CHAPTER – I

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Adolescents of today are the future citizens of tomorrow. In order to build a progressive nation, they should have a definite goal in life. Aspiration or goal is the foundation on which the advancement of a country depends. Adolescence is a critical time for forming aspirations for the future, especially with regard to career aspirations (Child Development, 2004).

A number of factors such as parental encouragement, peer acceptability, socio-economic status etc. may influence the formation of aspirations (Bardick, A.D. and Bernes, K.B., 2005). Parental encouragement is significantly related to adolescents’ educational aspirations (Zhou, Y. and Glick, J., 2005). Peer environment was the most important indirect effect on career aspiration (Xin Ma and Jianjun Wang, 2001). Socio-economic resources play significant role in explaining educational aspirations of adolescents (Zhou, Y. and Glick, J., 2005).

1.1 ADOLESCENCE

The term “adolescence” comes from the Latin word ‘adolescere’, which means, “to grow to maturity”. The term adolescence today has a broader meaning and includes mental, emotional and social as well as physical maturity (Hurlock, E., 1973). Vocational aspirations in the formative years of life are supposed to determine success in later life in regard to job satisfaction, productivity, personality adjustments etc. (www.education.nic.in).

Adolescence is a period when the individual is expected to prepare for adulthood by replacing childish attitudes and behavioral
patterns with those of an adult type. Hechinger, G. and Hechinger, F.M. emphasized this point of view when they said: “The task now is to make clearly understood that adolescence is a stage of human development, not an empire or even a colony. The mission of adult world is to help teenagers become adults by raising their standards and values to maturity than by lowering adulthood to their insecure maturity. The task for the adult world is to make adolescence a step toward growing up, not a privilege to be exploited. The young adolescent’s status in our modern society is vague and confused. At one time, he is treated as a child, and when he acts like a child he is reproved and told to “act his age”. When he attempts to act like an adult, he is often accused of being “too big for his britches”.

Studies of the problems of young adolescents have revealed that the problems are numerous and, for most part, center around schoolwork, plans for the future including education, choice of vocation etc. Adolescence is a time when a great number of young people make choices that will have an important bearing on the rest of their lives. Adolescence is a time of idealism and optimism. It is a time of dreaming about the future, when the adolescent aspires to reach great heights and confidently expects to do so. He may be particular about having a glamorous job, which will provide him with money. This would provide him with status symbols, which he regards as pre-requisites to happiness. He believes that acquiring these status symbols will automatically give him opportunity to new horizons.

Changes during adolescence are characterized by adolescents asserting their independence and spending greater amount of time away from parents (Padilla – Walker, 2006). The counterweight to the desire for independence in adolescence is greater responsibility expected by parents. Parents present career exploration, through which the adolescent
may be able to identify tentative educational and occupational goals, as a means to greater responsibility (Young et al, 2006).

1.2 ASPIRATIONS

A student has some goal or objectives in mind when he attempts a task. If he attains the expected results, he is, in one sense of the word, satisfied. If things work out such that the student falls short of his aims, he expects some degree of failure. This leads to seemingly contradictory results. In any performance, a person has a target. He strives to attain, what he thinks he can attain. Everyone has fantasies about some goals that he knows are unrealistic. The standard that a person expects to reach, in a particular performance, is generally referred to by psychologists as his level of aspiration. Aspiration is very complex and it is difficult to think of it in terms of level. Still, level of aspiration can be measured by asking a person what score he hopes to make on the next trial of a task.

Level of aspiration is a standard a person hopes to reach in a given performance. Because he has not yet reached his goal, his level of aspiration is discrepancy between his achievement and his stated goals. The distance between his achievement and his stated goals might be realistic in the sense that he has a good chance of success. On the other hand, distance may be so great that his chances of reaching his stated goals are slim; therefore his level of aspiration is unrealistic. In the views of Hoppe (1930) level of aspirations represents a person’s goals, claims or his future achievement in a given task. In everyday usage “ambitions” and “aspirations” are synonymous and are used interchangeably. The definition of ambition as given in the standard dictionary means an eagerness for honour, superiority, power or attainment. It suggests a “personal uplifting”. Aspiration means a longing for what is above one, with advancement as it’s
end; the subtle distinction lies in the emphasis on what is above one” is not just honour, power, superiority or attainment.

Hoppe (1930), one of the most outstanding German psychologists, made the first and a very extensive study on goal setting behaviour. It was he who formulated the concept of level of aspiration. What Hoppe understood of the term ‘level of aspiration’ may be stated as follows “the study almost undertakes the task, with certain demands, which can change in the course of the activity, the totality of this constantly shifting, now undefined and now precise expectations, goal setting or demands, in common with and one’s own future performance, we shall term level of aspiration of the subjects.”

Another German psychologist, Dembo (1931), while performing her experiments on anger, as induced by an over demanding situation, noted that some of her subjects resorted to a very unusual course of action. Instead of working for a high level of goal, indicated for them by the experimenter, which was beyond their reach, they set up their own goal of a low difficulty level, for attaining this goal, which the subjects had set for themselves, was termed by Dembo as their momentary level of aspiration.

Hoppe inferred the goals and expectations constituting the level of aspiration of an individual in an activity from the individual’s spontaneous remarks, expressions of success and failure experiences and the way he worked during the course of action.

Hausmann’s (1933) approach of requiring the subjects to make a bid before each trial represents a step forward in this direction. Hausermann, like Hoppe, relied heavily on the influences drawn from the subject’s verbal and motor responses for determining level of aspiration.
The credit for making the procedure truly objective goes to Frank (1935) who specified a set of operations, which made it possible to arrive at a quantitative measurement of level of aspiration. He defined level of aspiration operationally as “the level of future performance in a familiar task, which an individual, knowing his level of past performance in that task explicitly undertakes to reach.”

According to Gardner (1940), aspiration may be qualitative or quantitative, special or vague, stable or transient, or more at a time. But when we say level of aspiration, we attribute specificity and definiteness to aspiration. Gardner, therefore, maintained that level of aspiration could only refer to a quantitative indicator of the goal, which an individual makes regarding his future performance in a task.

An individual according to Lewin, while undertaking to perform a task, builds up a goal structure, comprising a number of goals of various magnitudes, for instance, there may be a dream goal, a wish goal, an action goal, also a low level goal which he is sure to attain, even if, luck was against him. It is the action goal or the goal an individual is trying for, at a particular time, which Lewin regards, as the index of level of aspiration. This action goal- based concept of level of aspiration has won the status of universal acceptance. It needs to be emphasized that action goal as conceived by Lewin, is of an immediate nature. The operational definition of level of aspiration, as given by Frank, was accepted by Lewin because it conformed admirably, with his criteria of level of aspiration.

One's expectation or aspiration has three aspects:

1) What characteristics of performance he considers as desirable
2) How well he expects to perform on each of these characteristics
3) How important each of these characteristics is to him.
A person's goals are arranged in a sort of program, which states where he expects to be at a certain time. He will have a definite idea of the consequences, which he expects in the near future. A person who has not planned his ultimate aims or doesn't consider the connection between his present actions and these remote consequences can't guide his present conduct. Foresight involves knowledge of probable consequences, some of which may be remote. Education helps people to take advantage of the experiences of others. Understanding of remote consequences is developed in the study of history, literature and science. Sometimes a person knows of the remote consequences but doesn't think about them sufficiently. He is so engrossed in immediate aims that they affect each of his decisions. Foresight is learned gradually. As children grow older, they place more and more emphasis on future goals.

When short-term plans are successful the person becomes confident in his ability and develops interest to continue a longer activity. Short-term goals can provide frequently rewarding accomplishment. As a person succeeds in attaining one goal, he begins to learn that foresight pays and he becomes readier to dedicate himself to slightly more remote goal. Remote goals become useful for motivation when the path to achieve them becomes clear. One's life stabilizes, when a sense of direction and enthusiastic concern develops for greater ends. It also gives motivation and interest to daily activities when difficulties are faced. Goals and interests are learned in many ways. For many people, a religious belief is a source of direction and energy. Others acquire major goals from their parents and friends.

Aspirations as measured and analyzed in the social-Psychological literature, are forms of attitude. This is especially the case with respect to educational and occupational aspirations and expectations.
According to the International Encyclopedia of Education, an educational or occupational aspiration or expectation designates a readiness to act towards the educational and occupational goals. Much research has been conducted on the educational and occupational aspirations of young people, and their influence on subsequent attainments. Such studies include both the determinants of aspirations, and also the work on the consequences of aspirations. The relationship between these career predispositions and attainments has become an important part of the study of school-to-work transition.

Aspirations clarify the notion of career plans or ambitions. It has been argued that the class structure, reinforced by a school system which inculcates values and imparts knowledge to the advantage of the dominant class, “socializes” youth in such a way, that educational and occupational choices coincide with a person’s location and class structure. A study was conducted by Sewell et al in 1969,70 on Levels of Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Youth of Both Sexes and it was found that aspirations were associated with the social class, when the effect of intelligence was controlled.

J. Steven Picou conducted a study in 1973 on Variations in a Model of the Occupational Aspiration Process of 582 Whites and 333 Black students and found that Occupational aspirations of Blacks and Whites were similar. Father’s occupation and education were more often related to occupational aspirations for Whites and family income was more often related to occupational aspirations for Blacks and more variance was explained for Whites than for Blacks.

Another study was conducted by D. Kaur in 1990 on Educational and Vocational Aspirations of Students Belonging to Different Socio- Economic Locales of Jammu Division and the main findings of this
study were that both educational and vocational aspirations were influenced by sex, SES and locality when taken independently. Urban students differed significantly from their rural counterparts in their educational preferences and vocational aspirations. While rural students were found to aspire for high academic degree/a degree in arts, the urban students aspired for high professional degree/a degree in science.

Grace Kao and Marta Tienda in 1998 conducted a study on Educational Aspirations of 24599 Minority Youth and found that among males who aspired to graduate school in tenth grade, Asians were most likely to maintain their aspirations (79%), while Blacks were least likely (54%). Among females with high aspiration, only Asians were more likely than Whites to maintain their aspirations. 84% of Asian females maintained their aspirations to attend graduate school, while comparable figures were 67% of Hispanics, 69% of Blacks and 68% of Whites. High educational aspirations of minority youth in eighth grade and each subsequent year and the large shares of minority students that persisted through high school who held high aspirations.

Ingrid Schoon and Samantha Parsons conducted a study in 2002 on Teenage Aspirations for Future Careers and Occupational Outcomes and found that teenage aspirations in combination with educational attainments were a major driving force in the occupational development of young people and that they mediated the effect of socio-economic background factors. Difference in the experiences of young people grown upto 12 years apart indicated that the socio-historical context played a key role in shaping occupational progression. For the later born cohort, the importance of educational credentials had increased, both in influencing teenage aspirations and predicting adult occupational outcomes.
A study was conducted by Justin Dandy and Ted Nettelbeck in 2002 on The Relationship Between IQ, Home Work, Aspirations and Academic Achievement for 160 Chinese, Vietnamese and Anglo- Celtic Australian School Children. It was found that Chinese and Vietnamese Australian children were higher in grades. They spent more time studying and were likely to desire an occupation requiring test qualifications than Anglo- Celtic Australian peers.

There has been research on the effect of aspirations and expectations on the educational and occupational attainment in Australia. In a small follow- up study of student educational and occupational aspirations, Poole (1982) found that 36% of those interviewed held the job they expected to have when they were 14 years old. Further Carpenter et al (1980) found that the effect of 12-year educational aspirations on eventual university enrollment was 0.48 for males and 0.42 for females. Their findings were consistent with the findings of comparative U.S. and Swedish studies and showed that “aspirations not only affect attainments but also act as key mediating variables in transmitting anterior factors into subsequent behavior.” (Carpenter et al 1981) In the study of urban Australian youth from all capital cities, Saha (1985) found that students’ occupational aspirations (preferred occupations) exercised important independent effects (net of socio- economic background and type of school attended) on both expected educational and occupational attainments.

The students’ views about educational and occupational goals have a wide range of interpretations. According to some writers, aspirations may signify a realistic estimation of the youth about socially desirable objectives. This shows that these estimations indicate both the assimilation of social values as well as the identification of the processes involved in realizing those goals (both in terms of advantages and obstacles).
Other researchers argue that aspirations reflect the values instilled by the parents and can be interpreted as a form of family encouragement. Aspirations could be considered as substitutes for parental encouragement and a part of cultural assets passed on to the younger generation in realizing their ultimate educational and occupational attainments. Francis-Dee Burtin conducted a study in 1976 on *The Relationship of Parental Education and Maternal Work and Occupational Status to Occupational Aspirations* in 139 Adolescent Females and found that innovative choices were made significantly more often as an ideal aspiration than as a real aspiration, reciprocally, traditional occupations were chosen less, often as an ideal aspiration than as a real aspiration.

T. Abernathy and W. Davis conducted a study in 1978 on *Student Perception of Influence on Career and Educational Decision Making* and found that their career and educational goals were influenced by various sources (e.g. self, father, mother, friends, relatives, counselors). These sources differed by both the age and sex of the student.

Further, a study was conducted by V. Gautam in 1988 on *Educational and Vocational Interests of Students at the Delta Stages and Its Implication for their Future Curriculum*. The main findings of this study were that significant conclusion was found in the preference orders of boys of classes VIII and X in both educational and vocational interest areas. Significant differences were found between the scores of boys and girls in all the areas of educational and vocational interests.

Anshu in 1988 conducted a study on *Level of Aspiration, Achievement, Motivation and Adjustment of Adolescent Effects of Family Climate* and found that in case of rural adolescents and rural boys intelligence and SES were assessed to be more effective. Family climate was highly responsible for one’s realistic aspirations.
A study was conducted by Don Hossler and Francis K. Stage in 1992 on Family and High School Experience Influence on the Post Secondary Educational Plans of Ninth Grade Students. It was found that parental influence and both high experiences were significantly related to student aspirations. Gender was directly related to student aspiration and Females in the sample had higher educational aspirations.

Educational and occupational plans have been studied extensively in the form of aspirations. This research was mainly concerned with the extent to which educational and occupational attainments were linked with career orientations and the factors, which determine these orientations. Research in industrial societies has shown that a variety of factors contribute to career orientations, the most important of which are the socio-economic status background of the student, the peer group, and the school itself (Sewell and Hauser, 1975, Kerckhoff 1976).

While social-psychological variables such as aspirations have been found to exert considerable influence on future occupational attainment (Otto and Haller, 1979), there is less agreement about the origins and meanings of these variables, or the manner by which they influence attainment. Alexander and Cook (1979), e.g. contend that career plans are, at most, a “rough sketch of some course of action”. Nevertheless they also find that students who firmed up their career plans early in life are not necessarily unrealistic or fantasy based. Thus, they argue that career plans are not to be regarded solely as educational outcomes i.e. as consequences of educational experiences and performances; but rather as intervening variables (along with school experience) between background factors and career attainment.

