

FROM DRILL TO DECISION: UNDERSTANDING THE COGNITIVE PATTERNS OF NCC CADETS

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Abstract

Leadership and Decision-making skills in youth are greatly influenced by the National Cadet Corps (NCC). The goal of this study is to understand NCC girl cadet's approach to problem-solving, risk assessment and leadership under duress. It also attempts to investigate the cognitive decision-making styles that are common among them. During this study, standardized decision-making style inventory was used to gather data through purposive sampling from a representative sample of 50 NCC girl cadets and 50 college going girl students from the same colleges among Army, Navy and Air NCC wings of Haryana. Considering discernible differences according to training level, the results show a high propensity for reliant and logical decision-making methods. More predisposition toward rational, spontaneous and intuitive decision-making styles was shown by cadets during training durations, indicating the beneficial cognitive effects of organized military-style training. The study comes to the conclusion that the NCC's hierarchical and disciplined environment greatly influences the thought processes involved in making decisions, which helps young people lead more effectively and responsibly. Both inside and outside of military youth organizations, these observations have wider ramifications for leadership development and educational initiatives.

KEYWORDS- Adolescents, Decision-Making, Leadership, NCC Cadets, Rational, Spontaneous.

INTRODUCTION

The character and determination of youth define its nation's affluence and competency. National Cadet Corps or NCC is one of such youth organisations which is actively working in several nations like India, Singapore and Nigeria. Its goals are to give young people a platform for leadership development, character development and cultivating a sense of national duty.

The cognitive ability to choose a course of action from a wide variety of options is known as decision making. It is not a random process; rather, it is based on the requirements, background, experiences, values and beliefs of each individual. Decision making is a continuous cycle that includes realizing when a decision is needed, weighing your options and analysing the results of your decision, according to **Mincemoyer & Perkins (2001)**. The ability to define the issue, recognize potential solutions, weigh risks & consequences and decide on the best course of action is all essential for making wise decisions. Thinking, evaluating and managing all of which get better with time. Decision-making, according to **Subasree & Nair (2014)**, is the ability to select the optimum course of action from a range of possibilities in a variety of life circumstances. It entails having the capacity to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of options and accepting accountability for the decision's results. Making decisions is the process of methodically obtaining data and assessing it in light of the goals. Decisions are sometimes made intuitively, based on feelings and emotions and other times they are made logically. **Butler (1992)** defined decision-making as choosing the course of action that will best carry out the desired task among the available choices. Every organization views decision-making as a basic activity (**Leonard, Scholl & Kowalski, 1999**). Managerial decision-making is critical to the success of an organization; poorly thought-out decisions can either contribute to the business's growth or demise. The process of making a decision involves recognizing and comprehending a problem or issue, obtaining data from multiple sources, identifying potential solutions, weighing the benefits and drawbacks of each, selecting one, acting, and finally reflecting on the choice and its consequences. Decision-making styles refer to the many ways that different people approach making decisions. These styles are based on a person's dominant characteristics. A person's style is determined by the demands of the scenario, the circumstances, their personal values, their knowledge, their ability to make decisions, and the amount of time they have available. Thus, while making decisions, five different decision-making philosophies are employed which are Rational decision-making style, Intuitive decision-making style, Dependent decision-making style, Avoidant decision-making style and Spontaneous decision-making style.

Rational- A methodical and logical approach to making decisions based on a thorough analysis of the facts at hand and a concise assessment of the possible outcomes of various options is known as rational decision-making. When making a logical decision, people usually go through a set of procedures that include scenario analysis, data collection and identification of potential alternatives, pros and cons analysis, and decision-making that maximizes their aims or goals.

Intuitive- When people make decisions based solely on reason or analysis, they are said to be engaging in intuitive decision-making. Instead, they are using their feelings, instincts, and hunches. When faced with uncertain or ambiguous situations, people who have an intuitive decision-making style typically rely on their implicit knowledge, past experiences, and gut instincts to guide them.

Dependent- It is most likely the case that the term "Dependent" designates a specific cognitive style characterized by a reliance on others for guidance and judgment when making decisions. When making decisions, people with a dependent decision-making style may tend to look to others for direction, validation, or affirmation. Decisions of this kind are made in a variety of contexts, including daily, professional, and interpersonal relationships.

