International Journal of Research in Social Sciences
Vol. 7 Issue 11, November 2017,
ISSN: 2249-2496 Impact Factor: 7.081
Journal Homepage: http://www.ijmra.us, Email: editorijmie@gmail.com
Double-Blind Peer Reviewed Refereed Open Access International Journal - Included in the International Serial Directories Indexed & Listed at: Ulrich's Periodicals Directory ©, U.S.A., Open J-Gage as well as in Cabell's Directories of Publishing Opportunities, U.S.A

A STUDY OF INTERFERENCES OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL FACTORS IN SELECTING EDUCATIONAL STREAM AT +2 LEVELS

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Abstract:

The study is all about relationship, contribution and prediction among personal values, career aspirations, socio-economic status, academic achievement and educational choice at senior secondary level. The present investigation is based on a population of class XI students, more specially, the new entrants into different educational streams. The sample consisted of 500 students selected from different senior secondary schools. Out of these 500 students, 250 were female and 250 were male. The "incidental sampling" technique being the most feasible, was used to select the sample. The sample covered a wide geographical area of Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. For the purpose of data collection the investigator used Personal Values Questionnaire (PVQ), Personal data Sheet (PDS) and Occupational Aspiration Scale. Finally, it was found that academic achievement of science students at senior secondary stage was better than the commerce students and arts students and there is a strong positive correlation between academic achievement and socio-economic status which is generally expected.

Key Word: Psycho-social Factor, Educational stream, Senior Secondary level.

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1. Introduction:

Modern education is largely based on the capacity of the individual, both mental and social. Education, as an instrument of change, is really one of the major means available to a civilized society for improving the lot of its members. The role of occupation in the life of an individual has broader psychological importance than has generally been recognized. Young men and women passing out of educational institutions and entering the world of work are

faced with a various problems regarding their vocational life. Those leaving educational and training institution are already under the impact of numerous variables in matters of choice-educational, vocational, social and personal. These variables appear to play an important role in educational choice of the students which in turn become instrumental in their occupational choices. The investigator selected the present problem keeping in view its importance especially in educational choices at senior secondary school level.

Determinants of Educational Choices:

According to the traditional view point, the 'choice' is a decision which is the individual makes at a given moment in time. It is a basic assumption of all but one theory (accident theory) of vocational choices that an individual systematically chooses the curriculum or occupation he intends to enter. Super (1960) has treated the concept of educational and vocational maturity as a part of the decision making process. Granted then, that the educational decision required of a young person at about the age of fourteen have an important bearing on his later occupational history, it is pertinent to ask whether he is ready to make the decisions typically required at the given age. Is his vocational maturity sufficient to enable him to deal adequately with the choice making tasks with which he is faced? If he has to make a choice before he is ready to make it, what will happen? What can be done to increase readiness for decision making of those who are not ready? A student's chances of choosing a stream wisely depend on the various variables like socio-economic determinants, psychological determinants, and personal determinants.

Educational Choice and Adolescents:

Choice of an educational stream represents one of the critical developmental tasks of adolescents. The contemporary Indian adolescent faces the problem of choosing the right type of stream which is compatible with his interest, aptitude and socio-economic status. Stream choice has often been defined as the individual performanceto opt, with in a given number of alternatives, his expresses for one or another, and this constitutes his choice. More specially, he indicates that thehas rankedtwo or more occupations along some continuum of desirability or favourability. When boys reach the high school age, they gradually begin to thinkabout their future and the kind of vocation they want to make their life work. Whether or not they can plan ahead depends partly on the economic stability of the family, partly on whether they belong to a social class where planning ahead is encouraged, and partly on their sex. Boys for the most part, are more seriously concerned about the problem of the choice of educational streams, because to them, it will be a life-career.

Boys typically, want jobs that have a glamour and excitement regardless of the ability required or chances that such jobs will be available for them. It is very necessary to have a knowledge vocational interests of the students to determine whether the individual gets satisfaction from the stream which he has chosen. The greater the correspondence between the educational stream and vocational choices, the greater the expectancy of success and happiness in life. Therefore, the educational choices hold a vitally important role in the whole gamut of educational issues and problems.

This is the reason why the pattern of our secondary school education hasbeen recognized into a new structure known as 10+2+3. This reorganization has provided diversified courses, so that it can be made suitable for varying needs, interests and aptitudes of different students. It has provided for the recognition of individual differences for the first time. It has saved human resources from being wasted. Education processes try to make the best use of human resources. In this way each and every individual may get satisfaction and would derive maximum happiness from his life which will contribute to the optimum good of society. So, each and every student should be given opportunities to develop his potentialities in his own way. It would be possible only when student's abilities, potentialities and interests are identified in such a way that they make right career choices.

2. Research Gaps and Issues:

Hays and Rothrey (1961) emphasize the role of school and home experiences in making wise educational choices. A student's chances of choosing wisely depends on the decision making experiences he has had in school and home settings and his decisions are influenced by the degree of independence from adult authority which he has achieved.

