Chapter 1

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I-INTRODUCTION

1.1 EMERGENCE OF THE PROBLEM

The tendency to join with others in groups is perhaps the single most important characteristic of humans, and the process that unfold within these groups leave an indelible imprint on their members and on the society (Forsyth, 2006). The interest in group dynamics has acquired tremendous importance in the recent years in the developing countries. Ours is also a developing country, new approaches are being introduced to study group relationships. Although in our country, family do provide sense of security, cooperation and affection in the present era of disintegration yet the child cannot be solely dependent on family for his socialization as he spends his much time with the teachers and his classmates. So, it becomes the responsibility of the teacher to know, how adolescents form groups in general and other mechanism operating in group situation.

The process of socialization and social interaction is expected to produce personalities that are substantially integrated and consistent. The emergence of integrated personalities, leads towards adjustment and harmonious social relation. This is the intended consequence of socialization and it is evident that it occurs in substantial measures. The general pattern of socialization is the same in all cases, however, actual experience tend to vary from situation to situation and from individual to individual. When individual is in the society and he interacts in it, there are chances of his being accepted as a leader, and there are equally chances for him to accept the role of the follower (Malik, 1978).

From the time of birth, a person comes in contact with some persons and as he matures, the area of his social interaction increases. Social interaction develops the very essence of his personality and helps him to learn social ideals, attitude and patterns of behaviour. It is through social interaction that a man makes himself well adjusted with his family, neighbours and other social groups so that he himself becomes a true social being in the real sense (Bonner, 1953).

The term sociometry is coined by Moreno (1934). Sociometry is a measure of assessing the attractions and repulsions within a given group. Different sociometric
groups include populars, above average, average, below average, neglectees, rejectees and isolates. There are some individuals who are accepted by the group (populars), some individuals who are neglected by the group, some are rejected and still there are some who are neither rejected nor accepted by the group and they themselves keep aloof from the group and they live in the society as isolates.

The students of different sociometric groups are influenced by many factors like intelligence, creativity, giftedness, socio-economic status, etc. It is clear that acceptance or rejection is related with the personality traits of the individuals. Those individual who are intelligent, creative and are out spoken, are widely accepted and those who are dull, lazy, lethargic and submissive, generally they are neglected and rejected (Bonney, 1943). The findings of recent researches in this area suggest that neglected and rejected students are at risk. They experience loneliness because of emotional difficulties. But the popular facilitate teaching learning process. In order to make neglectees, rejectees and isolates the productive members of society there is need to bring them into mainstream. For this continuous research in this area is necessary.

1.1.1 SOCIOMETRY

Sociometry was proposed by Moreno (1934) and utilized extensively during the 1940's, 50's and 60's for practical purposes at schools and work settings and also for research purposes to examine social interrelations and communication in groups. Sociometry could be defined as "the study and measurement of social choice" (Kerlinger, 1986). Through sociometry, a researcher is able to study the psychological properties of groups (Moreno, 1934), uncover the feelings and perceptions which individuals have regarding one another, and examine the structure of interactions between members of the formal or informal group (Jennings, 1977; Secord & Backman, 1964). In sociometry, interpersonal relations are measured by asking group members to express their preferences for particular companions in a certain situation or activity, like "Whom would you choose to work with?" (Festinger et al., 1950; Moreno, 1934; Northway & Weld, 1957). The typical choice is normally related to friendship or companionship at work. Since different choice criteria influence the content of interaction (Hare, 1962) and also the obtained sociometric choices (Lindzey & Byrne, 1968). The sociometric "test" reveals the group (affect) structure
(Secord & Backman, 1964) and identifies possible subunits of the group as well as various types of group positions (Jennings, 1977).

