



A Review on the Level of Aspiration among Secondary School Students

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Abstract

Aspiration level helps a student to increase self-confidence, helps in setting up goals, and avoid failure however all this is hindered due to the anxiety they experience about their set levels of aspirations. Education provides an exceptional path to meet the desired level of aspirations of human learners. It is an unremitting struggle to nurture all dimensions of the learners' personality to device their contiguous milieu for achieving desired goals of life. In the present scenario, competition is increasing everywhere in the country. With the rapid advancement of science and technology, this competition has spread to every corner of the world. Hence some students may fall prey to the fear of failure, lack of confidence, inadequate awareness and deficit resources. The sum total of these factors as well as linked negative emotions may produce certain level of anxiety. Anxiety prevents a student from taking initiative, learning new materials and exploring various disciplines and fields thus, lowering their levels of aspirations. Socio economic status is another important ingredient in determining what a student is, what he feels about himself and what determines his level of aspiration. In some homes, the parents are well educated and have a well social background, thus can nurture their children effectively. A lot of researches have done on these aspects which provide an insight into the factors that determine the level of aspiration as well as the effects on the performance and overall personality of children. This research review article highlights some of the significant studies related to the level of aspiration and allied factors among secondary school students in India and abroad that are analysed in chronological order.

Keywords: - Level of Aspiration, Socio Economic Status, Academic Anxiety, Success and failure

1. Introduction:

In this present world, this era is the era of competition. Education is the only medium through which a person can solve his personal, professional, and social problems of the people. A Good and quality education plays an important role in the growth of our future and professional career. With education, the level of aspiration that a student has becomes even more important as it helps the student to decide his goals and it motivates him to a desire for success. Success and failure of the student depending upon the way he pursues his aspirations. Aspiration helps us to improve our personal and social life. Every student has certain creative potential which also influences his selection of a particular vocation. The individual with his knowledge of past performance in that familiar task explicitly undertakes to reach his level of aspiration. According to C. V. Good's Dictionary of Education, a defined level of aspiration is "the goal or quality of performance desired by an individual or group in a specified activity" Thus the level of aspiration refers to a goal for which every person is always striving and it has become his goal to perform well in all endeavours throughout his life. Excessive competitiveness, unemployment, lack of proper educational facilities, and an increase in the cost of basic education are common issues in our society, due to which the level of academic anxiety among the students is also increasing and hence have a negative impact on the student's performance. Additionally, parents' expectations and desire for a high level of achievement for their child create a lot of pressure on the student. Therefore, academic anxiety can cause a student to doubt his/her ability to be able to achieve their set goal or something they aspire of doing. It makes them worry about results & failure that they may have to face if they couldn't match up to their aspirations. The term aspiration level of a pupil is widely used in the context of education. Recent researchers

found that aspiration is a countenance of their firm determination to reach the certain goal and progress. Aspiration may be operationalized as the pupil's capability to ascertain and fix aims in lieu of prospect, although consciousness within current sphere works in the direction of these aims. Therefore level of aspiration of the pupils is a unique bit that pools the components of eagerness, enthusiasm, motivation, firm determination as well as encouragement in the forthcoming goals of their life long journey of learning.



Fig 1.1: Cognitive Map

1.1 Level of Aspiration

The notion of the level of aspiration was first introduced in the writing of **Dembo et. al. (1931)**. Aspiration as a term can be defined as a "frame of reference involving self-esteem or as a standard with reference to which the individual experiences the feeling of success or failure". Thus the 'Level of Aspiration' is the extent to that a learner arrays own aims genuinely as per his bodily strength and intellectual qualities as well as in harmony over the situation in every society, education aspiration and success are affected to certain extent by social factors. **Gardner (1940)** defined as, "level of aspiration is a surely quantifiable concept, which has two inevitabilities that the subjects make some open signal of his goals and, he/she makes it in quantifiable terms." Aspiration helps a student to increase self-confidence, helps in setting up goals, and avoid failure however all this is hindered due to the anxiety they experience about their set levels of aspirations. Considering the world of work and the level of aspiration of an individual one has to decide what constitutes the preferential hierarchy of occupations. Several factors are considered as a determinant of occupational hierarchy such as level of intelligence and training, income, and personality variables.

