CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aims of education are multiple, but the primary aim of education is to make an individual understand one’s self and be able to decide upon one vocation or the other. Selection of a vocation as a process covers a considerable number of years, ranging from early childhood to late childhood. A thoughtful selection of a vocation by an individual and satisfaction in his work, inevitably affects the level and degree of his contribution to his own welfare and to that of the community. Jones (1958) said that although the life goal is the centre of all activities and lends meaning to life, a satisfying and a successful life depends on the wise choice of an occupation. A wise choice of an occupation, in turn, means happiness and prosperity. The progress and action taken by an individual throughout his lifetime is generally related to that person’s occupation.

The concept of vocational choice as a developmental process has its origin in the early works of Carter (1940). He concluded that the formation of interest patterns in adolescents progress in the late childhood which ensures mature realistic solutions to the problems of youth and adulthood. Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma (1951) introduced the idea that vocational choice is a continuous process which remains in existence for a long period. In this developmental framework, career behavior refers to the responses that an individual makes in selecting a career and adjusting in it. It is considered as a continuous fluid process of growth and learning, including self-concepts, developmental experiences, personal history, and psychosocial environment as major determinants of career choice. Super (1957) viewed that vocational development is one aspect of the individual’s progress which is essential for his social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Vocationalization or vocational development can be considered analogous to the more familiar term socialization (Crites, 1969). The process of vocationalization denoting psychological, sociological, cultural, and economic ingredients across times, results in outcomes which are effective in vocational behavior, decision-making ability and vocational maturity. Career development is a self-development process
viewed in relation to choice, entry and progress in educational and vocational pursuits (Tiedeman and O’Hara, 1963).

Super (1957) viewed career as the course of events which constitutes life; the sequence of occupations and other life roles which combine to express one’s commitment to work in his or her total pattern of self-development; the series of remunerated and non-remunerated positions occupied by a person from adolescence through retirement. It includes work related roles such as those of students, employees, pensioners, together with complementary, vocational, familial and civic roles.

Choice of career, however, is not an exclusive intellectual process in which various possibilities are sorted out in a logical manner; rather it is influenced both by psychological factors like intelligence and personality as well as social factors like family and school. The family is considered as the basic agent of socialization. Interaction between parents and children develops the basic attitude which they may express in various aspects of daily life in the process of vocational development. The family’s influence on career development operates along two interdependent dimensions: (a) opportunities provided by the family for developing the individual (education, money, role models), (b) family processes (parent-child education, socialization practices) (Schulenberg, Vondracek and Croner; 1984). Career choice also takes shape while the individual is in school. A young person’s relationship with school and work has its origin in the developmental context within which the process of learning and decision-making takes place, which has been called “vocationalization” (Crites, 1969; Herr and Cramer, 1972).

Herr (1990) advocated that career embodies complex interactions between the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor characteristics of persons, potentially mediated by their values, family history, school climate, community reward system and many other possible variables that unfold across time. A solid sense of self is the underpinning for clarifying plan and aspiration in the planning phase of career decision making, particularly, when late adolescents are establishing their identity (Chickering and Reisser, 1993).

The motive behind choosing certain careers or jobs may be primarily to be able to live in style, but the mind of the Indian youth is as much obsessed with self-
expression and self-realization as anywhere else in the world. In India, career selection is also a function of deep-rooted social and moral values which advocates performance of one’s duty towards the self and the society and to make the most of the available opportunities. It is true that the balance between opportunities and personal desires may not be ideal due to the vastness of population and wide gaps in sources of information (Mohan, 1999). Successful career development often involves setting realistic, deliberate goals, simultaneously searching for cohesiveness between employee and employer. Understanding how occupational preferences are identified based on knowledge of self and work can be instrumental in positive career development and satisfying occupational placement (Maietta, 2009).

1.2 THEORIES OF CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career development theories help to explain why and how people choose careers and enter into them. These theories cover various aspects of career decision making and career development process. The knowledge of career development theories is important for teachers and counselors because they need to seek constantly for insight into the reasons that motivate students to make appropriate career choices. According to Mohan (1999), the career development theories can be classified into two types: Structural and Developmental. These theories of career development are discussed below.