People observe and evaluate others and make conclusions about other group members' behaviour during social relations in informal and formal settings (Kerlinger, 1986). Sociometric choices are one means to reveal these assessments. People almost always have some preferences for their companions in their group (Northway & Weld, 1957; Tapiuri, 1958), and certain people usually receive more choices than others (Hare, 1962). In sociometry, people who receive many choices are referred to as sociometric stars (Forsyth & Katz, 1946; Secord & Backman, 1964). French and Mensh (1948) argued that these popular people are more likely to represent the group ideal or valued norms; therefore they receive more selections. Jennings (1950, 1977) proposed that the more frequently selected people help, protect, and provide emotional satisfaction to group members more than others do. Those with high-choice status in their group also may have some other favorable characteristics from an organization point of view since high status in a group has been related to productivity and the performance of a member (Hare, 1962). It has been also suggested that highly selected people are at the same time (informal) leaders of the group (Jennings, 1950; Lindzey & Byrne, 1968).

Overall, past research has related sociometric selections to a) propinquity b) compatible norms and values with the group, c) socially valued traits, d) similarity of attitudes and social background between members, e) social adjustment of the individual to the group life, and f) the abilities (e.g., intelligence and performance) of the person (Festinger, 1950, 1954; Festinger et al., 1950; French & Mensh, 1948; Lindzey & Byrne, 1968; Lott & Lott, 1965; Newcomb, 1943, 1961; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Whatever the reasons for higher choice status in a group, the more frequent selection rate indicates a better social potential of the person relative to other group members.

In addition to indicating the highly-chosen people, the sociometric test identifies the people who are left out of people's social preferences (Northway & Weld, 1957; Tapiuri, 1958). The unchosen people are usually considered to be (sociometrically) more or less indifferent as group members (not liked or hated). Festinger et al., (1950) found that the less a person received choices the more likely he or she was a deviate of the group, who were seen to be different from the others in the group. These
deviate people were not chosen as much in a larger group either. It was assumed that sociometric isolation is both a cause and an effect of being deviate.

1.1.2 EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION

Aspirations are strong desires to reach something high or great. Young people's aspirations guide what students learn in school, how they prepare for adult life, and what they eventually do (Walberg, 1989). Educational aspiration refers to the highest level of education to which an individual want to achieve.

UNDERSTANDING ASPIRATIONS

Aspirations reflect individuals' ideas of their "possible selves," what they would like to become, what they might become, and what they do not wish to become (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Realizing aspirations requires the investment of time, energy, and resources, both from the young person and from others (Sherwood, 1989). The extent to which communities mobilize such support bears on the quality of life—both among students and among adults. A similar observation applies to realizing career or employment aspirations. In brief, conditions in the community interact with the imaginations of students as they realize their aspirations.

The term "aspirations" is one which is often used synonymously with goals, ambitions, objectives, purposes, dreams, plans, designs, intentions, desires, wishes, cravings or aims. Aspirations are, what drive individuals to do more and be more than they presently are. We may know what we are, but we cannot know for certain what we can be! Education and career aspirations relate to how much value people assign to formal education and how far they intend to pursue it, i.e. do they seek a high school diploma, a college degree or other post-secondary training, or perhaps a Ph.D. or M.D. degree?

Aspirations are influenced considerably by the communicated expectations of the significant people who interact with the individual. If those expectations are high and consistent over time, then there would appear to be a greater likelihood that the individual's aspirations will be similarly high. Conversely, low expectations often result in low aspirations (Cobb, et.al., 1986).
Aspirations are always ego-involved and thus have a profound effect on the self concept. While people of all ages aspire to better themselves aspirations are specially strong during adolescence. Educational selection is a crucial decision that an individual has to make mostly at the least phase of school years. Thus, the term aspiration involves the estimation of his ability(whether over, under or realistic) for his future performance on the strength of his past experience(goal discrepancy), his ability and capacity, the effort that he can make towards attaining goal. The goal setting behaviour as well as the process of attaining the goal are consequences of his past experience, whether failure-oriented or success-oriented, level of efforts made by him in that direction, and his capacity to pursue the goal. Thus, four main points are distinguished in a typical sequence of events in level of aspiration situation.

1. Last performance,
2. Setting of level of aspiration for the next performance
3. New performance, and
4. Psychological reaction to the new performance.

