



VOCATIONAL ASPIRATION OF SCHOOL-GOING TRIBAL ADOLESCENTS OF WAYANAD DISTRICT

Dr. Pramod D.

ICSSR-Post Doctoral Fellow, School of Education,
Central University of Kerala, Kasaragod, Kerala

Dr. K.P. Suresh

Professor, Founder Head and Dean, School of Education,
Central University of Kerala, Kasaragod, Kerala

ABSTRACT

Vocational aspiration is the orientation towards some occupational goal generated through enthusiasm, passion or even mere necessity to sustain in life. The present study was explored to find out the level of vocational aspiration of school-going tribal adolescents and to compare the level of vocational aspiration of school-going tribal adolescents with respect to gender and nature of school. Survey was the major technique used for the study conducted on a sample of 110 tribal adolescents of 3 schools in Wayanad district. The Malayalam version of the Vocational Aspiration Assessment Test for Adolescents (VAS-A) developed by Dinakar and Suresh (2018) was the Tool used for the study. The results found that the level of vocational aspiration of school-going tribal adolescents was generally low to average; the vocational aspiration of male school-going tribal adolescents was higher than those of females; and the tribal adolescents of higher secondary schools had higher levels of vocational aspiration than those from secondary schools. Suggestions to incorporate practical measures for the effective inculcation of vocational aspiration for tribal adolescents are also given.

Keywords: Vocational Aspiration, Tribal Adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

Vocational aspiration, one of the major aspects of career development is generally considered as the orientation towards some occupational goal (Haller and Miller, 1967). Vocational aspiration is a result of enthusiasm, passion or even mere necessity to sustain in life. Vocational aspiration is said to give direction to an adolescent life. The term vocational aspiration is used synonymously or with some slight difference in meaning with occupational aspiration. Vocation refers to work that one does because of a feeling of deep affinity, enthusiasm or passion. It is basically idealistic in nature. According to Crites (1969), 'Vocational aspiration is formulated solely

in term of the wants and wishes of individuals, irrespective of the limitations imposed by reality'. Occupation indicates any activity that takes up a significant quantity of time in one's life basically that helps one to earn money. It is more realistic in nature. If one's occupation is the vocation that one has sought for it will certainly lead to self-actualization. Occupational aspirations are 'expressed career-related goals or choices' that provide important motivational momentum for career-related behaviours and future educational and career success (Rojewski, 2005). Vocational aspiration is determined by thoughts, feelings and attitudes, whereas vocational choice, the natural output of Vocational aspiration is 'reality-

based' since it has the practical element to it.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Getting into an occupation and leading a satisfactory life through it is considered one of the prime determinants of success in life of an individual. Vocational aspiration is a psycho-social construct that will help an individual to have direction in life in terms of vocational choices and efforts to get into an occupation of choice. Many studies have been conducted across the globe that deals with vocational aspiration and its effects or influence over various other socio-demographic variables. Studies by Watson, Tali and Rosy (2012), Quatman and Edler, (2002), Khallad (2000) and Atkinson and Raynor (1978) are related to vocational aspiration of tribal or native people of various areas of the globe. Studies dealing with plight of tribals in Kerala and practical measures to empower them are not that great in number. Yet, there are many studies that have described the status of tribals in a social and educational perspective. Studies, which offer concrete measures to ensure empowerment or those that lead the tribal adolescents to actualize themselves are not many. The present study is a humble attempt to know the level of vocational aspiration of tribal adolescents, which is one of the predictors of success of an individual. This study can pave the way for further researches in this direction.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the level of vocational aspiration of school-going tribal adolescents.
- To compare the level of vocational aspiration of school-going tribal adolescents on the basis of gender and nature of school.
- To suggest practical measures for the effective inculcation of vocational aspiration for tribal adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

Survey was adopted for the present study. The sample consisted of 110 tribal adolescents in Wayanad district where predominantly tribal students were studying from 3 schools. The Malayalam version of Vocational Aspiration Scale

for Adolescents (VAS-A) developed by Dinakar and Suresh (2018) was the Tool used for the study. The VAS-A had 20 statements related to hypothetical real life contexts that asked for the respondents' rating of their level of agreement to those particular contexts in the form on the options - Strongly Agree/Agree/Undecided/Can't Say/Disagree/Strongly Disagree. The Content Validity was ensured and Concurrent Validity with Occupational Aspiration Scale by Grewal, J.S. (1975) had a value of 0.74. The Split-Half Reliability of the Test was 0.79 and Cronbach Alpha was 0.81. The norms of the test were 'Low' - Scores 45 and below, 'Average' - Scores 46 -68 and 'High' - Scores 69 and above.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Level of Vocational Aspiration of School-Going Tribal Adolescents

