

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF THE ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to explore the relationship of the educational aspirations of the adolescent's vis-à-vis various dimensions of their family environment. It was also aimed to study the differences in the educational aspirations of adolescents on various demographic variables like gender of the adolescents, area where the family of adolescents is residing i.e. rural or urban areas, type of family viz. nuclear and joint family, parents' education and the position of adolescent among his/her siblings. The study was conducted on 1000 adolescents studying in Class 10th, 500 boys and 500 girls. A significant yet negative correlation was found among two dimensions of family environment and educational aspirations. The female adolescents and adolescents coming from rural areas had significantly higher educational aspirations than male adolescents and those coming from urban areas.

Keywords: Educational aspirations and Family environment.

Education plays a vital role in building any society. The modern society cannot achieve its aim of economic growth, technical development and cultural development without fully harnessing the talents of its citizens. Educationists, thus, strive to develop the intellectual potential of the students and make to see that their potentialities are fully realized and channelized for the benefit of the individual and that of the society. Therefore, it will not be wrong to say that education is the primary and basic need of any individual and one of its various purposes is to help to know and understand him-self, to become increasingly self-directive and capable of living a purposeful life. Self-directedness in case of children helps to develop in them the vocational identity which governs their educational choices and preferences for a particular career.

Today, with the modernization of the society and changes in its social, economic, political and religious values, the educational environment too is undergoing sea change. The values, the needs, the preferences and the aspirations too are undergoing

sea changes. Education is now being viewed from its long range objectives and from a purely utilitarian angle. The New Education Policy has given special emphasis to vocationalisation of education and to the Vocational education. This type of education is practically training for affairs of the life viz. getting a job and making a living to earn one's bread and butter.

Peterson, Stivers and Peters (1986) studied to find the family versus non-family significance for the career decisions of low income youth. In this study, the parents' were consistently rated as the most viable persons as education and career resources.

Marjoribanks (1986) studied a sample of Australian adolescents and reported that the influence of family variables on educational and occupational expectations was conditional on SES (Educational level of parents was a component of SES. Specifically, adolescents' perceptions of parent support influenced positively lower and middle SES adolescents' expectations more than the expectations

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of upper SES adolescents.

Park (2004) conducted a comparative study of educational aspirations of American, Korean, and Mexican and White Secondary students in California. The study revealed significant ethnic group and student achievement level differences in educational aspirations among these four ethnic groups, but it found no association between student's gender, parents' educational level and socio economic status and their educational aspirations. The study also indicated that the educational and occupational aspirations of the students closely mirrored those of their parents.

In today's competitive world, everyone is ambitious in one way or the other. A great deal of variation is found with regards to goal setting behavior. Persons with an equal amount of ability differ significantly in their goal setting behavior. One may set it very high while others very low, still others may set to their performance level. Thus, in choosing life goals and in doing daily life activities, people differ largely in their expectations and aspirations.

Family is considered to be the first school of the child and family members as the first teachers of the child. It is in the family that the basic ideas and ideals are initiated. The child also develops many attitudes towards himself and his associates in the family determine his later adjustments in life. Educational aspirations of adolescents are one such area where do's and don'ts of the family count a lot, exceptions notwithstanding. The type of educational processes that go within a family, to a large extent, depends on the environment within the family. The importance of family environment in the formation of personality is emphasized by all the sciences studying human behaviour. The family being a social institution has a structure and organisation. The interactions in the family have a definite impact on social and educational development of the child. The reciprocal relationships between the members of the family may be thought of as child's social and psychological heritage. Family structure, values and norms may be changing in present times; joint family system may be vanishing, even then family still remains the basic unit where persons are drawn

together by mutual love, warmth and affection for the realisation of best in man and woman.

Objectives

The various objectives of the present study are:

1. To study the relationship between the family environment and educational aspirations of the adolescents.
2. To study the significance of differences in educational aspirations of male and female adolescents.
3. To study the significance of differences in educational aspirations of adolescents belonging to rural and urban areas.
4. To study the significance of differences in educational aspirations of adolescents belonging to nuclear and joint families.
5. To study the significance of differences in educational aspirations of adolescents in relation to their parents' education.
6. To study the significance of differences in educational aspirations of adolescents in relation to sibling position.

Hypotheses of the Study

The various hypotheses of the present study are:

1. There does not exist significant relationship between the family environment and educational aspirations of the adolescents.
2. Male and female adolescents do not differ significantly in their educational aspirations.
3. There does not exist significant differences in educational aspirations of adolescents belonging to rural and urban areas.
4. There does not exist significant differences in educational aspirations of adolescents belonging to nuclear and joint families.
5. The adolescents with different level of parents' education do not differ significantly in their educational aspirations.
6. There does not exist significant difference in the educational aspirations of adolescents at different sibling positions.

