



OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATION, PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF PUDUCHERRY

John Paul. A * Sreekala. E*

*Junior Research Fellow (UGC), School of Education, Pondicherry University.

**Assistant Professor, School of Education, Pondicherry University.

Introduction

Motivation leads a person towards a particular task or event. Uniformity in motivation leads to aspiration. Aspiration is a little different from motivation in that aspiration is concretely activity based. We need motivation and aspiration at least in a minimum level to lead our life in a successful manner. In the present study, an effort is made to understand whether occupational aspirations and parental involvement are influenced by the variables: school, locale, parental education, parental occupation, religion, caste and income. Tests were conducted to understand whether occupational aspiration is related to parental involvement. The present study inquires whether students' aspiration is influenced by factors like school, locale, caste and income or whether the students' aspiration levels are self-driven. Intrinsic motivation comes from within a student towards a particular task. Extrinsic motivation is dependent upon external things like award, reward or price. Even if extrinsic motivation fails, intrinsic motivation drives a student to attain the goal. Intrinsic motivation initiates a student without the necessity of any other external factors. Students with aspiration towards particular occupations are tested with occupational aspiration scale in this study.

A Literature Review

Rashmi Garg (2002) conducted a study on educational aspirations, family background and found that personal factors of the Canadian students were more influencing educational aspirations rather than family background influencing educational aspirations of Canadian students.

Aspirations are not necessarily predictors of realistic attainment in the career of students, however, they have considerable psychological meaning and predictive value to identify future educational and career options (Holland & Gottfredson, 1975). Rosenbaum (1981) hypothesized that, over time, individuals are gradually eliminated from high prestige occupations through a series of complex interactions and processes. Thus, low aspirations effectively limit one's opportunities for attaining high prestige occupations.

It is worth to note that aspiring to lower prestige occupations is not, in and of itself, negative. Becker (1981) noted that the labour market provides only limited numbers of high prestige occupations. Lowered aspirations may, in fact, reflect an accurate and realistic assessment of personal abilities and skills. However, low prestige aspirations may be viewed as negative when career development and educational opportunities are considered.

Rojewski (1997) in a study on Adolescents' Occupational Aspirations stated that the scores of Occupational Aspirations are only tentative and a student who scored high Occupational Aspiration may not necessarily get high prestige occupations. So Occupational Aspirations scores can be taken only as a preliminary indicator of student's career choice.

During the developmental process of making occupational choices, most individuals will make compromises. The need for compromise can be attributed to discrepancies between an individual's occupational aspirations and the occupations that are accessible to that individual (Gati, 1993). During adolescence, as the individual's understanding of different occupations becomes more realistic and complex, compromise may become necessary if aspirations are perceived as being unrealistic or unattainable.

Occupational aspirations, using prestige level, are relatively stable during adolescence and provide substantial predictive power for later aspirations (Rojewski & Kim, 2003). In general, early adolescents are likely to express high status educational and occupational aspirations, regardless of the reality of attaining those goals. These aspirations are lowered by compromise when individuals do not believe they possess the necessary skills or abilities, believe that the educational or entry-level requirements are beyond their abilities, do not receive support or possess aspirations that are at odds with family and friends, or if they perceive significant community or societal barriers to job entry or success (Armstrong & Crombie, 2000). The influence of a number of background variables, psychological factors, and sociological aspects on occupational aspirations prestige has been studied, especially, gender, race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.

Career aspirations might also serve as a path for adolescents to insulate themselves from the realities and pressures of limited ability or future expectations. It is also possible that higher aspirations motivate adolescents to achieve more academically and occupationally by establishing idealized goals and intentions or by delaying decision making (Rojewski, 2009).



Rojewski(2005) in a study on career aspirations found that covariates such as gender, race and socio-economic status are significant predictors of career aspirations.

Literature review of occupational aspirations say that socio-economic background is an important predictor of occupational aspiration in some studies and in other studies socio-economic background does not influence occupational aspiration.