The term level of aspiration is best defined by **James Drever (1958)** in his **Dictionary of Psychology** as "a frame of references involving self-esteem alternatively as a standard with references to which an individual experiences" i.e. feeling of failure of success the career aspiration is the level of occupational prestige hierarchy which an individual views his goal. **Hurlock (1967)** defined it as a longing for what is above ones achieved level with advancement on it as its end. In other words, aspiration means the aim one sets for himself in the specified task that has potent personal significance for him/her or in which ego involved. During the latter part of the twentieth century, the term 'aspiration' was defined as fantasy level with or without any touch of reality. So, the term 'level of aspiration' involves the estimation of one's ability for his future performance on the strength of his past experience, his ability and capacity. Hence, the parents need to be made aware of the numerous positive and negative reward mechanisms that can be supportive in enhancing Level of Aspirations of their wards. It becomes the foremost duty of parents to make every effort to create a favourable and healthy environment in the home so as to endure high Educational Aspirations in children. It is very much desired in school students and especially in Tribal and Non-tribal students to have high Level of Aspirations and determinations for scholastic and social achievement. **Kumari (2015)**

1.2 Anxiety

Anxiety can be defined as a vague, unpleasant feeling accompanied by a premonition that something undesirable is about to happen. According to **Oxford Dictionary**, Anxiety is defined as the painful uneasiness of the mind concerning impending or anticipated it. Anxiety is a subjective feeling of unease, apprehension or afraid concern. Anxiety is a normal, emotional, reasonable, and expected response to real or potential danger/threat. **James Drever (1958)** defined anxiety as a chronic complex emotional state with apprehensive or

dread as its most prominent component characteristic of various nervous and mental disorders. **Sullivan (1953)** has stated that anxiety is an intensely unpleasant state of tension, arising from experiencing disapproval in interpersonal relations. The feeling is closely related to the emotion of fear. The vagueness of anxiety makes it particularly difficult to handle. In general, one usually cannot explain the reasons, but in a grip of the most uncomfortable emotions. Anxiety prevents a student from taking initiative, learning new materials and exploring various disciplines and fields thus, lowering their levels of aspirations. All of the responsibilities of being an academic come with a mental state known as "academic anxiety." This can be linked to practically all academic duties, ranging from class attendance to the most common source of academic anxiety examinations. But it doesn't stop there. Everything from reading speed to classroom performance can cause anxiety in students. Academic anxiety stems from a fear of being chastised by professors, parents, and classmates for failing to fulfil one's academic tasks effectively. Academic anxiety produces a decrease in attention span, concentration, and memory, which hurts the individual's performance

1.3 Socio-Economic Status

Socio-Economic Status is another important thing in determining what a student is, what he feels about himself and what determines his level of aspiration. It is assumed that a person has the socioeconomic status in terms of his monetary possession i.e. a house, land, a car, a scooter, etc. owned by an individual. It also refers to income, the standard of living and expenditure, etc. In some homes, the parents are well educated and have a well social background, thus can nurture their children effectively.

Hence their children tend to have a higher level of aspiration for them themselves. The socio-economic status is usually fragmented into three classifications; low, middle, and high to outline the three areas a kinfolk or an individual may fall into when engaging a family or individual into one of these categories any or all of the three variables of income, education, and occupation can be assessed. Additionally, low income and little education usually lead a student to lower his aspirations. Socio-Economic Status means the position that an individual or family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standard of cultural possessions and participation in a group activity of the community. According to the **Dictionary of Psychology of the American Psychological Association** "The Socio-economic status is a state of a person or the group on the socioeconomic scale, that is determined by a union of economic and social factors such as amount and kind of education, income, type and reverence of employment, place of dwelling, and in certain cultures or parts of society-ethnic origin or religious background". Socio-Economic Status would, therefore, be a ranking of an individual by the society he lives in, in terms of material belongings and cultural possessions along with the degree of respect, power, and influence he wields and levels of socio-economic status may be considered as a measure of one's combined economic and social status and tends to be positively associated with better health.

