Himachal Journal of Agricultural Research 35 (1):76-80, 2009

Educational interests of under-privileged children in Himachal Pradesh

Raj Pathania, Shubhangna Sharma and Shweta Jamwal
Department of Human Development, College of Home Science
CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishvavidyalaya, Palampur-176 062, India.

Abstract

The present study was undertaken with specific objectives to know the educational interests of under privileged children and to assess the factors affecting them as. The study was conducted in Bhawarna and Bhedu Mahadev blocks of district Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. A total of 200 children (100 males and 100 females) from 20 villages were randomly selected for the study. The data were collected through self structured interview schedules for general information Standardized scales were used for information related to educational interests of under privileged children. The findings indicated that girls were having educational interest in the area of fine arts and boys were interested in science education. The significant association was found between the educational interests and sex of the respondents, parent's educational and occupational status.

Key words: Educational interest, under privileged children, Himachal Pradesh.

Introduction

Under privileged are those who are not having opportunities or advantages enjoyed by other members of community (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1969). They are denied the enjoyment of normal privileges or rights of society because of low economic and social status. They are deprived through social or economic conditions, their families lacking in material possession and are characterized by poverty (Webster's new collegiate dictionary, 1975). These families are also known as socially disadvantaged or marginalized sections of society i.e. schedule caste, schedule tribe, minority backward classes and most of those who live below the poverty line. They still possess poor assets and are engaged in low-income activities.

The deprived caste enlisted in the schedule of our constitution was named schedule caste and because of being neglected for ages, they are still unable to enjoy the fruit of education at par with others. Generally the schedule caste students come from culturally and socio-economically disadvantaged families. (Ameerjan, 1994). On the other hand low-income families are those who live below poverty line and have monthly income below Rs 1000 per month. They are very poor and lacking in material possessions and many facilities, which are needed to live a happy and secure life. These families have different needs, interests, aspirations; way of life and that is why government of India gives them special attention due to their inaccessibility to the social and economic sources.

Under privileged children also have lots of interests and aspirations like other children of the community. Interests are something with which children identify their personal well being. Interests provide a strong motivation to learn. They play an important part in everybody's lives. The interests of different people vary almost as widely as their abilities vary. Interests are related to academic achievement and are expected to enhance contribution in the area of goal pursuit and that's why an individual is properly adjusted and motivated in the field of work he is interested in, but is found to be maladjusted in an uninteresting work situation. Interest plays an important role in the development of behaviour and personality and is very important to understand the individual and to guide his future interests. The intelligence and aptitudes are unable to predict educational and vocational success without considering the individuals interests. Therefore, the identification of interest is very essential for educational and vocational choices.

Material and Methods

The study was conducted in district Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. Two blocks namely Bhawarna and Bhedu Mahadev were randomly selected. The sampling procedure Included, initially a list of villages was obtained from the concerned block development officers and then ten villages from each block were randomly selected. Then with the help of Pradhan, a list of all scheduled caste and general caste families (having monthly income below rupees one thousand) was obtained. Then a door-to-door survey was performed to find out the number of children studying in 9^{th} and 10^{th} classes belonging to these families from both the blocks and finally a total of 200 children (100 males and 100 females) were selected randomly to form the sample.

The tools for data collection were self-structured interview schedule and standardized scale namely Educational Interest Record (EIR), Kulshreshtha (1971) EIR was used to assess the educational interests of children and level of educational interest as well.

The data were analyzed statistically. Averages and percentages were used for analysis of data. Chi-square test (χ^2) was also used to test the association of different independent variables with the dependent variables that were being studied by using.

Results and Discussion

Educational interests are those interests, which provide strong motivation to learn and is the tendency to choose particular area of education. They are related to academic achievements and are expected to enhance contribution in the area of goal pursuit.

Educational interest areas of male and female respondents

It can be seen from the (Table 1) that maximum number of males i.e (29.31%) were interested in the educational area of science where as only 6.03 percent in the area of fine arts. In the case of female respondents majority of females i.e. (30.83%) were found to have interest in the educational area of fine arts where as only 2.50 percent were interested in the area of agriculture.

Hierarchical order of educational interest areas

It can be seen from the (Table 2) that the most liked educational area of males was science (29.31%), followed by commerce (18.96%), then technology and the least liked interest area was fine arts i.e. only 6.03 percent where as in case of female respondents the most liked area was fine arts (30.83%), followed by home science (29.16%), then science and the least liked interest area was the area of agriculture education.

Level of education interest

Table 3 shows that majority of both i.e. 97 per cent of female respondents and 87 per cent male respondents were found to have high level of educational interest where as only one-tenth males and very few females (3 %) scored average level of interest.