Small, L (1955) conducted a vocational interest inventory to study the interest pattern of high school students and its relationship with achievement and socio-economic status. The purpose of the investigation was to make differential study of interest patterns of high school seniors and to study its relationship with achievement and socio-economic status.

Strong (1960), McArthur (1955) and Stevens found that inventories interests are better predictors of the regular adult occupation than are expressed preferences when the subjects are mobile class young men but that preferences are better predictors of adult occupation in the case of young men of upper class status.

Singh (1967) made a study of patterns of educational and vocational interest of adolescents with a purpose to test the hypothesis regarding the differences in interest based on rural-urban origin, the educational interest, vocational interest and course of study.

Allport and Vernon (1931)made a study of values which is a pioneering work in the field of measurement of values gave way to a number of researches on the subject of values and led to adaption of the scale in various languages.

Kumar (1972) conducted a study on social climate in school and characteristics of pupils, and also investigated value orientations towards basic values of Indian society.

3. Objectives:

The present study is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

1. To study the relationship among personal values, career aspirations, socio-economic status, academic achievement and educational choice.

2. To determine the relative contribution of personal values, career aspirations, socio-economic status and academic achievement to educational choice at senior secondary stage.
3. To develop a statistical model to predict the educational choice of children on the basis of their personal values, career aspirations socio-economic status and academic achievement.

4. Hypotheses:

1. There are significant correlations among the variables personal values, socio-economic status, academic achievement, career aspirations and educational choice.
2. Personal values, career aspirations, socio-economic status and academic achievement make a significant contribution to educational choice.
3. It is possible to predict the educational choice of students by the knowledge of their personal values, career aspirations, socioeconomic status and academic achievements.

4. Research Tools Used:

In order to obtain required information needed for the study, three research tools were employed: Personal Values Questionnaire (PVQ), Personal data Sheet (PDS) and Occupational Aspiration Scale.

5. Population and Sample:

The present investigation is based on a population of class XI students, more specially, the new entrants into different educational streams. The sample consisted of 500 students selected from different senior secondary schools. Out of these 500 students, 250 were female and 250 were male. The "incidental sampling" technique being the most feasible, was used to select the sample. The sample covered a wide geographical area of Uttar Pradesh and Delhi.

The following table provides the details of the sample.

Table -1: Details of the Sample

S.No	Name of the School	No of Students responded
1.	Senior Secondary School,A.MU,Aligarh(Boys)	90
2.	Senior Secondary School,A.MU,Aligarh(Girls)	90
3.	R.B.S Inter College, Agra,(Boys)	40
4.	Baikunthi Devi Inter College, Agra(Girls)	40
5.	JamiaMillia Islamic, New Delhi(Boys)	40
6.	Khurja Inter College, (Girls), Khurja	40
7.	H.B Inter College, Aligarh(Boys)	40
8.	Kirori Mal Jain Inter College, Aligarh, (Girls)	40
9.	Maheswari Inter College , Aligarh, (Girls)	40
10.	D.S. Inter College, Aligarh, (Boys)	40
	Total No. Of Students	500

6. Analysis:

One of the important uses of statistical methods is to reduce a large body of quantitative information's into a few meaningful and interpretable indices, commonly known as statistical averages. Generally, the raw data in a research study, which may or may not be in numerical form, are so huge and unmanageable that no meaningful conclusions can be drawn regarding their nature and relationship they exhibit. So, as a first step, it was considered worthwhile to summarize data in terms of statistical quantities that were easily understandable and interpretable. McNemar (1962) has rightly mentioned that the reduction of a batch of data to a few descriptive measures is a part of statistical analysis which should lead to overall better comprehension of the data. In the present study, three main descriptive measures were used to summarize the raw score distributions, namely, mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient. These statistics were further used to carry out more complex statistical analysis using multiple discriminant functions. These statistics were computed for each group separately and also for the combined sample. The study involves fourteen variables in all, ten of which are related to personal value questionnaire. The remaining four variables are academic achievements, educational choice, occupational aspirations and socio-economic status. The educational choice is the dependant variable and the remaining thirteen variables are dependant variables. For the purpose of data analysis the computer programmer assigned certain codes to these variables to facilitate computational process in the computer system. The details of the coding system are given in Table 2.

Table-2: Coding System for Computer Services

S. No.	Variable Name	Computer Code
1.	Educational Choice	V1
2.	Academic Achievement	V2
3.	Socio-economic Status	V3
4.	Religious Value	V4
5.	Social Value	V5
6.	Democratic Value	V6
7.	Aesthetic Value	V7
8.	Economic Value	V8
9.	Knowledge value	V9
10.	Hedonistic Value	V10
11.	Power Value	V11
12.	Family Prestige Value	V12
13.	Health Value	V13
14.	Occupational Aspiration	V14

The summary statistics consisted of means and standard deviations of different groups. The combined sample of 500 cases consisted of three subgroups, namely arts, Science and commerce students numbering 195, 220 and 85 respectively. The data were analysed separately for each group as well as for combined sample. The summary statistics (means and standard deviations) are given in table 3 for each subsample and also for combined sample.

