance policy and services. This study contributes to extending cross-cultural discourse on negative career thoughts and critically identifies the place of negative career thoughts of college students in the local and comparative contexts.

This study follows the integrationist approach of cross-cultural and comparative psychology. Within this approach, we have considered the *derived etic* approach in line with Kim (2000). This approach emphasizes fitting existing theories to the local context. In this connection, we intend to explore negative career thoughts by making two key assumptions (a) the construct of negative career thoughts can be investigated universally with the emergence

of career salience in people's lives, and (b) the manifestation of the construct may differ depending upon the contextual realities including cultural complexities and maturity of career guidance systems. Therefore, this approach seems to move from universalism to relativism by considering the fact career thought is a universal phenomenon but the degree and kind of expression have a certain degree of dependence upon cultural aspects. Brown (2002), about dependence of occupational choice on cultural values supports application of relativism in careers development.

This integrationist approach when elaborated from the lense of career theory is positioned in the social justice theory. Within this approach, nature and levels of negative career thoughts in young can be identified as a result of social justice approach of a society. In line with Watts (1999), and Sultana's social justice theory, it can be said that liberal and progressive societies may lay more emphasis on the career development of people with equality and thus may lower the negative career thoughts of the youth. Whereas lack of career guidance services may indicate a lack of focus on liberal and progressive approaches for life-long development and therefore young people may face ample difficulties in seeking career information leading to problems in career decision making and increased career anxiety.

Our research position has a basis in the Systems Theory Framework which clearly shows the role of cultural-context in forming career thoughts. The theory proposes connections between individuals' beliefs, self-concept, and attitudes along with the external factors such as geographical contexts, labor market, and socio-economic factors (Patton and McMahon, 2006). The same theory also emphasizes upon geographical contexts embedded in the historical trends and political decisions. These external factors may vary from one context to another and thus are likely to form unique circumstances responsible for clarity in career thoughts of youth people.

The Social Cognitive Theory demonstrates that career interests and goals are developed out of learning experiences and they are dependent upon both person and contextual variables (Lent, 2013). This perspective indicates the instrumental role of career guidance services for clarity in career thoughts of young people. CASVE model also supports the role of cognitions in connection to the contextual variables with an emphasis upon Communication, Analysis, Synthesis, Valuing, and Evaluating as essential components of career thoughts (Peterson *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, rich theoretical literature provides a foundation for research on career thoughts in connection to contextual factors where career clarity is assumed to be dependent upon the availability of information to evaluate career information to set achievable goals.

In this connection where the context has a great potential to influence individuals' behaviors, negative career thoughts may indicate a lack of supportive policies and larger career guidance support systems. Therefore, assessment of career thoughts of college students from different contexts may provide indirect evidence of the career guidance developments within the larger societal systems.

The influence of context or immediate circumstances on career thoughts and development has historical roots in constructivism. Hoskins (1995), has elaborated approaches and processes of meaning-making in counseling while using a constructivist approach. Vakilzadeh and Sadeghi (2016), have empirically showed the effectiveness of the constructivist career counseling approach. This approach indicates the role of context-related perceptions as central in attaching meaning to the experiences through thinking, rethinking, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation processes.

To understand the contextual influences in developing career thoughts, the present study aims to compare data from Pakistan and Korea. There are three reasons for selecting Pakistan and Korea. Firstly, both are Asian countries and hence comparative data from Asian countries may be helpful in forwarding the indigenization and related debate on assessment and intervention on negative career thoughts. Secondly, both the Pakistani and Korean societies have a low score on individualism when compared to the US (score, 14, 18, and 91 respectively; (Hofstede Insights, 2018) and both are Asian countries. Thirdly, both are developing countries (World Bank, 2013) and hence this may be foundational research to provide a model of career guidance suitable for the Asian context.

To further ground our study, we have reviewed the literature on negative career thoughts. We have also presented information on historical and cultural developments of career guidance in Pakistan and Korea, and overview of cultural manifestation of negative career thoughts in young adults in the two contexts.