Table 1. Educational interest areas of male and female respondents

Areas	Males	Females	Total
Agriculture	12(10.34)	03(2.50)	15(6.35)
Commerce	22(18.96)	09(7.50)	31(13.13)
Fine arts	07(6.03)	37(30.83)	44(18.64)
Home-Science	11(9.48)	35(29.16)	46(19.49)
Humanities	11(9.48)	05(4.16)	16(6.77)
Science	34(29.31)	22(18.33)	56(23.72)
Technology	19(16.37)	09(7.50)	28(11.86)
Total	116(100.00)	120(100.00)	236(100.00)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table 2. Most liked and least liked interest educational areas of male and female respondents

Areas	Males	Females
Most liked interest area	Science (29.31)	Fine arts (30.83)
Second most liked interest area	Commerce (18.96)	Home science (29.16)
Third most liked interest area	Technology (16.37)	Science (18.33)
Least liked interest area	Fine arts (6.03)	Agriculture (2.50)

Table 3. Level of Educational Interest

Level	Males	Females	Total
High	87 (87.00)	97 (97.00)	184 (92.00)
Average	13 (13.00)	03 (3.00)	16 (8.00)
Low	00 (0.00)	00(0.00)	00 (0.00)
Total	100 (100.0)	100 (100.0)	200 (100.0)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Factors affecting educational interests

On applying Chi-Square test (Table 4) it was found that sex of the respondents was found to have significant association with the educational interests in which maximum number of respondents were females and was having educational interest in the area of fine arts.

Table 4. Association between socio personal variables and educational interests

Areas / Factors	AG	CO	FA	HS	HU	SC	TE	Total
Age								
13-14	3 (20.00)	6 (19.35)	6 (13.64)	8 (17.40)	5 (31.20)	18 (32.15)	8 (28.57)	54 (22.89)
15-16	9 (60.00)	17 (54.84)	33 (75.00)	31 (67.40)	11 (68.80)	28 (50.00)	16 (57.14)	145 (61.45)
17-18	3 (20.00)	8 (25.80)	5 (11.36)	7 (15.20)	0 (0.00)	10 (17.85)	4 (14.29)	37 (15.66)
Total	15 (100.00)	31 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	46 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	56 (100.00)	28 (100.00)	236 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 14.13^{NS}$								
Education								
9th	3 (20.00)	13 (41.93)	19 (43.18)	25 (54.35)	10 (62.50)	26 (46.43)	12 (42.85)	108 (45.76)
10th	12 (80.00)	18 (58.07)	25 (56.82)	21 (45.65)	6 (37.50)	30 (53.57)	16 (57.15)	128 (54.24)
Total	15 (100.00)	31 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	46 (100.00)	6 (100.00)	56 (100.00)	28 (100.00)	236 (100.00)
χ^2 7.55 ^{NS}								
Sex								
Male	3 (20.00)	9 (29.04)	37 (84.09)	35 (76.08)	5 (31.20)	22 (39.28)	9 (32.15)	120 (50.84)
Female	12 (80.00)	22 (70.96)	7 (15.91)	11 (23.92)	11 (68.80)	34 (60.72)	19 (67.85)	116 (49.16)
Total	15 (100.00)	31 (100.00)	44 (100)	46 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	56 (100.00)	28 (100.00)	236 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 52.18^*$								
Caste								
SC	10 (66.60)	15 (48.38)	20 (45..45)	20 (43.47)	6 (37.50)	25 (44.64)	11 (39.28)	107 (45.33)
General	5 (33.64)	16 (51.62)	24 (54.55)	26 (56.53)	10 (62.50)	31 (55.36)	17 (60.62)	129 (54.67)
Total	15 (100.00)	31 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	46 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	56 (100.00)	28 (100.00)	236 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 2.73^{NS}$								
Income of family								
Below 3000	5 (33.64)	16 (51.12)	24 (54.55)	26 (56.53)	10 (62.50)	31 (55.36)	17 (60.72)	129 (54.66)
3001-6000	7 (46.60)	11 (35.48)	11 (25.00)	15 (32.60)	2 (12.50)	19 (33.93)	3 (10.71)	68 (28.81)
6001 & abv.	3 (20.00)	4 (12.90)	9 (20.45)	5 (10.87)	4 (25.00)	6 (10.71)	8 (28.57)	39 (16.53)
Total	15 (100.00)	31 (100.00)	44 (100.00)	46 (100.00)	16 (100.00)	56 (100.00)	28 (100.00)	236 (100.00)
$\chi^2 = 15.42^{NS}$								

