

A study of Vocational Interests of Secondary School Students

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Abstract

Vocational interest is the most enduring and compelling area of individual differences and the most popular means for characterizing, comparing and matching persons and environment. Through this research work, the researcher has tried to know and acknowledge the vocational interests of secondary students. In the present study, *Vocational Interest Record* (VIR) by Dr. S.P. Kulshrestha (1971), published by National Psychological Corporation, Agra is used. The data were analyzed with the help of 'Mean', 'S.D.' and 't-test' to study the vocational interest of secondary students. The mean of the girls was a little more than the mean of the boys in some fields, so the girls were slightly more interested in literary, commercial, constructive, artistic, social and household fields. In case of scientific, executive, agriculture and persuasive fields, boys were slightly more interested than that of girls. The findings of study are likely to prove of immense importance to educational thinkers, teachers, psychologists, parents and others who are concerned with the sphere of education.

Keywords - Vocational Interest, Secondary level Students, Vocational Interest

Introduction

India is a fast developing economy having greater responsibility in educating, developing and managing its own human resources for both domestic and global employment. No Nation can progress, no human group can advance and no individual can prosper without proper education, as education is the backbone of the nation. Education along with economic, cultural growth and empowerment forms core of every social and human development doctrines. But unfortunately a majority of the youth passing out from our

universities and colleges do not have the specific skill sets required by various sectors in the market. There is a mismatch between the skill manpower required and the skill manpower available and there is huge shortage of skill talent. Vocational Education is surely going to be an enabler to help India shine as an economically empowered democratic country where all get opportunity to develop their abilities. Realizing the urgency of skilling our coming generation to fulfill the demand of our job market, the government of India has formulated the National Policy on Skill Development (2009) and set a target for providing skills to 500 million people by 2022. The objective is to create a workforce empowered with improved skills, vocational knowledge and internationally recognize qualifications to gain access to decent employment and ensure India's competitiveness in the dynamic Global market.

Secondary and Vocational Education in India

Secondary and Higher Secondary Education are important terminal stages in the system of general education. At this stage, the youth decide whether to pursue higher education or opt for technical training or join the workforce. Vocational Education is, therefore suitable to the specific target groups who want to enter the world of work, help in solving the unemployment problem to a considerable extent by equipping these youth with tradable skills. Therefore, it is necessary to know the Vocational Interests of these youth so as to provide enough vocational subjects of their choice at the secondary level schools, which will facilitated them in finding suitable employments.

Vocational Interests play an important role in the life of an individual as these determine what one will do and how one will do it. It refers to variety of choices which an individual makes with respect to activities in which he is engaged.

Motivation for Students for Vocational Education

There are lot of responsible and contributory factors, which make students to choose vocational education and their interests. Motivation is an effective cognitive factor which operates in determining the direction of an individual's behaviour towards an end or goal consciously apprehended. Achievement Motivation which is the acquired tendency and is one of the most important social needs has been defined by McClelland and his

associates (1953) and also by Dechurms (1968) as a disposition to strive for success in competition with others with some standard of excellence set by the individual. McClelland called Achievement Motivation as a need for achievement referring to the individual motivation to overcome obstacles desire for success and the effort extended to seek out difficult tasks and do them well as quickly as possible. Achievement motivation is a fundamental requisite for learning. Atkinson (1966) found Achievement Motivation to have significant effect on educational and vocational choice.

McClelland (1956), Clark, Teevan and Ricciuti (1956) and Atkinson (1957) studied the relationship between need achievement and level of aspiration. They found that persons high in need achievement set their level of aspiration in the intermediate range of difficulty. Patel (1971) found that highly motivated pupils fixed up moderate goals.