There have been many theories about the formation of aspirations. It has been suggested that they represent the influence of family, peer group, and school socialization on the formation of occupational “role
maps". (Musgrave 1967, Ford and Box 1967) or on the assessment of personal abilities. (Blau et al 1956, Portes et al 1978). Grace Kao and Marta Tienda in 1998 conducted a study on Educational Aspirations of 24599 Minority Youth and found that family structure had little effect on the educational aspirations of eighth grade boys but exerted strong influence on aspirations of eighth grade girls. Gender was more influential in the formation of aspirations prior to high school at which time sex difference remained relatively stable. Female youth had slightly higher educational aspirations than their male counterparts. By the tenth grade, girls continued to have higher educational aspirations than their male counterparts.

Educational performance and attainment are both the aim and origin of aspirations and later attainments. The motivation with which young people set about their studies and other tasks connected to schooling is specifically related to their school performance and ultimate attainment. Specific aspirations are related to educational objectives alone. Other aspirations are related to educational objectives only as a stepping-stone to various long-term objectives. Thus educational aspirations may be understood in terms of career aspirations, such as for an occupation, wealth, or a particular life-style.

V.P. Bhargava and L. Singh in 1968 studied Determinants of Educational Choice- Behaviour of Adolescents of class IX studying in high school and intermediate colleges of Agra District (U.P.). They found that students seemed to care more for the material prospects than the educational vocational relationship as the criterion of personal satisfaction. There was a marked positive correlation between dimensions of material prospects and educational vocational relationship. The general desirability of an educational group was determined by its popular regard and material satisfaction more than by the personal satisfaction it offers.
Both males and females agreed to a considerable extent with regard to the material prospects of the educational courses. About the popular regard ratings boys and girls have a marked similarity. There is little resemblance in ratings on the dimension of educational and vocational relationship. It may be due to the different vocational aims of boys and girls.

Next, a study was conducted by K. Chaudhry in 1990 on Vocational Aspirations of 196 Standard IX students of English Medium Schools in Pune city. It was found that 40% of the respondents wanted to become doctors and engineers and majority of the students preferred the science stream for continuing their studies and future career.

A study was conducted by Ganesh Lal Jain in 1990 on Values, Level of Aspirations and Personality Traits of Rural and Urban Adolescent Girls of Rajasthan. It was found that Both rural and urban (secondary and higher secondary) adolescent girls aspire to study science as their first preference, and preferred government service as a first choice, followed by banking, civil services and clerical work and the aspiration level of both rural and urban girls was found to be average.

A person’s level of aspiration is affected by his earlier experiences. Each person has an idea of what he can achieve and of how others will react to him. People like to do things if they expect to succeed. This confidence, or expectation of success, is the result of previous successful experiences. But the past success alone is not the only factor responsible for motivating a person for an activity. A person will not be encouraged, even if he has been very successful in the past, if he thinks the present work will be more difficult.

Mostly adolescents like to have more successes or pleasant experiences than failures or unpleasant experiences. Successes are based on the level of performance of a person. As this level goes beyond the
level of aspiration, there is an inclination to keep the level of aspiration low. This inclination conflicts with the tendency to keep the level of aspiration high, which develops from its relation to the ego-level.

1.3 EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

The first challenge, an adolescent has to face in life is to plan his own educational career. He visualizes certain life goals and tries to plan his educational career accordingly. If a student has a sincere desire to achieve a particular educational goal, then many obstacles can be overcome.

Adolescents are said to belong to a distinct adolescent subculture and to be influenced more by their peers than by their parents. However, the extent to which the values and goals of adolescents and adults differ and the degree to which significant adults and peers actually influence the development of adolescents have not been adequately tested and specified (Berger, 1960). Most researches on parental and peer influences on educational plans of adolescents have considered one influence or the other but not both simultaneously.

Parental encouragement is significantly related to children’s educational goals. Parental involvement and family communication help motivate children’s higher aspirations. As a result students whose parents have more knowledge of children’s school life and attend more school activities have higher educational aspirations (Zhou, Y. and Glick, J., 2005).

Findings indicate adolescents who strongly identify with their mothers in particular placed a greater emphasis on school as important to their future, and possessed higher levels of academic self-efficacy and educational aspiration.

In a panel study of students in their first and last years of high school, McDill and Coleman (1965) concluded that: “… the end of the
senior year of high school, the prestige of the adolescent in the school social system contributes more to variations in their stated college plans than does their father’s or mother’s education”. However, data on the parent’s actual desires for their children, also presented by McDill and Coleman, indicate that even in the senior year the influence of parental desire on adolescent plans is greater than school status.

Herriot (1963) used adolescent perception of the educational expectations held by eleven different types of persons as sources of data on parental and peer influences. The highest correlation was obtained between adolescent educational aspirations and perceived expectations of a same age friend.

Most studies of parental influence use parental social class or education as indicators of parental educational aspiration for their children (Haller and Butterworth, 1960, McDill and Coleman, 1965, Sewell and shah, 1967). Benjamin J. Hodgkins and Arnold Parr in 1965 conducted a study on the Educational and Occupational Aspirations among 214 Rural and Urban Male Adolescents in Alberta and found that significant difference between upper and lower status subjects were obtained. However, in educational aspirations for both rural and urban male adolescents and social status or class seemed to be the important variable in terms of its effect upon educational aspirations.

Smith- Maddox (1999) pointed out that the educational aspirations of students from low –income families were positively related to their regular communication with parents.

Alan E. Bayer in 1970 conducted a study on Marriage Plans and Educational Aspirations on 4000 high school students and found that SES, aspirations and marital plans, each exerted a strong independent influence on the educational aspiration of both male and female high school
seniors. However, while social class is strongly related to educational goals, parental aspiration or parental encouragement of higher education can override lower-class background (Bordua, 1960, kohl, 1953, Rehberg and Westby, 1967, Sewell and Shah, 1968a and b etc.).

A study was conducted by S. Gerald Lesser and B. Denise Kandel in 1969 on Parental and Peer Influence on Educational Plans of 2327 Adolescents. It was found that concordance on educational goals was highly significant for both the mother and the best school friend. Concordance was higher for mother than for best school friend both among boys and girls. Girls had higher levels of agreement with their mothers than boys. Thus they were able to replicate with respect to educational goals the oft reported finding of greater consensus among mother-daughter than mother-son pairs.

Similarly, studies of peer influence on academic achievement and aspiration have been concerned with the influence of the value climate of schools on the adolescent within these schools, and rarely with the specific plans and attitudes of the adolescent's friends (Boyle, 1966, Coleman, 1961, McDill et al, 1966, Wilson, 1959 etc.).

The consensus between matched pairs of adolescents in the school has been investigated in two studies, which reach opposite conclusions. Alexander and Campbell (1964) in a study of male seniors in 30 high schools, conclude that "a student and his best friend tend to be similar in college plans and that the extent of similarity is greater when the choice is reciprocated." Haller and Butterworth (1960), in contrast, found low intra class correlation on levels of occupational and particularly, educational aspirations in 245 pairs of 17-year old high school boys and their best school friend (Duncan et al, 1968).
Friesen David conducted a study in 1983 on Changing Plans and Aspirations of 12951 High School Students and found that a greater proportion of boys and a smaller proportion of girls had chosen their profession. A larger proportion of students planned to pursue technical education. Smaller proportion of boys and a larger proportion of girls planned to pursue university type education. A greater proportion of 1981 students saw maths and science as their favourite subjects compared to the 1969 students. There was a slight trend towards an academic orientation i.e. about 55% planned to enter university and 35% planned for technical education.

A study was conducted by Ellen Brantlinger in 1992 on Unmentionable Futures: Post School Planning for Low Income Teenagers. It was found that all the students who were still in school said that they wanted to graduate. Regarding high school graduation, educational aspirations were high. 92.5% parents were perceived as wanting their offspring to remain in school. 52.5% students believed that their parents would be vehemently opposed to any notions of quitting and would take action to prevent them. 65% of students wanted to go to college. 37.5% students named college as their post school plan and an additional 20% named professions that required college degrees.

1.4 VOCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS

Both theory and empirical research highlight to varying degrees the family’s role in influencing children’s occupational aspirations. Roe’s (1957) theory e.g. focuses on the importance of early parent-child relationship in career development, whereas Holland (1985,p.93) emphasizes the environment that parents create for their offspring such that “types produce types”. The developmental theories of Super (1990) also recognized the family as a source of influence on self-concept and career
maturity. Eccles’ expectancy-value model emphasizes parents as role models, sources of reinforcement and providers of information, resources and opportunities for their children (Eccles, 1993).

Linda S. Gottfredson (1981) has presented a theory of the development of occupational aspiration. According to this theory, the first stage of development is that of orientation to size and power (3 – 5 years), when youngsters grasp the concept of being an adult. Gender self-concept is consolidated in the next stage of development: Orientation to sex rules (approximately ages 6 – 8 years). Children next enter the stage of orientation to social valuation (around ages 9 – 13 years), when the more abstract self-concepts of social class and ability become important determinants of social behaviour and expectations. With an increasing ability to deal with abstract, complex concepts and with the emotional stresses of adolescence, youngsters become more attuned to their own internal feelings and distinctive capacities. The fourth stage is thus an orientation to the internal, unique self (beginning around age 14) and is often referred to as the adolescent identity crisis.

As the present study is concerned with adolescents belonging to the age group of 12 – 15 years, so the last two stages of development of occupational aspiration, according to Linda S. Gottfredson’s (1981) theory are relevant to this study. At the beginning of stage of orientation to social valuation (around ages 9 – 13 years), adolescents begin to recognize prestige differences among jobs as well as social class and ability differences among people. Their preferences for prestige level of work come to differ considerably by social class. Social class, sex and ability differences become a part of everyday life and the associated differences in aspirations also appear “natural” to adolescents, parents and those around them.
There are many symbols of social class for example education, occupation, income, place of residence, clique membership etc. The development of social class awareness is best understood as a process, covering many years, in which, the most concrete and observable of these symbols or cues are recognized first, with the most abstract or unobservable ones being gradually recognized later. The proportion of both boys and girls saying, that they want manual or unskilled work drops conspicuously by adolescence (Rosenberg and Rosenberg, 1981). Higher social class adolescents have higher aspirations. Adolescents tend to see a large proportion of people in jobs closest to their own status background (Weinstein, 1958). Occupational and a sense of social mobility depend on the social class to which one belongs (Himmelweit et al, 1952). These conclusions are similar to studies conducted by other workers like Trusty (1999).

During the fourth stage, which is, orientation to the internal, unique self (beginning around age 14), the adolescents discover sets of adult social roles that they, their parents and their friends consider acceptable. Adolescents are still dependent on adults for knowledge and direction, but they begin to seek independence. Vocational reasoning and the bases of decision-making become more complex in adolescence.

In many earlier societies, the vocational problems of adolescents were much simpler than they are today. Such societies didn’t provide a large number of work choices. In earlier days, when both geographic and social mobility were limited, young people grew up likely to have observed adults performing the kind of work they would be doing in future. In societies with informal education system, most young people were slowly absorbed into the working life of adults. Even in Western societies with more formal education system, young people, in the past, were able to
see at first hand, the various crafts and professions that their society offered. Presently, with the growing technological complexities of societies all over the world, number of different professions, crafts and skilled trades are generated yearly.

During early or middle childhood, children cite active, exciting and glamorous occupations like airhostess, football star, pilot etc. These choices are based on emotions rather than cognition. As the child grows older, he realizes that, what he would really like to do in his fantasies about adult life may not be possible, and he begins to work out a compromise between what he is interested in and the choices that will, realistically, be available to him.

Then there is a tentative stage in which he will become influenced by the social status of the preferred occupation. Findings have shown that as societies begin to offer occupations similar to those found in economically and technologically developed societies, occupational prestige begins to resemble the following prestige-ranking: professional, white collar, supervisory, skilled and unskilled. The social status of different occupations influences the adolescents to make decisions. The realization of the adolescent that all occupations are not open to everybody supersedes the prestige or status of any occupation. Thus in the West, social class differences in vocational aspirations begin to appear at this stage. Adolescents start becoming aware of educational qualifications that may be needed for high-status occupations. They begin to work out whether or not they will be in a position to get such qualifications both financially and academically. In the final or the realistic stage, the young person has almost certainly decided upon the work area he is interested in. If he is fortunate enough to have a choice of particular jobs accessible to him, he begins to assess the important aspects of the job.
Studies in this area show that while money and security are often important factors, they are not the only criteria in choosing jobs. Studies have shown that there are many criteria for choosing jobs e.g. interest in the job, abilities and personality well suited, whether it offers a chance to serve the community, the pay, whether it is a secure and stable job, prospects for promotion etc.

Studies on British adolescents show the following criteria for choosing a job e.g. pay, variety involved in a job, chances of promotion, convenient timings, opportunity to help others, involvement of mind and need, thought and concentration. A study was conducted by Powell, Marvin and Bloom, Viola in 1962 on Development of and Reasons for Vocational Choices of Adolescence through the High School Years. It was found that more than one third of the subjects did not expect to enter the preferred occupation for reasons like inadequate finance, lack of abilities and influence of parents. Significant sex difference and developmental trends were noticed among these reasons. More boys than girls attached more importance to the financial aspect of occupation. The students were influenced by parents, relatives and teachers i.e. girls were influenced more by mothers while boys were influenced more by fathers.

For the adolescent, success in schoolwork creates confidence and proper career attitudes, which form a basis of their progress into the adult working world. Traditionally, adolescents followed the profession of their parents, by associating closely with their parents. Today, not all adolescents follow their parents’ profession. Because of high industrialization and technological advancement, tasks have become more and more complex because of high competition.

Choosing a discipline, paves the way for selecting a career in future. A study was conducted by B. Krishnan in 1958 on
Vocational and Educational Ambitions of over 800 High School Students. It was found that a large majority indicated their preference for science courses. A majority of students had indicated their desire to enter government service.

Parents may express their interest in the adolescent’s studies even if the discipline has been chosen by the adolescents themselves, or by their (parents’) choice. A study was conducted by S.L. Chopra in 1969 on Educational and Vocational Planning by High School Students. The sample consisted of 119 randomly selected students of class IX drawn from two schools from the age group of 13 – 14 years. It was found that about 55% planned about their job and a majority of these planned to take up profession, administration or other skilled jobs and 35% were influenced by their parents in their planning.