1.2. Explore Importance of the Problem

It is imperative to understand negative career thoughts in a collectivist context where there is a differential level of formal career guidance services and there is more reliance upon the informal mode of guidance due to the nature of collectivistic culture. This study will fill the existing gap in the literature and will provide the avenue to understand the negative career thoughts of young adults as a result of systemic approaches to career guidance. A cross-cultural comparative study by selecting two Asian countries was considered to fill this gap in the lietarure. Therefore, a use of comparablee quantitative measure of college students was found supportive to understand the nature and expression of negative career thoughts as a construct in a collectivist culture. This study is original to compare Asian cultures and to analyze cross-cultural similarities and differences along with the the mainifestation of nagative career thoughts in context different from previously explored and extends works in the Asian context.

1.3. Describe Relevant Scholarship

This section covers information that provided basis to develop the rationale of this study. We have moved from a review of previous studies to the exploration and narration of information that extends our work on previous studies and fits it into the integrationist approach of cross-cultural psychology.

1.3.1. Contextual Realities and Career Thoughts

The development of career-related cognitions in connection to contextual factors is of undeniable importance where individuals' thoughts, problem-solving, decision-making, and cognitions are continuously used to navigate the external opportunities and this undeniably includes navigating career information. The role of cognitive and person variables such as goals, outcome expectations, problem-solving, and self-efficacy are central to both theory and research since the last two decades. Research has shown the significant relationship of thinking orientation with exploratory activities (Blustein and Phillips, 1988; Lent *et al.*, 2000) providing indirect evidence of the importance of individuals' exploratory and proactive behaviors in seeking career information. This connection of career thoughts to factors external to us is also evident from the argument by Herr (2008) who considered social norms, mass media, behavioral expectations, policies and regulations, cultural traditions, culturally acceptable roles, beliefs and values as the contextual factors for both individual behavior and career guidance. This broadens the framework by viewing negative career thoughts and their modification in connection to to the systems, policy, and strategic corrective approaches. However, contexts may vary in terms of information provision and formal services to provide such support.

Research by Arulmani *et al.* (2003), has indicated the role of contextual factors in developing career beliefs. They have demonstrated differential career beliefs of groups from different socioeconomic levels when higher SES group places a higher value in acquiring skills, have a stronger orientation towards creating opportunities when compared to the lower SES group. This indicates the role of individuals' characteristics instrumental in career development might be dependent upon the socio-economic statuses of individuals. Hence, the importance of external variables cannot be ignored in developing career thoughts. This provides a foundation for looking at the cross-cultural differences by considering negative career thoughts as consequent of immediate family environment and geographical realities. Therefore, career thoughts in connection to the contextual realities indicate the importance of external factors such as career guidance services. This is likely to be understood by comparing the scores on negative career thoughts of college students with the students from different contexts with differential levels of progress in career guidance. Furthermore, analyzing varying levels of development in career guidance in various contexts may provide foundations for the cross-cultural studies in this area.

Therefore, investigating career thoughts in young people from different countries can be considered insightful to make an inference on systemic factors. Differential levels of negative career thoughts in young people may provide a stepping stone for reflecting upon cross cultural differences in context which are likely to be responsible for individual level differences.

1.3.2. Review of Previous Studies

Research on negative career thoughts mostly have explored correlates, exploratory and a few are based on the interventional models. Lustig and Strauser (2003), identified three groups of individuals with disabilities by administering CTI and found, (a) those with dysfunctional thoughts, (b) those with external conflict, and (c) those with productive thoughts. Sud and Kumar (2006), found the emotionality component of test anxiety yields a significant positive relationship with dysfunctional career thoughts and significant negative relationship with achievement motivation. Esters (2007), found that students from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Iowa State University yielded moderate levels of career indecision across three factors of CTI. Morgan *et al.* (2011) found that trait anxiety had a stronger impact on career indecision when compared to state anxiety. Atta *et al.* (2013), found that self-efficacy is negatively correlated with negative career thoughts of university students. Galles and Lenz (2013), reported a significant relationship between vocational identity and career thoughts. Chason *et al.* (2013), reported that negative career thoughts contribute to career decidedness and career choice. Furthermore, research has reported the inverse relationship between emotional intelligence and negative career thoughts, nonsignificant relationship between commitment anxiety and student academic engagement (Dahl *et al.*, 2008; Grier-Reed *et al.*, 2012; Sidiropoulou- Dimakakou *et al.*, 2012).