Variable (V)	N=195 M	σ	N=220 M	σ	N=85 M	σ	Total	
V2	53.559	8.150	67.741	9.506	57.729	8.721	60.508	11.024
V3	14.805	4.752	19.495	5.422	18.576	5.317	17.510	5.601
V4	14.620	3.195	13.904	4.062	14.258	3.833	14.244	3.713
V5	15.312	2.841	14.990	3.185	14.411	2.892	15.018	3.015
V6	14.605	2.747	14.322	2.807	12.952	3.654	14.200	2.966
V7	10.466	2.995	10.572	3.103	11.164	3.283	10.632	3.097
V8	10.353	3.187	10.581	3.534	10.929	3.534	10.552	3.402
V9	13.433	3.372	14.718	3.246	12.894	3.635	13.908	3.438
V10	9.702	2.807	10.077	3.347	10.305	2.988	9.970	3.088
V11	9.343	3.142	8.440	2.854	9.517	2.913	8.976	3.012
V12	11.087	3.712	10.572	3.433	11.305	4.290	10.898	3.703
V13	10.784	2.950	11.281	2.987	10.211	3.188	10.906	3.027
V14	51.328	10.051	56.986	7.949	54.952	7.947	54.434	9.183

The study involves fourteen variables including one dependent variable (educational choice) and thirteen independent variables. There are ten personal values which have separate score on each. Each unit of the sample has fourteen scores and hence a multivariate approach to data analysis is appropriate. Multivariate analysis is a general term used to describe a group of mathematical and statistical methods whose purpose is to analyse multiple measures of an individual. In the present investigation multiple discriminant analysis will be used which answers the basic statistical question. How can individual's best be assigned to groups on the basis of several variables and which is based on a regression equation known as "discriminant function" which maximally discriminates members of the different groups and tells us to which group each member probably belongs (kerlinger 1973). If we have two or more independent variables and members of several groups. The discriminant function gives the best prediction, in the least squared sense of the correct group membership of each member of the samples. From the scores on two or more independent variables, the group membership (educational choice) may be predicted. The data analysis was carried out on the computer.

7. Findings:

This study leads to the following findings:

1. In general, it was found that academic achievement of science students at senior secondary stage was better than the commerce students and arts students.
2. There is a strong positive correlation between academic achievement and socio-economic status which is generally expected.
3. Science students have higher occupational aspirations than commerce and arts students. These results also show that occupational aspiration positively correlated with both academic achievement and socio-economic status.

4. The result also shows that the commerce students had lower democratic value than arts and science group.
5. This shows that high academic achievement goes with high socio-economic status, high knowledge value, high occupational aspirations but low power value.
6. High socio-economic status is associated with high economic value but low social and democratic values.
7. The first discriminant function maximally discriminated between arts and science groups with commerce groups falling between the two. On the other hand, the second discriminant function discriminated commerce group from arts and science groups.
8. The primary variables having high loadings on first discriminant function were academic achievement occupational aspirations and socio-economic status.
9. The second discriminant function which separated commerce group from arts and science groups had highest loading on democratic value, socio-economic status, knowledge value and health value. This indicates that this discriminant function indicates the 'value dimension'.

8. Educational implication:

The finding that academic achievement which is correlated with socio-economic status and vocational preferences is a deciding factor in educational choice at senior secondary stage has important implication for education. The parent's teachers and guardians must do everything possible to improve the academic achievements. For this the school system has to improve curriculum, teaching method, instructional material and evaluation methods. The career choice is also highly correlated with socio economic status. It has been found that science stream has greater concentration of students belonging to upper socio-economic status. The children of lower socio-economic groups such as ST, SC and minorities join arts stream. This leads to the conclusion that children of SC, ST and other weaker section should be given special support by way of coaching classes etc. This will help them improve their achievement and thus enter into better academic stream.

Vocational aspiration is an important factor having bearing on career choice or educational choice. Due to certain social reasons, the children of lower socio-economic classes including SC and minorities have developed inferiority complex leading to low vocational aspiration. One of the reasons for this is segregation. The policy of the government to have separate schools and hostels for socially deprived children has failed to make desired impact, especially, in improving their self-concept and vocational aspiration.

Decision regarding the choice of stream carries more importance when the scope of vocational guidance is considered. The school counsellor or the guidance worker will be in a better position to guide the students if the general pattern of the electives of the school subject be made known to him. It is the prime duty of the school counsellor to place all the relevant, dark and bright, favourable and unfavourable issues before the student. Information must be

presented in such a way that student may feel at liberty to take his decision and in no case be forced to follow the counsellor's advice.

While imparting vocational guidance for educational choice of students, the school counsellor should keep in mind the educational facilities available to the students, the economic situation of the parents, the personal values, the scholastic achievement of the students, the personality traits required for success in the vocation, demand and supply of the know-how in the market, expansion of educational facilities and the like.

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