Another study was conducted by S. S. Chadha in 1979 on Some Psychological and Social Factors as Related to Vocational Aspirations of 713 Rural and Urban High School Children. It was found that the urban boys aspired for engineering (48%), protective (11%) and health (10%) occupations. Vocational relationship to health were less popular as only 6% to 12% boys and their fathers aspired for them. The agreement between fathers’ and sons’ vocational aspiration was found to be 64% for urban.

Mullis, Mullis and Gerwels (1998) found that students career aspirations tended to match their parents occupation e.g. students whose parents were in unskilled occupations tended to be more interested in realistic occupations while students whose parents were in professional or skilled occupations tended to be more interested in artistic, social or conventional occupations. These findings highlight the influence of parental role modeling on children’s occupational interests.
Next, a study was conducted by Lisa Y. Flores and Karen M. O'Brien in 2002 on Career Development of 364 Mexican American Adolescent Women. It was found that feminist attitudes and parental support predicted career aspirations. Preparation of a vocational plan is a major problem of the adolescents. The usual development of vocational aspiration is from dynamic, exciting occupations of low prestige value (e.g. being a construction worker) to emotionalized ambition having great prestige (i.e. being a famous trial lawyer) and finally to some occupation that represents a compromise between what a person would like and what he thinks he can do.

According to researches by Kahl, Floud and associates and Bordua, a working class boy is relatively likely to seek advanced educational and occupational mobility if his parents urge him to do so and unlikely to seek mobility if his parents don’t exert pressure in this direction. On the other hand, studies by Beilin and Wilson suggest that anticipatory socialization into middle-class values by middle-class peers at school may be the decisive factor. Beilin reports the working-class boys who plan to attend college, like middle-class boys, tend to participate heavily in organizing extra-curricular activities, and Turner feels that mobility-oriented working-class high school students should be “studied separately to discover whether or not they are incorporated into higher level cliques…”

Being the member of a particular social class influences vocational goal in many ways. It helps to determine the kinds of occupations with which the adolescent will be familiar and will help to determine the formulation of the kind of occupational aim. It plays a major role in determining the social acceptability (i.e. the reward value) of a given occupation to the adolescent and to his peers. Certain types of occupations are considered appropriate to members of a particular social class, while
others are considered inappropriate. Adolescents from lower socio-economic backgrounds may not have access to career resources and may not efficiently utilize available resources as those from a higher socio-economic background (Valadez, 1998).

A study was conducted by E.I. George and V. George Mathew in 1966 on Vocational Aspirations of School Leavers. It was found that out of six vocations, in general, pupils from the higher income groups desired to become doctors and engineers while the vocation ‘teacher’, ‘clerk’ and ‘nurse’ were favoured by the lower income groups. Slightly larger proportions of the lowest and middle income groups seemed to favour the group of defense personnel. More children of farmers and fishermen aspired to become teachers and nurses, while children of clerks and businessmen aspired to become doctors. Fewer children of clerks aspired to become teachers and nurses, of farmers and fishermen to become doctors and engineers and fewer children of businessmen and unskilled labourers aspired to become teachers. More urban pupils aspired to become doctors and engineers, while rural children to become teachers, clerks and nurses.

Choosing low status occupations, are contrary to the parents’ views about appropriate behavior for a member of their social class and as a result the adolescents are likely to be discouraged. Parents may become apprehensive about such choices, which may lead to general social disapproval both of their child as well as themselves. If economic rewards of the occupational choice are inadequate, parents may worry that the child may not be able to live in the same kind of environment as other members of his or her social class, or to afford the same social, recreational and educational milieu.
Members of the individual’s social class may exhibit social disapproval if the adolescents aspire towards high social status occupations as they may view them as a threat to themselves. But disapproval here may not be much strong. Most young people aspire to jobs with a rather higher socioeconomic status than those of their parents. Many adolescents may have unrealistic vocational goals. But they may be aware about the practical obstacles that may alter their vocational aspirations, which may also be affected by their social class status.

William D. Knill in 1964 conducted a study on occupational aspirations of 266 Northern Saskatchewan students and found that students aimed at those roles with relatively high community status and in some cases with an aura of glamour. Not a single aspired to be a Hollywood or TV star, a millionaire or a radio cowboy. In this respect they were not unrealistic and had moved away from childish ambitions.

Another study was conducted by Thomas R. Flores and Leroy C. Olsen in 1967 on Stability and Realism of Occupational Aspirations in Eighth and Twelfth Grade Males. It was found that in all cases mean scores on realistic Level of Aspiration (LOA) lower than mean scores on idealistic LOA and mean scores on short range LOA tended to be lower than mean scores on long range LOA. LOA of eighth grade males was probably sufficiently realistic and well formed to allow eighth grade males to make valid choices of secondary school courses and curriculum. LOA’S of the younger group were more stable over a six month period than were the LOA’S of the older groups.

After this, a study was conducted by M. B. Watson and C.D. Foxcroft in 1997 on Occupational Aspirations of Black South African Adolescents. It was found that most subjects aspired to social and investigative occupation and occupation with a high status.
According to a study by Simpson, R.L. (1962), ambitious middle-class boys showed the highest percentage of parental support, mobile working-class boys ranked a close second. In contrast, unambitious middle-class boys and nonmobile working-class boys ranked far behind in percentage of parental support.

In the current era, few opportunities are there for artists, musicians, historians, social workers etc. More final rewarding prospects are likely to be found in fields like computer programming, business management, branches of engineering etc. A study was conducted by Bhojak and Paras Mehta in 1969 on Vocational Interests of 240 Tenth Class students. It was found that science boys gave first three places of merit to the social service, computational and scientific areas respectively. Besides others, science girls gave first three places to computational, science and social science areas respectively.

Another study was conducted by Mildred L. Fortner in 1970 on Vocational Choices of High School Girls regarding their prediction. It was found that girls tended to choose occupations like Professional and managerial ones as well as skilled occupations to a greater extent than semi-professional, small business, semi-skilled and unskilled professions. Girls who stated occupational preference in professional and managerial occupations tended to choose occupations at a higher level than their parental occupations and also higher than their level of their own IQ or self-evaluation scores. Percentage of correct predictions was greater for those who chose occupations in semi-skilled and unskilled occupations.

A study was conducted by A. Rangaswamy and M. Feroz in 1976 on Students' Knowledge about Professions and their Vocational Aspirations on 300 students. It was found that boys and girls were interested in computational area. 59% of students were not willing to follow their
parents' profession and 29% were willing to follow for various reasons. NCC boys and even non NCC girls were willing to join the defense profession.

It is as relevant as finding and playing an appropriate role in society, as having an identity of one's own, as doing one's thing, as having a means of self-support, as getting and holding a job, or as eventually retiring.

Boys who have a specific occupational goal or who choose a specific field of study in high school and college tend to be differentiated from boys with other objectives, and those who change objectives tend to change to aspirations that could be predicted by use of their aptitude and interest patterns. William D. Knill in 1964 conducted a study on occupational aspirations of Northern Saskatchewan students and found that girls choosing professional careers were chiefly interested in nursing and teaching. Boys were chiefly interested in engineering, teaching, medicine and research. In the second group of occupations, the girls wished to be stenographers, hairdressers and store clerks. But no boys chose clerical, commercial or service careers. Over one-fifth of the boys chose careers in transportation- most of them wished to be aeroplane pilots. The girls in this category wished to be stewardesses. In the fourth group the boys favored mechanics over fishing, trapping and farming. Twenty boys chose the armed forces and law enforcement agencies. Nine boys chose professional sports.

A study was conducted by E.I.George and V. George Mathew in 1966 on Vocational Aspirations of 2038 School Leaving Pupils. It was found that the six most popular vocations i.e. teacher, doctor, engineer, clerk, nurse and defense personnel were mentioned by 79.87% of the students. 'Teacher' was the most desired vocation. The frequency of
preferences and aspirations were roughly the same for all the vocations i.e. 72.33% of pupils' aspirations as well as preferences happened to be one of the first six vocations. Choices of boys are more dispersed over different fields than those of girls. Results show that more boys aspire to become ‘doctor’ and ‘engineer’ while more girls aspire for the vocation of teacher and nurse.

Edward D. Smith and Edwin L. Herr in 1972 conducted a study on Sex Differences in the Maturation of Vocational Attitudes among 2160 Adolescents. It was found that females expressed more maturity in terms of their attitudes towards work and career planning than did males in the eighth and tenth grades. Tenth grade students possessed more mature judgment in endorsing expression of attitudes relevant to variation in vocational behaviour than did the eighth grades. Adolescent girls maintained more attitudes towards factors involved in the process of career choice than do adolescent boys.

S. S. Srivastava in 1972 conducted a study on Sex and Grade Differences of Students’ Occupational Choices as influenced by their Fathers’ Occupational Expectations. It was found that boys were found to become more independent and realistic in their choices as they grew in age, expectation and grade. The level of vocational choice was similar for boys and girls of lower grade but in upper grades, girls’ choices were somewhat fanciful as compared to boys who showed maturity and realistic professions. Girls’ choices were more homogeneous and consistent across age and grades in comparison to boys. Girls were also more influenced by their fathers’ suggestions and expectations especially at younger age as compared to boys.

People who attach importance to knowledge and understanding tend to be attracted towards philosophy or science. Those who value economic returns tend to be interested in business management. Those who cherish aesthetics
tend to be interested in art, literature or music. And those who place great emphasis on variety and independence tend to be more interested in the condition under which they do it rather than what they do.

B.N. Panda conducted a study in 1994 on Vocational Interests and Academic Performance of 200 Tribal Adolescents. It was found that there was significant difference between male and female students in scientific, extra curricular, artistic, social and household areas of vocational interests. The tribal male adolescents were more interested in the areas of scientific, extra curricular and social as compared to their female counterparts whereas the female adolescents had shown more vocational interests in the areas of artistic and household work.

Another study was conducted by Xin Ma and Jianjun Wang in 2001 on Examination of Walberg’s Model of Educational Productivity in Student Career Aspiration. They found that there was a strong direct link between educational outcomes and career aspirations. There was an indirect relationship between factors of educational productivity and career aspirations via educational outcomes. Peer environment was the most important indirect effect on career aspiration through educational outcomes. Factors of educational productivity enhanced students’ career aspirations through improved educational outcomes of students.

As compared to earlier years, adolescence is a period in which planning for the future must be seriously considered. As part of such an assessment, the adolescent must evaluate his ability and reach decisions related to training and work. His decisions about his future program will have some reference to work. It will also represent an attempt to combine the expectations he has for himself and the expectations others have for him. The extent to which the individual’s chosen career integrates his various
self-perceptions, will depend upon the degree to which the situation provides him an opportunity for a choice of careers as well as upon the level to which he is able to use his capability.

The adolescent is often asked to give an early and specific view of his occupational plans. It is perhaps more practical for him to give utmost priority to his general objectives related to work areas such as those of the sciences, the professions or business. Whatever broad spheres of training he chooses, he should make a conscious effort to acquire maximum general knowledge from various possible fields. Occupational selection may be made because the person enjoys the work itself. He may also enjoy its prestige value. An individual may be influenced in his occupational choice by its prestige, being aware of the effects of the above needs upon his decision.

A study was conducted by Helen Olive in 1973 on Sex Differences in Adolescent Vocational Preferences. It was found that the females showed a significantly higher social class status occupation than that of the males. The females surpassed the males in their potential occupational striving for prestige and status. The female adolescents still didn’t aspire to the most prestigious post i.e. physicians, dentists, college presidents, upper levels of administration etc. Their responses clustered around professions like group workers, social work, teaching and secretarial work. These posts required somewhat less education, training, and responsibility and, therefore, return somewhat less earning power and status. They also include fields still considered to be typically acceptable as feminine areas of occupational involvement.

Another study was conducted by R.P. Goyal in 1975 on Vocational Choice of 433Higher Secondary School Students. It was found that occupations which were higher on the socio-economic ladder were
preferred mostly, especially, the professions- technical jobs e.g. those of engineers, physicians, science, doctors, teachers, jurists, nurses and draftsmen. Jobs, which are clerical, are some of the least preferred ones. 25% of the preferred occupations were undecided and unclassifiable. The choices of girls clustered around professional- technical jobs while the boys showed varied choices. Jobs of doctors, teachers, military officers and engineers, police officers, accountants, patwaris, telephone operators, wiremen, musicians, magistrates, hostesses and IFS were preferred by a few.

S. Toong conducted a study in 1982 on Vocational Aspiration in Relation to Creativity, Personality, Achievement and SES of 1039 High School Students and found that the highest percentage of student aspiration were for the teaching and welfare field. The lowest percentage of student aspiration was for artistic fields, close to which was also the percentage of student aspiration for a literary field. The highest percentage of student (47.65%) aspiration for level II vocations and level I vocations ranked three with 24.83% aspiration for it. Although the highest percentage of students in the field of engineering and health aspired for high level vocations and in the teaching and welfare field the highest percentage of student aspiration for low level vocations, yet percentage of students aspiring for medium level vocations in these fields was significantly higher than the percentage of students aspiring for low level vocations in the field of engineering and health, and high level vocation in teaching and welfare field. The significant percentage difference was observed between realistic and unrealistic aspirants for vocations.

Another study was conducted by Rashmi Nagar in 1991 on Vocational Aspirations of Educated Girls in Gorakhpur Division and Facilities Available to them. She found that as the education level increased the SES showed upward trend. Level of educational influenced the
vocational aspiration of urban girls at all three educational levels – primary, secondary and higher. Urban counterparts preferred science area. As children mature and approach adulthood they become more and more conscious of the need for choosing their vocation. Teenagers mostly mention problems related to personal financial status, job choice and vocational training. Teenagers can be considered as mature only when they attain economic independence.

P.P. Hoult and M.C. Smith conducted a study in 1978 on Age and Sex Differences in the Number and Variety of Vocational Choices, Preferences and Aspirations and found that subjects were able to distinguish between these categories i.e. vocational choices, preferences and aspirations. The pattern of the total number of occupations chosen in all three categories showed that, rather than the number being reduced, as the subjects got older, there was an inverted U pattern with a gradual rise to age 13 and slight decline to 16. Males tended to list a greater range of choices, a slightly greater range of preferences, and an almost similar range of aspiration to females.

Next, a study was conducted by N. Jayapoorani in 1982 on Vocational Interests of Higher Secondary School Students. It was found that majority of students (84%) preferred natural science, maths and English. While boys showed interest in engineering jobs, girls preferred to work as doctors. Both boys and girls developed their vocational interests between 13-15 years of age.

Fred W. Vondracek, Rainer K. Silbereisen, Mathias Reitzle and Margit Wiesner in 1990 conducted a study on Vocational Preferences of Early Adolescents and found that the formation of early vocational preferences among the 10-13 year old respondents appeared to be associated with more advanced identity development. These young
adolescents appeared to be remarkably “tuned in” to the world of occupations, suggesting greater realism than might be predicted on the basis of conventional career development theories.