Avoidant- A decision-making strategy known as "avoidant" is characterized by a tendency to put off or avoid making decisions, particularly in trying or emotionally taxing circumstances. When faced with difficult decisions, people with an avoidant decision-making style may be reluctant to take them on or may purposefully try to delay making decisions in an effort to lessen stress, worry, or unpleasant outcomes.

Spontaneous- When discussing decision-making styles, the term "spontaneous" typically describes an approach characterized by impulsivity, snap judgments, and a propensity for making decisions without giving them much thought or preparation. Individuals who make decisions on the spur of the moment usually depend on their intuition, gut feelings, or fast reactions to situations.

The National Cadet Corps (NCC) was first established to fill the void left by the Army. It is an Armed Forces organization that seeks to change the way younger men and women use a by educating, inspiring, and drawing them to a career in the armed forces while also teaching them to be selfless providers and ideal citizens of the nation.

Here, researchers have tried to analyse the pattern of selection among various styles of decision making of NCC final year students of college.

Related studies-

Bibi et.al. (2023) looked at how nursing student's anxiety and self-confidence affect their clinical decision-making. They surveyed 80 nursing students in Peshawar, Pakistan using convenient sampling. The findings enlighten the fact that (56.3%) have high levels of self-confidence, (41.3%) moderate and (2.5%) low self-confidence, whereas (41.3%) had low, (40%) moderate and (18.8%) high anxiety despite a weak, statistically insignificant negative correlation between self-confidence and anxiety.

Ran et al. (2022) wanted to understand how emotional intelligence (EI) influences career decision-making (CDM) and generalized self-efficacy (GSE) among university students in China. They studied 310 undergraduate students from different universities in China using a cross-sectional research design and convenient sampling. They used scales to measure emotional intelligence, generalized self-efficacy and career decision-making difficulties. The results showed that EI, GSE, and career decision-making difficulties are connected. They found a positive relationship between GSE and emotional intelligence, meaning higher GSE is linked to better emotional intelligence. They also found that higher GSE and EI are associated with fewer difficulties in career decision-making. This study suggests that improving emotional intelligence skills can help students make better decisions in both their academic and professional lives.

Hu et. al. (2021) studied impacts of social comparison and despair on teenagers utilizing the ultimatum game (UG). (1) The study discovered that participants had a greater feeling of justice and had a higher approval rate when the proposal was more equitable. There was no discernible difference in the participants' perceptions of fairness between the two social comparisons, however the acceptance rate for downward social comparison was much greater than that for upward social comparison. (3) In the gain context, the acceptance rate of the depressive mood group was greater than that of the normal mood group; however, in the loss context, there was no difference in the acceptance rate between the two groups. Participants experiencing depression reported feeling more unfairly treated in both win and loss scenarios. (4) Social comparison, the fairness degree of distribution, and sorrowful mood all have an interaction on social decision-making. Social comparison, depression, and proposal type all interact to show that social circumstances and cognitive biases can influence social decision-making in addition to an individual's emotions.

Bavolar & Orosova (2015) examined the General Decision-Making Scale's (GDMS) psychometric properties using a sample of Slovak university and high school students. As validity criteria, it discusses the connection between decision-making styles and decision-making competencies and mental health. 427 Slovak university and secondary school students participated (64.6% of them were female). The original factor structure of the GDMS was validated, and it demonstrated good internal consistency. There were found to be weak but substantial correlations between the decision-making types. Two decision-making styles, spontaneous and avoidant were found to be significant predictors

of the overall decision-making ability. The avoidant decision-making approach posed a risk, whereas the intuitive method offered protection.

Research Gap

Research on how decision making intersects with other variables, like age, rationality, dependency etc. is lacking among college students. A more complete picture of the connection between NCC training and decision-making may be possible by comprehending how these variables interact. The factors that require a thorough review of the existing literature to make sure that the gaps in knowledge have not been recently addressed or updated in the field are intervention strategies, underexplored decision-making domains, cultural and contextual considerations, technology and decision-making.

Research Questions:-

1. How does NCC training influence the decision-making styles of NCC and Non NCC students?
2. What factors contribute to variations in decision-making processes among college going students?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to enhance understanding of the interplay between type of training and decision-making styles among NCC and Non NCC students, with implications for their well-being, academic performance, military training, safety, support services, policy development, and broader applicability to other contexts.