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The studies related to the educational aspiration, academic anxiety, socio-economic status, senior secondary school students were analysed in order to systematically understand the trends and were written below in chronological order.

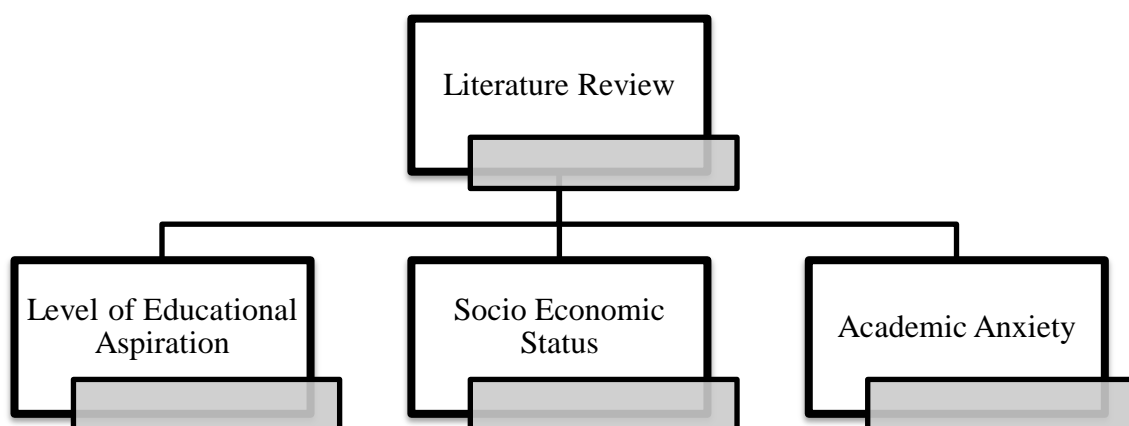


Fig 2.1: Literature Map

Gupta (1987) studied relationship between level of aspiration, anxiety, personality traits, locus of control and academic achievement of the secondary school learners with an objective to evaluate the extent and direction of the relationship of the level of aspiration, anxiety, personality traits, locus of control and academic achievement

by using a sample of 670 students of the average intelligence of Hindi medium selected from class XI of a school situated at Allahabad city and establish that level of aspiration, anxiety and locus of control were correlated negatively with the scholastic achievement whereas socio economic status had substantial positive correlation with scholastic achievement.

Goel (2004) studied the effect of home-based environment on the educational aspirations. The sample of this study comprised one hundred students (50 boys & 50 girls) of XII classes ranging 16-20 years age. The results of this study stressed that girls had much greater level of educational aspiration than boys. Boys opined that they experienced more rejection with the autocratic environment at home in contrast to girls which felt more support than boys.

Park (2008) compared the level of educational aspiration and student's disengagement between students with two parents and those with a single parent. In this study they found that students with single parent are much less aspiring to and more likely to disengaged than their counterparts with two parents.

Siddiqui (2014)

This study highlighted that academic anxiety is a very common phenomenon predominant among all students studying at diverse levels of education. A moderate level of apprehension is essential for attainment in academics. However, severe anxiety level evidences to be destructive for pupils, because it is adversely correlated with scholastic performance. The academic anxiety has engrossed the attention of several researchers employed in the education field. The socio economic aspect as reported by various researchers is another important variable that impacts motivation, aspirations, anxiety levels, adjustment as well as other facets of education. Contemporary study has been elected to find out levels of anxiety with respect to gender, socio-economic status and school type of secondary school students. The study exposed that female students and low SES school pupils agonize more from scholastic anxiety, Interactional effects do not have noteworthy difference on scholastic anxiety except socio-economic status.

