CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The main aim of this research is to make an exploratory study of the occupational aspirations of the college students as influenced by the socio-economic variables and interests and it proceeds with certain definite hypotheses which are formulated on the basis of Indian situation and also with the help of available research material.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The main objective of this study is to find out how far the differential location in the socio-economic status and the various interests determine the occupational aspirations of the college students in Ernakulam district.

Specific Objectives

1. To find out the influence of caste and community affiliations, rural-urban background, gender differences and academic achievements on the occupational aspirations of college students.
2. To see how far the economic status of the family is associated with the occupational aspirations of the college youth.

3. To assess the influence exerted by the occupational and educational standards of the parents on the occupational aspirations of the students.

4. To find out the gap between the occupational aspirations and the occupational preferences of the students.

5. To see the relation between the occupational aspirations and interests of the college students.

**Hypotheses**

I. The occupational aspirations of college students are influenced by their:

1. Caste and community affiliations
2. Economic status
3. Parental Education
4. Parental occupation
5. Gender Differences
6. Rural-Urban Background and
7. Academic Achievement.
II. The occupational aspirations of college students are related to their interests.

In order to understand the strength of the occupational aspirations the investigator studied the occupational preferences of the college students also.

Definition of Concepts and Variables

Occupational Aspiration

Occupational aspiration is the goal set by an individual, with regard to his future career, not taking into consideration his socio-economic limitations.

Occupational Preference

The preference shown by an individual for actually entering in an occupation taking into consideration his socio-economic limitations. The occupational aspirations of the students were studied in four categories of occupations:

1. Professional-Managerial-I
2. Professional-Managerial-II
3. Semi-professional and
4. Skilled occupations.
These classifications were adopted based upon the 'occupational classification' given by Anne Roe (1956). She gave six categories according to the level of function. They were Professional-Managerial-I, 2. Professional-Managerial-II, 3. Semi-professional, 4. Skilled, 5. Semi-skilled and 6. Unskilled.

Out of these groups only the first four groups were taken for the present study. Because the last two groups - the semi-skilled and unskilled were not aspired by any of the students when the pilot study was conducted. Taking these four broad categories for determining the hierarchical positions of the occupations, some alterations were adopted as to the specific occupations to be included in each of these categories. These alterations were done on the basis of the social prestige value in Kerala, the functional responsibilities and the training needed for these occupations. These characteristics of the occupations were determined on the basis of the results of an opinion poll conducted among 100 persons selected from different fields of occupations and also in consultation with the officers of the Public Service Commission and the University Employment Information and Guidance Bureau of Cochin University of Science and Technology.
Accordingly the following occupations were included in each of the four groups of occupations.

**Professional-Managerial-I Occupations**

Doctor, Engineer, Lawyer, Proprietor of large business concern.

**Professional-Managerial-II Occupations**

Professor/Lecturer, Manager, Officer, Journalist, Medium business concern.

**Semi-professional Occupations**

School teacher, small business concern, social worker.

**Skilled Occupations**

Nurse, Clerk, Typist, other skilled works with I.T.I. or other similar qualifications.

**College Students**

In this study, college students mean all the senior pre-degree students from the colleges of Ernakulam district, affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University. The students of parallel colleges do not come under this study.
Caste and Community Affiliations

Caste

"It has been widely used to describe ranked groups, within rigid system of social stratification and especially those which constitute the society of Hindu India" (Gerald, D. Berreman, Encyclopedia of Social Sciences).

The present study does not fully reckon with the traditional hierarchical caste structure. But the investigator grouped the entire students into three categories based upon the notifications of the Government of Kerala, for the purpose of reservations in educational institutions and occupations.

The three groups are the following:

1. **Scheduled Castes**

   All the castes included in the list of scheduled castes as declared by the President of India, on the basis of socio-economic backwardness. According to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes (Amendment) Act, 1976 (Central Act No.108 of 1976) there are 68 castes included in the list of the scheduled castes (Census of Kerala, 1981).
2. **Backward Communities**

All the communities which are not included in the list of scheduled castes or forward communities. Muslims, Latin Catholics, Anglo-Indians, Converted Christians and all Hindus who are not considered as scheduled castes and forward communities come under this category. The inclusion of these communities is on the basis of the socio-economic backwardness, as categorised by the government orders. These communities enjoy the benefits of educational and occupational reservations.

**Forward Communities**

All the communities not coming under the backward communities and scheduled castes are included in this category. Brahmins, Nairs, other Hindus who are not included in the list of scheduled castes or backward communities and all Christians except those belonging to the backward communities are considered as the members of forward communities. Members of forward communities do not enjoy any benefits of educational or occupational reservations.
Economic Status

The economic status of the students is determined based upon the annual income of their parents. The investigator grouped the students into five categories as the following:

1) Upto Rs. 5000  2) Rs. 5001 to 15000  3) Rs.15001 to 25000  4) Rs. 25001 to 35000  5) Above Rs.35000.