Statement of the Problem-

"From Drill to Decision: Understanding the Cognitive Patterns of NCC Cadets"

Objective-

The objective of this study is to analyse any significant impact of NCC training on decision making over NCC girl cadets.

Methodology-

Research Design

Correlational research design has been used in this study as investigator tends to examine the effect of NCC training (Independent Variable) on various decision-making styles (Rational, Intuitive, Dependent, Avoidant, Spontaneous as independent variables).

Sample & Sampling techniques-

A sample of 100 (50 NCC Girl and 50 Non NCC) college going girl students of final year has been taken through purposive sampling technique.

Variables-

There are two groups of NCC girl cadets and non NCC girl students taken as fixed factor and their difference has been checked on five dependant variables which are rational decision-making style, intuitive decision-making style, dependant decision making style, avoidant decision-making style and spontaneous decision-making style.

Hypothesis-

H₀₁ There will be no difference in decision making styles among NCC girl cadets and Non NCC girl students.

Tool used-

General Decision-Making Scale Indian adapted version of Scott & Bruce (1995) used to collect data.

Procedure-

A meeting was held with college principals to obtain their consent for the study. The investigator visited selected colleges and enlisted instructor's help for data collection. Important instructions were given to participants, emphasizing confidentiality. The researcher provided clarifications for doubts. Respondents took over 30 minutes on average to complete the questions. Gratitude was expressed to participants and authorities for their assistance.

Data Analysis-

Following data collection, the data were coded, imported into SPSS 28.0.0 version for statistical analysis, and MANOVA has been employed.

Results-

To examine the normality of data descriptive statistics were used and findings are displayed in the form of a table:-

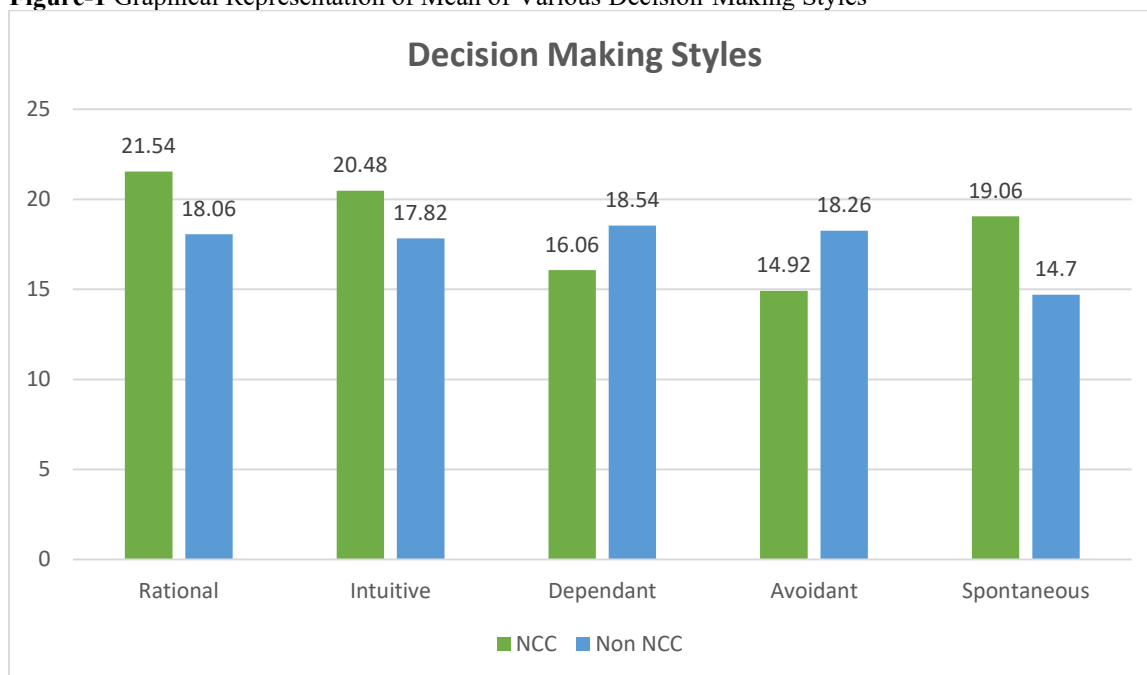
Table-1 Descriptive Analysis of Data

Descriptive Statistics				
	NCC	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Rational Decision making	NCC Girls	21.54	2.261	50
	Non NCC Girls	18.06	2.917	50
	Total	19.80	3.130	100
Intuitive Decision Making	NCC Girls	20.48	2.794	50