Ashton D. Trice conducted a study in 1991 on Career Development: Relationship Among First Aspirations, Parental Occupation and Current Occupation and found that 59% indicated a first career aspiration before the age of 13 years. 46% of adolescent first aspirations matched current occupations. Subjects reporting early aspirations in the same category as their fathers’ occupations were more likely to remain within the same category at middle age than those whose early career aspirations did not match their father’s occupation.

Thomas D. Cook, Mary B. Church, Subira Ajanaku and William R. Junior Shadish et al conducted a study in 1996 on The Development of Occupational Aspirations and Expectations Among Inner City Boys and found that subjects tended to be more realistic about occupational aspirations and expectations the older they were.

Occupational and educational decisions are the product of a complex of interacting variables. Such factors as the adolescent’s self-concept, his experiences in the school situation, his home environment, his socio-economic background, and his interpersonal relationships all contribute to his educational and vocational attitudes, interests, aspirations etc.

Fortune survey was conducted in 1942. This survey indicated that high school students as a group tend to aspire to rather high goals in their vocational planning. Many of them are planning upon entering vocations that will require post high school training. There is also a marked tendency for these adolescents to be interested in securing a position, which will offer them a high degree of security. This desire for securing a position
is more pronounced among adolescents from low-income families than it is among the adolescents from higher-income groups, for many of those from low-income families have probably experienced the emotional turmoil that comes from a lack of security.

The problem of deciding on a vocation is more relevant for the adolescent boy than for the adolescent girl. Pressures on him to select a career are somewhat similar to those that promoted the need for independence. Parents, peers etc. encourage the boy to make this decision during this period. In order to maintain an identity with the adult role, he must decide on some vocation. Most adult males have chosen a way to make a living, and in order to assume the role of the adult the boy must also take a vocational decision. A vocation is like a socially approved way to attain indirect or substitute satisfaction for motives, which may have been partially gratified. Motives such as social recognition, domination over others, aggression etc. can be satisfied, to some extent, in a variety of occupations. The choice of army as a career may be motivated in some cases, by the desire to dominate other men and gratify aggressive urges. Medicine, law or the theatre affords opportunities for social recognition and prestige in the community. Social work, nursing or medicine offer the adult the opportunity to nurture and to care for other people.

After that, a study was conducted by Helen S. Farmer in 1983 on Career and Home Making Plans for High School Youth. It was found that boys and girls had similar educational aspiration levels. Females scored higher on a measure of home making commitment compared to boys and boys didn’t increase their non-traditional career choices in the fantasy conditions compared with realistic conditions. They chose 3% non-traditional career types in both conditions. Females instead of scoring similar to males on level of occupational choice scored significantly higher than
males. Females didn't increase the number of non-traditional careers chosen in a fantasy condition compared to a realistic condition nor was the level of career chosen in each condition significantly different for either sex. The girls were choosing more from traditional careers than boys (35% vs 3% for the realistic conditions and 34% vs 3% for the fantasy conditions). Overall sex difference for career choice type was significantly different for both realistic and fantasy conditions.

Keshav Sharma and Tsering Dhundup in 1988 conducted a study on Sex Difference in Educational and Vocational Aspirations of Tibetan Children's Village School and found that there was no significant sex difference in the educational aspirations of the students. As compared to the girls the Tibetan boys had a greater range of vocational choice, were more ambitious vocationally and preferred challenging, prestigious, well paid, creative and adventurous types of jobs. The girls preferred clean jobs characterized by routine work, security, quietness and non-competitiveness. A significant sex difference was noted: a) in favour of boys in the artistic group of vocations b) in favour of girls in clerical group of vocations.

B.N. Panda conducted a study in 1994 on Vocational Interests and Academic Performance of Tribal Adolescents and found that there was significant difference between male and female students in scientific, extra curricular, artistic, social and household areas of vocational interests. The tribal male adolescents were more interested in the areas of scientific, extra curricular and social as compared to their female counterparts whereas the female adolescents had shown more vocational interests in the areas of artistic and household work.

Most parents, and society in general, have encouraged and emphasized, the importance of education, to youth. This was boosted due to numerous factors like the growing rate of technology, occupations,
the need for increased education for the more desirable jobs, and the greater availability of education etc. A college degree has become a symbol of prestige and has been considered by most of the people as the only way to upward socio-economic mobility, since the World War II. Even if the final selection of appropriate training and a satisfactory occupation should be made by the youth himself, he will often need the support of his parents.

A study was conducted by Karen M. O’Brien and Ruth E. Fassinger in 1994 on Career Orientation and Career Choice of 409 Adolescent Women. It was found that career orientation and career choice of adolescent women were predicted by abilities and gender role attitudes and relationship with mother. Young women who possessed liberal role attitudes were instrumental and efficacious with regard to mothers and careers, and exhibited a moderate degree of attachment and independence from their mothers tended to value their career pursuits. Adolescent women who selected non-traditional and prestigious careers showed a high ability and strong agentic characteristics.

When girls and boys reach the high school age, they think seriously about their future and the kind of vocation they want, to make their life work. Many factors influence their future plans like the economic stability of the family, their sex, the type of social-class group to which they belong to (where planning ahead is encouraged) etc. Mostly, adolescents from middle-class families are encouraged to plan ahead more than those from the lower classes (who are more concerned about the present situation).

P.H. Mehta, R.K. Mathur and D. Pant in 1985 conducted a study on Influences on Level of Occupational Aspirations of 285 Adolescents and found that there was a strong indication of sex difference on level of occupational aspirations in favour of girls among both semi
urban and urban students. In the case of girls significant predictors of level of occupational aspirations turned out to be the SES index.

A study was conducted by T.S. Sodhi in 1988 on Vocational Interests and Occupational Choices of 1015 Adolescent Girls of Chandigarh. It was found that very few adolescent girls were able to make correct occupational choices in accordance with their vocational interests. It was also observed that occupational choices and vocational interests were comparatively more congruent for girls of urban background and those belonging to the high income group as against their counterparts from semi-urban areas and low income group.

After that, a study was conducted by Anil Saraswat in 1988 on Achievement Motivation, Occupational Aspirations and Academic Achievement of Adolescents in Different Types of School Climate in Aligarh District. He found that boys and girls significantly differed in their occupational aspirations. The coefficients of correlations among achievement motivations, occupational aspirations and academic achievements were significant.

Further, study was conducted by Becky Francis in 2002 on the Impact and Implications of Gender for 14-16 Year Olds Career Choices. It was found that girls occupational choices had become far more ambitious than was previously the case. However, boys' occupational aspirations remained high, questioning some assumptions in the literature. Yet it was maintained that the choices of both girls and boys still reflected to some extent a deeply embedded gender dichotomy, and that in this sense their choices demonstrated little recognition of choice in the adult employment market.

Generally, the unrealistic vocational aspiration of childhood develops into a realistic concept of definite fields of work,
according to ability, education and training, and the individual’s capacities. Adolescents realize that they are likely to follow the pattern of their fathers in their occupational selection. But sometimes circumstances make it possible for them to attain a higher education and thus move into a higher vocational bracket. Many adolescents aspire to jobs above the occupational level of their family. Mostly, girls are more stable in their vocational aspirations than the boys. Boys, normally, want jobs that have glamour and excitement. They also want jobs with high prestige, even if these jobs pay less than those with lower prestige. Many boys from lower status families hope to achieve higher social status through high status occupations.

L.J. Saha conducted a study in 1982 on Gender, School Attainment and Occupational Plans. He found that male students had higher level of occupational aspirations than females.

After this, a study was conducted by J.W. Rojewski in 1995 on Impact of At Risk Behaviour on the Occupational Aspiration and Expectations of 129 Male and Female Adolescents in Rural Settings. It was found that rural adolescents aspired for careers with prestige levels similar to those held by non rural peers. Female youth at substantial risk aspired to higher level careers than male peers at the same risk levels. At risk status accounted for a relatively small amount of the total variance for occupational aspirations. It was concluded that career compromise and circumscription were critical in determining success in attaining one’s occupational aspiration.

Girls, mostly, show a preference for occupations with greater security, with less demand on their time. The vocational choices of girls generally lay emphasis on service to others, such as teaching or nursing. Adolescent females have been found to possess greater degrees of career maturity than adolescent males. A study was conducted by B.K. Passi
in 1981 on Patterns of Vocational Aspirations of 600 Higher Secondary School Adolescents in Relation to Sex and Residential Backgrounds. It was found that a definite hierarchy between boys and girls existed with marginal emphasis on the vocations of doctors, teachers, engineers and professors. Vocational aspirations differed significantly with reference to the variations of sex and residential status of the students – Boys were found more than girls.

The experiencing of failure may have the effect of reducing the level of aspirations. Continued and repeated failure or even a single traumatic experience with failure can have long-term effects. The fear of failure can be so disturbing that the person becomes sure of failure, due to extreme anxiety. It can also cause the individual to aspire to attain only those goals that can be reached with little or no chance for failure. Thus, the individual doesn’t come close to his level of achievement but has learned that failure is so distasteful that it must be avoided.

A level of aspiration, that is either too low or too high, is inappropriate. The emotional stress of the capable high-school graduate with an adequate socioeconomic background, (who ignores his opportunity for occupational training corresponding with his ability,) is the same as that of the individual with limited resources, who struggles to attain a vocation that for him is unfeasible. The school can be of service by helping individuals maintain or develop levels of aspiration that are according to their abilities, personalities, and socioeconomic status.

An adolescent understands that some people win praise and some do not. He develops standards to assess himself, or an ideal of what a good person ought to do. If his performance and conduct are generally accepted, and he makes steady progress towards the ideal, he realizes that he is capable of meeting the standards of goodness. If he feels
that he will never come near the ideal, he develops a sense of inadequacy. For adolescents, developing a career goal is an important part of creating an identity. They can commit to formal study as a vital part of the career preparation process more sincerely, as their career goals become more distinct. Without this focus on desired outcomes, it can be difficult to remain committed to school and postsecondary study.

There are many instances of young people who know their career goals, who have realistically assessed both their personal abilities and the labor market projections. Such people are ready to move smoothly from education to their chosen occupations. Existing research and theory suggests that a number of characteristics of the family are particularly relevant to vocational development. These include the location of the family in the broader social context (for example, socioeconomic status and racial/ethnic background); the structural features of the family such as single or dual parenthood; and family processes such as transmission of family work values, planned parental career-related interventions, and family interaction style (Schulenberg et al., 1984).

1.5 PARENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Parents are the first contact that the adolescent has since childhood. Evidences from empirical literature also lend support for the dominance of parents in shaping adolescent’s career aspirations. Many studies have found that students identify parents as the strongest influence on their career and course decisions (Bender, 1994; Lunneborg, 1982). Scientists also agree that parents are the single most influential factor in the career development and choice of their children (Clark and Horan, 2001).

J. Downing and L.M. D’Andrea conducted a study in 1994 on Parental Involvement in Children’s Career Decision Making and found that parents exhibited some marked educational and career choice
bias. Parents in the UK and US had a strong bias in favour of university attendance and related careers. Swiss parents were much more inclined to leave these decisions to their children.

Researchers have shifted focus to the exploration of family processes (e.g. parents’ role modeling, attitudes and behavior) that might contribute to the development of adolescent’s occupational aspirations. Adolescent active choices and occupational aspirations are mainly influenced by parents through their roles as analysts of reality and providers of experiences for their children. Several investigators have recorded a positive association between parents’ perception of their children’s academic skills and adolescent’s self-concepts of these abilities.

Parents can promote children’s interests and actual choices through the experiences they provide in the home and their specific parenting practices. Parents may translate their values and beliefs into actions and thereby transfer them to the child by simply engaging in different activities. Parents, who read to their children, e.g., send a clear message regarding the value of academic pursuits. In this way, specific parenting behaviors may affect adolescent activity preferences, their beliefs about themselves, and ultimately, their educational and occupational choices.

A study was conducted by John S. Mahony and Stephen R. Merritt in 1994 on Educational Hopes of Black and White High School Seniors in Virginia. It was found that parental encouragement was at least somewhat important to both groups. Parental behaviour associated with children’s academic achievement includes parenting styles, verbal interactions, book reading, helping with homework and school involvement. Parental identification has been associated with higher levels of educational
achievement, occupational status and vocational aspirations among adolescents and young adults alike.

It has been noted that disagreements among adolescent-adult relationships seem to be mostly concerned with relatively minor issues. In the Danish-American survey conducted by Lesser and Kandel (1969), it was found that there was similarity in educational values between adolescents’ parents and their friends. However, particularly in the long term, where differences existed, parental influences in this area outstripped the influence of friends.

On the other hand, in a study of occupational aspirations of high school students, Simpson (1962) found that for both middle-class and lower-class boy, “parental influence was more strongly related to aspirations than peer influence.” Parental influence was measured by the child’s report of his parental pressure to enter a profession. High peer influence was defined by two criteria: belonging to two or more school clubs, and mentioning at least one middle-class friend.

Mark Davies and Denise B. Kandel in 1981 conducted a study on Parental and Peer Influences on 762 Adolescents Educational Plans and found that parental influence on their adolescent children’s aspirations were much stronger than the influence of best friends. Peer effect though weaker than parental effect were much stronger for girls than for boys i.e. friends appeared to be relatively unimportant in determining the aspirations of boys but were quite influential in determining the aspirations of girls. Far from declining over the adolescent years the influence of parents related to that of best friends increased. The greater peer orientation of girls than of boys was accompanied by greater susceptibility to the influence of peers in the form of future life plans.
Parents who are in agreement with aims and objectives of secondary schools, and who regard high school education as a useful preparation for later life, are likely to encourage their children to prepare their homework carefully, attend school regularly and prepare for exams in a responsible manner.

Conger (1977, p.427): A lower class girl whose parents are unable to, or uninterested, helping her to go to college is less likely to aspire to be doctor than one whose parents encourage such a vocational choice and who are in a position to help her. Similarly, a boy whose parents expect him to go to work upon completion of the ninth grade is not likely to spend much time contemplating the idea of becoming an engineer.

The role that parents play in the life of the adolescent depends a lot on the structure of the family. In a joint family, the role of other family members also becomes as important as their parents. In a nuclear family, the family consists of just the parents and siblings and the circle of interaction is smaller, so the parental role is more prominent. Parental role in the decision-making process of the adolescent is only up to advice -giving. As the parents are consulted, the extent of their approval is also important. Parental interest in his adolescent child is very important, as this encourages the adolescent to do well. It also helps to share the small burdens that he faces in college life. If interest is developed in the adolescent’s study in a mature and adult way, he will not feel like a school child.