1.2.1 Structural Theories

The structural theories focus on characteristics and occupational tasks of an individual. Some structural theories are discussed briefly:

Trait-Factor Theory

Parson (1909) advocated Trait-Factor theory and viewed career choice as a largely conscious and straight forward problem solving process. This approach assumes that matching of an individual’s vocational assets and liabilities (like abilities and interests) with the available career information can be accomplished and once accomplished it solves the problems of vocational choice and hence, results into vocational satisfaction for that individual. He proposed that the choice of an occupation depends upon: (1) Clear understanding of oneself, one’s aptitudes, abilities, interests, ambitions, resources, limitations and their causes; (2) Knowledge of the requirements and conditions of success, advantages and disadvantages,
opportunities and prospects in different lines of work; and (3) True reasoning on the relations between these two groups of facts. Williamson (1965) emerged as the strongest proponent of the theory and suggested six steps in the process of career counseling based on the trait-factor approach viz; analysis, synthesis, diagnosis, prognosis, counseling and follow up.

Klein and Weiner (1977) summarized assumptions underlying the trait and factor theory as follows:

(a) Each individual has a unique set of traits that can be measured with proper reliability and validity.

(b) Occupations require that workers possess certain very specific traits for success, although a worker with a wide range of characteristics can still be successful in a given job.

(c) The choice of an occupation is a straightforward process, and matching is possible.

People differ in these traits and jobs differ in their requirement of traits. If the traits of people can be isolated and measured or quantified, it will be possible to match people with jobs. The psychological traits are either inhibited or developed as a result of person’s environmental interactions. The closer the match between personal characteristics and job requirements, the greater is the likelihood of success.

**Holland’s Typological Theory**

The typological theory provides explicit links between various personality characteristics and corresponding job titles and attempts to organize data about people and jobs. Holland (1985) contends that the choice of a vocation is an expression of one’s personality. This theory is based on four working assumptions: (1) Most persons can be characterized by one out of the six types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional (RIASEC), (2) There are six model environments: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional (RIASEC), (3) People search for environments that will let them exercise their skills and abilities, express their attitudes and values, and take on agreeable problems and roles, (4) Behavior is determined by an interaction between personality and
environment. Holland (1985) also elaborated five secondary assumptions which he calls key concepts that describe the theory. These assumptions are:

(1) Consistency: Consistency is the degree of relatedness between personality type and environmental models. Some pairs or types have more in common than other pairs.

(2) Differentiation: Differentiation is the degree to which a person is well defined. Persons and environments differ in the degree to which they are differentiated and saturated. A well differentiated person shows distinctly higher rating on minimum number of types. A person or an environment which resembles many types is poorly differentiated.

(3) Identity: Identity refers to the clarity and stability of goals, interests, talents, etc. in the case of persons. Environmental identity is revealed through the organization’s clarity, stability and integration of goals, tasks, and long standing system of rewards. A person’s identity is related to the extent of differentiation of his/her profile and environmental identity is related to the level of saturation in the type of occupational activity.

(4) Congruence: Congruence is defined as correspondence between personality type and environment. Different types of personalities require different environments to flourish. Incongruence occurs when a type lives in an environment that provides opportunities and rewards not in line with his/her characteristics like preferences, abilities, etc. The hexagon can be used to determine the degree of congruence between an individual’s high point code and the environment. Proximity of types and models in the hexagon is indicative of the degrees of congruence between types and models.

(5) Calculus: Calculus refers to the relationship between types or environment in hexagonal model in which the distances between the types or environment are inversely proportional to the theoretical relationship between them.

Holland (1985) developed a special hexagonal model to depict relationships between various personality types and between environmental models. The hexagon is helpful in understanding the theory, the instruments and the classification system. The six types appear on six points of the hexagon as shown in the figure 1.1 below.
Figure 1.1: Showing Hexagonal Model for Interpreting Interclass and Intra-class Relationships

A brief description of personality types as suggested by Holland (1985) is given below:

1. Realistic: Realistic type of people prefer activities that involve systematic manipulation of objects, machinery, tools and animals, and are averse to social skills like educational and therapeutic.

2. Investigative: Investigative type of people show preferences for activities involving observational, analytical, systematic, and creative competencies as against low preference for persuasive, social, and repetitive activities.

