CHAPTER-IV

Educational Choice of College Students
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4.1 Introduction

Education in terms of degrees and diplomas has become an essential condition of social change and mobility. Education in terms of literacy has become a necessity to conduct the day-to-day activities of life.

It should be stressed that unlike during British rule when education was regarded as the means of acquiring white collar jobs, education in modern India has become not only the means of qualifying oneself for white collar jobs, but also a basic need to conduct business and trade, agriculture and day-to-day activities of life. Besides, education in terms of degrees has become a symbol of status to acquire a bride/groom in marriage. Western education is one of the criteria of selection of mates. Among some castes such as Patidars, Ahirs, and Jats, among whom dowry has become an accepted practice, educated sons are regarded as “post-dated cheques” (Rao, 1967; 137). In the last few decades educational qualifications have become a prerequisite for choosing brides/grooms. Boys and girls with higher education have better prospects of marriage than those with lower education. Families, which achieve a higher economic status but do not correspondingly get their children highly educated are not held high in public esteem. Individuals, groups and communities with low literacy and educational levels are looked down upon.

According to Gunnar Myrdal (1968), in developing countries like India, there has been, largely for historical reasons associated with colonialism, a tendency to view education as a consumer service rather than an investment in the formation of human capital needed for the development of the economy. William Knowles (1965), for instance, remarks there is an increasing demand for higher education by the emerging middle class in Puerte Rico: neither parent nor child is certain as to the value of the education, but considers the
diploma a passport to respectability. Neither parents nor child is certain about career opportunities but has faith that a diploma will improve earning ability.

4.2 Objectives of the Chapter

The main objective of the chapter is to know whether there is any relationship between faculty and goals of education. To be specific, whether Science and Commerce students differ significantly in their educational goals from Arts students. Do Science and Commerce students have higher goals of education in comparison with Arts students.

The specific aims of the chapter are:
1. To know the educational goals of the respondents,
2. To know whether there is any relationship between faculty and levels of educational goals of the respondents,
3. To know the relationship between faculty and levels of educational goals when respondents’ caste background is controlled.

Chidanand (2009-10) in his thesis “Social Realities of Occupational Aspirations: A Study on Graduate Students” made a study of relationship between faculty and levels of educational and occupational goals. The study found that there was a significant relationship between faculty and goals of education and occupation. The study also found that respondents’ educational and occupational goals differed according to their social background. But there are no studies of caste influencing respondents’ educational goals.

4.3 Goals of Education

“Goals of education” refer to respondents’ aspirations, perceptions of education in terms of attaining maximum degrees. The investigator wants to know whether the respondents are clear about their educational goals. It has been argued that the government of India since independence has been increasingly providing all kinds of facilities and assistances to weaker sections, women and rural populations. But one may ask whether facilities promote
motivation for the weaker sections who have been engaged in menial and manual occupations since generations, to perceive higher levels of education and occupations. It is observed that a majority of the students from the backward and SC castes, women and Muslims drop out from schools and colleges. It is also observed that most students seek admissions only to secure scholarships and eat mid-day meals. Such students seldom plan for any educational goals.

As early as 1971, Rajendra Pandey (1971) studied “Educational Aspirations of Rural and Urban Youth”. The objectives of the study were:
1. To find out which of the two youth groups – rural and urban, aspires for higher education,
2. To find out which of the two youth groups aspires more for education, for technical and skilled professions as against simple education for traditional professions. The study revealed that rural students who were mostly drawn from Arts faculty, had low or unclear idea of any educational goals.

According to Pandey, a larger percentage (52%) of youth in the rural group like to go in for Arts and a higher percentage (51%) of urban youth for Science. It means youth from rural and urban areas tend to join general (Arts) and technical (specific) faculties, respectively. It may further be pointed out that Arts students do not have specific educational goals. They seek admissions in colleges just to while away time or acquire a degree to strengthen their traditional business or qualify themselves for a better partner in life. Women and backward caste students come to college just for the sake of scholarships. Interestingly, Pandey has not linked educational aspirations of the respondents to the process of youth development.

Kusum K.Premi (1976) wrote an article on Scheduled Castes and Educational Opportunities. Premi, by taking into consideration the existing

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4 Studies indicate that there is a high drop out rate among SCs and STs despite many measures to prevent (Deccan Herald, 30.11.2009).
studies on Scheduled Castes, argues that reservation of seats in educational institutions has not brought about equality of opportunity. It is also contended that the performance of the SC students is below normal. According to the author, mere expansion of facilities and abolition of fees does not per se result in more participation by the deprived groups. It should be realized that mere provision for facilities does not create motivation for mobility.

Sudarshan (1973) made a study of *Aspirations of Indian Youth*. The study is basically descriptive in nature. It deals with the aspirations of the male and female youth in the age group of 15-24 years. The study investigates the changes in their aspirations as a result of such factors as education, rural and urban background. A small sample of 400 youth was selected from the four districts viz., Meerut, Jhansi, Kanpur and Varanasi. However, the article does not give details of methodology, sample frame, socioeconomic background of the respondents. The study revealed that nearly a half of the youth did not have any aim of life in view and even those who claimed one only expressed short term objectives, which were, in fact, a means to the attainment of some ulterior goal. Only some were “other oriented” and the often proclaimed idealism in most cases. The attitudes of youth regarding marriage and family; public participation, etc. were conservative. In short, youth under study, were conservative and narrow minded.