Parents express their interest in the adolescent’s studies in many ways. They have a lot of interest in the progress of the adolescent’s academics. Studies indicate that adolescents are concerned about what their parents have to say in regard to their occupational aspirations. They are aware that parents perhaps do know more than them and want to consult
them before finally taking up anything. Duvall (1977) said “seeking counsel and getting specific knowledge about possible fields within the limits of real possibilities.” This is what perhaps the parents provide while they help the adolescent choose their career. Data collected show that both parents and adolescents have played a co-operative venture in the adolescents’ occupational aspirations. Adolescents turn increasingly to their peers with their personal confidences during the teen years. As Duvall has said parents who understand that young people must identify with their own generation, if they are to emerge as full fledged young adults refrain from paying pressures that alienate them even further from their teenagers.

Parents are in a powerful position to influence the career development of the children. Bell (1963) was interested in parents’ influence on their children’s aspirations. He correlated parental motivation with the aspiration levels of high IQ male high school students. He asked if parents wanted their sons to attend college; whether they punished them for doing poorly and rewarded them for doing well in school. Boys whose parents provide high motivation tended to be more ambitious than those who received little motivation from their parents. Girls who have a working mother as a role model associate maternal employment with less traditional sex-role concepts. These girls perceive both men and women in a wide variety of activities, ranging from using a sewing machine to hunting with a gun. They tend to approve more of employment outside the home and to evaluate female competence more highly.

Perhaps the most revealing evidence of parental influence is reported in a study of French adolescent’s perceptions of how their parents affected their orientation to work; young apprentices and students two or three years older prepare for advanced technical training. The results suggest that those in the first group, who were placed on the job market with no
preparation or training, thought that their parents did the least to support, counsel or supervise them. These adolescents were the most dissatisfied with the role their parents and had played and blamed them for their indifference rather than blaming society or socioeconomic factors. Almost all the teenagers who participated thought that supervision of studies was among the most important of parental duties.

Family influence of parents and siblings may also play a significant role in vocational aspirations. Parental motivation plays a prominent role in this. It has been hypothesized that a working-class boy is likely to seek advanced educational and occupational mobility if his parents urge him to do so and unlikely to seek mobility if they do not exert pressure in this direction. Such a boy with strong parental support may prove more ambitious than a middle-class boy without such parental support and urging. Parental motivation has been found to be significantly related to students’ aspiration levels, even when social-class status and IQ are held constant. In general, students whose parents ranked high on aspirational motivations (i.e. held high educational and occupational goals for their kids and rewarded good school work) tended to have a high aspirational level themselves. (i.e. a “desire for an occupation above that of their parents’ social class level”). But this relation was strongly among students scoring high on personality measures of authoritarianism and conformity. Apparently, nonauthoritarianism and nonconforming adolescent males are less susceptible than their more dogmatic, conforming peers.

Father’s occupation exerts a significant influence on the career aspirations of sons, though, apparently not of daughters. James G. Goodale and D. T. Hall conducted a study in 1976 on The Influence of Sex, Values and Parents and found that the basic path linking social origin to career plans (Parental background - Students College Plans = Students
Occupational Plans) was found for males, while parental background did not enter the path for females who perceived less parental interest and pressure regarding their school work than did males. Student work values did not mediate the relationship between parental background and career aspirations.

John A. Fleishman and Peter G. Carpenter conducted a study in 1987 on College Plans and College Attendance of 14000 Australian Students and found that fathers’ occupational prestige led to greater parental encouragement to enter college. More women (71%) than men (64%) planned to enter college. Gender interacted with parental encouragement to affect intentions and not behaviour.

The number of sons following in their father’s footsteps greatly exceeds what one would expect by chance, even if social- class influences are taken into account e.g. sons of physicians, lawyers and scientists are far more likely to enter these occupations than are other young men of similar socio- economic status. In part these findings can probably be accounted for on the basis of such obvious factors as:

1) Greater opportunity to become familiar with father’s occupation as compared with others.
2) Greater likelihood of access to the occupation; and
3) At least in some cases (e.g. physicians strong parental motivation- and sometimes pressure- for the son to enter the occupation.)

Parents send clear messages concerning the value of education and their beliefs about their children’s academic potential regardless of their level of involvement. Other contexts beyond the family, such as the school or peer group, may also begin to assume a larger role in socializing adolescents around academic pursuits. Parents’ values and beliefs predicted adolescent occupational aspirations via both direct and indirect
pathways, however the pattern of relation differed across achievement domains e.g. in the academic model relation between maternal beliefs about positive outcomes and adolescent aspirations for a professional career were mediated by youths’ educational aspirations.

A study was conducted by M. Jodl Kathleen, Alice Michael, Oksana Malanchuk, Jacquelynne S. Eccles and Arnold Sameroff in 2001 on Parents Role in Shaping Early Adolescence Occupational Aspirations. It was found that mothers who viewed their children as having a greater chance for positive outcomes and who held high educational expectations/aspirations were more likely to have children who valued school as being important for their future. Mothers’ educational expectations/aspirations for their children were positively related to higher levels of educational expectations/aspirations among youth. Adolescents who strongly identified with their mothers tended to place a greater value on school being important to the future and to possess higher academic self-concepts and educational expectations/aspirations independent of their mothers’ actual academic values and beliefs.

Like mothers, fathers who held high educational expectations/aspirations for their adolescents were more likely to have children who valued school as important for their future and who had high educational expectations/aspirations for themselves respectively. Only youths educational expectations and aspirations significantly predicted professional career aspiration after controlling for gender and GPA of adolescents. All above results suggested that the link between parents’ values and occupational aspirations was mediated via youths’ educational expectations/aspirations.

Teens who possessed higher educational aspirations were more likely to desire a professional career in the future. The emotional
climate in which the child struggles to achieve new competencies is another important factor in his later perception of himself in relation to his work. The child whose parents encourage and help him to try different tasks and who provide affectionate reassurance when his efforts don’t succeed, will approach difficult and challenging tasks with more confidence and enthusiasm than with one who is scolded for failure or who is not encouraged to try a new activity.

S. Gerald Lesser and B. Denise Kandel in 1969 conducted a study on Parental and Peer Influence on Educational Plans of Adolescents. It was found that concordance on educational goals was highly significant for both the mother and the best school friend. Concordance was higher for mother than for best school friend both among boys and girls. Girls had higher levels of agreement with their mothers than boys. Thus they were able to replicate with respect to educational goals the oft reported finding of greater consensus among mother-daughter than mother-son pairs. 85% of adolescents planned to continue their education when their mothers also provided strong encouragement. Only 53% planned if they didn’t get encouragement. Concordance on educational plans with reciprocated best friends overall was higher than for any other category of friendship. Controlling external social factors like social class suggested that influence of mother and friend, especially that of mother was intrinsic for the interaction itself.

Another study was conducted by Joseph C. Bledsoe and R. Gene Wiggins in 1974 on Self-Concepts and Academic Aspirations of ‘Understood’ and ‘Misunderstood’ Boys and Girls in Ninth Grade. It was found that understood subjects perceived themselves more favourably in parent-teenager relations and academic adequacy and had higher desired and expected aspirations. Parents sometimes fail to understand the issues
involved in a child’s learning to take responsibility for him. They make demands, which he is physically, socially and emotionally unable to meet. The anxious parent who fears his child will not be able to take his proper place in society because he lacks competence in some activities e.g. reading, may unwittingly contribute to the child’s difficulties in acquiring that competence. A parent who nags, scolds, and punishes a child when he fails certainly doesn’t contribute to the child’s enthusiasm for new activities, the risk of failure is always greater for tasks requiring new skills and behavior than it is for previously learned tasks.

Parents who attempt to influence the choice of vocation for their children often do so as a compensation for their own deficiencies. When parents find that they can no longer hope to become famous or to achieve their adolescent dreams, they project their hopes for glory into the brightest or favorite child of the family and compel the child to enter into the profession, which, in their opinion, offers the desired prestige or wealth. Stanely Krippner in 1963 conducted a study on Junior High School Students’ Vocational Preferences and their Parents Occupational Levels and found that all occupational strata (except the highest), the fathers apparently suggested careers that would boost their sons slightly above their own job level. Parents and adolescent children spend some part of their time getting along with each other very nicely, sharing discoveries and fresh looks at experiences, talking over problems and plans, and simply enjoying each other’s company. Adolescent feels a secret relief when his parents add the weight of their authority to his own uncertain controls.

It is probably a rare parent who in one way or another doesn’t influence the decision of a son or daughter with respect to his life’s work. This may be by way of example, by way of definite urging, by way of “non directive” help in thinking through the problem of a vocation. A child’s
employment depends upon, the parent’s personality, his ability, his economic achievement, all of which, either by way of heredity (in the case of ability) or by way of environmental advantage or disadvantage, determine the final result.

Most children attain the occupational level either on the same or the level closest to that of their fathers. The occupational world has a wide range of stratification and depends upon the type of background from which the individual comes. This stratification appears is based on factors transmitted through family inherited- (through the biological inheritance of a given level of intelligence) intelligence, of possible temperament; through the cultural inheritance of personality, attitudes, vocational aspirations and through the materialist inheritance of financial backing for education, first office expenses, equipment etc.

G. Dyer in 1958 conducted a study on Parental Influence on the Job Attitudes of 51 children from Two Occupational Strata and found that the white collar families were more satisfied with their fathers occupation than the blue collar ones. The family into which one is born generally influences one’s future. In some cases, there is upward mobility in the occupational world, but is a rare feature. Fathers in different levels of occupations can have sons, who can be found in any level of occupation. The total influence of parents and family is very significant. The individual himself may be unaware of their effect, especially if he has chosen an occupation different from that of the parents. He even fails to understand that his choice was within a frame of reference, grown out of family background. But even so, parents received most votes for being the most influential factor in determining choice among 380 high-school seniors in Missouri.
The relationship between children and their fathers is obvious at a young age, when a large number of children choose the same occupation as their fathers. This may predominantly be due to “hero worship” or may emerge out of familiarity with only that line of work. As they grow older, overlapping between specific choice and father’s occupation diminishes.

The study conducted by G. Dyer in 1958 on Parental Influence on the Job Attitudes of children from Two Occupational Strata indicated that neither the parents nor the children from either level wanted the children to follow their fathers occupation. Since both groups fell in the lower categories of occupations it was felt that the prestige value of their fathers occupation played an important part in the evaluation of jobs and its influence on their children.

A study was conducted by R. V. Rao in 1977 on Relationship Between 138 Students and their Parents in Respect of Choice of Vocation and it was found that there was significant positive correlation between parents and their wards in respect of choice of vocation for the latter, but this relationship was not too high.

Trends of this type do not indicate that father’s major influence has reduced but it may be exerting itself in other significant ways. The most significant contribution made by the parents is to provide an environment, where the children can have different types of vocational experiences. They help the youngster ponder over the issue but don’t force their choice upon him. When a young person is dealt with in this manner, he would be unaware of the influences actually exerted, and might even, refuse to acknowledge, that the parent had an influence.

A study was conducted by Marjoribanks in 1992 on Ethnicity, Family as Opportunity Structures and Adolescent Aspirations. It
was found that initial relationship between parents and adolescents’ aspirations were mediated by the association between adolescent perceptions of family contexts and their aspirations. Parental aspirations continued to have modest significance, linear association with realistic occupational aspiration in the Anglo- Australian group. After a mean level of perception scores was attained however, adolescent perception of family opportunities structure had strong association with their occupational aspirations.

Parents’ aspirations acted as a threshold variable, such that until a mean value of parental aspiration was attained, there was a positive relationship between the parental scores and adolescent occupational aspirations. After that threshold level, however, further increments in parental aspirations were not related to children in realistic occupational aspirations. At each level of parental aspiration, adolescent perception of family opportunity structure had a U- shaped association with their occupational aspirations. Parents act in important ways by working through the learning situations, which place responsibility upon the young adolescent. An adult is well aware that vocational choices keep changing because a number of factors influence them. They might be influenced by a friend’s choice, which may die out when that friend moves away. A brief work experience may lead to the emergence of another choice.

Courtland C. Lee in 1984 conducted a study on Predicting the Career Choice, Attitudes of 520 Rural Black, White and Native American High School Students and found that parental influence and self- concept interacted with ethnicity in the prediction of career choice attitudes. Each person has a reasonably unique history of the development of his vocational decisions. The vocational experiences, indecisions and decisions result in his settling down to a life work ultimately. Family influence is stronger in early adolescence than it is in the later years of this
period. In late childhood and early adolescence, there is a closer relationship with parents and other adults than in the late adolescent years, when the tendency to rebel against adult authority becomes most pronounced. As the influence of adults begins to wane, the influence of friends and age-mates becomes progressively more powerful.

In American society, as a person’s occupation is of prime importance, most parents encourage their children to remain in school and to prepare for some vocation that will provide financial security and a favorable social status. Generally, the adolescent is free to select an occupation, according to his potential and his socio-economic status to prepare for such an occupation. Vocational choice and preparation for it, is a developmental task, which becomes increasingly important as the individual matures and nears the end of his schooling. Studies show that occupational planning and preparation are chief concerns of a majority of adolescents. Sometimes adolescents are unrealistic about their vocational goals, still they may have some awareness of practical obstacles, which may modify their vocational aspirations. The boy, whose parents are unwilling to help him go to college or medical school, is not likely to aspire to be a doctor than one whose parents encourage such a vocational choice. Similarly, the boy, whose parents expect him to go to work upon completion of the ninth grade, is not likely to spend time contemplating the idea of being an engineer.

Most of the parents encourage their offspring to assert their independence and make their own vocational decisions, in spite of their father’s occupational levels. When lower-class parents want to have their child improve his status in life by going to college, they start to urge him to be college-oriented. At this time, parents’ attitudes are more important than peer attitudes, though they don’t lose their effectiveness even after peer attitudes become more powerful forces.
L. Richard Simpson in 1962 conducted a study on Parental Influence, Anticipatory Socialization and Social Mobility and found that parental influence was associated with mobility aspiration among working class boys. Parental advice was a much better predictor of high ambition than is the boys’ social class. In parental influence, peer group membership and extra curricular activities, the mobile working class boys resembled the ambitious middle class boys more than the unambitious middle class boys.

Sometimes parents may pressurize their children to achieve in school beyond their capacity but these pressures are quite subtle. Father gives the general impression that his achievement in school was much higher than it actually was. Mother is delighted by good grades and only passively is acceptant of average grades. The rewards for success are great, and the disappointment of failure extreme. Children are expected to achieve in school, not at the level of their parents, but at an ideal level or one at which the parent wishes he had performed. Such pressures can cause children to be overanxious regarding their school achievement. They can also cause them to set unrealistic goals for themselves, in terms of intellectual ability, aptitude, and social and economic circumstances, to instill a child who has limited ability and inadequate personal and economic attributes. This invites frustration, anxiety, and inevitable discontent. Feelings of futility and concern for personal worth can probably be the result.