In our present study the researcher is intended to find out that whether type of school, locality, family income have influence on students' occupational aspiration or not. Euntung(2002) conducted a study on Parental Involvement and Children's Educational attainment and found that parental expectation was closely related to children's educational achievement. The coefficient for parental expectation was positive, and it had predictive power for children's educational achievement.

Euntung(2002) in his study on Parental Involvement and the results said that communication between parents and children resulted in a statistically significant contribution to explaining variance in children's educational achievement. Children who engaged in higher levels of communication with their parents had higher levels of educational performance in studies.

Parents' English proficiency was positively attributed to most parental involvement variables, with the exception of 'parental expectation'. Parents who had a higher level of English proficiency tended to become more acculturated into the American societal and cultural fabrics, with higher levels of parental involvement. More importantly, parents' English proficiency had a positive and consistent impact on children's educational achievement, throughout every regression model in this study. We could conclude, therefore, that parents' English proficiency, as assessed on the basis of acculturation levels, is heavily associated with children's educational achievement. The results found that parental involvement makes a positive contribution to children's educational success.

Okpala(2010) examined the relationship between parental involvement and student achievement. The expenditures on instructional supplies and parental involvement were significant in explaining mathematics test scores. The results indicated that percentage of students in free/reduced lunch programmes was relatively negative to scores in mathematics. Overall findings of the study states that economic status is correlated to academic achievement.

Carter (2000) conducted a study on Parental Involvement on Adolescents' Education among eighth grade students. Several types of parental involvement were analysed for gender differences, including school discussion parent-school connection, parental expectations, parental attendance at school events, and three measures of parental involvement (checking homework, limiting television watching, and limiting going out with friends). The results showed that daughters had more parental involvement than sons.

Young (1998) analysed the effect of cultural issues in the development of trust between schools in the United States and Mexican-American parents. The study found that the "existence or absence of trust between the home and the school affects the development and sustenance of meaningful parental involvement". Young's finding that cultural roles, expectations and values play a pivotal part in how trust is perceived and developed, is further evidence of the need to be aware of the context of culture and ethnicity.

Edwards (2000) found that children referred to far more parental involvement occurring in the home setting than at school. In spite of the findings, parents, and sometimes teachers, can misinterpret the situation and assume that older children do not want parents to be involved in their education, which can act as a barrier to effective Parental Involvement.

Parsons (1999) examined parental involvement and behavioural problems and found that reputation for exhibiting challenging behaviour their parents are reluctant to visit schools. There was a negative correlation between parental involvement and children's behavioural problems so that the more the problems of behaviour in children the less parents are inclined to be involved in school. When behaviour problems become so severe that schools begin to consider suspension or expulsion conflict between schools and parents is almost inevitable and presents a formidable barrier to meaningful parental involvement.

Frank defines level of aspiration as "the level of future performance in a familiar task which an individual, knowing his level of past performance in the task, explicitly undertakes to reach".

Hoppe defines level of aspiration as "the degree of accomplishment consciously striven after by an individual".



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Parental involvement is the participation of parents in every facet of children's education and development from birth to adulthood, recognising that parents are the primary influence in children's lives(PTA, Connecticut, 2008).

Parental involvement is being involved in their children's lives, at school, coaching them; spend time together, having meals together, going on vacation, and being there for them; teach them, guide them helping them with their education, help discern right from wrong, guiding through important decisions, teaching citizenship and life skills and develop their unique talents and abilities; know then what is going on their lives, paying close attention to where they spend their time and with whom, and knowing their interests and passions; having right mind-set being interested in the child's activities, and loving them unconditionally and provide for them; food, clothing, shelter, give them a wide range of experiences.(Baumgardner, 2008).

Hill(2009) examined several studies and opined that parental involvement has positively associated with academic achievement with the exception of parental help with homework.

William(2003)conducted a meta-analysis on parental involvement and reported that the impact of parental involvement overall is significant for all the minority groups under his study.