Interventional studies are scarce in this area. One such study has reported that dysfunctional career thoughts are significantly reduced through the application of effective career planning courses in college students (Budden *et al.*, 2006).

1.3.3. Grounds for Integrationist Approach

We have extended our argument by discussing cross-cultural and comparative approaches taken so far to compare the sample scores against the scores used for the standardization of CTI. Such studies provide a foundation for comparative and cross-cultural studies on negative career thoughts. One of the studies compared scores with that of the normative sample on CTI. Musgrove (2013), conducted a comparison of their research sample with the population on which CTI was normed by using a single sample t-test. Findings showed that student veterans had positive career thoughts, less decision making confusion, and less commitment anxiety when compared to the college population who participated in the original study to establish norms for CTI. The methodology of this study justifies the present study that involved using a single sample t-test to understand cultural and comparative differences that prevail for career thoughts of college students in different contexts.

Another cross-cultural study by Lee *et al.* (2016), also justifies the rationale of the present study. The researchers found that Korean school and college students and adults scored significantly higher on CTI when compared to the American sample. Again the normative data of CTI was utilized for this comparative study. The researchers referred these differences to plausible cultural differences when Korean culture was interpreted as collectivist culture and interdependent self-view which are contrary to the American cultural context.

This research strategy was taken to test the integrationist perspective of cross-cultural research. A comparison of college samples from Pakistan and Korea will rightly provide an understanding of similarities for the Asian context.

1.3.4. Cross-Cultural Similarities and Differences

Next, the cultural and contextual developments in career guidance in Pakistan and Korea are focused andthe developments in career guidance services along with provisions at national levels are analyzed. Both Pakistan and Korea are located in Asia and hence a comparative study requires in-depth focus on their career guidance systems and progress made in this area so that scores of college students can be interpreted in light of developments external to individuals.

The US has the oldest history of career guidance and its coverage at the college level. With thestart of placement services in 1890-1919, educational guidance moved from elementary and secondary to colleges and universities in 1940-1959 (Pope, 2011). Whereas, career guidance grew in Korea a little later when compared to the US (OECD, 2002;2004). Jin (2013), reported a widespread career development system in Korea that encompasses career education for the youth, web-based career development system, and career education for adults. This shows that career guidance has expanded and grown in Korea after the United States. On the contrary, Bilal and Malik (2014), have reported that career counseling is required in a true sense at all the educational levels of Pakistan. The differential statuses of career guidance services in selected three contexts is evident from these sources of information and therefore significant differences in negative career thoughts of the college students from these contexts can be considered as an outcome of larger developments at societal and system-level approaches whereby differential levels of career guidance systems has an impact upon career clarity of young people.

1.4. Rationale and its Correspondence to Research Design

Based on the review of literature, this study tested the integrative perspective of career thoughts in adolescents by considering primary data from Pakistani and Korean contexts. This research strategy was undertaken to understand the manifestation of negative career thoughts in young adults in both contexts. Findings of the study were expected to provide an understanding of the role of contextual factors and influence of larger career guidance support systems on the college students for their career thoughts clarity. For this a comparison of data in light the literature of contextual developments in career guidance were critically analyzed.

2. Method

This research is based upon the quantitative method. It is follows the positivist paradigm because career thoughts are studied through a quantitative approach and career thoughts as assumed as something that is shaped by societal influences and processes. Data was collected personally by the researchers from the college students of Pakistan and Korea.

After completion of data collection from Pakistani colleges, Korean researchers were contacted with a request for data sharing. Then, one of the authors of the Korean version of CTI and Korean publisher offered us with permission to use a normative data set for this study. The data set was established in a sample of Korean college students who matriculated in 4-year colleges located in South Korea.

2.1. Participant (Subject) Characteristics

The mean of age bracket for Pakistani sample was 19 and the mean age for Korean college students was 21. Participants were college students in the two contexts.

