



E-ISSN: 2789-1615
P-ISSN: 2789-1607
Impact Factor: 5.69
IJLE 2023; 3(2): 47-51
www.educationjournal.info
Received: 19-06-2023
Accepted: 24-08-2023

Dr. Swati Negi
Professor, Head, Department
of B.Ed. Government Post
Graduate College, Gopeshwar
Chamoli, Uttarakhand, India

General trends in vocational interest of socially deprived adolescents

Dr. Swati Negi

Abstract

The choice of a vocation is an important decision a person must make for himself. It is a long process rather than a simple incident “one’s job is the watershed down which the rest of one’s life tends to flow”, has been well said by Robert and Helen Lynd. Vocational interests and choices do not appear all of a sudden during adolescence but as a result of a continuous developmental process. The nature of vocational interest is determined by the individual’s socio economic level and personality characteristics and by the opportunities to which he is exposed. The present study provides insights into the vocational preferences of this demographic, contributing to the understanding of career choices and opportunities for guidance and counseling programs.

Keywords: Socially deprived, adolescents, vocational interests

Introduction

Vocational interest and its subsequent development are greatly influenced by the experience a child undergoes. The introduction defines vocational interest as the preference for certain professions among various options, highlighting its significance in guiding individuals towards suitable careers. The paper explores the development of vocational interest, emphasizing its role in maturity and societal contribution.

The methodology used is normative survey research approach, focusing on socially deprived adolescents in Tehri Garhwal district. The study employs the standardised Vocational Interest Record (VIR) for data collection.

The analysis and discussion section presents findings based on mean scores, standard deviations, and ranks for ten vocational fields. The results classify vocational interests into high, medium, and low categories, revealing distinct preferences among socially deprived students. High interests include executive, scientific, and social fields, while medium interests cover artistic, persuasive, household, and literary fields. Low interests are observed in commercial, agriculture, and constructive fields.

The conclusion rejects the null hypothesis, emphasizing the significant differences in vocational trends among socially deprived adolescents. The present study provides insights into the vocational preferences of this demographic, contributing to the understanding of career choices and opportunities for guidance and counseling programs.

Vocational Interest is a term standing for the preference in favor of certain professions out of many existing and known ones. Vocation serves many important purposes of human beings. They keep the persons usefully occupied. Suitable vocational interest and their preference are one of the most important decisions in the life of all persons. Once the choices are more close to suitable and feasible professions they, always turn into promising returns in normal conditions.

Significance

Vocational Interest is mostly needed for helping persons to take proper decisions and making necessary preparations to enter into one of the preferred professions and reap the fruits of the potential and opportunities. The knowledge of Vocational interests of students provides for sound guidance and counselling programme to conserve, utilize, develop and maintain human resources for optimum progress. The investigator in this study has intended to investigate the ongoing trends of the vocational interest. Hypothesis was framed, data was collected and analyzed to test them. The results obtained for the hypothesis is presented and discussed herewith.

Correspondence Author;
Dr. Swati Negi
Professor, Head, Department
of B.Ed. Government Post
Graduate College, Gopeshwar
Chamoli, Uttarakhand, India

Vocational Interest and its Development

Vocational interest and choice is a mark of maturity. A mature individual contributes to society through the economic progress and the contribution is reasonably related to the abilities of the individual and to the needs of the social group. In a complex society, such a development of vocation is in itself an achievement. It requires physical development, mental growth, social development and emotional maturation, at least on a minimum level. A vocational choice is in itself a process of growth reflecting other phases of development.

The socio economic level of the family appears to exercise the most potent influence of all. The level and quality of education available and aspired for, as well as the level of work accessible are greatly affected by the family's finances and social contacts. SC/STs have always been deprived of such access and chance. As a result of internalizing pressure their intellectual endowment does not commensurate with the level of aspiration leading to conflict. Such students are not able to have an integrated self-concept and vocational maladjustment is likely to follow.