Interesting findings reveal from tribal pupils. Mubayi (1974) studied the Vocational Aspiration and Achievement Motivation (n) in tribals of South Gujarat. The findings indicate a negative but significant relationship ($r=-0.30$) between the n- Achievement and Vocational Aspiration. The negative trend in the relationship indicates that pupils who aspire for higher status tend to score low n. Achievement. A negative but not significant relationship is evident among non-tribal schools. Lyngdoh (1975) has also reported the similar finding in tribals of Meghalaya ($r=0.122$). It indicates that increase in Achievement Motivation is associated with the decrease in occupational aspiration. Desai (1972) and Patel (1972) also found that the Vocational Aspiration of high and low n. Achievement pupils did not differ significantly. However, contrary to earlier findings, Phutela (1976) reported a positive and significant relationship between n. Achievement and educational (0.133) and Vocational (0.82) Aspirations. The findings till to date do not lead to any conclusive evidence.

Interests play an important role in one's life because they determine to a large extent, what they will do and how well they will do it. An interest is a learned motive which drives a person to occupy himself with an activity when he is free to choose what he will do. Interests are important because they serve as a source of strong motivation to learn.

As the large incidence of failure in the Secondary School examination has been of great concern not only to the parents but also to the educators. With the Constitutional provision aimed at making the elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country, the scope and responsibility of the educators have added new dimension. One of

the main concern of the educators has been how to maximize the achievement of all children with due recognition to their individual difference in ability.

Creativity and Vocational Interests among students

Many investigations conducted in India and abroad have revealed inconsistent results on sex differences in the test scores of creativity. Torrance (1963) while investigating on sex differences in creativity of the students from first grade to fourth grade has found that boys become increasingly superior on most of the measures of creative thinking, up to third grade. By fourth grade boys begin to lose their battle against conformity to behavioural norms showing a sharp measured decrement in most of these abilities (originality and flexibility). Torrance and Alotti (1969) found that girls were better than boys on the measure of creativity. Richmond (1971) has concluded that females scored higher than males. Flaherty (1992) investigated on the effects of a multimodal programme on self concept and cognitive and affective creativity on students in third grade and found that the girls in the experimental group made significant gains over the boys. In another study conducted by Boling and Boling (1993) found that first born males and later born females demonstrated the greatest creativity. With younger students prior to grade three, Kogan (1974) and Tegano and Moran (1989) found a tendency of girls to score higher than boys. However boys scored higher on originality in grade three. Coon (1969) and Warren, Luria (1972) found higher scores for girls in early adolescence on figural creativity. Torrance (1983) found that gender differences in divergent thinking ability have changed over time. In the 1950s and 1960s boys outperformed girls on measures of originality, whereas girls surpassed boys on elaboration and most measures of verbal creativity. Torrance (1962, 1965) and Harold's (1968) results indicated that there are significant sex differences on several creativity variables, with males being stronger than the females. Raina (1969) found that boys excelled on all the figural measures of creative thinking as well as some of the verbal measures. Nayana (1981) found that males excelled females on measures of verbal flexibility, figural originality and figural elaboration. Singh (1982) made an extensive study and found that boys achieved significantly higher mean scores than the girls on the measure of creative thinking. Lau and Li (1996) also found that boys were more creative than girls.

Conclusion

On the basis of study the measure findings are that there is no significant difference was found in Achievement Motivation of boys and girls. Significant difference was found in Vocational Interests of boys and girls. Positive correlation was found between Achievement Motivation and Vocational Interests of Secondary School boys and girls. The result revealed that there was no significant difference in the Achievement Motivation of boys and girls as the calculated t-value was less than tabulated value at 0.01 significant levels. Hence the null hypothesis was accepted. So it can be interpreted that there exists no significant difference in Achievement Motivation of Secondary School boys and girls. Studies conducted by E.Manjuvani and K. Anuradha (2011), Ayishabi and Moly (1998), Mavi and Pates (1997) also found no gender difference in the Achievement Motivation of students (Mean scores were almost equal for both boys and girls).

The result revealed that there was significant difference in the Vocational Interests between the boys and girls as the calculated t-value was greater than the tabulated value at 0.01 significant level. The calculated t-value 1.96038 was greater than the table value 1.68 at 0.01 significant level. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Comparatively, girls were better in their Vocational Interests (as the Mean score of girls was greater than boys). From this study it can be interpreted that girls were more career conscious than boys.