**Table-4.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Goals of Education</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>52.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>630</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data presented in Table-4.1 show that only 16 per cent of them had high
goals of education. Another 32 per cent had medium level of educational
goals. But 52 per cent, a majority had low goals of education. The fact that
only, 16 per cent had goals of education shows that only a small proportion of
the respondents had clear perception of the goals in terms of degrees. An
analysis of the data shows that a majority of had very low goals of education.
A majority of the respondents, who were perhaps engaged in petty trade, never
attended classes regularly. Chidanand (2010) found that of the Arts students,
80 per cent women students never attended classes regularly. They had very
low aspirations of education. According to Sherry Sabharwal (1969), a
majority of the women do not have long-term career aspirations and are
conditioned to put their domestic life first in their list of priorities.

**Figure-4.1**

**Goals of Education**

![Figure-4.1 Goals of Education](image)

The above analysis shows that the expansion of higher education so as
to reach the poorer sections has not helped them to develop clear cut goals of
education.
4.4 Goals of Education and Faculty

The aim of this section is to know whether respondents’ goals of education and faculties are related. To be specific, whether the Science and Commerce faculty students have higher or clear goals of education than the Arts faculty students. The hypothesis to be tested is that more Science and Commerce than Arts students tend to develop higher goals of education. The underlying assumption is that those who seek admission in Science and Commerce faculties are serious, hard working and goal oriented, while those who seek admission in Arts faculties are likely to be non-serious and casual who want a degree. Therefore, the Arts faculty students are likely to have low goals of education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>63.00</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>43.00</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>52.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 27.15; \text{df}=2; \text{significant at 5\% level} \)

\( \text{CC}=0.20; \text{t}=196.60; \text{df}=4 \text{ significant at 5\% level} \)

It could be seen from Table-4.2 that a majority (63\%) of the Arts faculty students had low goals of education. This section of students did not know what to learn and what not to learn. It was also observed that most of them were engaged in side business. Some were self-employed, while others were employed in shops and business concerns. Only 10 and 27 per cent of the Arts students had high and medium goals of education respectively. Put in a
different way, only 10 per cent were clear about their goals, while 27 per cent had vague perceptions.

Data with regard to the Science & Commerce students reveal that even they do not have a high percentage of students with higher goals of education, as 21, 36 and 43 per cents of them had high, medium and low goals of education, respectively. It means even the Science & Commerce students have not fared well in their identification of goals of education. It is clear that the expansion of education and better facilities for the weaker and minority sections has not served the proposed objective of developing youth through education. These days admissions in Science & Commerce are not based on merit but on donations. In most government colleges, admissions in Science & Commerce faculties, students with little merit are admitted because of reservation, social and political influences. Obviously, such students have no perceptions of goals. Their ability to choose is very poor. The present system
of education, which itself is in a crisis, does not act as a source of motivation. It does not provide diverse opportunities for choice and experimentation. Lipset (1968) commenting on the higher education system in India as the main cause for the unrest in students, states “Indian higher education shows some of the classic patterns of a former colonial education system. He further adds that based on foreign examples, Indian higher education has been slow to adjust to its new post-independence environment. The university has expanded faster than the economy, thus creating problems of educational unemployment.

Data with regard to Arts faculty show that 63 per cent had low goals of education. It means they are without any goals. Arts courses do not give any motivation for definite goals of education. It was observed that most students from Arts, especially girls, SC & ST and minorities, are least interested in classes.

Note: Drop out rates in government schools is on the rise

The following table gives the details of drop out rate of SCs and STs in government schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>SC/ST</th>
<th>Minorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>72365</td>
<td>8835</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>35637</td>
<td>4314</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>111218</td>
<td>14035</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>39841</td>
<td>4625</td>
<td>12.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Deccan Herald, 11.12.2012; Bangalore-Karnataka
Only 27 and 10 per cents had medium and high goals of education, respectively. From the above data two findings may be drawn:

1. The Arts students, as expected have low goals of education.
2. Interestingly, even the science & commerce faculties students have had low goals of education. It is clear that even though the government has provided quite a large number of schemes and facilities to the OBCs, SCs and STs and women, the efforts have not succeeded in motivating them to perceive higher educational aspirations.

4.5 Caste and Goals of Education

Sociological studies have shown that one’s caste background has a significant bearing on one’s perception of goals (Naidu, 1979; Singh, 1980). Caste in terms of educational and occupational values provides sustained motivational basis for human behaviour. In traditional India, the ritually pure castes such as Brahmins, Kshatriya and Vaisyas were expected to learn and educate themselves. However, the Brahmins, among the superior castes, preserved and continued the tradition of learning and education.

