

# A Study of the Effects of Business Training on the Attitude towards Job Market and Career Self-Concept of Secondary Level Male Students in Iran

Fateme Samiee<sup>1</sup>, Nayereh Vakilizadeh<sup>2</sup>, Nahid Akrami<sup>3</sup>, Mehdi Keikhosro Kiani<sup>4</sup> & Mina Golkian<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Academic Member, Department of Counseling, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

<sup>2</sup> M.Sc. in Career Consultation, Iran

<sup>3</sup> Academic Member, Department of Psychology, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

<sup>4</sup> M.Sc. in Psychology, Iran

<sup>5</sup> M.Sc. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Iran

Correspondence: Mina Golkian, M.Sc. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Iran. E-mail: minagolkian@gmail.com

Received: September 29, 2014

Accepted: October 29, 2014

Online Published: November 25, 2014

doi:10.5539/ibr.v7n12p167

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v7n12p167>

## Abstract

The present study aimed to study the effect of business education on the attitudes of the secondary school male student towards job market and career-related self-concept. The populations of the study were all male secondary students in Isfahan in the year 2013/2015. The sample was a group of 44 students were placed in the experimental and 44 in the control group. In this study, the researcher-made questionnaire was used which involved 5 dimensions, i.e., utilizing the economic opportunities, stimulating entrepreneurial skills, increasing the risk in investment, presenting new products and services and running personal businesses. In this study, business skills were taught during eight 75-min sessions, depending on the students' tiredness, curriculum and general conditions of the schools. The results of the independent samples T-test showed that there is a significant difference between the student's attitudes towards the job market in each of the experimental and control groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the experimental group got higher scores in each of the following dimensions: utilizing the economic opportunities and the market, stimulating entrepreneurial skills, increasing the risk in investment, presenting new products and services and running personal businesses.

**Keywords:** business, attitude towards job market, career self-concept

## 1. Introduction

Among the issues which influence the commitment to a job search plan are the attitudes people have towards job and these attitudes sometimes interfere with their job search. Some attitudes are rooted in the people's beliefs and primary values and changing them may be impossible or take a long period of time. What is certain is that job planning does not happen in a vacuum. Life conditions of each person affect his/her decisions and the way they decide. The society in which he grows up, the messages the family send about job, the messages he receives from his friends, the feelings he has about himself are among the factors which influence his decisions and beliefs about job (Suki Niket et al., 2004).

As for the attitudes towards the job market, what we encounter in reality is the attitude towards the job market of the field of study and career prospect. Thus, issues such as determining the effect of individual, social, economic and cultural factors e.g., career-related expectations (materialistic and spiritual expectations), educational improvement, educational levels, field of study, socio-economic background of the students and their attitudes towards the social and macro-economic realities, supply and demand of workforce are of considerable importance.

Following the industrial revolution and the ever-increasing dependence on science, scientific theories became more prevalent in everyday life. Seeking science was not just for satisfying spiritual needs anymore, but it paved the way for getting higher incomes. The higher the education of the individual, the more professional and applied his/her career. However, redundant education imposes more expenses and delays entrance into the job market.

Therefore, most often when choosing their major, people pay heed to the economic status and ease of access to other jobs and the possibility of replacement of the job with an appropriate one; so that they can compensate for the expenses they paid (Sohrabi et al., 1997)

Therefore, in most cases, when choosing a field of study, one takes into consideration the economic status, easy access to the job and replacement of an appropriate job instead of education so that he/she can compensate for the lost opportunity cost (Sohrabi et al., 1997).

Freeman found that inclination of the students towards some specific fields of study is a function of the income and job market in the preceding years. The findings of the international institute for educational planning shows that the inclination towards acquiring professional merit is the most manifest reason why the student continue their education at the academic level ( planning and budget organization, 1999).

Jamil Selmi argues that before choosing their fields of study, some students investigate the successful professions in the society and choose their field of study with regard to their areas of interest. However, it must be taken into account that each student has a specific mental image of his/her own favorite field of study due to different factors. Inclination towards learning and continuing one's education is in her net in all individuals. However, other reasons such as acquiring wealth and social status could be influential (Sohrabi et al., 1997). In other words, students should choose a profession after graduation. That is they shoulder the responsibilities of a job which serves to meet their materialistic and spiritual needs to pave the way for meeting the more important needs of the society and its subsystems.