Xitao fan(2001) conducted a study in the Area of Academic Achievement, it was revealed that the relationship between parental involvement and academic achievement is stronger when academic achievement was represented by more global indicator of academic achievement (e.g., school GPA), than by academic subject-specific indicator (e.g., math grade).

Balli(1995)conducted a study on socio-economic status, parental involvement and supported empirically, to some degree, that socio-economic status and parental involvement are positively related.

Astone(1991) had suggested that parents of higher SES are more involved in their children's education than are parents of lower SES and that greater involvement fosters more positive attitudes towards school, reduces absenteeism and dropping out and enhances academic achievement.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the occupational aspiration and parental involvement of higher secondary school students.
2. To study the relationship between occupational aspiration and parental involvement of higher secondary school students.
3. To study the occupational aspiration of higher secondary school students with respect to the following dimensions,
 - a) Type of school.
 - b) Caste division.
 - c) Parental Income.
4. To study the parental involvement of higher secondary school students with respect to the following dimensions.
 - a) Type of school.
 - b) Caste division.
 - c) Parental Income.

Methodology

Survey method is used to collect data. The following standardised tools are used for the purpose of data collection.

1. Occupational Aspiration Scale by G.S.Grewal(1975).
2. Parental Involvement Scale by VijayaLaxmi Chauhan and Gunjan Arora(2009).

Sample of the study

Higher secondary school students of Puducherry constituted the population of the study. A total of 107 higher secondary schools were identified in Puducherry region and sampling frame was constructed using 107 higher secondary schools. Using simple random sampling method, ten higher secondary schools were sampled out. From these ten higher secondary schools, data were collected from 430 students. Among the ten schools, four schools were private run and six were government run.



Results

From the total sample of 430 higher secondary school students, descriptive analysis is carried out. Mean and standard deviation of the scores of occupational aspiration of higher secondary school students are found to be 52.54 and 9.095 respectively. Skewness and kurtosis of the scores of occupational aspiration of higher secondary school students are found to be 0.660 and 0.633 respectively. Mean and standard deviation of the scores of parental involvement of higher secondary school students are found to be 94.32 and 5.981 respectively. Skewness and kurtosis of the scores of parental involvement of higher secondary school students are found to be 0.860 and 0.740 respectively. Since the values of skewness and kurtosis of both the scores of occupational aspiration and parental involvement lie between +1 and -1, it is assumed that data is normal in its distribution. Since the data on occupational aspirations scores and parental involvement scores is approaching normalcy in distribution, t-test and F-test are employed to find out mean differences and Pearson product moment Correlation is carried out to find association between the scores of occupational aspiration and parental involvement.

Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis-1

There exists no significant association between the scores of occupational aspiration and parental involvement among higher secondary school students.

Table1: Correlation between occupational Aspiration Score(OAS) and Parental Involvement Score(PIS)

Correlation	Occupational Aspiration(OAS)	Parental involvement(PIS)
OAS:Pearson Correlation Sig (2-tailed)	1	0.50
N	250	250
PIS: Pearson Correlation Sig (2-tailed)	0.050	1
N	250	250

OAS-Occupational aspiration score

PIS-Parental Involvement score

Since the table value is 0.430 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Moreover the correlation value is 0.050 which is not between +1 and -1, so there is no significant relation between occupational aspiration and parental involvement. Both occupational aspiration and parental involvement are not associated significantly to each other. So an increase or decrease in occupational aspiration scores of a person will not predict increase or decrease scores in parental involvement of that person. Statistically there is no correlation between the above two variables.

Hypothesis-2

There exists no significant difference in the scores of occupational aspiration among higher secondary school students with respect to type of school.