Education of fathers								
Illiterate	6	1	6	2	0	4	3	22
	(40.00)	(3.22)	(13.64)	(4.30)	(0.00)	(7.14)	(10.70)	(9.32)
Primary	5	0	4	12	0	3	0	24
	(33.64)	(0.00)	(9.09)	(26.00)	(0.00)	(5.35)	(0.00)	(10.16)
Middle	0	9	10	14	3	12	5	53
	(0.00)	(29.04)	(22.70)	(30.43)	(18.76)	(21.40)	(17.85)	(22.40)
Matric	4	12	21	18	4	18	4	81
	(26.66)	(38.70)	(47.70)	(39.10)	(25.00)	(32.10)	(14.280	(34.32)
Sr. Sec.	0	4	3	0	3	19	9	38
	(0.00)	(12.90)	(6.80)	(0.00)	(18.76)	(33.90)	(32.15)	(16.10)
Graduate	0	5	0	0	6	0	7	18
	(0.00)	(16.10)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(37.50)	(0.00)	(25.00)	(7.81)
Total	15	31	44	46	16	56	28	236
	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)
$\chi^2 = 134.09$*								
Education of mothers								
Illiterate	6	13	19	9	4	2	7	60
	(40.00)	(41.90)	(43.18)	(19.56)	(25.00)	(3.75)	(25.00)	(25.42)
Primary	2	2	7	6	0	6	3	26
	(13.30)	(6.45)	(15.91)	(13.00)	(0.00)	(10.71)	(10.71)	(11.01)
Middle	0	9	6	21	9	28	8	81
	(0.00)	(29.04)	(13.60)	(45.65)	(56.25)	(50.00)	(28.57)	(34.32)
Matric	7	4	12	9	3	16	7	58
	(46.60)	(12.90)	(27.20)	(19.56)	(18.76)	(28.57)	(25.00)	(24.57)
Sr. Sec.	0	3	0	1	0	4	3	11
	(0.00)	(9.60)	(0.00)	(2.71)	(0.00)	(7.14)	(10.71)	(4.66)
Total	15	31	44	46	16	56	28	236
	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)
$\chi^2 = 71.23$*								
Occupation of fathers								
Unemployed	4	0	11	10	2	10	0	37
	(26.66)	(0.00)	(25.00)	(21.73)	(12.50)	(17.85)	(0.00)	(15.67)
Laborer	2	1	13	6	0	7	0	29
	(13.34)	(3.22)	(29.54)	(13.04)	(0.00)	(12.50)	(0.00)	(12.28)
Agriculture	9	5	12	8	3	9	4	50
	(60.00)	(16.41)	(27.27)	(17.39)	(48.76)	(16.07)	(14.28)	(21.18)
Govt. job	0	16	6	13	7	17	13	72
	(0.00)	(51.62)	(13.64)	(28.26)	(43.75)	(30.35)	(46.42)	(30.50)
Private job	0	9	2	9	4	13	11	48
	(0.00)	(29.04)	(4.54)	(19.56)	(25.00)	(23.21)	(39.28)	(20.33)
Total	15	31	44	46	16	56	28	236
	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)
$\chi^2 = 77.34$*								
Occupation of mothers								
H. Wife	3	12	19	29	2	16	2	83
	(20.00)	(38.20)	(43.18)	(63.04)	(12.50)	(28.57)	(7.14)	(35.16)
Laborer	7	7	12	10	5	15	5	61
	(46.66)	(22.58)	(27.21)	(21.73)	(31.25)	(26.92)	(17.85)	(25.84)
Agri. worker	5	0	7	3	3	8	4	30
	(33.64)	(0.00)	(15.91)	(6.52)	(18.76)	(14.28)	(14.28)	(12.71)
Govt. job	0	7	2	0	4	6	6	25
	(0.00)	(22.58)	(4.54)	(0.00)	(25.00)	(10.71)	(21.42)	(10.59)
Private job	0	5	4	4	2	11	11	37
	(0.00)	(16.14)	(9.09)	(8.69)	(12.50)	(19.64)	(39.28)	(15.67)
Total	15	31	44	46	16	56	28	236
	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)	(100.00)
$\chi^2 = 101.80$*								

Ag= Agriculture, Co= Commerce, A= Fine Arts, HS=Home Science,
Hu= Humanities, Sc= Science, TE= Technology

Father's education was also having significant association with educational interests where majority of respondents father's were educated up to matric level and these respondents were having interest in the area of fine arts. Educational interests are related to academic achievements and are expected to enhance contribution in the area of goal pursuit. The educational interest in case of females was found to be higher in the area of fine arts where as science was main educational interest area in case of male respondents and level of educational interest was found to be high in both males and females. The present study finds support from Kusumlata (1987) who found that high achievers were more interested in science and craft activities than low achievers of low-socio economic status families and Kappus (1982) also reported that girls from low income farm families were found to be more interested in post school education than boys.

In another study by Kinjaran (2001) also found that there was significance difference in the performance level of schedule caste students. The girls in this community were more disadvantaged. The educational level reached by these categories was also not uniform and found the positive correlation between socio-economic status of these students and educational levels.

Mother's education was also significantly associated where maximum number of respondent's mother's was educated up to middle standard and these respondents were having interest in the area of science. Similar findings were reported by Kinjaran (2001) that there was positive correlation between socio- economic status and the educational levels of schedule caste children.

Mother's occupation was also significantly associated where majority of respondent's mother's were housewives and these respondents were having interest in the area of Home Science.

References

Ameerjan MS 1994. Background variables of schedule caste and tribe college students. Indian Educ. Rev. **20** (1): 28-35.

American Heritage *Dictionary 1969*. American Heritage Publication Co., Inc., New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Kappus W 1982. Desires and aspirations of young people from farm families. J. Psychol. **60** (4): 637-42.

Kinjaran R 2001. Educational performance of schedule caste students. J. Educ. Planning. Admn. **12** (3): 489-93.

Kulshreshtha SP 1971. *Educational Interest Record*. Agra: National Psychological Corporation.

Kusumlata V 1987. Interests patterns of high and low achievers. Indian Educ. Rev. **14** (2): 44-47.