The findings reveal that boys do not differ significantly in all the variables of verbal creativity, except the measures of originality, from the girls. The results of the present study are in agreement with the findings of Torrance (1963), Razik (1967), Raina (1969), Torrance and Aliotti (1969), Richmond (1971), Singh (1982), Tegano and Moran (1989), Lau and Li (1996), who found the existence of significant sex differences between boys and girls in the test scores of creative thinking ability on which boys scored significantly higher scores than girls. However, the findings may be logically reasoned in that girls in our society have been encouraged to conform, whereas boys are expected to be active and dominant risk takers (Block 1983). Furthermore, Davis and Rimm (1989) acknowledge that most boys are provided with toys such as trucks, Logos and models that enhance their visual-spatial abilities. While Lever (1976) notes that the games of girls are often highly structured requiring turn-taking and rules. The content and theme of the study is of

vital importance for the teachers, parents, and career counselors. It is also important to know as what should be done to help the students to choose the right stream of education according to their vocational interest. This study will provide an opportunity to teachers, parents and career counselors to guide students towards right selection of vocations and subjects in accordance with their vocational interest. This study also suggests that filtration should be adopted after intermediate and only deserving candidates should be encouraged for high education with appropriate academic stream and others should be diverted to adopt vocational subjects according to their interest.

The major findings of the basis of various studies were that none of the boys whose fathers were doctors, engineers or teachers obtained marks less than 45%. The sex-wise degree of importance of reasons motivating students to pursue higher education was also studied. The reasons regarded most important by boys were a desire to cultivate the right interest, attitudes, morals and intellectual values. The reasons regarded most important by girls were a desire to cultivate the right interests, to seek new knowledge and to have a good social life. Majority of students chose vocational education out of their interest while a smaller section joined it as they could not get admission in academic stream. Most of the students felt that vocational education was purposeful, interesting and important for enhancing employment and thereby leading to national development. The majority of parents opined that their wards were interested in vocational education and that it was better than pursuing academic education as it prepared them for employment and self-education. It was found that in the Union Territory of Delhi, vocational courses were introduced in schools on the basis of the availability of teachers and infrastructure facilities. Most of the school had part-time teachers to teach the courses. However, enrollment to these vocational courses was found to be increasing as the passed out students were being absorbed in the employment.

One fourth of the total students who opted for vocational education at +2 stage were either self-employed or employed by other organisation on the basis of their vocational. Less than ten percent students were doing jobs other than what they had studied and about fifteen percent students opted for higher studies. It was also reported that the students who got jobs based on their vocational qualification were not satisfied because of meager salaries, lack of sufficient skills on their part and job insecurities.

The studies also reported that some of the significant factors for joining vocational and technical courses are interest and motivation for a particular kind of activity, personal concern, asset, set of values cherished, level of self concept; attitudinal aspect, career maturity and future prospects. As per the study these factors varied in degree from child to child and no generalization could be made about their relative importance for a child.

A large number of studies have been conducted in India and abroad on vocational and technical education as well as in the field of motivation and academic achievement/success. The researcher reviewed the related research work done in areas such as Vocational Education and Job Success, Vocational Stress, Knowledge of Education and Job Opportunities among Adolescents, Studies on Personality type and Teaching Effectiveness, Impact of Distance Education, Success in Vocational Work, Perception of Career and Parental Perception of Technical Education, Studies of Vocational and Technical Aspirations of Students, Studies on Interest and Difficulties Faced by the Students, Studies Related to Socio-Economics Status, Studies related to Employability in Technical Qualified Youth, Studies related to Comparative Analysis of achievements of Boys and Girls etc. On the basis of the aforesaid review it may be concluded that vocational and technical education are referred to as job oriented courses, consequently, students join vocational and technical education to get a gainful employment immediately after completion of courses. The research findings generally indicate that parental expectations regarding educational and career goal success is quite high. The gender bias regarding education of girl child has considerably reduced. It is seen that parents push their children to earn outstanding grades. It is a general view that academic success is the key to occupational success. The findings also indicate that vocational and technical training is preferred by the parents and students as it enhances employability and better income prospects. In short the findings indicate that parents/siblings/friends serve as role models, they support for career goal achievement, they expect high grades in academics, they support introduction to the positive of teaching the vocational/technical subjects at school level.

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