Thus, the access to a suitable job after graduation greatly influences the individual, social, psychological, political, cultural and economic aspects of the students' lives.

In the realm of social sciences and social psychology and in relation to the other subject areas, the attitude towards the job market or, to put it in a more specific way, the attitude towards career prospect, affects the cognitive, emotional behavior of the students at present and in the future and will have different effects and consequences which are of importance to the students and to the society and the political, cultural and economic system. Thus, what makes this research a necessity is the significant quantity of the students and the role they play as the expert, open-minded workforce in social, political, cultural and economic sections of the society.

Among the reasons which emphasize the significance of the present study is that by determining the students' attitude towards their career prospect as part of their general career prospect and identifying the effects of the important factors which influences it, it will be possible to adapt students and their multiple characteristics to the existing social, cultural and economic realities of the society (Razi, 2003).

Therefore, it can be claimed that the results will pave the way for presenting ideas to identify the potential workforce of the society in a better and more comprehensive way with regard to their present and future career, particularly after graduation. Thus, the society planners can positively direct the students' attitude towards job market through some variables. On the other hand, they can soften the negative attitude of the students by exchanging, limiting and removing some variables.

Thus, the idea that by giving career counseling and presenting specific training, it is possible to change the students' attitude towards job searching skills or accelerate their entrance to the job market can be rejected. It can be concluded that it is necessary for students to learn a series of complementary skills to make the knowledge applicable and to enter the job market.

The skills that the graduated students need can be roughly put into two categories: general and specialized. General skills are also referred to as job awareness or peripheral skills.

General skills or job searching skills are the skills whose aims are to have a better understanding of one's abilities, to identify the skills which are desirable to entrepreneurs, to find out how to present yourself to the job market and finally how to make the transition from the academic to professional life.

Thus, with regard to the importance of this issue to juveniles and the absence of such studies in the literature, the present study aims to find the answer to the following question:

Does job training affect the students' attitude towards the job market?

The research hypothesis is as follows:

Job training affects the students' attitude towards the job market.

## 2. Methodology

### 2.1 Research Design

The present study is semi-experimental. T-test was used to compare the mean score of the two independent groups. The research populations of the study were all male students of secondary school in Isfahan Province in the educational year 2013-2014. 80 students were selected and using Kukran formula, 44 were put in the experimental and 44 in the control group.

### 2.2 Research Tool

In order to assess the students' attitude towards the job market, a researcher-made questionnaire was utilized. With regard to the review of the related literature, the questionnaire was comprised of 5 skills: utilizing the economic opportunities and the market, stimulating entrepreneurial skills, increasing the risk in investment, creating new products and services and running personal businesses. The questions were investigated through Likert scale. Each question was assigned a score from 1 to 5 depending on the answer. The answers were graded from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

To make sure of the reliability of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was examined by three experts and its face and content reliability was confirmed. In order to make sure of the internal reliability, a pilot study was done on 30 subjects. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.865. This coefficient for each of the skills of utilizing the economic opportunities and the market, stimulating entrepreneurial skills, increasing the risk in investment, creating new products and services and running personal businesses were 0.792, 0.607, 0.756, 0.616, and 0.718, respectively.

### 2.3 Sampling Procedures

In this study, in order to have the treatment of teaching business management skills, first 80 students were randomly chosen. After getting the parents' consent and assuring them to observe all ethical principles, the experimental groups (80) students had the treatment for 8 sessions each of which lasted 75 minutes, depending on the spees, tiredness of the students, general conditions of the schools and the curriculum. As the students are trained in groups, the educational conditions were the same. Thus, the fundamental business skills were taught using role-play via practice and repetition and the students got familiar with business concepts, different types of companies, workflow, job duties and production planning and finally, the students hold a fair for their products (key chains) and sell them.

In this study, statistical analysis was carried out using SPSS<sub>20</sub> software and data was analyzed through independent samples t-test.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 Descriptive

Table 1 shows the frequency, mean, median, standard deviation and variance of the experimental and control groups regarding each aspect of the attitude towards the job market.

