

A Study of Educational Aspiration of Secondary Students in Relation to Their Educational Motivation

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ABSTRACT

Education plays a vital role in both individual development and societal progress, with secondary education serving as a crucial stage that shapes future academic and career paths. This study explores the intricate connection between educational motivation and goals among pupils in secondary education. Educational aspirations refer to students' goals and expectations regarding their academic and professional achievements, while motivation encompasses the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that drive them toward these goals. Taking inspiration from Self-Determination Theory, which prioritizes relatedness, competence, and independence, the study examines how psychological needs, social influences, and personal interests interact to shape students' engagement and achievement. Using mixed methods both quantitative and qualitative the research investigates how intrinsic factors and extrinsic factors affect motivation and aspirations across diverse socioeconomic and cultural contexts. Findings aim to reveal how educational motivation supports ambition, fosters perseverance, and enhances academic outcomes. By understanding these dynamics, educators, families, and policymakers can design inclusive, equitable learning environments that nurture students' potential and resilience. Ultimately, the study underscores the importance of aligning motivation with aspirations to empower students to reach their educational, professional goals, contributing to broader educational and societal advancement.

Keywords: Education, Educational Aspiration, Educational Motivation & Secondary students.

INTRODUCTION

Education can be broadly viewed as a process that nurtures understanding, shapes character, and strengthens both the mind and the body. In its widest sense, it includes the full range of experiences that

influence an individual's knowledge, values, and behaviour. More formally, education refers to the intentional transmission of accumulated knowledge, abilities & ethical standards from one generation to the next. Throughout history, education has played a vital role in the survival and advancement of civilizations, empowering individuals to use acquired knowledge in meaningful, productive, and socially beneficial ways. In today's world defined by rapid technological progress and multifaceted socioeconomic challenges education is increasingly recognized as a key driver of economic growth, innovation, and upward social mobility. A well-educated society not only improves overall quality of life but also cultivates adaptability, creativity, and resilience qualities essential for navigating the uncertainties of the twenty first century.

Educational aspirations refer to the goals and expectations students form regarding their academic achievement and future career paths, including the level of education they hope to attain and the professions they wish to pursue. These aspirations are shaped by personal ambition and external influences such as family expectations, cultural norms, and socioeconomic factors. In contrast, educational motivation involves the internal and external forces that drive individuals to learn, persist, and succeed. Motivation may be intrinsic, arising from genuine interest and a desire for self-improvement, or extrinsic, stemming from rewards such as recognition, financial security, or social approval. Together, aspiration and motivation interact to shape students' learning attitudes, resilience, and overall academic outcomes. Recent research highlights the importance of exploring this relationship, particularly among secondary school students, who stand at a critical stage between foundational learning and future academic specialization. At this point, students' aspirations often crystallize, and their motivational patterns begin to stabilize, significantly shaping their educational trajectories. These patterns are influenced by contextual factors such as family background, parental involvement, peer relationships, teacher expectations, school climate, and broader socioeconomic conditions. Students from supportive and education-oriented families tend to show higher motivation and more ambitious aspirations, whereas those facing economic or social disadvantages may encounter barriers that restrain their academic goals. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) offers a useful framework for understanding these dynamics. SDT emphasizes three basic Autonomy, competence, and relatedness are regarded as core psychological requirements that underpin intrinsic motivation. When learners experience choice, feel capable of mastering tasks, and perceive meaningful connections with others, they are more inclined to invest effort, engage deeply, and strive toward ambitious goals. Conversely, if these needs are frustrated or neglected, students may withdraw from learning activities and experience diminished confidence in their abilities.

This study seeks to examine the relationship between educational motivation and aspiration among secondary students through quantitative and qualitative methods. By analyzing students' goals, motivational drivers, and perceived challenges, the research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of how diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds shape their educational pathways.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED RESEARCHES

The investigator can define the boundaries of the field and determine the scope of the study by looking at prior research. The researcher can also more precisely and clearly articulate their goals through this procedure.