As a matter of fact vocational interests/ choices/ preferences/ aspirations have been subject of intense psycho-educational research for the preceding five decades. Consequent to research efforts in the discipline of psychology, followed by the discipline of education, vocational interests have gained greater clarity and acquired better appreciation for the role they play in determination of vocational adjustment in real life situations. A probe into this will throw some light in understanding the vocational interests of socially deprived adolescents.

Review of Literature

The review of literature regarding vocational interests has been presented below:

Super and Crites (1965)^[12] held values as basic interests and preferences as an indication of interests. of values with roots in value layers. They expected that values affect the choices of vocational courses, such as medical, engineering, business, and so on.

Rao (1975)^[11] investigated into "The vocational preferences and reasons for vocational preferences", of 250 male students of X, XI and XII classes. He used his own questionnaire and found senior students more in favor of the professions like medicine, engineering college and teaching. The disliked professions were of peon, attendant, conductor, postman, politician, clerk, and mechanic. The reasons for preferences were advancement, interest, prestige, security, money, leisure, comfort, and easy job.

Aminabhavi and Dharanendriah (1996)^[1] studied "The factors contributing to vocational interests of professionals". The sample consisted of 100 male professionals. NCERT Interest Inventory (senior form) was used to measure the vocational interests. The analysis revealed that the socio-cultural background had contributed significantly to the economic, secretarial, legal, administration, outdoor physical, scientific, protective service, education and medical interests of the professionals.

Gerwels, Mullis and Mullis (1998)^[5] studied "The stability of vocational interests among high school students" and examined the stability of adolescents' career interests using Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII). Significant differences in mean scores were found in gender and parental occupation, and differences were relatively stable.

Bhuwal (2003)^[3] made "A comparative study of the effect socio economic status on the self perception, vocational interest and scholastic achievement of SC & ST students in tribal areas of Baster and Kanker districts". A sample of 100-100 SC/ST students of class IX, X each was taken and tested. The main conclusions were that there was a clear relationship of socio-economic status on self-consciousness, vocational interest and academic achievements. Low socio-economic status SC/ST people were not untouched by the developing schemes run for tribal by government. Positive personality traits & self-consciousness have developed vocational interests for various areas among pupils.

Lunneborg and Lunneborg (2004)^[9] analyzed "The factor structure of the vocational interest on the models of Roe and Holland". Analyses of interscale relations in 235 students suggested that the two dimensional, circular configuration of occupational and personality types impedes the understandings of the structure of vocational interests. For both models four orthogonal dimensions seem necessary to capture interindividual variability: social vs. technical, organizational vs. outdoor, science vs. business, and artistic vs. realistic.

Yadav (2005)^[15] studied "The relationship between the needs and vocational preferences of the adolescents" on a sample of 200 students of class XI belonging to Arts, Science and Commerce. Tools used were Tripathi's Personal Preference Schedule (TTPS) and Thurston's Vocational Interest Schedule. It was found that the students who had high need of achievement, their need of exhibition was the lowest of all. The students had given highest preference to the executive and the least to the jobs related to the music. The administrative work had been preferred the most.

O' Regan, Maura (2006)^[10] studied "The circumscription and compromise in the career preferences of undergraduate students", in the University of Reading, UK. The students expressed concerns about where their degree will lead them to or what will they do when they finish undergraduate experience. They viewed it as the one facilitating their success in achieving the increasingly elusive 'graduate job' and improve student 'employability' by embedding that particular agenda into the curriculum.

Felix (2006)^[4] conducted "A research on career choice in Dominica", a small and relatively underdeveloped Caribbean nation. Holland's theory of career choice, which predicts a relationship between personality type and occupational preference and satisfaction, was tested on a data from 101, 14-16 year olds in their final year of schooling. They were consistent with Holland's ideas in some respects, but the close relationship was observed between Social and Realistic categories, contradictory to theoretical predictions.