Some homes are exceptionally encouraging where effort is made to attain accomplishments, develop interests and ideas rapidly and build up maturity. Other homes let the children freely follow their own interests. There are also homes, which wish to keep the child immature and dependent. Some homes are warm, whereas others are emotionally cold. The
warm homes provide love and encourage the child to direct and express his feelings. Family members react to each other on an emotional level. Their feelings are alive and open. A democratic home lets the children express their preferences and takes them into account. Policies are worked out between the parents and the child, or are expressed carefully. In an autocratic home there is little freedom for the child to influence his parents.

Different attitudes of the parents also influence the adolescent’s attitude towards his career. One parent is nagging and critical, where another smothers the child with reassurance and suggestions. One parent follows where his child drags him, another ignores the child’s wishes. So complex is the child’s response that each of these relationships may remain friendly. Each home has its own individuality, neither totally good nor bad, which leaves it’s unique effect on the child.

Lawrence B. Green and Harry J. Parker in 1965 conducted a study on Parental Influence upon Adolescents Occupational Choice and found that Boys tended to select a towards-person occupation when perceiving the positive parental behaviour. If the relationship with either mother or father was perceived as being warm, protecting and tangibly rewarding, the sons gravitate towards persons occupations. Cold, negative and punishing parents seemed to have little effect upon their sons’ occupational orientation. For girls a dynamically negative father and a more passively negative mother affected the daughter’s orientation towards non-person occupation. The dynamic behaviour like demanding, rejecting and punishment symbolic-love seemed to be more powerful in influencing girls’ occupational orientation than the passive behaviour ‘Neglecting’. It appeared that maternal neglect was felt more deeply and seemed to be an influential factor in the occupational choice of girls. Influence of fathers upon the occupational orientation of girls appeared to be much stronger than that of
the mothers. The indulgent parent protects the child from difficulties and discomfort and demands that he take responsibility. Indulgent homes are usually warm (rather than warm), but not all warm homes are indulgent. Contrary to indulgence is hostile rejection where the parent dislikes the child and is continually critical and penalizing.

Some parents adopt democratic actions as a way to teach self-reliance. Democracy can be an unbalanced, excessively indulgent relationship, in which the child gets his way at every turn. In other homes, democratic and warm, the child is pushed toward achievement. Formal democratic planning highlights foresight and deliberate analysis of consequences. Therefore, it reinforces the “anxiety” connected with middle-class socialization. Generally parents, who adopt democratic methods to carefully do the right thing, do not understand the attitude they require. If a parent follows rules for conducting the home democratically, without making the child emotionally secure, he (the child) doesn’t become independent. Independence requires self-assurance.

Family is the social institution, which has a great influence throughout development of the individual. Most studies indicate that majority of the adolescents have few serious disagreements with parents. Indeed, during adolescence very few families experience a major deterioration in the quality of the parent-child relationships (Steinberg1991). Generally adolescents and parents have different attitudes about issues of contemporary social concern to some extent, but most of these differences show disparities in the intensity of attitude rather than it’s direction. Thus, adolescents and parents are diametrically opposed on a particular issue i.e. most differences between the two generations involve different levels of support for the same position.
Therefore, there is considerable diversity in the nature of parent-child relationships in adolescence. Diversity is related to the particular context within which the adolescent and family develop. Sometimes this diversity may represent undesirable patterns of behavior e.g. dropping out of school. Attitudes and behavior of most of the adolescents is in agreement with the views, desires or expectations of their parents.

Majority of the families care about their children’s school accomplishments, but their understanding of the system and their ability to make it advantageous for their children differs, usually by social class but also within classes. Families can be seen to have two fronts when interacting with schools, with two overlapping but distinct amounts and types of cultural capital: a) adults draw directly on their own resources in their dealings with the school and in their efforts to influence the education of their children, and b) children draw on those resources that have been transmitted to them by others in the family as well as other resources they have accumulated from their experiences outside the family.

The term “social capital” has been used in the study of education to refer to the social resources the children and youth have available to them outside schools in their family or community. These resources can be constructive in promoting educational growth. The term refers to a variety of different social resources each of which may be of value for education. Forms of social capital include interests of parents in their children’s development, norms held and enforced by parents or by the adult community that shape and control children’s activities, related to adults other than the child’s own parents, and the trustworthiness of those who make up a child’s social environment. Social capital thus consists primarily of relationships of various categories of adults to the child and to one another.
Social capital available to the child stands in contrast to the human capital, financial capital, or physical capital of the child’s parents or others in the child’s environment, for it is complementary to these resources. The effective availability of these resources to the child depends on the strength of the relationships of the child to those holding these resources e.g. the education of a parent (or more generally the parent capital) becomes available to the child only if the relationship of the child to the parent is sufficiently strong that the human capital is transmitted. Social capital that is important for child rearing is present in three aspects of social structure: a) the intensity of the relationship of adults to the child b) the relationship between two adults who have relationship of some intensity with the child c) continuity over time. The social capital lies in the capability of the relationship between the adult and the child. The adult hobbyist who transmits excitement about his or her hobby, the swimming coach or violin teacher who transmits intensity of commitment to a goal, the parent who helps a teenager over one or another obstacle, or who has carried out sufficiently strong socialization that a child has internalized the parent’s goals: all of these adults illustrate the ways in which social capital can be important in a child’s development.

Family background and processes lay the foundation from which career planning and decision-making emerge. Parents provide day to day examples of cultural standards, attitudes, support, and expectation and determine self-esteem, interpersonal skills, and role models for work in many ways.

Schools where students are brought together from different geographic areas are known as Career magnet schools. Apparent parental support for college significantly differentiates between career magnet and comprehensive students. Career magnet students are more likely
to report that their parents would place great emphasis on their college attendance and would be willing to make financial sacrifices for it (Flaxman, E., Guerrero, A. and Gretchen, D., 1999). Many factors are responsible for the above phenomenon e.g. to attending a career magnet program continuously needs a lot of dedication and sacrifice. Career magnet students have to get up earlier and spend more time commuting to their school (in pursuit of education) than the students who attend comprehensive high schools in the neighborhood. This dedication may be conveyed to parents and increase their inclination to support the student's ambitions. Other evidences of student commitment may also persuade parents to be more supportive. This future orientation is also expressed in their greater involvement in college planning activities, including discussions with their parents about college attendance.

The ambitions of parents for their children, the families structures, the way they handle conflict and communication, and the feelings of parents toward work and learning, may have a lot of influence on the development of skills and attitudes essential for success.

Studies reveal that parents pass on occupational values, such as values of conformity or autonomy in work to their children. Now a days parents initiate different kinds of planned career-related interactions with their children. Development of career maturity among adolescents have been shown to be related to daily patterns of family functioning, like decision-making styles and degrees of conflict and unity.

R.A. Young, J.D. Friesen and J.M. Dillabough conducted a study in 1991 on Personal Constructions of Parental Influence Related to Career Development. They found that interaction perceived as key elements in career development referred to either the process or outcomes of parental
influence and addressed responsibility, autonomy, open communication, support and encouragement and direction and guidance.

Families generally support career development mainly through setting examples of appropriate career behaviors, providing enriching experiences for children, and supporting development of desirable work-related attitudes. The extent of parental influence on learning is extensive. Evidence indicates that parents either directly or indirectly influence all of the main determinants of cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning. These determinants include the student's abilities and motivations, as well as having an academically stimulating home environment, having an academically oriented peer group, and limiting television viewing. It is known that the effectiveness of parents' involvement in their child's learning can be enhanced.

Parent-child interactions occurring in adolescence are different for girls and boys. In a study conducted in the U.S., the adolescent males reported more inactive functioning in their families and more parent participation in school, while the females perceived greater career-related interaction with their parents and stronger work values in their families.

J. Trusty, R.E. Watts and P. Erdman in 1997 conducted a study on Predictors of Parents' Involvement in their Teens' Career Development and found that gender was the one predictor variable that was practically significant. Female teens reported higher levels of parental involvement.

Rebecca S. Carter, Roger A. Wojtiewicz in 2000 conducted a study on Parental Involvement with Adolescent Education and found that in students' grades, tests, scores and educational aspirations, parents helped daughters in some ways and sons in other ways. Generally,
daughters experienced more parental involvement with their education than did sons.

Students' attitude towards learning, and consequent school-to-work transition readiness, can be enhanced if their families have stronger work values (extrinsic and intrinsic orientations and work autonomy) and parents who engage in greater planned interactions with them about careers, (including those which extend beyond career investigation and choice). Attention is often given to parents' contribution to career exploration and choice (as in intentional interactions) or parental support for children's homework or their participation in the planning and operation of educational programs (parent participation in school).

Lee Shumow and Jon D. Miller conducted a study in 2001 on Parents at Home Work and at School Academic Involvement with Young Adolescents. It was found that fathers of young adolescents were less involved at school than were mothers but similarly involved academically at home. Parents of struggling students were involved more in homework assistance and parents of successful students were involved more at school than were other parents. Parental academic involvement at home was associated positively with young adolescents school orientation. Family provides a background for rich and exclusive set of experiences, related to preparation for work and the school-to-work transition process. Families contribute to school-to-work transition readiness through their planned interactions with children about careers and through participation in their children's schooling. Parents also contribute to school-to-work transition through the strength of their work values, and the way in which they deal with their routine work of family life.
Parents of different socio-economic groups have different views regarding schooling of their children. From the time the child enters the school, middle and upper class parents tend to value schooling for the education—both academic and social—that it provides. On the other hand, parents of lower socio-economic groups have traditionally considered school as essential for vocational success, due to the skills provided and the qualifications attained. Except for the very lowest socio-economic groups, all the other groups of parents have emphasized the value of school, to some extent because they have expected the school to be of some use to their children. The effects of parental influences may overpower the restricting effects of socio-economic status or the negative influences of parents, if they are genuinely interested in their children. The consequences of parental influence are also powerful if they have motives, which help them to succeed academically and relevant academic opportunities in the community are available to them.

It was demonstrated in a study of high school boys that, although, middle-class boys, as a group, had higher and educational and vocational aspirations than the working-class peers, working-class boys with parents who encouraged and supported educational and occupational mobility had higher aspirations than middle-class boys with parents who did not encourage such striving. Parents of children and adolescents with relatively high educational aspirations have been found to give their children more praise and approval, to show more interest and understanding, to be closer to their children, and to provide them with more of a feeling of belongingness.

The extent to which parents influence their adolescent depends upon the quality and strength of the parent-child relationship.
Adolescents need the active involvement of parents in their daily life in order to succeed.

1.6 PEER ACCEPTABILITY

The peer group plays an important role in developing a set of attitudes, values and norms in the individuals. The peer group has been described as an “aggregation of people of approximately the same age who feel and act together.” The term peer usually refers to children who are social equals and who similar on characteristics such as age. However, it has been suggested that classifying children who interact at about the same level of behavioural complexity as peer, might be more appropriate, than just focusing on equal ages (Lewis and Rosenblum, 1975).

The relationship with peer is qualitatively different from that with family members. Havighurst (1953) considers the peer group as a playgroup, which furnishes companions who, unlike adults are of approximately equal skill and strength. His relationship with people outside the family becomes increasingly important in his development.

Bruner (1965) points out that peer group is a significant source of social control in human beings. Being accepted by the peer group is an important source of happiness and self-confidence for the child. To ensure his acceptability by the peer group, the child learns that he must accept the group’s interests and values and the process of acceptance by the peer group may be an important phase, enhancing adjustment in school.

Peers are a source of social interaction rules and about how well the child is playing the game, from a different perspective than that of the family. It is the perspective of equals with common problems, goals, status and ability. Peer group is a group of individuals who have such intimate relations with an individual as are expressed by visiting, eating and drinking together in one another’s home and by the other rituals of informal
social participation. The basis of social clique is the equality of the members in social status and similarity in culture.

In an urban society peer group plays an important role as an agent of socialization. For, the family cannot keep pace with the rapid changes in urban society. Besides, the values of the younger generation will be changing faster than their parents. Thus, “the family loses and the peer group gains from this situation”(Reisman et al, 1953). Thus, the peer group plays an important role of adult socialization by providing an intimate social and emotional environment conducive to social learning.

Havighurst has also identified the following functions of the peer group:

1. It trains the child to get along with his fellows;
2. It develops a rational conscience and (with the family) gives the child a scale of values;
3. It teaches the social attitudes appropriate to the age and sex status of the child; and
4. It helps the child to attain emotional independence from his family. According to Davis, “As a learning environment for children and adolescents who wish to rise in the world (attain a higher class position), the social clique is an even more important training context than the family, which can teach him only the behavior and motivation of its own class; a social clique provides him necessary models for cultural imitation.” Similarly, Rosen pointed out that “The peer group is the chief ‘reference group’ in many matters formerly dominated by the family.”

Basic orientations towards the future determine who will be an individual’s friends. Those who plan on college are committed to academic achievement or high marks and will stand apart from those who
would like to quit school and get a job as soon as possible. When the adolescent’s peer group is college-oriented, he is much more likely to decide to go to college than when the peer group is work-oriented. The criteria set by one’s group affect his goals. A person who thinks of himself as a member of a particular group will strive for the attainments characteristic of that group. A person decides the extent to which he can perform a task well, partly by noticing what others are doing. He is most influenced by the individual with whom he identified or the group to which he feels he “belongs.” Goals in some groups are high, in others low.

Each person shows a need for peer approval: a desire to be liked and included in activities, to have his accomplishments praised, and his ideas listened to. Getting along without friction is not enough. For full pleasure in activities, he must feel that he “belongs”, that his group likes and welcomes him. During adolescence the need to belong to and identify with a group of individuals of the same age group is stronger than it is at any other period. This trend is seen in most present-day societies. Adolescents spend a great deal of time with their own age-group and the values and attitudes of their own particular set of friends, within the peer group, become an important influence on their behavior.

Adolescence is a period when learning about interpersonal behavior in various situations like social, intimate and work-oriented increases. Even a short period of an year or eighteen months can produce a remarkable change in the social maturity of the adolescent. Much of this social maturity is developed through interaction with peers. Bonds with adults reduce, as children grow older so their dependence on peers increases. Adolescents share their doubts and uncertainties about the future and their defeats and victories of the present. Peers have more time, inclination and patience to share introspective thoughts.
Peers help the adolescents in defining his sense of himself. The adolescent must be prepared to meet the expectations of his society concerning adult standards of performance in many areas e.g. social, vocational etc. The acceleration of such demands can make adolescence a very challenging period, especially if the young person is faced with many possible choices. The peer group (members of which are facing similar choices) can help the adolescent in defining his sense of self and his expectation. Peer group helps in dealing with such contradictory patterns of behavior and expectations. Adolescents generally form their own ‘culture’ that consists of exclusive values that young people imbibe and that give them a sense of belonging to an identifiable group. These values involve tastes in clothing, language, music and leisure-time activities that are rarely shared or appreciated by adults.