2.2. Sampling Procedures

Data for this study were collected from 200 college students of Pakistan using the conveneience sampling method. The government collges of Islamabad were visited personally by the first researcher after seeking official approvals from concerned authority. Participants participated in this study voluntarily. After that, Korean researchers were contacted and data of 1,327 Korean college students was shared by the second and third authors. Data selected of first 200 college students were compared to the data collected from the Pakistani context. Later, findings were rechecked using the Korean data comprised of responses of 1,327 participants which yielded similar results.

2.3. Measures

The Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI: (Sampson *et al.*, 1996) were used to compare negative career thoughts of Pakistani college students and Korean college students. The authors used the Urdu version of CTI for Pakistani college students and Korean version of CTI for the Korean college students.

Urdu Version of the CTI. The CTI was translated and adapted into the Urdu language after obtaining permission from the publisher (Psychological Assessment Resources https://www.parinc.com/Products/Pkey/73). The inventory was translated and adapted by a step-wise procedure that involved translation in Urdu by experts, followed by a committee approach to finalize translation, and then back translation into English to check equivalence with the original measure. The English translation was sent to the original author and publisher for final review and their suggestions were incorporated. After administration on a sample of 200 college students, the translated version was found both reliable and valid for the Pakistani context. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the total CTI scale was .89. The total of CTI was strongly related to DMC ($r = .89$) when compared EC ($r = .57$). DMC yielded lower correlation with EC ($r = .37$) when compared to CA ($r = .74$) as predicted.

Korean Version of the CTI. Lee *et al.* (2002), translated 48 items of The CTI into Korean and examined the psychometric properties of the translated CTI. They found that Cronbach's α coefficients for the total scale and subscales in a college group were respectively .95 (total scale), .90 (DMC), .62 (CA), and .82 (EC). Test-retest reliability was .75 for the total scale, .76 for the DMC, .61 for the CA, .55 for the EC in a group of college students measured across 4 weeks. They also inspected relationships between the translated CTI, and the My Vocational Situation (MVS) and the Career Decision Scale (CDS) to find convergent validity of the Korean version of CTI. The results showed significant correlation of the Korean version of the CTI scores with the MVS and the CDS scores similar to the original CTI was found to be associated with those scales.

2.4. Research Design

Specify the research design in the Method section. Were subjects placed into conditions that were manipulated, or were they observed naturalistically? If multiple conditions were created, how were participants assigned to conditions, through random assignment or some other selection mechanism? Was the study conducted as a between-subjects or a within-subject design?

2.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis involved t-test and item analysis to understand similarities in CTI and item-analysis to understand commonalities in the factor structure of CTI for college students of Pakistan and Korea.

3. Results

Table-1. Mean scores, standard deviations of CTI total and subscales, and t-test in a sample of Pakistani and Korean College Students

	Pakistani data (N=200)		Korean data (N=200)			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t score*	*Cohen's d*
CTI	70.8	19.5	60.8	16.3	5.5**	0.5
DMC	16.21	7.6	14.1	6.7	4.1*	0.3
CA	15.4	4.5	16.2	4.2	1.7 (.07)	0.1
EC	8.2	2.9	6.1	2.3	9.9**	0.8

*$p< .01$, **$p< .001$
Note: CTI (Career Thoughts Inventory); DMC (Decision Making Confusions); CA (Commitment Anxiety); EC (External Conflict)

Table 1 shows that college students from Pakistan scored significantly high on the total CTI.

However, results were different regarding the three subdimensions. Results show a significant mean score difference on DMC and EC between college students from Pakistan and Korea when students from Pakistan scored significantly high from the Korean students on the two subdimensions. Whereas the mean score difference on CA was found as nonsignificant with a slight high mean score of Korean students in CA. Cohen's d shows that the effect size of the t-score between the groups on EC was only found strong.

Table-2. Comparison of factor analysis and reliability values

Data	% of Variance	Number of factors	*r*
Pakistani data	33.5	2	.74/.60(DMC-EC/CA)
Korean data	39.8	2	.89/.84(DMC-EC/CA)

Table 2 shows results exploratory factor analysis of the items of three subdimensions with suppression value .2 for the Pakistani context. Furthermore, the findings were compared with the findings of a previous study by Lee *et al.* (2016).