Rajesh (2014)

An individual's level of aspiration is the valuation of the learner's ability for his own future achievement based on the strength of his ability, past experiences and the efforts that he can make towards attaining the goal. These efforts are consequences of his past experiences, whether success oriented or failure oriented glassy of efforts ended in that track, and his capability to pursue the aim. The current study was also intended to study the Level of aspiration of secondary school students in regard to contextual variables such as residential locality, sex, school management and medium of instruction. The sample comprised of 300 secondary school students carefully chosen from Chennai city. A standardized 'Level of Educational Aspiration Test' developed by Yasmin Ghani Khan (1999) was administered to gather data. The outcome reveals that boys had lower aspiration than girls. The investigation further exposed that aspiration levels of Tamil medium students are lower than that of English medium students.

Kumari (2015)

The findings of this study emphasize upon the substantial role played by family-home in shaping pupils' Level of Aspiration, no matter whatever the income level or SES of the family is. Therefore, parents need to be prepared aware of the numerous positive and negative reward contrivances that can be supportive in increasing Level of Aspirations of their wards. It becomes primary duty of parents to make every single effort to produce a conducive and healthy environment in the home so as to withstand high Educational Aspirations in kids. It is very much preferred in school pupils and particularly in Tribal and Non-tribal pupils to have higher Level of Aspirations and determinations for social and educational achievement.

Osama Jaber (2016) This study intended to look at the relationship between level of aspiration, critical thinking and future anxiety to motivation to learn through a sample of 81 students from the Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Education at Najran University. 'The motivation to Learn Scale of Gaber and Al-

Marei'- 2014' California Critical Thinking Skill Test (CCTST-2000), Aspiration Level Scale, and Future Anxiety Scale prepared by the researcher were used. The Pearson's Correlation Coefficient value obtained indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between motivation to learn and the level of aspiration, critical thinking, and future anxiety ($P \leq 0.01$). The stepwise Regression and Prediction Coefficient was also used and displayed that the level of aspiration predicts motivation to learn.

Sharma (2017) studied on Relationship between mental health and academic anxiety among adolescents. The intents of the present study were tried to explain the relationship between mental health and academic anxiety among adolescents. The Descriptive survey method of research was implemented in this study. The sample consists of 100 adolescents aged 13 to 16 years with equal number of boys and girls, was selected through purposive sampling. Academic Anxiety scale for children (AASC) and and mental health Battery (MHB) were used as tools for the collection of data that were developed by Dr. Arun kumar singh & Dr. Alpana Sengupta. The findings were Anxiety was significantly but negatively correlated with mental health for both male and female adolescents. Gender difference on 'academic Anxiety' among adolescents was found significant whereas gender difference on 'mental health' was not significant.

Darsana C. & Purabi B. (2020) studied level of aspiration of higher secondary students in relation to their achievement motivation. The main objective of the study was to find out the relation between the level of aspiration and achievement motivation of higher secondary students. The study was steered in the Kamrup region of Assam, India. The investigator employed a descriptive survey method as well as stratified random sampling was used to select 168 students with equal strata as the sample. The study establishes that there is no significant relationship between the level of aspiration and achievement motivation of higher secondary students.

Panda (2021)

This research paper sightsees into the academic anxiety of secondary school students in relationship to their socio-economic background in Balangir District using survey and descriptive methods of research. Sample of this study comprises of 100 students (50 Boys and 50 Girls). The Academic Anxiety Scale developed by A. K. Singh & Dr. A. Sen Gupta as well as 'Socio-Economic Status Scale' developed by Kupuswami was used for the data collection. He found that there is a significant difference between Male and Female Student, Government and Private School and the study has further revealed that SES is an important variable which affects the academic anxiety in an adverse manner in the occupation and education indicator.