The difference between the level of the last performance and that of the new goal is called ‘Goal Discrepancy’ whereas the difference between the goal level and that of new performance is called ‘Attainment Discrepancy’. The greater the discrepancy, whether goal or attainment, the lesser the chances of attaining the goal and the wider frustration that the individual experience(Sharma & Gupta, 1996).

1.1.3 GENERAL MENTAL ALERTNESS

Mental alertness refers to the performance of a system. Some people perform better than others in solving problems comprehending events and messages and learning. Everyone recognizes that we differ greatly in these talents. There are individual differences among people, so they possess different mental alertness.

Mental alertness is effected by intelligence. Binet (1904) identified the essential features of intelligent behaviour as “the tendency to take and maintain a definite direction, the capacity to make adaptation for the purpose of attaining a desire end; and the power of auto criticism”. Intelligence is an ability to adjust, an ability to learn, an ability to carry abstract thinking and the like. Some researchers go on saying that the intelligence may be classified, as under, abstract intelligence, concrete intelligence.
or mechanical or motor intelligence and social intelligence. Intelligence and mental ability is an essential element in all aspect of human behavioural phenomenon. Everybody possesses it more or less (Srivastava, 2006).

The state of mental alertness preceding a motor task is accompanied by an increase in cerebral blood flow. During the first trials, these changes seem to be chiefly related to ascending reticular impulses. Habituation lateralizes and focalizes changes which are probably due to metabolic modification in selective expectancy. Unconsciousness or reduced mental alertness indicated by changes in mental status (tiredness, confusion, disorientation, or decreased alertness) (Piraux et.al., 1975).

1.1.4 IMPULSIVENESS

Impulsiveness is a personality trait which includes quick and impulsive behaviour, risk taking activities, lack of emotional control, non-planning, liveliness and hyper activity. (Barratt, 1965) & (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1977). As every one recognizes that personality characteristics do have some influence on individual behaviour. Persons possessing different types of personality behave in a totally different manner. For example, the persons who are introverts do not easily engage in social activities. Conversely an extrovert person attempts to develop new relationships with others. In case of impulsive trait also, people who are highly impulsive may behave differently as compared to low impulsive and moderately impulsive subjects (Rai & Sharma, 1988).

Impulsivity typically refers to “behaviour that incorporates a component of rashness, lack of foresight or planning or as a behaviour that occurs without reflection or careful deliberation.” From the perspective of psychology, impulsivity is at least a two-factor construct labeled “reward sensitivity” and “rash-spontaneous impulsiveness” (Dawe & Loxton, 2004). Compared to psychologists, psychiatrists have a tendency to consider impulsivity in a broader way. They view impulsivity as an aspect of various behaviour disorders. Psychiatrists are more concerned about behavioural disorders, borderline personality disorders (BPD), and antisocial personality disorders caused by impulsivity (Dawe & Laxton, 2004) & (Dawe et.al., 2004). Psychologists and psychiatrists treat impulsivity as a heterogeneous construct. Definitions from different disciplines about impulsivity have significant implications for future impulsivity-
related studies. That is, dimensions of impulsivity should at least include risk-taking, responding quickly to stimuli without reflection, and the inability to plan ahead. Individuals with impulsivity are inclined to have impulsive behaviour and personality disorders which are difficult to manage (Barratt & Patton, 1983) & (Critchfield et.al., 2004).

According to (Barratt 1994; Eysenck et.al., 1985; Parker & Bagby, 1997). impulsivity is defined as the extent to which individuals are unable to control their thoughts and behaviours. The relative inability to control one’s behaviour is thought to stem from deficits in the self-regulation of affect, motivation, and arousal as well as in working memory and higher order cognitive functions that ordinarily give rise to hindsight, forethought, anticipatory behaviour, and goal-directed action (Barkley, 1997). Barratt (1994) suggested that highly impulsive individuals are characterized by a “hair-trigger temper”, and by the lack of self-control that they need to refrain from aggressive behaviour after being provoked. McCrae and Costa (1985) reported that impulsivity is positively correlated with Neuroticism but uncorrelated with Agreeableness. Some researchers concerned with impulsiveness have taken a broader view of the pervasive characteristics of impulsiveness as dominating a personality. For e.g, Shapiro (1965) discussed impulsive styles and included various kinds of personality disorders such as the psychopathic alcoholics and other drug addicts, Wishnic (1976) defined the impulsive personality as a person with destructive character disorder and focused on certain types of criminals and addicts.