Table 2: t-test: Occupational Aspiration Score with respect to the type of school

School	N	Mean	SD	SE	't'	df	Sig
Private	105	53.83	9.036	0.882	1.910	248	0.057
Government	145	51.61	9.056	0.752			

Since the table value is 0.057 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no significant difference in the occupational aspiration scores of government and private higher secondary school students. With respect to type of school, private and government school higher secondary students score in occupational aspiration almost equal. Because the mean scores of private and government higher secondary students lie almost nearer. So the researcher concludes that type of school does not influence a student's occupational aspirations.

Hypothesis-3

There exists no significant difference in the scores of occupational aspiration among higher secondary school students with respect to caste.

Table1.4: ANOVA: Occupational Aspiration Score with respect to caste.

Group	Mean	df	Mean Square	'F'	Sig
Group1,2,3	1.(53.16) 2.(52.46) 3. (52.09)	2	10.625	0.128	0.880



- 1-Scheduled caste, Scheduled Tribe
- 2-Other Backward Class
- 3-General

Since the table value is 0.880 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no significant difference in the occupational aspiration scores of higher secondary school students with respect to caste. With respect to caste, the students were divided into three groups namely, Scheduled Caste Scheduled Tribe, Other Backward Class and General. The mean scores of higher secondary students in occupational aspiration with respect to caste division are almost equal. So the mean difference among these three does not differ significantly. So it can be understood that caste does not influence occupational aspiration of higher secondary school students.

Hypothesis-4

There exists no significant difference in the scores of occupational aspiration among higher secondary school students with respect to their family income.

Table 3:ANOVA: Occupational Aspiration Score with respect to family income.

Group	N	Mean	df	'F'	Sig
1	142	94.00	4	2.162	0.074
2	69	95.00			
3	18	94.00			
4	13	93.00			
5	08	97.00			

- Group 1:Salary up to 10,000
- Group 2: Salary 10,000-30,000
- Group 3: Salary 31,000-50,000
- Group 4: Salary 51,000- 100,000
- Group 5: Salary 100,000 and above.

Since the table value is 0.074 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. So there is no significant difference in the scores of occupational aspiration among higher secondary school students with respect to family income. Higher secondary school students were classified into five groups as above according to their salary. The mean difference of groups with different family income do not differ significantly. So salary does not influence occupational aspiration.

Hypothesis-5

There is no significant difference in the scores of parental involvement among higher secondary school students with respect to type of school.

Table 4:t-test: Parental Involvement with respect to school

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	't'	Sig
Private	105	94.66	6.308	248	0.758	0.449
Government	145	94.80	5.742			

Since the table value is 0.449 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore parental involvement scores of higher secondary students do not differ significantly with respect to type of school. Even though the type of management of higher secondary students differs, their parental involvement scores do not differ significantly.

Hypothesis-6

There is no significant difference in the scores of parental involvement among higher secondary school students with respect to caste.

Table 5:ANOVA: Parental Involvement score with respect to caste division.

Caste	N	Mean	SD	df	F	Sig
1.	38	95.32	5.981	248	0.501	0.606
2.	180	94.53				
3.	32	94.67				

- 1. Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe
- 2. Other Backward Class
- 3. General



Since the table value is 0.606 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore parental involvement scores of higher secondary students do not differ significantly with respect to caste division. The mean scores of parental involvement scores of higher secondary students across caste division does not differ significantly.

Hypothesis-7

There is no significant difference in the scores of parental involvement among higher secondary school students with respect to family income.

Table 6:ANOVA: Parental Involvement score with respect to family income.

Salary(Rs.)	N	Mean	SD	df	F	Sig
Upto 10,000	142	94.00	5.981	248	0.756	0.555
11,000-30,000	69	95.00				
31,000-50,000	18	94.00				
51,000-100,000	13	93.00				
Above 100,000	08	97.00				

Since the table value is 0.555 which is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore parental involvement scores of higher secondary students do not differ significantly with respect to family income. Family income was categorised into five groups as above. The mean scores of higher secondary students in parental involvement across the above said five groups do not differ significantly.

