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Gender differentials in vocational interests of under-privileged children

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Abstract

The present study was undertaken with specific objectives to know the interests of under privileged children and to assess the factors affecting them. 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 interests of under privileged children. The findings indicated that in the case of vocational interests both the male and female respondents were interested in executive field. The significant association was found between the vocational interests and sex of the respondents.

Key words: Vocational interest, gender, under-privileged children.

Introduction

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.

The best indicator of probable success in advanced training is strong general ability and strong educational and vocational interests in the field based on realistic image of it (Cronbach, 1963). An interest may be defined as a tendency to make consistent choice in certain direction without external pressure and in the face of alternatives i.e. it represents a tendency to select certain activities or things in preference to certain others (Kulshrestha, 1971). Thus, the educational interest plays a very significant role in educational choices and in the same manner vocational interest also plays a very significant role in choice making. When children finish their schooling, they prepare themselves for right vocational choice, which would accord well with their developed abilities, aptitudes, interests, personality qualities and present situation and would contribute to their happiness and social good.

Methodology

The study was conducted in district Kangra of Himachal Pradesh. Two blocks namely Bhawarna and Bhedu Mahadev were randomly selected. 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 done 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 scales. A door-to-door survey was conducted in order to meet the requirement of the various objectives of present study. The tools used for the study Vocational Interest Record (VIR), Kulshreshtha (1971).VIR was used to assess the vocational interests in a given vocational/occupational area. It also finds out the level of vocational interest.

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

Results and Discussion

Vocational interests of under-privileged children

Vocational interest is 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 and they are the interests of a person towards particular vocation or occupation. These are also related to academic achievements of a person.

Vocational interest areas of male and female respondents

From the data given in the table 1, it can be seen that majority of both boys and girls were found to have vocational interest in the area of executive jobs i.e. 37.42 per cent of female respondents of males respondents where as in case of male respondents nobody was interested in the area of agriculture and only 2.75 per cent were interested in the area of persuasive jobs. As far as female respondents are concerned, only 3.60 per cent respondents were interested in the literary and social areas of vocations.

Hierarchical order of vocational interest areas

It can be seen from the table 2 that most liked vocational interest area of male respondents was executive (55.04), followed by social (9.17), then commercial and the least liked interest area was agriculture where as in case of female respondents the most liked area was executive followed by household (18.91), then artistic and the least liked interest area was the area of constructive activities.

Level of vocational Interest

As is clear from the table 3 the level of vocational interest was found to be higher in both males and females i.e. 68 per cent. All most similar percentage of males and females had higher level of vocational interest followed by 67 per cent of female respondents and 69 per cent of male respondents.

Gender and the vocational interests

As is clear from table 4, sex the respondents was found to be significantly associated with the vocational interests where maximum numbers of respondents were females, studying in 9th standard and belonged to general caste category and these respondents were having vocational interest in the area of executive jobs.

Table 1.Vocational Interest areas of males and females

Areas	Males	Females	Total
Literary	05 (4.58)	04 (3.60)	09 (4.09)
Scientific	08 (7.33)	06 (5.40)	14 (6.36)
Executive	60 (55.04)	42 (37.83)	102 (46.36)
Commercial	09 (8.25)	08 (7.20)	17 (7.72)
Constructive	04 (3.66)	01 (0.90)	05 (2.27)
Artistic	05 (4.58)	16 (14.41)	21(9.54)
Agriculture	00 (0.00)	03 (2.70)	03 (1.36)
Persuasive	03 (2.75)	06 (5.40)	09(4.09)
Social	10 (9.17)	04 (3.60)	14 (6.36)
Household	05 (4.58)	21 (18.91)	26 (11.81)
Total	109 (100.00)	111 (100.00)	220 (100.00)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

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

Areas	Males	Females
Most liked area	Executive (55.04)	Executive (37.83)
Second most liked interest area	Social (9.17)	Household (18.91)
Third most liked interest area	Commercial (8.25)	Artistic (14.41)
Least liked interest area	Agriculture (0.00)	Constructive (0.90)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table 3. Level of vocational interests

Level	Males	Females	Total
High	67 (67.00)	69 (69.00)	136 (68.00)
Average	30 (30.00)	28 (28.00)	58(29.00)
Low	03 (3.00)	03 (3.00)	06 (3.00)
Total	100 (100.00)	100 (100.00)	200(100.00)

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table 4. Association between sex of the respondents and vocational interests

Areas/ Factor	L	Sc	E	C	Co	A	Ag	P	S	H	Total
Sex											
Male	4 (44.45)	6 (42.85)	42 (41.17)	8 (47.05)	1 (20.00)	16 (76.19)	3 (100.00)	6 (66.66)	4 (28.57)	21 (80.76)	111 (50.45)
Female	5 (55.55)	8 (57.14)	60 (58.82)	9 (52.99)	4 (80.00)	5 (23.80)	0 (0.00)	3 (33.34)	10 (71.42)	5 (19.23)	109 (49.54)
Total	9 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	102 (100.0)	17 (100.0)	5 (100.0)	21 (100.0)	3 (100.0)	9 (100.0)	14 (100.0)	26 (100.0)	220 (100.00)

$\chi^2 = 24.96^*$

L= Literary, Sc= Science E= Executive, C=Constructive, Co= Commerce, A=Artistic, Ag= Agriculture, A= Fine Arts, P=Persuasive, H= Household

In contrast to present findings Thigahrajan (2001) observed the occupational preferences of schedule caste students and found that there was appreciable difference in the preferences of both boys and girls. The most preferred occupations were executive and administrative services.

Karocsay and Szijjarto (1980) studied the career orientation of rural youth with respect to agriculture labor force situation. The results showed that interest in agriculture career was found to be decreasing among boys and there was increase in interest of technical activities. The interest in the jobs of horticulture was found to be more in females. Kuziel (2002) also reported that schedule caste children felt that agriculture profession was not regarded high by society and that's why they professed desire to migrate to urban areas to do other types of jobs.

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