Operational definitions of the terms

- a. **Vocation:** Vocation is a type of trade which has some objective and person earns financial gains against it. It is a job, task, assignment or an economic activity which enables a person to earn a livelihood.
- b. **Vocational Interest:** It is, here, defined as one's own pattern of preferences, aptitudes, likes and dislikes, preferred in any manner, wisely or unwisely, by self or by another source for a given vocational area or vocation.
- c. **Socially deprived adolescents:** The scheduled caste,

scheduled tribes and other backward class pupils studying in X, XI and XII classes at secondary level will be treated as socially deprived adolescents.

Methodology

The study was designed to be carried out on the lines of "Normative Survey Research" method.

Population

The population for the present study consisted of all the SC/ST/OBC students (socially deprived adolescents) studying in the District Board High School, Government Intermediate College, Saraswati Vidya Mandir, Kendriya Vidyalaya and English Medium Schools situated in nine blocks (Viksaskhand) of Tehri Garhwal district.

Sample

A sample of 500 SC/ST/OBC, socially deprived students in the age group of 13-19 years (adolescents) taken randomly from the classes X, XI, XII from various high schools and higher secondary schools of Tehri Garhwal district. The total number of boy and the girl students taken was 250 each.

Tool

The vocational interest record (VIR) developed and standardized by Dr. S.P. Kulshrestha was used for measuring the vocational interests of socially deprived adolescent students. After the responses were obtained, the response sheets were scrutinized to see that how the respondent has responded to all the items and statements. If

little doubt was established about the seriousness of the responses made, the test tool was cancelled.

Statistical Procedure Employed In The Study

The scored data of the pupils was tabularized and for the purpose of statistical analysis the following techniques were used:

- (i) Measure of central tendency (ii) Measure of variability (iii) Measure of coefficient of correlation

Analysis and Discussion

The first hypothesis which states that the students do not differ significantly between the dimensions of vocational interests among socially deprived adolescent students and the prevailing job trends of employment, the data was analysed.

The whole group comprised of total 500 socially deprived adolescent students, namely, scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and other backward class pupils of standard X, XI and XII studying in the various high schools and higher secondary schools, was tested for relative strengths in the ten vocational fields, namely, Literary (L), Scientific (Sc), Executive (Ex), Commercial (Com), Constructive (Con), Artistic (Art), Agriculture (Ag), Persuasive (Per), Social (Soc) and Household (Hse).

Vocational interests of the whole group was studied and the conclusions were made regarding the choice shown by the students. The data was tabularized and statistical procedure revealed the following results which were tabularised as following:

Table 1: The Mean, Standard Deviation (SD) And Ranks Of The Whole Group (N=500) For Each Of The Ten Vocation Fields

S. No.	Vocational field	Mean	Rank	S.D.
1.	Literary	8.33	VII	3.79
2.	Scientific	11.78	II	3.56
3.	Executive	13.43	I	4.30
4.	Commercial	7.76	VIII	3.88
5.	Constructive	4.62	X	3.28
6.	Artistic	10.50	IV	4.44
7.	Agriculture	6.52	IX	4.02
8.	Persuasive	10.49	V	3.90
9.	Social	11.56	III	4.10
10.	Household	8.70	VI	4.54

The above table shows Means, Ranks and Standard Deviations of all ten vocational fields. The range of SDs is from 3.28 to 4.54 in all ten vocational fields. The table reveals that the relative strengths of the students' preferences in ten vocational fields are different from one another. The range of means is from 4.62 to 13.43.

As regards the variability of the scores, the students interest is most variable in Household field (SD=4.54), and least variable in Constructive field (SD=3.28). The variability of scores in other fields of vocational interest, is fairly homogenous and lies within the range of 1.26 units only, (from 4.54 to 3.28).

Hierarchy

The vocational interests of the students are classified into a definite hierarchy. The investigator has classified the hierarchy of the vocational interests into three categories, namely, high, medium and low. The vocational fields of first three ranks (1, 2, and 3) were considered high. The

vocational fields of (4, 5, 6, 7) ranks were considered medium. The vocational fields of next three ranks (8, 9, and 10) were considered low.