Dependent Decision Making	Non NCC Girls	17.82	3.015	50
	Total	19.15	3.186	100
	NCC Girls	16.06	2.831	50
	Non NCC Girls	18.54	3.732	50
	Total	17.30	3.523	100
Avoidant Decision Making	NCC Girls	14.92	2.968	50
	Non NCC Girls	18.26	3.521	50
	Total	16.59	3.649	100
Spontaneous Decision Making	NCC Girls	19.06	2.453	50
	Non NCC Girls	14.70	3.512	50
	Total	16.88	3.726	100

Result inferred from the Table-1, clearly state that NCC Girl Cadet group posits a higher mean value ($M=21.54, SD=2.26$) in comparison to non NCC girl students ($M=18.06, SD=2.92$) for rational decision-making style. The same pattern was observed by NCC girl cadets in case of intuitive and spontaneous decision-making styles as ($M=21.48, SD=2.75$) & ($M=19.06, SD=2.45$) vs ($M=17.82, SD=3.01$) & ($M=14.70, SD=3.51$), whereas comparing dependant and avoidant decision-making styles the non NCC girl students shows a higher mean value ($M=18.54, SD=3.73$) & ($M=18.26, SD=3.52$) in comparison to NCC girl cadets ($M=16.06, SD=2.83$) & ($M=14.92, SD=2.97$). Further, the findings have been displayed in graphical form for greater understanding as Figure 1 given below:

Figure-1 Graphical Representation of Mean of Various Decision-Making Styles



As data fulfilling the criteria of NPC, MANOVA was used to find out any existed difference between two groups.

Table-2 MANOVA summary for Depression on scores of various styles of Decision-Making

Multivariate Tests ^a							
Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.994	2926.901 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.994
	Wilks' Lambda	.006	2926.901 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.994
	Hotelling's Trace	155.686	2926.901 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.994
	Roy's Largest Root	155.686	2926.901 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.994
NCC	Pillai's Trace	.610	29.371 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.610
	Wilks' Lambda	.390	29.371 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.610
	Hotelling's Trace	1.562	29.371 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.610

	Roy's Largest Root	1.562	29.371 ^b	5.000	94.000	.000	.610
a. Design: Intercept + NCC							
b. Exact statistic							

There was a significant difference between NCC girls and Non NCC girls when considered jointly on the decision-making styles, Wilks' Lambda = .390, ($F_{5,94}=29.371$); $p < .05$; values for Pillai's Trace test (.610, ($F_{5,94}=29.371$), Hotelling's Trace (1.562, ($F_{5,94}=29.371$) and Roy's Largest Root 1.562, ($F_{5,94}=29.371$). All these values found to be significant at an alpha level 0.05, but still Pillai's Trace test was considered for being less effective to deviation in homogeneity of variance. Hence, the null hypothesis "There will be no difference in decision making styles among NCC girl cadets and Non NCC girl students" is rejected. For further analysis, considering limitation of MANOVA a Post hoc test deployed to check which specific groups are significantly different from each other.

Post Hoc Test

To examine the subject effect analysis of variance or ANOVA was conducted by setting level of significance at 0.05 .