Parental Education

The formal educational qualifications attained by the fathers and mothers of the students. In the present study the investigator grouped the students into four: 1) with graduate and Post-graduate parents, 2) high school, Pre-degree and technical qualification as I.T.I. certificate or of similar educational standards of the parents, 3) upto upper primary, 4) Illiterate parents.

Parental Occupation

The present occupation of the parents. The investigator studied only the occupations of the fathers. Based upon the occupations of the fathers the students were grouped into seven categories as the following: 1) The students
whose fathers are in the professional-managerial-I occupations, 2) The students whose fathers are in the professional-managerial-II occupations, 3) The students whose fathers are in the semi-professional occupations 4) The students whose fathers are in the skilled occupations 5) The students whose fathers are in the semi-skilled occupations 6) The students whose fathers are in unskilled occupations and 7) The students whose fathers are unemployed.

Gender Differences

Boys and girls.

Rural-Urban Background

Rural Students

Students who have their original families in the rural areas and who live at present in the rural areas.

Urban Students

Students who have their original families in the urban areas and those who live now in the urban areas. Those students who have their original families in the rural areas but who
live in the urban areas for at least three years are considered as urban students.

**Academic Achievement**

The marks obtained by the students in the Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) examination were taken as the criterion to determine the academic achievement of the students. Accordingly, the students were divided into four groups: 1) upto 40 per cent marks, 2) above 40 per cent and upto 60 per cent marks, 3) above 60 per cent and upto 80 per cent marks, 4) above 80 per cent marks.

**Interest**

"Interest is a generalised behaviour tendency of an individual to be attracted to a certain class of incentives or activities that are vocational in nature and those whose broad meanings transcend vocations" (Guilford J.P. "Fundamental Statistics in Psychology and Education", New York: McGraw Hill, 1963).

In the present study, the interests expressed by the students through the Mathew Interest Inventory are considered.

**Field of Study**

The field of this study is all the colleges of Ernakulam district, affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University.
Pilot Study

The investigator visited five colleges in Ernakulam district and had discussions on this topic with the principals and teachers and also with 100 students. The discussions were very useful in the formation of the questionnaire and in the selection of the scale for studying the interests of the students. The principal, teachers and the students were very positive about the feasibility of this study. They all encouraged the investigator highlighting the urgent need for such a study which would be of great help to the young students to assess their aspirations and interests in various occupations. And the principals, teachers and students promised full cooperation to the investigator for this study.

Universe

The universe of the study included all the senior Pre-degree students from the colleges of Ernakulam district. The investigator wanted to study the senior Pre-degree students, because it is at this level that the boys and girls seriously think about their future career. Students join most of the professional colleges after the Pre-degree
course. The senior Pre-degree year is, therefore, the most appropriate time to study the occupational aspirations of the students.

The investigator visited the Mahatma Gandhi University and obtained the list of the colleges of Ernakulam district where Pre-degree courses are offered. There were 28 colleges in Ernakulam district, of which only 22 colleges had Pre-degree course. Out of these 22 colleges one college had only sanscrit subjects for Pre-degree. This college was deleted from the universe. Thus the universe of this study consists of the senior Pre-degree students of the following 21 colleges during the academic year 1989-90 (Diary 1989, Mahatma Gandhi University).

1. Alwaye, St. Xavier's College for Women
2. Alwaye, Union Christian College
3. Angamaly, Morning Star Home Science College
4. Cochin, The Cochin College
5. Edathala, Al-Ameen College
6. Edacochin, Aquinas College
7. Ernakulam, Maharaja's College
8. Ernakulam, St. Albert's College
9. Ernakulam, St. Theresa's College
10. Kalady, Sree Sankara College
11. Kalamassery, St. Paul's college
12. Kolencherry, St. Peter's College
13. Kothamangalam, Mar Athanasius College
14. Maliankara, S.N.M. College
15. Manimalakunnu, Koothattukulam Govt. College
16. Muvattupuzha, Nirmala College
17. Perumbavoor, Mar Thoma College for Women
18. Thevara, Sacred Heart College
19. Thrikkakara, Bharatha Matha College
20. Tripunithura, Government College

There were 11200 Senior pre-degree students in these 21 colleges.

Sample

Stratified Random Sampling method was used to select the respondents of this study. The total 11200 senior Pre-degree students were grouped into two strata: stratum one consisted of the scheduled caste students (1750),
and stratum two consisted of students from all other categories (9450).