Thus, on the basis of above discussion, it is clear that regardless of whether impulsiveness is correlated with extraversion or character disorder, it may be stated that impulsiveness is a personality trait which includes quick and impulsive behaviour, risk taking activities, lack of emotional control, non-planning, liveliness and hyper activity. Various studies have been conducted on impulsive subjects in which learning, Problem solving, perception and other processes have been studied but very few studies have been conducted to investigate the behaviour of impulsive subjects in social settings such as between sociometric groups.

The present investigator is making an effort to study the Educational Aspiration, General Mental Alertness & Impulsiveness of those who are popular among the
Sociometric groups, those who are neglected and rejected by the group and those who are isolates.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

“Study of Educational Aspiration, General Mental Alertness, & Impulsiveness of different Sociometric groups among Secondary School Students”.

1.3 DEFINITION OF THE TERMS USED

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION:

According to Gottfredson (1981) Educational and occupational Aspirations represents a person’s orientation towards particular academic and career goals.

New Webster's Dictionary (1981) defines Aspiration as an ardent wish or desire chiefly after what is great and good.

Educational Aspiration means the goal, the adolescent sets for himself in educational task which has intense personal significance for him. In other words it refers to orientation towards educational goal, arranged in educational hierarchy.

Educational Aspiration in the present study may be defined as the total score obtained by the secondary school students on the standardized scale of Educational Aspiration (EAS) prepared by Sharma and Gupta in the year 1996.

MENTAL ALERTNESS:

According to Thurstone (1952) ‘Mental Alertness’ refers to the kind of thinking flexibility and versatility an individual possesses that makes it possible for him to adjust to new situation.

According to Srivastava (2006) ‘Mental Alertness’ is any function pertaining to the mind, such as, awareness, perception, imagination, reasoning and the like.

Mental Alertness is the mental characteristic of a person, who is quick and alert to problems, and he is alive to what is going on, and such persons are found to be more energetic.
General Mental Alertness in the present study may be defined as the total score obtained by secondary school students on the test of General Mental Alertness (GMAT) prepared by the investigator.

**IMPULSIVENESS:-**

According to Barratt (1972) ‘Impulsiveness’ however, defined, is essentially related to the control of thoughts and behaviour.

According to Good (1973) “Impulsive actions are those behaviours that occur without deliberation or delay although not at the reflex of the consequences”.

Wishnic (1976) defined the Impulsive personality as a person with destructive character disorders and focused on certain types of criminal and addicts.

According to Zanarini et.al. (1989) ‘Impulsivity’ is regarded as a core feature of personality disorder.

According to Corsini(1999) ‘Impulsiveness’ is a type of behaviour characterized by the inclination of an individual to act on impulse rather than thoughts.

In general, Impulsivity refers to quick, unplanned behaviour that appear due to the lack of clear forethought.

Impulsiveness in the present study may be defined as the total score obtained by secondary school students on the scale of Impulsiveness (IS) prepared by the Rai and Sharma (1988).

**SOCIOMETRIC GROUPS:-**

Bronfenbrenner (1945) worked out critical sociometric status scores for number of choices with up to three sociometric criteria. Sociometric groups are the groups which are formed on the basis of inter personal relationships of student in the class. A sociometric group includes, populars, above average, average, below average, neglectees, rejectees and isolates.
**STARS OR POPULARS**

Moreno (1934) reported that some of the pupils attracted so many choices that they captured the center of stage like stars. Bronfenbrenner (1945) later made the definition more specific by indicating that star was any individual who received more choices on the sociometric test than could be expected by chance alone. He developed a table of scores indicating the number of choice it would be necessary to receive with various choice limits in order to be placed in the stars category.