Findings and Recommendations

Occupational Aspiration Scores and Parental Involvement Scores of higher secondary school students were taken into consideration in this study. Occupational aspiration is studied with respect to the demographic variables: type of school, caste, parental occupation and family income. A study conducted by RashmiGarg (2002) on educational aspirations and family background found that personal factors: drive, motivation and aspirations were more powerful in influencing the educational aspirations than background of the family in influencing educational aspirations of Canadian students. In the present study also, the results on occupational aspiration scores of higher secondary school students when studied in relation with type of school, parental occupation, caste, religion and family income showed that occupational aspiration scores are not influenced by any of the above said demographic variables.

Correlation values between occupational aspiration and parental involvement is found to be 0.050. So there is no significant correlation between the scores of occupational aspiration and parental involvement. Xitao (2001) conducted a study on parental involvement and found positive correlation between parental involvement and academic achievement. So parental involvement can be studied with other areas of study like educational attainment, academic achievement. Therefore studying parental involvement with respect to concretely observable factors may produce positive correlation.

Parental involvement scores of higher secondary school students do not differ significantly when tested with demographic variables: type of school, caste, family income. A study examined by Xitao (2001) parental involvement has significant correlation with education related factors. Astone (1991) suggested that parents of higher socio-economic status are participating more in their children's education and the level of education of parents from higher socio-economic status is more when compared to parents of lower socio-economic status. So educated parents from higher socio-economic status would take part in their children's educational activities. So it is inferred that parental involvement scores would show significant association with parental education rather parental income.

Hill (2009) studied parental involvement in middle school and found that parental involvement towards their children from childhood to adulthood showed a decreasing trend. In the present study, parental involvement is studied among higher secondary school students and those students would almost be in their adolescent age. In general, parental involvement would decrease when their children reach adolescence. Communication between parents and children with respect to parental involvement showed statistically significant contribution to children's educational attainment. Children who communication with parents showed more educational performance in their studies (Euntung, 2002). Therefore, communicating with children in their academic endeavour would increase their academic performance. On the whole parental involvement contribute positively towards their children's academic performance. Studies reviewed in the area of occupational aspiration found that socio-economic status is an important predictor in occupational aspirations (Rojewski, 1997).

Another study conducted in the area of occupational aspiration by Charles (1999) found that socio-economic status does not predict occupational aspirations. In the present study, the results showed that socio-economic status does not influence



occupational aspirations of higher secondary school students of Puducherry. External factors do not seem to be influencing the occupational aspirations. Internal factors like interest, drive, motivation and aspiration may influence occupational aspirations of higher secondary school students. So in addition to educational support, financial support, children have to be given psychological support to reach their goals. A study conducted by Entwistle (1998) showed that intrinsic motivation is associated with deep approach, involving gaining of understanding in studies. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is associated with a surface learning approach, involving rote learning of material. So intrinsic motivation performs better than extrinsic motivation in the educational performances of students.

The results of occupational aspiration is not influenced by the demographic variables: type of school, religion, caste, parental occupation and family income. We can arrive at a conclusion that highly aspiring students can come from any background. So demographic variables should not be considered as a barrier in selecting a right for particular educational course. The government should give adequate facilities to poor students in reaching their destination. The quality of education provided to children studying in government schools should be improved and then only students can find their right path after school education. It is recommended that while carrying out educational research, concrete and observable concepts may be taken to ensure the clarity and generalizability of results.

Parental involvement in the life of higher secondary school students was high from educated parents. So it is clear that education of parents is very important in students' life. Parents from higher socio-economic status also participate in their children' educational activities. So higher social and economic status is a good support in children' education.

There should be a counsellor in schools to solve the mental, emotional, psychological problems of children particularly when they are in their adolescence period. Motivated and aspiring students should be given educational, financial and psychological support. In the present situation, almost in all the schools the post of counsellor is vacant. Private schools that are always result oriented give a lot of burden on students in studies. Overburden upon students may be checked.

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