Findings showed that three factors emerged on a three-factor rotation commad in SPSS. However, a closer analysis shows that only two factors of CTI are valid for the Pakistani context. It was observed that 19 items loaded on Factor 1 with 9 items loaded on Factor 2 and 3. The items appeared in more than one factor were not considered and hence items 3, 27, 28, 29, 36, 38, 43, and 44 clustered in factor 1. This factor loaded items of both DMC and CA. Three items, i.e., 6, 23, and 9 loaded on factor 2. These three items reflected EC. Finally, three items, i.e., 1, 14, and 32 loaded on Factor 3, when each of them was from three subdimensions. Findings show that CA did not emerge as a separate dimension. The scree plot showed that Factor 1 contributed the most.

Findings are similar to the Korean study (Lee *et al.*, 2016) because factor analysis indicate a lack of importance of CA as an exclusive and independent dimension of CTI for Pakistan. The Korean solution indicated two factors with items on DMC and one item of CA and the other factor was comprised of 1 DMC and 1 EC related item with the rest of the items were from CA.

Furthermore, DMC can be considered as a major contributor to negative career thoughts in Asian culture. The findings are contrary to those derived from the normed data in a way that US-based data has indicated CA as an independent dimension.

4. Discussion

Findings extend the integrationist perspective of cross-cultural research in career development by operationalizing the construct negative career thoughts for the local context. With the pioneering work of US-based researchers on career thoughts, this construct can be adapted and adopted to the needs of Asian culture. Our findings are in line with the findings by Lerkkanen *et al.* (2012) who found that CTI can be adapted rather than adopted for the Finnish culture. Our findings closely correspond to those by Lee *et al.* (2016) who found that EC did not emerge as an independent factor for college students in the Korean context. Thus a two-factor solution despite variations in Finnish, as opposed to the Pakistani and Korean context shows that CTI may not fit universally. To explicate reasons for contextualizing CTI, we again revert to the systems theory framework of career development.

The systems framework theory rightly indicates influence of external variables along with the intrapersonal variables for career development. Therefore, we interpreted the differences on CTI with regards to the policy and contextual developments in career guidance by reviewing secondary data on career guidance in Pakistani, Korean - based context.

Findings indicated a high score of college students from Pakistan when compared to the Korean college students on the total of CTI and its two dimensions (decision-making difficulties and external conflict) whereas nonsignificant difference in one dimension (career anxiety). The results were different when scores of college students on CTI were compared to the scores of the normative sample from US depicting that the Pakistani sample scored significantly high on all the three dimensions of CTI when compared to the US-based normative sample. This supports a previous study by Lee *et al.* (2016), as they reported Korean students scored significantly high on CTI and its dimensions when compared to the US-based normative sample. These findings indicate contextual similarities and differences and provide a basis of adapting and adopting models of research on career thought in the Asian context.

Exploratory analysis of the top ten highest scored items of CTI common for both Pakistani and Korean students along with factor analysis indicates the importance of exploration of factor structure based on the indigenous information. Despite that the Pakistani and Korean college students had a nonsignificant difference in career anxiety, five out of top ten highest scored items fell into career anxiety. Interestingly, the other five top-scored items did not fell into the three subdimensions of CTI. These items mainly revolved around problems in career information and interest. When interpreted with the reference to STF findings of this study show the concerns related to career information possibly result of a lack of career guidance support and services.

Next, we have discussed the differences between the two contexts by taking into account historical developments of career guidance policy, practice, and research in the US, Pakistan, and Korea regarding the influence on adolescents' career development. Career guidance history in the US is deeply ingrained into the historical movement of vocational guidance in the early 1990s and grew towards the establishment of career guidance centers (Garis *et al.*, 2012) much before Korean and Pakistani focus on career guidance.

When compared to Pakistani context, research and practical works on career counseling in Korea for college students have grown rapidly in the recent decade (see (Jin, 2013; Na *et al.*, 2010; Nadermann and Eissentat, 2018). Maze (2013) reported the start of career guidance services by the Government of Korea dates back to the 1980s. This level of works on career guidance requires due attention by the Pakistani government. Furthermore, focused studies on the career of college students are scarce in Pakistan and few available related to the high school students such as by Yaqoob *et al.* (2017).