According to Gronlund (1959) the term star is referred to an individual who receives a large number of choices on a sociometric test.

**ISOLATES**

The isolate is an individual who receives no choice on a sociometric test. Although he is a physical member of the group. He is also sometimes referred to as an outsider on a “social island”, although these designations are not as common as the term isolates.

**NEGLECTEES**

This term is used to identify the individual who receives relatively few choices on the sociometric test. Although he receives some choices, he tends to be neglected by the majority of the group members. Bronfenbrenner (1945) also clarified this term by indicating that neglectee was any individual who receives fewer sociometric choices than could be expected by where three choices are used with three sociometric criterion, any individual receiving one to three choices would be classified as a neglectee.

**REJECTEES**

The rejectee is an individual who receives negative choices. Negative choices are those resulting from requesting individual to indicating those whom they donot prefer for a group activity.

In the present study the investigator include only four extreme categories namely-populars (stars), neglectees, rejectees and isolates.

1. **Popular** or star is one who secures 15 or more choices from his fellows in 3 social situations.
2. **Neglectee** is one who secures one to three choices in 3 social situations.

3. **Isolate** is one who secures zero acceptance and zero rejection. It means he is neither accepted and nor rejected by his fellows in 3 situations.

4. **Rejectee** is one who secures 3 or more rejections in 3 social situations.

**SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Secondary School Students in the present study are the students studying in class IX & X.

**1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

In a classroom situation, populars facilitates the teaching learning process, isolates don’t contribute and rejectees and neglectees hinder the teaching learning process; then it becomes a challenge for the teacher, how he organizes them and how best he uses their abilities and capabilities. In order to improve the social and emotional climate of the groups, the knowledge of group dynamics is extremely essential. If we analyze data on classroom group formation we will find that in every class, there are two or three isolates who need special guidance of the teacher for proper adjustment with the larger group (Malik, 1978).

Since, in a classroom situation populars (stars) facilitate teaching – learning process, generally possess positive characteristics but some of them may have negative characteristics also. Similarly, neglectees and rejectees generally possess more negative characteristics but they may have some positive characteristics also. Isolates who keep themselves aloof from the group possess both positive as well as negative characteristics (Gronlund & Anderson, 1975). Teacher knows that the group of children, they work with are more than an aggregation of individuals. They know that the groups have form and structure, that there are patterns of sub-groups, cliques, and specific friendships. Some children are liked by their group more than others. Some are also less liked and often even rejected by their group. The patterns of friendship and rejection play an important role in determining how the group will react to learning situations, and to various types of group management techniques which teachers might wish to use.
The above description is a very nice summary of the necessity of Sociometry in the classroom. It also highlights what sociometrists are trying to accomplish by studying groups in social settings. They are trying to see how people get along in groups and what this means in the context of learning and developing within the classroom. There are individual differences among people, so they possess different Aspirations, Mental Alertness, and personality trait (Impulsiveness). In the present study three variables i.e. Educational Aspiration, General Mental Alertness and Impulsiveness have been taken to study in different Sociometric groups viz., populars, neglectees, rejectees, and isolates. However, no researcher has focused on the sociometric groups with the combination of the mentioned variables.

The present study is, therefore, justified on the grounds that it is the first plan of its kind, designed to explore the relationship of the combination of three independent variables viz., Educational Aspiration, General Mental Alertness and Impulsiveness among different Sociometric Groups of Secondary School Students. The present study will be useful for educators in general and teachers in particular because the knowledge of the relationship of these factors under study will enable the educators and teachers to plan their educational programme keeping in view these factors. The present study will provide an insight to the teachers to deal effectively with their students so that they will be able to develop themselves to the maximum level. This will also assist the teachers to create a more affectionate, harmonious, warm and democratic emotional atmosphere in the classroom. And also proper training and guidance may be given to the children accordingly. Moreover, on the basis of the findings of the study, teachers may help the students to modify their behaviour with regard to Educational Aspiration, General Mental Alertness and Impulsiveness.