Method

The Descriptive Survey Method was adopted in the present study to investigate the family environment and its relation to the educational aspirations of the adolescents living in that family coupled with various demographic factors.

Sample

In the present study, for collection of the data, the researcher applied Stratified random sampling technique from the adolescent student population studying in Class 10th in the schools situated in and around Ludhiana (rural and urban areas) and affiliated to CBSE and PSEB. A total of 1000 students were taken from 17 different schools of Ludhiana district both from urban and rural areas. Of the total sample population, 500 were male students and 500 were female students. 250 male and 250 female students were from urban areas and 250 male and 250 female students were from rural areas.

Measures

The tools used for the present study were:

- *Educational Aspiration Scale* devised (Sharma and Gupta, 1971)
- *Family Environment Scale* devised (Bhatia and Chadha, 2005)
- *Gender* (Male/Female), *Place of residence* of the family (Rural/Urban), *Kind of family* (Nuclear/Joint), *Parents' education* and *Sibling position* of the adolescent in the family were taken as the demographic variables for the present study.

Results and Discussions

Upon collecting the data from the selected sample population, the scores of the respective scales were tabulated and subjected to statistical inference for arriving at the results of the present study. For interpretation of the analysed results, the Statistical techniques of Product Moment Correlation and t-ratios were calculated to test the significance of the results.

Table 1: Co-efficient of Correlation between various dimensions of Family environment and Educational Aspirations (N=1000)

| S. No. | Dimensions | r | Sig. Level |
|--------|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Cohesion | 0.0379 | NS |
| 2 | Expressiveness | -0.0088 | NS |
| 3 | Conflict | 0.0299 | NS |
| 4 | Acceptance and Caring | 0.0292 | NS |
| 5 | Active Recreational Orientations | -0.0386 | NS |
| 6 | Independence | -0.0317 | NS |
| 7 | Organisation | -0.1295** | Sig. |
| 8 | Control | -0.0625* | Sig. |
| 9 | Family Environment | -0.00208 | NS |

** Significant at 0.01 level

*Significant at 0.05 level NS- not significant at 0.05 level df=998

Table 1 reveals that Organisation and Control exhibits a significant and negative correlation with the Educational aspirations of the adolescents at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance respectively. Whereas, no significant correlation was found between the dimensions of Cohesion, Expressiveness, Conflict, Table depicts that the coefficient of correlation between Family Environment dimension of Acceptance and Caring, Active Recreational Orientations and Independence of family environment and educational aspirations. Hence, the hypothesis of no significant relationship of family environment and educational aspirations cannot be rejected.

Table 2: Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents on the basis of Gender

| Gender | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|--------|-----|--------|--------|---------|
| Male | 500 | 36.971 | 9.690 | 8.614** |
| Female | 500 | 42.491 | 10.875 | |

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 2 reveals t-ratio between educational aspirations of male and female adolescents is 8.614 which is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, male and female adolescents differ significantly in their educational aspirations. Female students (M = 42.491) exhibited significantly higher educational aspirations than those of male adolescents (M = 36.971). Thus the hypothesis of no significant

difference in the educational aspirations of male and female adolescents is rejected.

Table 3: Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents on the basis of Locality

| Locality | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|----------|-----|--------|-------|---------|
| Rural | 500 | 40.794 | 10.58 | 2.645** |
| Urban | 500 | 39.023 | 10.69 | |

**Significant at 0.01 level

Table 3 reveals t-ratio between educational aspirations of rural and urban adolescents is 2.645 which is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, adolescents living in rural and urban areas differ significantly in their educational aspirations. Adolescents living in rural areas (M = 40.794) exhibited significantly higher educational aspirations than those of adolescents living in urban areas (M = 39.023). Thus the hypothesis of no significant difference in the educational aspirations of adolescents belonging to rural and urban areas is rejected.

Table 4: Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents on the basis of Family Type

| Family Type | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|-------------|-----|-------|-------|----------|
| Nuclear | 500 | 39.46 | 10.57 | 1.547 ns |
| Joint | 500 | 40.89 | 10.57 | |

NS- not significant at 0.05 level

Table 4 reveals t-ratio between educational aspirations of students belonging to nuclear and joint family is 1.547 which does not exceed the table value (1.96) at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, it can be said that the educational aspirations of students belonging to nuclear and joint families do not differ significantly. Thus, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the educational aspirations of adolescents belonging to nuclear and joint family is accepted.