According to this classification, the students were high In Executive, Scientific and Social field; medium in Artistic, Persuasive, Household and Literary fields; and low in Commercial, Agriculture and Constructive fields as shown in the above table.

The description of their high, medium and low vocational interests is as follows:

A) High Vocational Interests

It has been shown that the students possess high interest in jobs, such as, that of City Magistrate, Judge, Manager, Principal, Superintendent of an office, etc in the executive field; in the jobs of Engineer, Doctor, Scientist, Chemist, Medical Representative in the scientific field; and in the jobs such as Social Worker, Volunteer, Welfare Officer, Village Worker, Red Cross Worker, Primary Health

Worker, etc. in the social field.

In the present age of globalization, modernization, urbanization, industrialization and commercialization the young child tends to choose an occupation with which he identifies a greater degree of recognition and reputation. A growing awareness of the world of work and the opportunities now available seems to be largely responsible for the above choices of the jobs. The students probably look upon these job profiles as the ones which can provide them work satisfaction as well as life satisfaction. This seems to be justified in the contemporary age of scientific advancement and the importance given to science, administrative and social work in the society.

Various factors responsible for the students' high interest in these fields are genuine interest, novelty, adventure, power, independence, fame, justice, pay scales, ambitions, administration, and so on. The students, probably, look upon these jobs of executive, scientific and social fields as having good scope for social service, for advancing knowledge, for efficient administration, for social justice, and for keeping people rightly informed about current events. It may also be due to their ambition for discovery of truth of new knowledge and liking towards clean administration. This also shows that they have considerable thought to achieve the social status and due importance in the society through personal interest in the above white collared jobs. This may also be attributed to their interest in welfare of society at large.

B) Medium Vocational Interests

The students' moderate interests were for the jobs such as that of a Singer, Music Composer, Actor, Photographer, Instrumentalist, Artist, Painter, etc in the Artistic field; for the jobs of Politician, Social leader, Party spokesman, Advisor, Advertisement Manager, Insurance Agents in the Persuasive field; for the jobs of Interior Decorator, House Manager, Home-Science Teacher, Care Taker, House Planner, Cooking Experts, Dress Designers, etc. in the household field; for the jobs such As Writer, Editor, Translator, Critics, Poet, Journalist, News Correspondent, Novelist, etc in the literary fields.

This can be attributed to the invasion of mass media into the lives of people which has substantially affected the way the individuals, especially the adolescents look at the whole spectrum of the occupational sphere. The number of so-called "Talent Shows" being aired onto the various channels, opportunities now available even to the small town inhabitants, the glamour attached to these professions, availability of number of vocational institutions, exposure to development of latent skills, extent of approval with the fellows have influenced the interest and vocational choices of the subjects. For instance Indian Idol, Voice of India, Boogie-Woogie, MTV- Roadies to name a few and a bunch of all such types of shows provide a platform to the youngsters to expose their talent publicly on national channels and the local networks.

The youngsters seem to make up their mind in taking up artistic skills or their artistic inclinations seriously as professions to earn their livelihood. These jobs also need special ability and a lot of time to be devoted for improvement of skills required which meet with the aspirations of youngsters to gain social recognition, fame, and monetary benefits from it to some extent. Therein they have considerable regard for public-dealings, autonomy,

personal benefits, feeling to satisfy their innate abilities/talents, sense of adventure, independence and autonomy which make them opt for these jobs. This is a changed trend in the vocational interests as reported in the past where the artistic field generally occupied low interest category (Singh, L., 1967) (Rao, S.N., 1975) ^[11]; (Katiyar, P.C., 1982) ^[7].