Srivastava (2022) conducted the study as an attempt to find the relationship among socio economic status and the level of academic anxiety in senior secondary school students of the Balangir Ditriect of Odisha. This study comprised a sample of 100 students (50 boys and 50 girls) of class eleventh from two Government and two private schools. It has established that socio economic status significantly affects the academic anxiety of senior secondary school students. Furthermore academic anxiety is not dependent on the gender and type of school.

3. Methodology

The following methodology adopted for the reviewing the research studies of the related literature as per the specified variables specified in the figure below. Each research study has been analysed objectively in order to understand the significance, sample size, internal validity as well as external validity of it for meaningful findings, conclusions and suggestions for further research such that the research gap can easily be traced. After systematic content analysis of studies reviewed, the conclusion, research gap and future scope has been obtained on the basis of the above studies review which may support to the new researcher for the newest and fresh investigation on a new sample and population of his/her interest in the upcoming future innovations.



Fig 3.1: Methodology Map

4. Research Gap

The studies reviewed above have shown that level of aspiration and academic anxiety are significantly related to the socio-economic status of the students. It indicated that there is a strong relationship between the level of aspiration and academic anxiety of school children and their socio-economic status to achieve excellence in education and this may be true in the context of any population too. However, some studies also indicate that there is no relationship between the level of aspiration and academic anxiety of the students. The researcher, therefore, it's a gap whether socioeconomic status influences the level of aspiration and academic anxiety of senior secondary students of all populations. Hence this can be the one basis for carrying out fresh study. It also realize the necessity to investigate separately the educational aspiration, vocational aspiration, economic aspiration etc. of higher secondary school students and factors determining them in order to have a better understanding of the children and help them to guide in the right direction without losing the most precious resource.

5. Future Scope

The study may be undertaken to highlight the different dimensions of Level of aspiration on academic performance of different school students, formal and non-formal students, rural and urban students, private and public students. Studies may be replicated on very large samples. A comparative study may be conducted on Level of Aspiration on academic performance of Tribal and Non-tribal school students. Additional investigations may be commenced in relation to carrier aspiration and academic performance in university students. Other psychological variables can be incorporated in the research design to determine their possible influence on educational aspirations and Anxiety. A comparative study may be designed to bring out educational aspirations among students on different levels such as senior secondary level and college level. A descriptive study may be conducted to explore inherent student's characteristics, which reflects students' educational aspirations and Anxiety. A study can be conducted to measure the influence of educational aspiration and anxiety on student's personality.

6. Conclusion

The level of aspiration influence goal-setting behaviour in order to result in success or failure based on individuals' decisions to desire a particular aim. Once learners need an aspired dream through it clutch in future prospect, as well as instruction received effortlessly impels to succeeding in their dream, learners can be enormously passionate stout generous in using various educational forms and methods deprived of circumstances. The above mentioned researches highlight on the nature of level of aspiration of higher secondary school students. In the present scenario, competition is increasing everywhere in the country. This competition among students grew quickly, particularly in the realm of education. Students always feel some pressure and stress on their academic front to survive in this competition, but the level of aspiration is vital for making decisions in the future. The student has to face many problems in choosing a career after the completion of his studies. If it is not suited to his capacities and interest a vicious circle of anxiety forms around

him, resulting in a state of mental conflict which is highly detrimental to him and also the society as well. This further gets exaggerated if a student belongs to a low socioeconomic status. Limited resources hinder him to have a higher level of aspiration in life. The level of aspiration is very much influenced by the socio-economic status of the students.

The demand, scope, and job availability are important factors in setting up the aspiration level which can be subsequently influenced by the anxiety associated with future success or failure in that particular stream. The reviews of studies on the level of aspiration highlights the trends of the relationship among variables linked to it along with research gaps in as well as scope for future research to be done by using newest sample, methodologies, novel variables for the newest researchers.

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