Table 1. The students' score on the attitudes towards the job market in the two groups

Dimensions	Group	Frequency	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Variance
Risk Taking in Investment	Experimental	43	19.534	19	3.018	<b>9.112</b>
	Control	43	15.558	15	3.201	<b>10.252</b>
Skill in Making Use of Market Opportunities	Experimental	43	15.744	15	3.201	<b>10.249</b>
	Control	43	15.581	15	3.360	<b>11.290</b>
Entrepreneurial Talent	Experimental	43	19.790	20	3.384	<b>11.455</b>
	Control	43	19.046	20	3.866	<b>14.950</b>
Running One's Own Business	Experimental	43	20.395	20	2.829	<b>8.007</b>
	Control	43	18.488	19	3.514	<b>12.351</b>
Creativity and Presenting New Services	Experimental	43	12.162	12	1.478	<b>2.178</b>
	Control	43	11.255	11	2.381	<b>5.671</b>

As shown in Table 1, the mean scores of the experimental group in all five skills (utilizing the economic opportunities and the market, stimulating entrepreneurial skills, increasing the risk in investment, creating new

products and services and running personal businesses) were higher than those of the control group.

### 3.2 Inferential

The results of the Levene's test regarding the students' attitude towards the job market for each of the experimental and control group are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. The results of the Levene's regarding the students' attitude towards the job market for each of the experimental and control group

Dimensions	Levene's Test to Assess the Equality of Variances	
	Significance	Levene's Test
Taking Risks in Investment	0.638	<b>0.223</b>
Making Use of The Opportunities of The Job Market	0.594	<b>0.286</b>
Entrepreneurial Talent	0.176	<b>1.861</b>
Running One's Own Business	0.144	<b>2.175</b>
Creativity in Providing New Products and Services	0.406	<b>1.321</b>

Since Levene's test is significant at  $p > 0.05$ , it can be concluded that there is equivalence of variance for all dimensions.

Table 3 shows the results of the independent samples T-test regarding the students' attitude towards the job market for each of the experimental and control groups.

Table 3. The results of the T-test regarding the students' attitude towards the job market for the experimental and control groups

Dimensions	T-Test for Equality of Means				
	Standard Deviation	Difference	Significance	Degree of Freedom	T value
<b>Taking Risks in Investment</b>	0.671	3.976	0.000	84	5.926
<b>Making Use of the Opportunities of the Job Market</b>	0.707	1.627	0.032	84	2.30
<b>Entrepreneurial Talent</b>	0.783	0.744	0.034	84	0.176
<b>Running One's Own Business</b>	0.538	0.688	0.007	84	2.772
<b>Creativity in Presenting New Products and Services</b>	0.056	0.427	0.037	84	2.122

The independent samples T-test was significant at  $p < 0.05$ . Thus, the research hypotheses are confirmed. That is there is a significant difference between the attitude towards the job market of the experimental group and that of the control group. In other words, it can be concluded that business training had an effect on the students' attitude towards the job market. Therefore, the students who were trained got higher scores in each of the following dimensions: utilizing the economic opportunities and the market, stimulating entrepreneurial skills, increasing the risk in investment, creating new products and services and running personal businesses.

## 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the effect of business training on the attitudes of the secondary school male students' towards the job market. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the attitudes of the experimental and that of the control group ( $p < 0.05$ ) and that of the experimental group in each of the following dimensions: utilizing the economic opportunities and the market, stimulating entrepreneurial skills, increasing the risk in investment, creating new products and services and running personal businesses.

Regarding the effect of the business education on investment, the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Azizi (2003), Borumand Nasab (2002), Druker (1985) and Power et.al. (2011).

As for the effect of business training on the skill of making use of the opportunities of the job market, the findings of the present study are consistent with those of Ahmadi and Shafi Abadi (2008), Bandpey (2011) and Kuchuk (2013).

Regarding the effect of business education on entrepreneurial talent, the findings are consistent with those of Shafi Abadi (2008), Bandpey (2011) and Kuchuk (2013).

Regarding the effect of business education on self-employment, the findings of this study are in agreement with those of Ahmadi & Shafi Abadi (2008), Bandpey (2011), Clark et al. (1984) and Kuchuk (2013).

Finally, with regard to the effect of business education on creativity in presenting new products and services, the findings of this study are in agreement with those of Rissal (1992), Shine (1994), Faris (1994), Postigo (2002) and Azizi (2003).

It can be concluded that business education makes one more familiar with the job market and the related issues. It makes the person aware of the real business life and affects his/her attitude towards the market and makes him/her more aware of the importance of the issues related to the job market.

### Acknowledgement

All material and immaterial rights of this paper have supported by IMAM HOSSEIN NAZRE ESHTEGHAL N.G.O.

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