George (2014) carried out a comparative analysis of higher secondary students' educational goals in connection to particular demographic variables. The study's goals were to evaluate and compare students' aspirations for education according to their gender, place of residence, and parents' educational history. Random sample of 300 students from different higher secondary schools in Kerala's Ernakulum District were given Josen and Afrin's (2011) Educational Aspiration Scale by the researcher using the normative survey approach. The results showed that students' goals for study were generally moderate, with female students showing greater aspirations than male students.

Razil et al. (2015) looked at the relationship between high school students' academic motivation and self-regulation. The two variables showed a strong link, according to their research. There was no visible difference in academic motivation or self-regulation between male and female students, according to the t-test results. While there were no significant differences in basic education students' levels of academic motivation, the ANOVA findings revealed substantial disparities in self-regulation. The researchers stressed that instructional strategies that promote self-regulated learning and give students more chances for creativity and academic growth should be incorporated into teaching practices and teacher education programs.

Bedel (2016) investigated the relationships between pre-service early childhood education teachers' attitudes toward teaching, academic motivation, and academic self-efficacy. 251 participants who were enrolled in early childhood education programs were given questionnaires. Academic motivation and academic self-efficacy were found to be strongly correlated. However, neither academic motivation nor self-efficacy was correlated with pre-service teachers' favorable opinions toward the teaching profession. Regression analysis also showed that the only significant predictor of academic motivation was academic self-efficacy.

Saikia (2017) compared the educational goals of higher secondary students from tribal and non-tribal backgrounds. Using a descriptive survey design, the investigator selected a sample of 100 science-stream students from the Sonitpur district of Assam. Educational aspiration levels were assessed with the Level of Educational Aspiration Test developed by Dr. Yasmin Ghani Khan (1999). The findings indicated that 66.67% of non-tribal students and 60% of tribal students demonstrated high educational aspirations. Moderate levels of aspiration were observed among 30% of non-tribal students and 32.5% of tribal students. In contrast, low aspiration levels were reported by 3.33% of non-tribal students and 7.5% of tribal students. Overall, statistical analysis revealed no significant difference between tribal and non-tribal students in terms of their educational aspirations.

Kumavat (2017) investigated how academic accomplishment motivation aids students in achieving their learning objectives. The aim of the study was to determine what psychological drives

junior college science students leads to succeed. 96 randomly chosen 12th-grade science students, ages 17 to 18, from a junior college in the Ahmednagar area made up the sample. The data was analyzed using a t-test. The findings showed that female science students were more motivated to succeed academically than their male peers.

The educational goals of secondary students in connection to their motivation were not precisely examined in any research. It is still crucial to comprehend how secondary pupils' motivation influences their aspirations. The association between educational aspiration and educational motivation at this level requires more research.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Adolescents must make decisions about their future as they approach maturity, decisions that have a significant impact on their success and happiness. Students' ambitions for their academic future are reflected in their educational aspirations, which include going to college or obtaining particular credentials. These aspirations are influenced by peer pressure, cultural norms, family history, socioeconomic status, and personal experiences. Higher aspirations are associated with improved performance and more engagement, and they serve as a powerful predictor of academic results. Students' effort and perseverance are greatly influenced by their desire for learning, whether it comes from internal fulfillment or rewards from outside sources. Stronger study habits and a deeper comprehension are typically developed by motivated learners. Teachers can develop conditions that support secondary students' sustained motivation and greater ambitions by investigating the relationship between aspiration and motivation.

Studying the educational aspirations of secondary students in relation to their educational motivation is a vital research area with meaningful implications for educational practice, policy, and broader societal progress. By exploring the dynamic relationship between aspiration and motivation, this study aims to deepen our understanding of students' academic experiences and the challenges they face. It highlights how personal and socio-environmental factors influence students' educational pathways. The insights gained will support educators and policymakers in fostering learning environments that cultivate motivated, resilient, and engaged learners who can pursue their academic goals and ultimately contribute positively to society and the economy.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research is named as "A Study of Educational Aspiration of Secondary Students in Relation to Their Educational Motivation".

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the educational aspirations and educational motivation of secondary students.
2. To find out the difference of educational aspirations between male and female secondary students.
3. To find out the difference of educational motivation between male and female secondary students.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant relationship between educational aspirations and educational motivation of secondary students.
2. There is no significant difference between educational aspirations of male and female secondary students.
3. There is no significant difference between educational motivation of male and female secondary students.