Since adolescents share interests and activities in common with other adolescents, this doesn’t imply that they reject parental values. Both British and American data suggest that, in societies where economic and social class differences exist, there is a greater similarity between values of parents and adolescents of one class than between those of adolescents of very different backgrounds. Adolescent relate themselves with different types of peer, which influence and speed up the process of socialization. During the school years, the child extends his activities to engage in those of his school. In this situation, he comes across other children with whom he must learn to work and play cooperatively and with whom he must learn to compete.

The child must attain certain wisdom from his peer relations. These relations are important in the development of his ability to work and associate with other people. The extent, to which he can cooperate and compete successfully with others, is related to his early association with
his classmates as well as to his experiences within the family. In the school surroundings, a child acquires the skills that bring him the acceptance and recognition of his group. He learns that his peer group appreciates certain behavior and attitudes and that other behaviour brings about the group's displeasure. He understands the consequences of nonconformity i.e. the result of his being difficult or behaving differently from the group. The acquired practices that bring approval and recognition become a part of the child's role behavior in group situations.

The extent to which an adolescent acquires the ability to interact cooperatively depends upon the specific intensity of his peer relations. The beginning as well as intensity of his cooperative behavior in the peer group situations will depend partly upon his ability to communicate. The extent to which he actually desires to work with or for others in a group setting depends upon the quality of his relationships. The child who has found his peer group a source of pain or who has failed to receive satisfaction from it, may choose solitary, isolated or independent occupations, or he may try to compensate for the deficiencies of his earlier relationships, in his work situations.

Richard J. Noeth, Harold B. Engel and Patricia E. Noeth in 1984 conducted a study on Career Decisions of High School Students and found that students rated friends highly in terms of helpfulness in the career decision making process.

Xin Ma and Jianjun Wang in 2001 conducted a study on Examination of Walberg's Model of Educational Productivity in Student Career Aspiration. It was found that there was a strong direct link between educational outcomes and career aspirations. Indirect relationship between factors of educational productivity and career aspirations via educational outcomes. Peer environment was the most important indirect effect on career
aspiration through educational outcomes. Factors of educational productivity enhanced students career aspirations through improved educational outcomes of students.

Peer group also plays a significant role in vocational selection e.g. the upper-middle class youth who prefers to work with his hands in a skilled laborer’s job, may be discouraged from doing so, for fear that he will be detested by his college bound friends. As childhood advances, the individual spends more time outside the home and less time inside the home. Most of the time, he is outside the home, is spent with members of the peer group. It is clear that the peer group has a greater influence on the young adolescent’s attitudes, interests, values and behavior than the family has. This doesn’t indicate that the family’s influence is taken over by that of the peer group. The extent to which the adolescent regards them as competent guides, will determine which of them has a greater influence. When his problems are related to life, in general, the young adolescent regards his parents as more competent and when they are related to the present and specific situations, his peers are regarded as more competent to advise him and guide him. Generally, urban adolescents are more influenced by the peer group and the rural, by the family. The influence of the peer group is strengthened by the adolescent’s desire to be an accepted member of the peer group.

The degree of acceptance of different adolescents varies from very high prestige accompanied by high acceptance (as in the case of the “star”) to little or no acceptance (as is typical of the “isolate”). Characteristically, the star is more outgoing, more involved with people than with things, more careful, daring, active, easy going, and flexible, and shows more leniency in the acceptance of peer standards than does the less accepted individual. Some involuntarily withdraw from social relationships.
because they find little satisfaction in such relationships. The involuntary isolate wants friends and resents his lack of acceptance by his peers. Some adolescents are not rejected, but they are merely neglected because they are so colorless and have so little to offer that they are overlooked. There are the “fringers”, who have minimal acceptance and can easily lose whatever acceptance they have, by doing or saying something to annoy their peers. Then, there are the “climbers”, who are trying to improve their status by identification with a more prestigious clique.

The unpopular adolescent often comes from a lower socio-economic group than the majority of his classmates, does poor schoolwork, and lacks the knowledge of social skills, which adolescents of higher socio-economic status have acquired. Few adolescents are satisfied with the degree of acceptance they have in the peer group. Most of them want to improve it. Well-directed group activity teaches concern for others, willingness to solve disputes, and pride in others’ accomplishments. Pupils learn that acting alongside others is fun, and they learn to cooperate as a team.

The widening environment promotes independence. As a child mixes with children from other homes and with community groups, his interests and activities are less attached to his own family. He proceeds with limited supervision, though his parents normally take care to know what he is doing and help him to assess which activities are right or wrong. Increasingly, more and more areas of decision are placed under the adolescent’s control, and he spends more time away from home. He has frequent occasion to mingle among strangers. His assurance is the result of his experiences over many years that, as he came into contact with a new group, he was accepted and treated pleasantly. The child’s work is constantly evaluated, praised and criticized by his peers and by his adults.
In choosing their peers, adolescents typically gravitate toward those who exhibit attitudes and values consistent with those maintained by the parents; these opinions are the beliefs ultimately adopted by the adolescents themselves. (Guerney and Arthur 1983). While peers influence adolescents regarding issues like educational aspirations and performance, in most cases there is convergence between family and peer influence.

Studies suggest that career magnet programs (schools which have students from different geographical areas) exert significant influence on students. The closest friend of career magnet graduates were more likely to be those who had career ideas. Generally, one's closest friend in high school is a chief indicator and source of social norms and values. Career magnet students (Having a best friend with career ideas) are more likely to be exposed to a surrounding in which career thinking and career planning are the norms (Flaxman, E., Guerrero, A. and Gretchen, D., 1999).

Career magnet programs encourage the formation of friendships that are more likely to be based on shared career concerns, since they bring students into a new setting, populated by students, who are likely to have shared career interests. A fairly intense relationship with a serious peer may incline parents to believe that their child, too, is serious about getting ahead. Career magnet students are also significantly more likely to describe their closest friend as being career oriented. This fact suggests that career magnet students may live in a world that is more supportive of career thinking and willingness to demonstrate concerns for the future. Career magnet students also seem to have a somewhat more realistic view of their own capabilities.

Studies have shown that friends whose choices were reciprocated were in somewhat greater agreement about educational goals
than those involved in unreciprocated choices. D.B.Kandel and G.B.Lesser conducted an investigation on the educational plans of adolescents and found that the degree of friendship was refined further by considering simultaneously whether the choice was reciprocated and whether the friend in school was the best friend overall. “The ‘very best friend’ in terms of this classification, is the best friend overall whose choice is reciprocated. Concordance on educational plans with reciprocated best friends overall is higher than for any other category of friendship”. Peer influences on educational aspirations appear to be considerably greater for girls than for boys, reaching a peak at ninth grade, and then declining.

J. Steven Picou and T. M. Carter conducted a study in 1976 on Significant Other Influence and Aspirations. It was found that peer modeling influence had the strongest effect on aspirations.

Further, a study was conducted by G. P. O’Neill in 1979 on Post Secondary Aspirations of 750 High School Seniors in Different School Contexts: A Canadian Study. It was found that the adolescent clique or subgroup (specific others) was an important factor in determining different levels of post secondary aspirations. Joint contributions of parental expectations and family SES continually accounted for more variance in aspirations than all other factors combined. Parental expectations, family SES and school peer group had statistically significant relationship with the dependent variable i.e. aspiration.

Next, a study was conducted by Mark Davies and Denise B.Kandel in 1981 on Parental and Peer Influences on 762 Adolescents Educational Plans. It was found that parental influence on their adolescent children’s aspirations was much stronger than the influence of best friends. Peer effect, though weaker than parental effect was much stronger for girls
than for boys i.e. friends appeared to be relatively unimportant in determining the aspirations of boys, but were quite influential in determining the aspirations of girls. Far from declining over the adolescent years, the influence of parents related to that of best friends increased. The greater peer orientation of girls than of boys was accompanied by greater susceptibility to the influence of peers in the form of future life plans.

There are studies, which show the part played by peer’s class status in influencing the educational and occupational aspirations of students. Wilson (1959) e.g. showed that in predominantly working class schools, only a third of the sons of working-class parents wished to go to college, whereas in predominantly middle class schools half of the working class boys had college aspirations. Simpson (1962) found that ambitious working class boys tended to have more middle class friends than unambitious boys from both the middle and the working class. Similarly, Ellis and Lane (1963), in a study of working class boys entering a high status university, found that these boys had close associations with middle class friends while they were at high school. Studies by Alexander and Campbell (1964) revealed that peers’ social class status influenced significantly the college plans of the respondents. In short, peers’ class status has a significant bearing on the aspirations of students.

Robert K. Bain and James G. Anderson in 1974 on School Context and Peer Influences on Educational Plans of Adolescents. It was found that those boys, who as a result of parental urging aspired to attend college, either had to accept some diversions from their largely non college oriented classmates or else had to find friends among a college oriented minority. The magnitude of peer influence on aspiration was established. Significant part of the similarity in aspiration between a student and his best friend is due to their mutual influence on each other. A second
significant factor is the way in which students come to assess in the first place based on similar intelligence and SES.

Positive relationship between school social class composition and the college plans of students of a given social class can be explained more in terms of peer influence than in terms of school social class- related difference in the formal education programs of the schools. The greater the proposition of students from a certain social class who attend a school, the greater the numerical opportunities and probability that a given student who attends that school will form friendships from among other students of that given social class. Once a student forms a friendship with another, he will tend to be influenced by the attitudes and values, social class linked attitudes and values of that friend.

Lower class males would rather be friends with upper class males than vice versa. The inference is that when a mutual friendship is formed the upper class person will affect the attitudes and values of the lower class person more than vice versa.

1.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS

There is evidence from many studies that the SES of the family is a vital factor in the vocational of adolescents. Social status or class seems to be the important variable in terms of its effect upon educational aspirations (Hodgkins and Parr, 1965).

Vimal Shah, Tara Patel and William Sewell in 1971 conducted a study on the Social Class and Educational Aspirations of 5201 High School students in Ahmedabad and found that there was a positive relationship between the level of aspirations and social class status, when the effect of sex was controlled. This indicated that given opportunity, women could also aspire to higher education.
J.S. Gaur in 1973 conducted a study on the Factors Affecting Occupational Aspirations of Adolescents and found that SES of the students was significantly related to aspiration, when intelligence was held under control. There is a good deal of evidence to show that family class status plays an important role in influencing one’s educational and occupational aspirations e.g. Douglas found that the middle class parents took more interest in their children’s progress at school than the manual working class parents did and they became relatively more interested as their children grew older.

Social- class membership influences vocational aspirations in a number of ways. It helps to find out the types of occupations with which the individual will be familiar and which of them he will be likely to consider in preparing his occupational aims. It also plays an important role in determining the social acceptability (i.e. the reward value) of a given occupation to the adolescent and to his peers. The individual’s social- class status is related to his occupation. Certain types of occupations are considered appropriate to the members of a particular social class, others inappropriate.

W.H. Sewell, A.O. Haller and M.A. Straus in 1957 conducted a study on Social Status and Educational and Occupational Aspirations and found that the values in different status positions are important influences on educational and occupational aspirations.

Another study was conducted by Alan B. Wilson in 1959 on the Residential Segregation of Social Classes and Aspirations of High School Boys and it was found that the values of the membership groups affected the formation of aspirations and the ethics of the school affected occupational aspirations.
The adolescent who deviates from the expectations of his particular class (for occupational aspirations) may experience anxiety-producing disapproval from his peers, especially if this deviation is related to jobs associated with lower-class status. Families to a large extent influence occupational aspiration and choosing a career. Children get a chance to observe occupational roles of adults in their family. The lifestyle of the family is influenced by the occupation of the householder, even if the occupational activity is separated from families, and eventually the adolescent perceives the occupational conditions to that extent. In many cases, families provide occupational information, or are influential in giving occupational advice. In this way, families exert pressure on adolescents for particular types of occupational choices. The absence of such family pressure leads to the general disorientation in occupational aspiration. Concepts of occupational training, success, and satisfaction are the main impact of families.

Nasreen Rehman Shiekh and Usha Krishnan in 1996 conducted a study on Vocational Choice and Parental Attitude in Relation to Socio-Economic Class. It was found that there was a significant higher choice of level three vocations among the low income group. Children’s perception of parental acceptance was accompanied by their choice of more person oriented vocations than those who perceived parental rejection. Sex * Acceptance – Rejection interactive effect was significant.

Studies conducted in the U.S. as well as other countries have shown that socioeconomic status is significantly related to level of aspiration. H. S. Bedi in 1982 conducted a study on Aspirations of 750 Adolescents as Related to SES, Intelligence and Sex and found that SES had a significant relationship with adolescent educational and occupational aspirations.
Upper-middle- and upper class youth have traditionally aspired to higher educational levels than their lower-middle- and lower class peers. LaMar T. Empey in 1956 conducted a study on Social Class and Occupational Aspirations and found that absolute occupational status aspiration of high school seniors from middle and upper classes were significantly higher than those of seniors from lower classes. Youth from higher socio-economic levels tend to view education as having intrinsic values, quite apart from its function of increasing vocational opportunities and economic awards.

Most young people aspire to jobs with a somewhat higher socio-economic status than those of their parents. The study conducted by LaMar T. Empey in 1956 indicated that the relative occupational status aspiration of low class seniors will indicate that they prefer and anticipate significantly higher occupational status than their fathers.

The relation of social class membership to vocational aspiration was clearly demonstrated in an investigation of all graduating seniors in Wisconsin’s public and private high schools. Students were asked to state the occupations that they hoped eventually to enter. Their choices were then assigned “prestige scores”. It was found that subjects in the lower third of the student population in socio-economic status aspired to high prestige occupations, significantly less often than would be expected by chance; conversely, students in the upper third aspired to such occupations, significantly more often than would be expected. Furthermore, the later actual occupational attainments of lower socio-economic status were close to their expectations.

Lower-status occupational choices are contradictory to the parental ideas about the suitable behavior for a member of their social class and as a result, are likely to be discouraged. The parents may also fear
that such a choice may lead to social disapproval, both of their child and as well as themselves. They may also worry that the child may not be able to live in the same neighborhood as the other members of his social class, to afford the same social, educational and recreational advantages for himself and his family.

The child gradually becomes aware of his assets, liabilities, and interests, through his school experiences, which lay the foundation of his educational and vocational aspirations. Middle-class children are taught to be anxious and concerned about the impressions they make and to struggle to attain high standards. “Something terrible will happen if you don’t try hard in school, if you don’t earn a place for yourself, if you don’t find a distinctive job etc.” Middle-class parents keep the pressure on. Some of them criticize the child severely for not coming up to their standards because they feel they must make him ambitious and industrious.