4.6 Introduction of Modern Education

With the advent of British rule there were significant changes in Indian society. The institution of caste began to lose its hold in public life. Formal education relatively became students from traditionally outcastes began to seek admission in schools and colleges. The government gave greater priorities to the education of the weaker sections. However, youths from the backward and SC & ST castes have not developed their personality. Their role perception is in a state of crisis. Durganand Sinha (1992) in her article “The Young and the Old” points out that there is a role-ambiguity among the youth. Thorat (1992) says that the identity of the SCs & STs is not adequately developed. Under such conditions it goes difficult for the weaker sections to form any goals of education.
The objective of the section is to know whether there is any positive association between the caste status and goals of education of the respondents. The hypothesis to be tested is: Respondents’ caste status and their goals of education are positively associated.

Table-4.3
Caste and Goals of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of Education</th>
<th>Forward castes</th>
<th>Backward castes</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 = 217.92; \text{ df}=2; \text{ significant at } 5\% \text{ level}$

It could be seen from Table-4.3 that there is no perfect correlation between caste status and levels of goals of education. For example, only 35 per cent of the forward castes had higher goals of education, while 55 of them had medium level of goals. It indicates that even the higher caste students did not have higher goals of education. This trend goes against our hypothesis. One reason is that with the introduction of reservation of sects and jobs for the backward castes, the forward castes such as Brahmin, Lingayat and Jain students are becoming different in their educational goals. On the other hand, the data show that 72 per cent of the backward castes, including the SCs and STs had low goals of education. It is clear that despite all possible facilities and assistance provided for the backward castes their goals of education were very low. The reasons may be that neither their social background nor the higher education systems act as agents of motivation. It appears that the policy of extension of higher education to the doors of the weaker sections has not yielded the expected results.
4.7 Faculty, Caste and Goals of Education

It has been found in the previous sections that faculty viz., Arts or Science & Commerce were not responsible for influencing the goals of education. It is clear that higher education does not prepare the students for any definite goals of education. It was also found that respondents’ caste background did have some impact on their goals of education.

This section aims to examine whether there is any association between the respondents’ caste status and goals of education when the effect of faculty is controlled.

Chidanand (2010) made a study of the influence of caste on the perception of goals of education by college students by controlling faculty and found that there was a relationship between caste and faculty which together influenced their goals of education. Uploankar (1988) conducted a similar study on PUC students and found that one’s social background through higher education.
Faculty and Caste by Goals of Education

In the following paragraphs an attempt is made to know, whether respondents’ caste background has any independent influence on their goals of education.

It could be seen from Table-4.4 that on the whole there is no relation between higher education and perception of goals of education. To be specific, higher education in terms of faculties viz., Arts and Science & Commerce does not influence students’ educational aspirations. The data indicate that 52 per cent of the college students had low perceptions. It means they had no idea of any goals of education. An indepth study of a couple of students revealed that they joined college because of scholarship, attendance is liberally granted, etc. Women students said that they just wanted a degree certificate.

Data further show that only 32 per cent had vague ideas of goals of education. To quote a student: “I do not know how long I study. If everything goes smooth I may continue”. Girl students frequently said: “My higher education depends on my parents’ decision”. In short, college students, under study, do not have any clear picture about their goals of education. Only 16 per cent had clear picture of goals of education. They are mostly from upper castes and classes and urban background.

A further analysis of the data shows that Science & Commerce students have not fared well as 36 per cent had medium aspirations, while 43 per cent had low goals of education. However, 66 per cent of the backward castes had low goals of education. It means, a majority of the backward castes got admissions in Science & Commerce faculties on the basis of donations, influence and pressures by politicians but not on the basis of merit.
### Table 4.4
Faculty and Caste by Goals of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals of education</th>
<th>Forward caste</th>
<th>Backward caste</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Forward caste</th>
<th>Backward caste</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Forward caste</th>
<th>Backward caste</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31.00</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>21.00</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>62.00</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>120</td>
<td>36.00</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>55.00</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>90</td>
<td>21.00</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>32.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>73.00</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>63.00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>134</td>
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<td></td>
<td>134</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>330</td>
<td>52.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total

\( \chi^2 = 198.19; \text{ df}=2; \text{ CC}=0.63; \text{ Significant at 5% level} \)

\( \chi^2 = 110.55; \text{ df}=2; \text{ CC}=0.50; \text{ Significant} \)

\( \chi^2 = 164.93; \text{ df}=2; \text{ CC}=0.46; \text{ Significant} \)
Interestingly, 62 and 31 per cents of forward castes had medium and high goals of education, respectively. It means faculty as such, does not make much difference to the goals of education. But it is caste factor which seems to make a difference to the students’ goals of education.

A further analysis of the data shows that a majority (63%) of the Arts faculty students have low goals of education. It could be further seen that a majority (73%) of the backward caste respondents had had low goals of education. On the other hand, only 29 per cent of the forward caste students had low goals of education. But 42 and 29 per cents had medium and high goals of education, respectively. It is clear that the influence of caste is more than the influence of college education.

To sum up: by and large most college students under study have low goals of education. It means most of them seek admission in colleges not to learn and acquire a degree, which would enable them to compete for a job, but due to the fact that college education is made easily accessible.