Table-3 Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	Rational Decision making	302.760 ^a	1	302.760	44.467	.000	.312
	Intuitive Decision Making	176.890 ^b	1	176.890	20.940	.000	.176
	Dependent Decision Making	153.760 ^c	1	153.760	14.014	.000	.125
	Avoidant Decision Making	278.890 ^d	1	278.890	26.298	.000	.212
	Spontaneous Decision Making	475.240 ^e	1	475.240	51.787	.000	.346
Intercept	Rational Decision making	39204.000	1	39204.000	5758.036	.000	.983
	Intuitive Decision Making	36672.250	1	36672.250	4341.169	.000	.978
	Dependent Decision Making	29929.000	1	29929.000	2727.802	.000	.965
	Avoidant Decision Making	27522.810	1	27522.810	2595.242	.000	.964
	Spontaneous Decision Making	28493.440	1	28493.440	3104.965	.000	.969
NCC	Rational Decision making	302.760	1	302.760	44.467	.000	.312
	Intuitive Decision Making	176.890	1	176.890	20.940	.000	.176
	Dependent Decision Making	153.760	1	153.760	14.014	.000	.125
	Avoidant Decision Making	278.890	1	278.890	26.298	.000	.212
	Spontaneous Decision Making	475.240	1	475.240	51.787	.000	.346
Error	Rational Decision making	667.240	98	6.809			
	Intuitive Decision Making	827.860	98	8.448			
	Dependent Decision Making	1075.240	98	10.972			
	Avoidant Decision Making	1039.300	98	10.605			
	Spontaneous Decision Making	899.320	98	9.177			
Total	Rational Decision making	40174.000	100				
	Intuitive Decision Making	37677.000	100				
	Dependent Decision Making	31158.000	100				
	Avoidant Decision Making	28841.000	100				
	Spontaneous Decision Making	29868.000	100				
Corrected Total	Rational Decision making	970.000	99				
	Intuitive Decision Making	1004.750	99				
	Dependent Decision Making	1229.000	99				
	Avoidant Decision Making	1318.190	99				
	Spontaneous Decision Making	1374.560	99				

a. R Squared = .312 (Adjusted R Squared = .305)

b. R Squared = .176 (Adjusted R Squared = .168)

c. R Squared = .125 (Adjusted R Squared = .116)

d. R Squared = .212 (Adjusted R Squared = .204)

e. R Squared = .346 (Adjusted R Squared = .339)

Results provided from table 3 infers that NCC training has a statistically significant effect on rational decision making style ($F(1, 98) = 44.48$; $p < .05$; partial $\eta^2 = .312$), intuitive decision making style ($F(1, 98) = 20.94$; $p < .05$; partial $\eta^2 = .176$), dependent decision making style ($F(1, 98) = 14.01$; $p < .05$; partial $\eta^2 = .125$), avoidant decision making

style ($F(1, 98) = 26.3$; $p < .05$; partial $\eta^2 = .212$) and spontaneous decision making style ($F(1, 98) = 51.79$; $p < .05$; partial $\eta^2 = .346$).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of Table no 1 displayed the distribution of data of NCC and non NCC girl students of various decision-making styles. It clearly shows that girls who have participating in NCC programme have significantly higher mean value in rational, spontaneous and intuitive decision making while in avoidant and dependent decision-making styles the scoring is lower in comparison to the regular college going girl students. To check any significant difference between two groups MANOVA was deployed. Table no 2 bearing the findings of MANOVA suggest that there is a significant difference between two group. NCC training is having significantly influencing the decision-making styles of girl cadets in a positive manner. There may be various leadership activities and exposure to rigorous and adventurous camp training which seems to be playing part in making NCC cadet as emerging leaders. These vital activities enhance confidence and resilience of cadets and further improve the personality, leadership skills and prepare them for a better life. It also opens the gate of armed forces for NCC girls and provides a career of utmost respect and adventure.

This study has provided valuable insights into the nuanced relationship between NCC training and decision-making styles among NCC students. Noteworthy impacts were observed on various decision-making styles. This study serves as a stepping stone, prompting a more nuanced understanding of how various training activities along with regular studies contributing to the holistic well-being and success of NCC students.

Suggestions and Implication

Decision making is a vital factor for the NCC students to show their calibre, interest and preparedness for their life. NCC Student with good decision-making abilities and sensible mental health can lead the society to higher level. There are various activities which might be helpful in inculcating the better understanding of self and decisive capability-

- ❖ The teacher should motivate the NCC students in learning process.
- ❖ Guidance and counselling cell should be established in each and every educational institution to provide advice to the NCC students.
- ❖ Diagnostic assessments should be organized continuously in the classes to know the difficulties during learning process of students.
- ❖ Teachers should be emphasising on NCC students as they are participating in various activities related to NCC training along with regular studies.
- ❖ Curriculum should be planned in such a way that NCC students should be able to manage the timing between studies and training.
- ❖ There should be more training programme like NCC to be introduced by the govt. in various forms along with regular studies and existing establishment of NCC units and directorates also to be increased.

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