The school is a path to attain high social status. Ways to improve one’s social status are available only to a few. Joe DiMaggio provides an excellent example. The route, millions of families count on, whereby their children can earn incomes and respect, is education. The middle-class therefore, wants their children to stay in school and to profit from it. They are eager that their children should have good grammar and good spellings as these win middle-class respect. Such refinements are not important to lower class members.

Joseph C. Pentecoste in 1975 conducted a study on Occupational Levels and Perception of the World of Work in the Inner City. He found that students in the medium level group scored significantly higher than those in the low occupational level group on creative – independence, personal satisfaction, co-worker concern, aspiration and security.
Studies of American culture show that middle-class children are taught to give far more importance to future than to present pleasures. By contrast, some low-class children are taught to take advantage of each moment as it comes and to let tomorrow take care of itself.

The acceptance of a child depends on his capacity to do the things that command prestige in his group. These include looking clean, acceptably dressed, doing fairly good schoolwork, if he is a middle-class child. In a lower-class group, neatness or too much facility in school may bring rejection. The lower-class boy wins esteem by being very masculine and rugged. Each social group sets up ideals for it's members to follow, and the person who wins acceptance is the person who shares his peers’ ideals.

Some studies have shown that sons from high status, upwardly mobile families, were found to be more aspiring as adolescents and the most assertive in their appraisals. Simpson (1962), however, found that among boys aspiring to higher occupations, the proportion of those whose parents had advised them to enter the professions was much higher than the proportion of such among lower aspirers.

Gerald W. McLaughlin, W. Kevin Hunt and James R. Montgomery in 1976 conducted a study on SES and Career Aspirations and Perceptions of Women Seniors in High School. It was found that SES affected the occupational/educational aspirations of women. With regard to education, women from high and middle groups in SES were more inclined to attend four year colleges, whereas those in the lower groups favoured community colleges and technical schools. Women with high SES emphasized selecting a career that would allow them to achieve personal goals and skills. Women with a low SES had low aspirations.

Future of women was strongly influenced in a predictable direction by their parents’ SES. A positive relationship existed between SES
and educational aspiration among women high school seniors. All SES groups planned to pursue education beyond high school. A higher percentage of women in the higher groups wanted to obtain a bachelor’s degree than from any other group. Women in the low group viewed additional education after school as a means to develop additional vocational capacities. Careers for women still remained prominent but they did decline as SES increased.

Aspiration for attending college, finishing high school and going to work or dropping out of school relate to the adolescent’s total background. Perin H. Metha, R.K. Mathur and Daya Pant in 1987 conducted a study on Influence on Level of Occupational Aspirations of Adolescents. It was found that there was a strong indication of sex difference on level of aspirations in favour of girls among both semi – urban and urban students. Girls had a higher level of aspiration than boys. In case of girls, significant predictors of level of aspirations turned out to be SES global index. Girls who belonged to educated and high SES families may have learnt to aspire to a career, because of the more permissive attitude of their parents in comparison with low SES and less educated parents, who tended to view girls as taking up the role of housewives only. Classmates, peers and friends have a significant influence on the adolescent’s educational aspirations. The lower- class adolescent is more likely, with parental approval and even urging, to leave school and to get a job earlier than his middle or upper- class counterparts. There is also pressure from the family to have him stay at home and contribute his earnings to the family.

There is considerable data that indicate that lower-income parents value education as much as higher-status ones but their own lack of education impedes the transmission of this value. If there are multiple children, parents are more likely to invest in the education of those
children who appear motivated to succeed. The majority of boys and girls from the upper and middle-class group have educational and vocational objectives. This is not true of those from the lower occupational groups. Adolescents from the middle class who aspire to a manual vocational objective are apt to have selected a skilled occupation. Their intelligence test scores and educational records are definitely inferior to those aspiring to white-collar occupations. They are significantly more impulsive, submissive and concerned with overt activity than boys from the same home background, who choose to remain at that occupational level.

Studies have shown that the majority of high school seniors from the manual home background have adopted white-collar vocational aspirations. These boys occupy a position midway between the manual aspirants and the white-collar background boys choosing white-collar vocations. Their intelligence test scores are superior to those choosing manual vocations but inferior to those of the stable white-collar group. They are characterized by restraint and thoughtfulness. They are also more concerned with overt activity. The boy who is stable at the manual occupational level or who is moving downward is, conversely, impulsive and much concerned with overt activity. The notion that upward mobility is a result of poor adjustment is not supported by this study. Rather, it appears that such boys are well adjusted at school and have adopted many values found among the white-collar group.

Students from higher socio-economic status families also perceived more interaction with their parents about careers and greater degrees of parental participation in school. Benjamin Pope in 1953 conducted a study on socio-economic contrasts in children’s peer culture, prestige values and found that early adolescence in the upper social classes placed a higher value on conforming to adult standards and conventional
codes of conduct than those in the lower socio-economic classes, who emphasized self-assertion and aggression.

There are a number of reasons students’ family experiences may be enhanced by higher socio-economic status. Greater family economic resources may permit more ready access to at least some resources supportive of intellectual, cultural, and recreational activities. Economic resources may also permit family members to more easily achieve physical and psychological distance from one another, serving to reduce conflict and enhance cohesion and sociability.

Joseph C. Pentecoste in 1975 conducted a study on Occupational Levels and Perception of the World of Work in the Inner City and found that students in high occupational level group scored significantly higher than those in the medium and low occupational level groups on three of the need scales – creative-independence, belongingness, security- and higher than the low occupational level group on higher actualization.

A study was conducted by S.L. Chopra in 1982 on Some Non-Intellectual Correlates of Academic Achievement. It was found that socio-economic background was a very important determinant for continuation of education. Parents from higher socio-economic classes gave greater help and encouragement to their children for studies. Students from higher socio-economic classes had higher educational and occupational aspirations. A larger number of students from higher socio-economic classes did some planning for a future career in life.

D. Dabir conducted a study in 1986 on Vocational Aspirations as a Function of Aptitude and Motivation Patterns among the Boys and Girls Studying in IX, X and XI graders in Nagpur District. It was found that the relationship between SES and vocational aspiration was predominant. Vocational aspiration was a function of SES of the subjects.
The SES of boys as well as girls contributed most considerably to vocational aspirations. Vocational aspirations were generally influenced more by the SES of the subjects than any other variable studied in the project.

Higher education may lead to greater awareness of growth opportunities and perhaps enhance comfort in interacting with educational associates outside the family.

F.G. Caro conducted a study on 71 working-class and 73 middle-class male high school seniors who were asked to describe the desirability of two sets of occupations on a seven-point scale. The results indicated that students from both middle- and working-class backgrounds preferred the set of high prestige positions to those of medium prestige, but middle-class students ranked high prestige occupations as higher and medium-prestige occupations lower than working class students did. It appears that middle-class students have strong preferences for high prestige occupations, whereas working-class students are more flexible or less immediately concerned about the occupational futures.

With respect to probable job outcome, middle-class students perceived themselves as more likely than working-class students actually to achieve high prestige occupations. Incidentally, both groups also viewed college as increasing the chances of a high prestige job; however, working-class students perceived college as not likely to ensure such a result, and they showed only a slight preference for college over work as an immediate post-high school activity. In contrast, middle-class students showed a strong preference for college. Working-class students, perceiving high-prestige occupations as less accessible to them, tend to protect themselves from possible disappointment by placing less value on high-prestige positions and more value on medium-prestige positions. Nevertheless, like their middle-class peers, they still tend to view high-
prestige positions as more desirable, though the differences are not nearly so wide as the case of middle-class students.

Some people rise in social status. Others fall in social status and fit into a slot below their parents' level. This shifting is referred to as social mobility. A parent who wants his child to be upwardly mobile tries to teach him the living patterns and values of a group higher than his own. Therefore, the school receives a number of lower class pupils who possess middle-class attitudes and anxieties. Within the middle-class, many are using the school to climb to a higher prestige level.

Social stratification is the hierarchical ranking of people within society along one or more dimensions of inequality based on a certain combination of real and perceived income, wealth, power; social standing, age, and ethnicity, as well as other social (and sometimes physical) characteristics. Because, directly or indirectly, these have been derived from the division of labor, and also because occupations have become the most distinguishing characteristic of modern societies, in most cases occupations are used as the basis for social stratification scale. This means that most social stratification scales are hierarchical rankings of occupations along one or more dimensions of inequality based on a certain combination of real and perceived characteristics of all the individuals in that occupation. The importance of hierarchical rankings is that occupations differ precisely in the aspect of resources e.g. income, wealth or power. This may lead to differences in people's life chances such as health and those of their offspring (e.g. children's educational attainment).

Alan B. Wilson in 1959 conducted a study on the Residential Segregation of Social Classes and Aspirations of High School Boys and found that residential segregation of social classes in an urban area affected the climate of the school, the membership and thereby influenced
the motivations of the child. Socio-economic stratification scales try to summarize the cultural and economic resources related with different occupations. In their simplest but still effective form they are constructed by the averaging of the mean income and educational level of all individuals within an occupation; and then these averages of occupations are projected into one socio-economic scale. Social stratification includes different opportunities for the various groups in the society. In other words, one’s socio-economic status influence one’s attitudes, perceptions and aspirations e.g. individuals with better social and economic status have the chance of acquiring an advanced education and of rising to higher positions.

Francis- Dee Burlin conducted a study in 1976 on The Relationship of Parental Education and Maternal Work and Occupational Status to Occupational Aspirations in Adolescent Females. It was found that significant association existed between occupational aspirations and father’s education, between occupational aspirations and mother’s occupational status (Traditional or non traditional).

The role of socio-economic status in influencing the educational and occupational aspirations of adolescent can be examined under material life chances, working conditions and opportunities for status. Socio-economic status, which is largely determined by, one’s occupation (including rent from building) determines one’s material life chances such as standard of living, housing, clothing, neighbourhood etc. Children coming from the higher social classes have more material facilities, which provide an initial advantage to the children of the upper strata and enhance their self-concept. On the other hand, the poor material life chances of the lower classes will lower their self-concept and as a result hamper their efforts to attain upward mobility e.g. the low income of parents will discourage their children from continuing their schooling. The percentage of drop-outs is
also larger, as children among the lower classes are treated as addition to the family labour force and as such a supplementary source of income. In short, one’s socio-economic status determines one’s educational and occupational aspirations.

Simpson, Richard L., David R. Rorsworthy and H. Maxmiller in 1960 conducted a study on Occupational Choice and Mobility in the Urbanizing Piedmont of North Carolina. It was found that most of the boys whose fathers’ occupations are in the higher scale plan to go to college. 16.4% of those whose fathers’ occupations were in the lowest of the four occupational groups plan to go to college. The educational choices made while in high school vary with the occupational background of the students. A positive relationship was found between the sons’ expected future earnings and the present earnings of their fathers.

Next, a study was conducted by A. Furlong and F. Cartmel in 1995 on Aspirations and Opportunity Structures of 13 Year Olds in Areas With Restricted Opportunities. It was found that differences in aspirations were largely explained by the socio-economic location of families rather than by the structure of the local labour market. Subjects from the depressed urban area were least likely to have considered participating in post compulsory education at any level and tended to have a relatively restricted range of occupational aspirations.

After this a study was conducted by Grace Kao and Marta Tienda in 1998 on Educational Aspirations of Minority Youth. It was found that parental SES exerted a strong influence on educational aspirations and was vital to their maintainance through the high school years. There were strong effects of family background on aspirations to attend college. Similar to it’s influence on boys, parental SES strongly influenced the
educational aspirations of girls. Family structure influenced girls but not boys' educational aspirations.

Parents who have higher SES, typically have higher prestige occupations and thus may serve as role models for their child’s own occupational aspirations. Adolescents witness first hand the benefits of high achievement and high aspirations and the relationship between achievement and occupational success, which may enhance adolescent’s motivations and aspirations for their future (Child Development, 2004).

Different occupations have different types of working conditions e.g. manual occupations are often carried out in unpleasant working conditions. It also involves risk, dirt and physical strain. Generally, it is basically less rewarding, and seems as such, even when it is highly paid. It is less likely to involve authority, responsibility or power. On the other hand, non-manual work, which consists of white-collar jobs, is rated high. It ensures a comparatively high degree of safety, leisure and comfort. It is rational to accept that these drastically different life- and work- experiences will be reflected in the attitudes of the children coming from parents in manual and non-manual occupations. Working class in western society will value those aspects (e.g. job security) in their working situation that are not valued by the upper classes. Studies have shown that those in higher status occupations report more job satisfaction and are more likely to want a job, which is interesting and stimulating.

Every society designates different status to different occupations. Manual work is low in the prestige or status hierarchy of all modern societies. In India, both in the traditional and modern setting, manual work is rated low. “Among occupations, those involving manual work are rated lower than those which do not. Manual occupations may involve the handling of dirt or polluting objects”. And this low status
attributed to manual work, and especially to unskilled work, will influence the worker’s self-esteem. It will develop a sense of inferiority in the worker. He may accept the opinion of others as his lack of ability and may transfer this to his children. His ambition under such conditions may appear inappropriate or even absurd. Parents with such an attitude may fail to encourage their children to ‘achieve’. They may not even acknowledge the achievement of their children unless their attention is drawn to it.

Parents from low SES background may not feel comfortable with or capable of assisting their children with their schoolwork. Low SES parents may not become involved in their children’s’ schooling in ways that enhance or change school behaviour or performance, but their involvement may communicate their expectations for their adolescents’ future success and upward mobility. Similarly, Jordan and Plank (2000) found that the lack of guidance and support of parents was the primary reason; talented, low income, middle class students were less likely to attend college, despite their parental aspiration and involvement.

Trusty (1999) suggested that children from low SES backgrounds may model their parents’ low levels of educational attainment and low SES families have not experienced the benefits associated with educational success. It is more difficult for parents of low SES backgrounds to influence positively their children’s education (Child Development, 2004).

The relationship adolescents have with their parents has been found to be an important dimension of career development. Structural variables such as socio-economic status directly influence career development outcomes (Whiston and Keller, 2004).

During the high school years, students make significant career decisions regarding their educational and career plans (Gushue, G.V.
and Whitson, M.L., 2006). Last year in high school is an important period in adolescents’ career decision-making process (Germeijs, V. and Verschueren, 2006).

The above discussion was mainly related to the studies conducted by various scholars and researchers in the particular field of educational and vocational aspirations with reference to parental encouragement, peer acceptability and socio-economic status. In the forthcoming chapters, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the method of conducting the present study, analysis of the data collected, its interpretation etc. have been discussed.