C) Low Vocational Interests

The vocational interests of the students were low in the jobs such as Steno, Salesman, Typist, Shopkeeper, Cashier, Draftsman, etc. in the commercial field; in the jobs such as Gardener, Farmer, Animal-Breeder, Soil Specialist, Dairy Manager, Nursery Manager, etc in the agriculture field; in the jobs such as that of Welder, Dyer, Watchmaker, Ironsmith, Carpenter, Mechanic, Washer Man, etc. in the constructive fields.

This may be due to the less significance attached to these jobs in the prevalent society. Persons engaged in these jobs have to devote lot of time as, the nature of these jobs being technical compared to the financial gains which they earn in return. Hence the monetary returns, social acceptance, social recognition, social service, less prestige, the situations of the workplace and their self-esteem are some of the factors which deviate the interest of individuals away from these kinds of jobs.

The process of development and compromise between the individual and social factors, between the self-concept and reality, between exploration and establishment, between opportunity and interactions, between abilities and interests and aptitudes seems to play a major role in deciding the vocational interests of the students.

Vocational interests, thus follow a pattern defined with peculiar characteristics in which students possess high interest in executive, scientific and social field medium in artistic, persuasive, household and literary fields; and low in commercial, agriculture and constructive fields.

Conclusion

For the purpose of testing the first hypothesis which states that there exists no significant difference between the dimensions of vocational interests among socially deprived adolescent students and the prevailing job trends of employment Mean and SD values were found. Thereafter ranks were assigned to the vocational fields of the whole group on the basis of the mean values scored in each of the ten vocations. The relative strengths of students in ten vocational fields have been described in terms of the hierarchy of the vocational preferences into three categories, such as, High, Medium and Low. The first three vocations were considered high, the next four as medium, and the last three as low.

Vocational Interests of the whole group

The mean scores of the socially deprived students were almost, significantly different in all ten vocational fields. Consequently, a distinct hierarchy of preferences for the professions in ten vocational fields was found. According to this classification, the students were

- a. High in Executive, Scientific and Social fields
- b. Medium in Artistic, Persuasive, Household and Literary fields
- c. Low in Commercial, Agriculture and Constructive fields.

The null hypothesis was rejected as it was evident that some students preferred some vocations more than the other. Therefore the above hypothesis about no difference in the vocational trends of the socially deprived adolescents is rejected and it is evident that some of the students prefer some vocations more than the other vocations.

Interpretation

After going through the above statistics, the investigator became interested in knowing that what is the trend of vocational interests of adolescents among the socially deprived groups of students selected for this study.

It was found that the representation of socially deprived students in different courses is very marginal and enrolment number of boys and girls are unevenly distributed over all courses and classes. Obviously, there is a need of mass campaign and creating awareness, providing vocational guidance and counselling to the socially deprived students. Thus the educational and psycho-social factors, which influence the vocational interest of socially deprived students, should be explored. Hence conducting the research work to explore the influence of various variables associated with vocational interest of socially deprived students is need of the hour.

Educational Implications

The present study has been very revealing in the area of vocational preferences of the socially deprived adolescents in the Garhwal region. It has shown the need of handling the vocational aspirations/ preferences/choices with care and directing these adolescents towards gainful ends. Cooperative efforts of several persons and agencies of the society, state and nation is needed to be sought which can render promising results through précised educational plans and their implementation in practice in the right spirit.

The students' preferences should be duely considered while making a choice of profession, as it is they who would work and carry forward their aims and aspirations to achieve work satisfaction as well as life satisfaction from the jobs they enter. The parents, too, must not insist their improper suggestions on their wards.

The students' preferences should be seen in accordance with their innate nature and abilities. The vocational preferences can be suitable and can, also be unsuitable with regard to job requirements, job opportunities and personal potentials. Some of the students seem to be ambitious and attracted towards some vocational fields, like Executive, more then necessary, because of the high job values in society for the professions of these fields. They are required to be brought to real base. Society has to pay due attention on the dignity of the labour in a democratic and socialistic fashion.

Future research should investigate whether a broader set of social and contextual variables may provide greater insight into how and when adolescents clarify vocational choices and eventually commit to a career.

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