Vocational Aspiration			Low		Average		High	
Mean	SD	N	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
50.92	9.28	112	28	25	79	70.54	5	4.46

Table-1 shows that 25% of the school-going tribal adolescents had low level, 70.54% had average level and 4.46% had high level of vocational aspiration. The mean score of 50.92 falls in the classification of average from the norms of VAS-S between the 20 percentile and 30 percentile scale scores of the scale. The minimum score obtained was 28 and the maximum score was 71. The maximum score obtained was equivalent to percentile 90 score of VAS, which suggested that there were no School-going tribal adolescents who have very high levels of vocational aspiration.

The above findings lead to the inference that the level of vocational aspiration of school-going tribal adolescents was generally low to average, more than two-thirds of the school-going tribal adolescents had average levels of vocational aspiration and the number of school-going tribal adolescents who had low level of vocational aspiration was much higher than those having high level.

Table 2: Comparison of Vocational Aspiration of School-Going Tribal Adolescents based on Gender and Nature of School

Variable	Sub-sample	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Gender	Male	64	52.98	8.37	2.74**
	Female	48	48.17	9.79	
Nature of School	Secondary	77	49.68	9.06	2.12*
	Higher Secondary	35	53.66	9.3	

**Significant at 0.01 level & *Significant at .05 level.

Table-2 reveals that the mean vocational aspiration scores of male school-going tribal adolescents (52.98) is higher than that of females (48.17) with a significant t-value of 2.74, (t=2.74, p<0.01) and the mean vocational aspiration scores of tribal adolescents of higher secondary schools (53.66) was higher than that of secondary schools (49.68) with a significant t-value of 2.12, (t=2.12, p<0.05), it could be interpreted that the vocational aspiration of male school-going tribal adolescents was higher than those of females and the vocational aspiration of tribal adolescents of higher secondary schools is higher than those of secondary schools.

The reason that can be attributed to the male school-going tribal adolescents having significantly higher vocational aspiration than females is that, in tribal context males have more avenues for social interaction and expression rather than their female counterparts. Similarly gender bias does exist in terms of girls being expected to stay at home and look after household chores after marriage. This can have an effect in girls' having lesser levels of vocational aspiration than their male counterparts. Similarly, the higher secondary school adolescents are more mature in terms of chronological as well as mental ages which makes them think more in terms of pursuing a career or having vocational choices. This explains their higher levels of vocational aspiration.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Career guidance should be given to tribal adolescents so that their levels of vocational aspiration can be enhanced.
- There is a gender disparity in the level of

vocational aspiration and this should be removed by giving more vocational training and career guidance to girls.

- Career orientation should be given to the children at an early stage of their lives so that even if they drop out after secondary schools, they would have some levels of aspiration towards what they would want to do in their lives.

SUGGESTIONS

The following are some suggestions that can surface from the study.

- Career orientation and career guidance should form an integral component of secondary school curriculum.
- Career choices and updates about various careers should be made available to the adolescents.
- Career guidance bureaus and career corners should be there in all secondary schools and at least two teachers - ideally one male and one female, should be assigned for its establishment and effective functioning.
- Career talks by professionals in various fields should be organized in every secondary schools should be arranged.
- Educated people from tribal communities, tribal leaders and tribal promoters are to be included in career orientation programmes for each area or tribal community so that vocations related to those communities can be taken forward and well marketed if the adolescents are interested in them
- In the present age searching for a job should not be the only prerogative of adolescents. Providing jobs by being an entrepreneur in any field should be encouraged. Entrepreneurship skill training must be introduced and implemented in secondary schools. SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) career goal setting should be encouraged among all adolescents.
- There should be co-ordination among various departments of the state and central

governments as well as the local self government institutions to ensure that programmes for development of educational and occupational aspirations among all socially disadvantaged, especially the tribals, are not hampered by red-tapism or lack of coordination.

CONCLUSION

Vocational aspiration is very much essential for an early adolescent to have an aim in life and to develop goals for the attainment of the same. Having high Vocational aspiration will help to develop informed vocational choices that can, in turn, lead that person entering into an occupation of choice leading to success in life. Tribal adolescents have a tendency to drop out from school for making quick money which can hamper their long term development to their potentials. So it is imperative that these resourceful individuals are not deprived of actualizing to their optimum potential becoming fruitful members of the society.

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