350 students (20%) from the first stratum (scheduled castes) and 850 students (9\%) from the second stratum (all the other students) were randomly selected to form the sample (1200) of the study, which was more than 10 per cent of the universe (11200).

The investigator purposefully included more percentage of students from the stratum of the scheduled caste students for two reasons: 1) investigator's special interest to understand the aspirations of the students from the scheduled castes and 2) to ensure inclusion of adequate number of the scheduled caste students in the sample due to possibility of relatively lesser number of this category if drawn on a simple random basis from the universe.

After collecting the data it was found that 46 from the stratum of the scheduled caste students and 54 from the stratum of the other students did not attempt majority of the questions either of the questionnaire or of the interest inventory. These 100 students from the sample were deleted when further works of the study were carried on.
The actual number of students in the sample therefore, became 1100 (304 from the scheduled caste and 796 from the other students) which is approximately 10 per cent of the universe (11200).

Tools of Data Collection

1. Questionnaire
2. Mathew Interest Inventory

Questionnaire:

An elaborate questionnaire was used to collect the data regarding the following dependent and independent variables.

Dependent Variables


Independent Variables

Mathew Interest Inventory

The test measures the interest pattern of adults. The test has been standardised largely on pupils of standard X and the test is appliable from that level. The test does not differentiate vocational, occupational and avocational (hobby) interests. Some of the measured areas have more vocational implications than others.

The eight scales and their trait descriptions are given below:

1. Aesthetic: Artistic, musical, literary, general aesthetic (25 items)

2. Social: Social work, social science (25 items)

3. Science: Biology, physical science, psychology, general Science, technology. (25 items)

4. Business: Clerical, persuasive, commerce, computational, mechanical agriculture. (25 items)

5. Outdoor: Travel, adventure, tourism, general outdoor (20 items)

6. Political: Organisational, party politics, political science (15 items)
7. Sports: Sports appreciation, sports participation  
   (15 items)

8. Religious: General interest in religion, participation  
   (15 items) in and practice of religion

The 165 items are grouped into interest in jobs, 
reading about academic subjects related to various fields, 
hobbies, visiting places related to different areas, getting acquainted to people representing different areas, etc., in order to make it easy for the respondents to maintain a mental set and answer the items.

Reliability

The odd-even reliability (corrected for attenuation) of the eight scales are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table III. Odd-even reliabilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=60)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Validity

The correlations of the eight scales of the Mathew Interest Inventory with the most similar scale in Vocational Interest Inventory (Mathew, 1968), an ipsative type inventory in English for college students in Kerala are given below:

Table IV. Intercorrelations between MII and VII

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale in MII</th>
<th>Scale in VII</th>
<th>Males (N=18)</th>
<th>Females (N=25)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic</td>
<td>Aesthetic</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Social work</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Scientific</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Mechanical</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor</td>
<td>Outdoor</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>Outdoor</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Social work</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pre-testing the Tools of Data Collection

The questionnaire and the Mathew Interest Inventory were tested on a sub-sample of 50 students not included in
the sample, but included in the universe. On the basis of the pre-testing few alterations were made in the questionnaire. Originally the occupations "farmer" and "fishermen" were added in the list, but they were deleted later knowing that no one marked these occupations during the pre-test. With regard to the Interest Inventory the pre-testing was useful to give the initial suggestions to the students in a better way.

Data Collection

The investigator spent 5 months (June-October 1989) to complete the process of data collection. The collection of data from 1200 students of 21 colleges of Ernakulam district involved many tasks. The investigator obtained the help of a female assistant to make the process effective and easier among girl students. In addition, the principals and the office staff of the colleges cooperated well with the data collection process.

Printed notices informing the students in the sample the nature of the study and also requesting their cooperation, were distributed three days in advance. The time for filling up the questionnaire and answering the inventory was informed by a notice of the principal of each college.
Students showed great enthusiasm in giving the data, especially in answering the inventory.

**Editing, Coding and Statistical Treatment of the Data**

The data were edited and coded and were entered on a master sheet manually.

The statistical treatment of the data was done by computer application using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) in the electronic data processing section of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay. Chi-square test was used to see whether there was any association between the socio-economic variables and the occupational aspirations and preferences and also between the interests and the occupational aspirations and preferences. The association and other inferences were considered significant at five per cent level of significance i.e. $p = 0.05$.

**Scheme of Chapterisation**

The entire report is presented in seven chapters. Chapter one gives a general introduction where the definition and major theories of occupational aspirations, the main thrust of the study and its significance are given. Chapter
two presents the review of relevant literature, while chapter three gives the methodology. Analysis and interpretation of data are given in chapters four, five and six. Chapter seven gives the summary of the study, the major findings and recommendations and the contribution of the researcher. Tools of data collection used in the study have been appended.