Table 5: Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents on the basis of Parents' Education

The students under study were divided into three groups on the basis of their parents' education-

'low educated', 'medium educated' and 'highly educated' parents' group.

Table 5 (A): Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Low and Medium Educated Parents' Groups

| | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|-------|---------|
| Low Educated Parents | 395 | 41.20 | 10.41 | 2.948** |
| Medium Educated Parents | 460 | 39.73 | 10.51 | |

** Significant at 0.01 level

Table 5 (B): Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Low and Highly Educated Parents' Groups

| | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|-------|---------|
| Low Educated Parents | 395 | 41.20 | 10.41 | 4.676** |
| Highly Educated Parents | 145 | 36.67 | 10.22 | |

** Significant at 0.01 level

Table 5 (C): Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Medium and Highly Educated Parents' Groups

| | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|-------|---------|
| Medium Educated Parents | 460 | 39.73 | 10.51 | 3.187** |
| Highly Educated Parents | 145 | 36.67 | 10.22 | |

** Significant at 0.01 level

Tables 5 (A), (B) and (C) reveals t-ratio between educational aspirations of children of low educated & medium educated parents (2.948), low educated & highly educated parents (4.676) and medium educated and highly educated parents (3.187) respectively which are significant at 0.01 level. Moreover, educational aspirations of children of low educated parents' is significantly higher than the children of medium and highly educated parents. Thus, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the educational aspirations of adolescents on the basis of their Parents' Education is rejected.

Table 6: Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents on the basis of Sibling Position

The sibling position of adolescents under study

comprised 'first sibling position, middle sibling position and last sibling position'.

Table 6 (A): Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents at First and Middle Sibling Positions

| | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|-------|-----------|
| First Sibling Position | 452 | 39.59 | 10.33 | 0.0397 ns |
| Middle Sibling Position | 165 | 39.55 | 11.35 | |

NS- not significant at 0.05 level

Table 6 (B): Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents at First and Last Sibling Positions

| | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|------------------------|-----|-------|-------|----------|
| First Sibling Position | 452 | 39.59 | 10.33 | 1.016 ns |
| Last Sibling Position | 383 | 40.31 | 10.47 | |

NS- not significant at 0.05 level

Table 6 (C): Mean Differences in the Educational Aspirations of Adolescents at Middle and Last Sibling Positions

| | N | Mean | SD | t-ratio |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|-------|-----------|
| Middle Sibling Position | 165 | 39.55 | 11.35 | 0.7400 ns |
| Last Sibling Position | 383 | 40.31 | 10.47 | |

NS- not significant at 0.05 level

Tables 6 (A), (B) and (C) reveals t-ratio between educational aspirations of adolescents at first and middle sibling position (0.0397), first and last sibling position (1.016) and middle and last sibling position (0.7400) respectively which are not significant at 0.05 level. Thus, the hypothesis of no significant difference in the educational aspirations of adolescents on the basis of their sibling Positions is accepted.

Conclusions

The findings revealed that a negative and significant correlation exist between the dimensions of Organisation and Control of the Family Environment and Educational Aspirations of the

adolescents.

In the aspect of mean differences in the educational aspirations of adolescents on the basis of various demographic variables, it has been found that girls exhibited significantly higher educational aspirations than boys.

Adolescents living in rural areas had higher educational aspirations than their urban counterparts.

Children of low educated parents had significantly higher educational aspirations than medium or highly educated parents.

No significant difference is found between children of nuclear or joint families and between the adolescents on the basis of their sibling positions.

Educational Implications

In the modern scenario, the adolescents are looking more towards their peer world. They are finding the green pastures along with the suggestions and thinking of their peer world. The family traditions, values or thinking are being thrown in the backyard. They are having the ambitions to get higher education abroad so as to improve their status both socially and economically. They are more allured towards the Westernisation and the concept of getting richer through short cuts. It is true that glamour of foreign countries easily attracts the youth and makes them blind to the realities in which they are placed. A negative relationship between Organisation and Control in the family makes the things clearer that more they find themselves in the limits of Control; more they will try to free themselves from the bondage of family traditions.

It is a common sight that girls are performing far better than boys in the Senior or Senior Secondary level exams and even in the competitive exams, the performance of girls or the adolescents coming from low income group families are performing far better than their counterparts. Similarly, the children of low educated parents and those from rural areas are giving tough competitions to their counterparts. All these present day happenings are entwined with the results of the present study.

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