DELIMITATIONS

1. This study is confined to only descriptive survey method.
2. The study includes only rural secondary students of class X.
3. The study is restricted to only secondary students of class X of U.P. Board.
4. This study is delimited to only Ganjdundwara block of Kasganj district in U.P.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The current study aims to investigate secondary students' educational motivation and aspirations. In order to determine the degree of educational aspiration in connection to educational motivation, the researcher used a survey method in a descriptive research approach.

POPULATION

The population for the present study comprised all governments and aided secondary schools located in the Ganjdundwara block of Kasganj district.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING

For the study, a representative sample of one hundred students from Ganjdundwara Block's Government and Aided secondary schools was chosen. A random sampling method was used to choose the sample.

TOOL USED

The Educational Aspiration Scale, created by Sharma, V. P. and Gupta, A. (2015), and the Academic Motivation Inventory, created by Mishra, K. S. (2020), were the two standardized tools used in this study.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUE USED

The Researcher Used the following statistical techniques-

1. Mean
2. Standard Deviation
3. Critical Ratio
4. Pearson Correlation Coefficient

FINDINGS

1. There is no significant relationship between educational aspirations and educational motivation of secondary students.

The mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation coefficient for educational aspiration and academic motivation are presented below.

Table – 1

		N	M	S.D.	Pearson's correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance
1	Educational Aspiration	100	26.77	5.06	0.41	0.01 Significant
2	Academic Motivation	100	159.1	19.46		

Table–1, express that mean scores for educational aspiration and academic motivation are 26.77 and 159.1, respectively. The standard deviations for these variables are 5.06 and 19.46. The relationship between the two variables was examined at both the 0.01 and 0.05 significance levels. The calculated correlation coefficient is 0.41, which is significant at the 0.01 level. **Null hypothesis has been rejected.**

- There is no significant difference between educational aspirations of male and female secondary students.

The mean, standard deviation, and CR of educational aspiration of male and female (secondary students) are presented below.

Table – 2

Educational Aspiration	N	M	S.D.	CR	Level of significance
Male	50	27.22	5.33	0.90	0.05 Insignificant
Female	50	26.32	4.78		

Above Table–2, show that the mean scores for educational aspirations of male and female secondary students are 27.22 and 26.32, respectively. The standard deviations for these variables are 5.33 and 4.78. The relationship between the two variables was examined at both the 0.01 and 0.05 significance levels. The calculated CR is 0.90, which is statistically insignificant at the 0.05 level. **Null hypothesis has been accepted.**

- The third hypothesis made by researcher was, 'There is no significant difference between educational motivation of male and female secondary students.' The mean, standard deviation, and CR for educational motivation of male and female secondary students are presented below.

Table – 3

Educational Motivation	N	M	S.D.	CR	Level of significance
Male	50	159.42	20.22	0.16	0.05 Insignificant
Female	50	158.78	18.86		

Table–3 express that mean scores for educational motivation of male and female secondary students are 159.42 and 158.78, respectively. The standard deviations for these variables are 20.22 and 18.86. The relationship between the two variables was examined at both the 0.01 and 0.05 significance levels. The calculated CR is 0.16, which is statistically insignificant at the 0.05 level. **Null hypothesis has been accepted.**

CONCLUSION

The study's conclusions are as follows:

1. When secondary student's educational aspirations and academic motivation are compared, different results show a moderate positive linear correlation between these two factors.
2. Male and female secondary student's educational aspirations were analyzed and the results indicate that there is no significant difference between the two groups.
3. In a similar vein, male and female secondary student's academic motivation levels are similar, indicating that there is no significant difference between them.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The objectives people establish for their academic future are represented by their educational aspirations, which offer guidance, inspiration, and a sense of purpose. They have a significant impact on personality development and enhance academic motivation and achievement. Pupils who have specific, challenging learning objectives frequently exhibit improved attitudes toward learning and greater success. The study's conclusions show a significant positive relationship between secondary students' educational aspiration and their academic motivation. Higher aspiration students might attend better schools, have more self-confidence, and work more, all of which would result in better results. In order to help children reach their greatest potential and make significant contributions to society, educators, legislators, and parents should support lofty goals and provide appropriate direction.

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