Research in Pakistan is dominantly focused on career development (such as (Ali and Shah, 2013; Kamran and Khalidi, 2011; Kanwal and Naqvi, 2016)) rather than theory, models, or practice of career counseling (such as (Bilal and Malik, 2014)). Whereas, Korea has established a career guidance system rapidly after the 1950s. Gong (2013), have elaborated on the exponents that led to the growth of career guidance and counseling in Korea and foremost amongst them include the realization of life-long challenges in career development. Therefore, college-level career guidance and counseling grew within the larger, holistic and life-long approach to career guidance. As a result, colleges have established career counseling and information centers that focus on career counseling, mentoring services, job posting, and skills training. The nationwide service centers seem to have created nation-wide awareness of the importance of career guidance. This situation of career guidance is much far and beyond the current developments in career guidance within the Pakistani context.

The emergence of career guidance at all levels of education is recent emergence in the educational policy of Pakistan (Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training Government of Pakistan, 2017) with patchy and inconsistent work in the educational sector and for lager population. Though national skill strategy (National Vocational and Technical Education Commission Prime Minister's Secretariat (Public) Islamabad, 2009) talks about the importance of career guidance and placement services, however national-level approaches lack wide coverage of services and therefore career clarity in youth and linking career development with larger educational goals is still a challenge in Pakistan.

These findings support and extend previous findings on higher career maturity levels in the secondary schools where there are career guidance and counseling provisions (Sirohi, 2013). Hence, it can be said that the immediate, local, and national environments play an instrumental role in developing career thought clarity, and translated and adapted versions of CTI are useful to have cross-cultural and comparative perspectives.

5. Implications for Research and Career Guidance

Based on findings following implications can be drawn

Findings indicate a dire need of indigenous measures to assess negative career thoughts of college students in Asia. Construct negative career thoughts can be well explored by taking in-depth and qualitative approaches across Asian, developing, and collectivist societies. This can help to understand its manifestation and representation of negative career thoughts in young people from developing and Asian countries. Furthermore, the low Eigen Values obtained on CTI after factor analyses indicate a need for exploration of other factors such as accessibility to career information sources and resources. Focus group discussions might provide information about the factors which if included might provide relevant and functionally useful scale to assess negative career thoughts in the Asian context.

Findings indicate that career guidance for college students in the Asian context should primarily focus on career decision making and provision of career information to support decision making resultantly overcoming conflicts and confusion. Careers education in the Asian context should prioritize interventions directed towards career decision making and careers information at a priority and considering them major chunks with career anxiety and issues external conflict as embedded with the major chunks.

Large scale comparative studies while considering cultural dimensions and young people's career thoughts can provide meaningful information about similarities and differences across context in the Asian region. Similarities rather than differences can help to obtain an approach suitable for a number of Asian countries.

Empirical studies in the Asian context can test the change in career decision making of young adolescents by providing relevant career information. Effectiveness of the approach and models tested and supported by research may provide a robust basis for the expansion of career services.

6. Conclusion

Findings of this study show a dire need to focus on contextual approaches to study negative career thoughts of young people. The indigenuous approaches to study negative career thoughts can provide basis for context-relevant approaches to career guidance. Research and intervention to improve career decision-making can be considered important for the Asian countries and this opens avenue for further studies in this direction.

7. Limitations and Suggestions

This study is based on culturally translated versions of CTI in Urdu and Korean languages and therefore a comparable and equivalent version can provide clearer results. Furthermore, assessment of career thoughts when made regarding the experiences adolescents have in receiving career services may provide empirical information on the role of immediate context and career guidance services informing career thoughts. Finally, the quality of career services and their impact can also be assessed along with the assessment of cultural dimensions such as individualism and collectivism.

The higher external conflict in young adults in both Pakistan and Korea indicate culture-specific nature of career problems may exist in the collectivist Asian context. Therefore, further research and intervention may take this into account for developing culture-specific models of practice.

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