Educational administrators, curriculum planners, counselors and guidance workers may also be benefitted by the results of this study. The information yielded by this work may be of great practical use for the purpose of training programme of teachers and guidance personnel. Researchers may also discover in it new challenges or new domains for further exploration. The present study is, thus, envisaged to serve a multidimensional cause in the vast field of education.
This justifies the selection of problem of the present study. This study is nothing more than a humble attempt by the investigator at working out the level of Educational Aspiration, General Mental Alertness & Impulsiveness, of different Sociometric Groups among Secondary School Students.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

1. To study choices sociogram & rejectees sociogram of secondary school students.

2. To find out difference, if any, on the variable of Educational Aspiration among four Sociometric groups (i.e., populars, neglectees, isolates & rejectees).

3. To find out difference, if any, on the variable of General Mental Alertness (its domains viz., Arithmetic Reasoning, Definition, Number Series and Same Opposite) among different Sociometric groups i.e., populars, neglectees, isolates & rejectees.

4. To find out difference, if any, on the variable of Impulsiveness among four Sociometric groups (viz., populars, neglectees, isolates & rejectees).

5. To make the comparison between two Sociometric groups i.e., populars & neglectees, populars & isolates, populars & rejectees, neglectees & isolates, neglectees & rejectees, isolates & rejectees on the variable of Educational Aspiration.

6. To make the comparison between two Sociometric groups i.e., populars & neglectees, populars & isolates, populars & rejectees, neglectees & isolates, neglectees & rejectees, isolates & rejectees on the variable of General Mental Alertness(its domains viz., Arithmetic Reasoning, Definition, Number Series and Same Opposite).

7. To make the comparison between two Sociometric groups (i.e., populars & neglectees, populars & isolates, populars & rejectees, neglectees & isolates, neglectees & rejectees, isolates & rejectees) on the variable of Impulsiveness.
1.5.1 SUBSIDIARY OBJECTIVE

1. To find out the correlation between different variables i.e., Educational Aspiration & General Mental Alertness, Educational Aspiration & Impulsiveness and General Mental Alertness & Impulsiveness of different Sociometric groups (i.e., populars, neglectees, isolates & rejectees).

1.6 HYPOTHESES

1. Significant difference will be found on the variable of Educational Aspiration among four Sociometric groups (i.e., populars, neglectees, isolates, & rejectees).

2. Significant difference on the variable of General Mental Alertness (its domains i.e., Arithmetic Reasoning, Definition, Number series and Same-opposite) will be found among different Sociometric groups namely, populars, neglectees, isolates, & rejectees.

3. There will be statistically significant difference among the four Sociometric groups (i.e populars, neglectees, isolates, & rejectees) on the variable of Impulsiveness.

4. There will be a significant difference between two Sociometric groups (i.e., populars & neglectees, populars & rejectees, populars & isolates, neglectees & isolates, neglectees & rejectees and isolates & rejectees) on the variable of Educational Aspiration.

5. There will be statistically significant difference between two Sociometric groups (i.e., populars & neglectees, populars & rejectees, populars & isolates, neglectees & isolates, neglectees & rejectees and isolates & rejectees) on the variable of General Mental Alertness (its domains i.e., Arithmetic Reasoning, Definition, Number series and Same-opposite).

6. Significant difference will be found on the variable of Impulsiveness between two Sociometric groups. (i.e., populars & neglectees, populars & rejectees, populars & isolates, neglectees & isolates, neglectees & rejectees, isolates & rejectees).
1.6.1 SUBSIDIARY HYPOTHESIS

1. There will be a significant correlation between different variables i.e., Educational Aspiration & General Mental Alertness, Educational Aspiration & Impulsiveness and General Mental Alertness & Impulsiveness of different Sociometric groups (i.e. populars, neglectees, isolates and rejectees).

1.7 DELIMITATIONS

1. As India is a vast country it is difficult to cover the entire geographical area in a single study like the proposed one. Therefore, the sample has been selected from A.M.U Board, U.P. Board & CBSE Board Schools of Aligarh City.

2. The study is conducted only on IX & X Class Students.

3. Only girl students have been taken into account.