3. Artistic: Artistic type of people show tendencies to be expressive, non-conventional, unsystematic, original, and introspective. They are averse to systematic activities like clerical and mechanical in nature.

4. Social: Social type of people have an interest in human relations. They prefer working with others to inform, train, develop, cure or enlighten them.

5. Enterprising: These people enjoy activities involving manipulation of others to attain organizational goals or economic gains but avoid symbolic and systematic activities.

6. Conventional: Their preference is for ordered, systematic manipulation of data and filing records.

Thus, Holland (1985) theory suggested that individuals can find satisfaction in work environment that are compatible with their personalities. He added that closer the match of personality to job, the greater the satisfaction.
1.2.2 Developmental Theories

The developmental theories focus on developmental stages, or phases, typically as aspects of a life-long process of an individual. Some structural theories are discussed briefly:

Super’s Theory

Super (1955) proposed that career development is a continuous process of maturation involving formation and implementation of vocational self-concept. It is a compromising process affected by biological, heritage, personal and social determinants, opportunity to play various roles, and feedback. Super (1980) brought together life stage and role theory depicted graphically as “Life Career Rainbow” as shown in figure 1.2. It represents a comprehensive picture of multiple roles, various factors influencing these roles, and the patterns of interactions. Among the two major dimensions, the longitudinal dimension or the maxi-cycle represents the life span and the major life stages viz; growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance, and decline corresponding to childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle adulthood and old age respectively. Within this maxi-cycle, there is a mini-cycle operating at each stage. This mini-cycle is a recycle of the five stages.

Figure 1.2: Showing the Life-Career Rainbow: Six Life Roles in Schematic Life Space
Role salience is the second dimension, the latitudinal depicted by the rainbow. The six life roles played during the life time graphically depicted on this dimension are child, student, citizen, worker and homemaker. The role behavior at various stages is influenced by biological, psychological and personal determinants on the one hand and the socio, economic, historical and situational determinants on the other. The rainbow is helpful in understanding the relative position of roles against life stages. With how much commitment and involvement one participates in these roles, affects the individual’s future career development.

Super (1990) further synthesized theories and models, and developed a unified model called “segmental model of career development” (Career Archway) shown in figure 1.3. The model is more explicit about the relationship between segments and the force that binds the relationships.

The base of the career archway consists of three stones with the biological-geographical foundations of human development at the doorstep. The large stones at the two ends give support to the two columns of person and society which grow and develop out of their impact on each other. He used the term personality to include all personal qualities like needs, values, intelligence, aptitudes, interests, attitudes etc. which determines the achievement.

Figure 1.3: Showing a Segmental Model of Career Development
The societal forces like family, school, community, peer group, the economic situation of the country are the important aspects of the social policy which determines occupational practices. Dynamic interaction of individual and society gives rise to the career (represented as the Arch). The arch consists of developmental stages, developmental task, and roles ranging from childhood through adolescence and young adulthood to maturity. The keystone of the Archway is the person who is the decision maker, and in which all of the forces-personal and societal—are brought together and organized in terms of self percepts and perceptions of social roles. The combined influences of various forces give rise to career decisions.

Ginzberg’s Theory

Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad and Herma (1951) introduced the idea of developmental nature of choice in which past behavior exercises the major influence upon present and future decisions. According to them, choice is a process which transpires over a prolonged period of time. They identified a series of vocationally relevant decisions through which an individual passes in the maturation process before he enters into the world of work. An individual never reaches an ultimate decision in a single moment but through a series of decisions over a period of many years. The major elements of the theory are:

1. Occupational choice is a developmental process. It spans the entire period of adolescence ranging from age 10 to 21 years. Each step in the process has a meaningful relation to those which precede and follow it.

2. This process is largely irreversible. Each decision made during the process is dependent upon the chronological age and the development of the individual. Moreover, once launched upon a process the experience cannot be undone.

3. The process ends in compromise between an individual’s needs, interests, capacities and values, and the realities which impinge upon him (e.g. opportunities). The individual must renounce to some degree of satisfaction, which he might derive if he based his choice on a strong interest, a marked capacity, or a realistic opportunity. He must find a balance among the major elements.

Ginzberg (1972) revised the theory initially proposed by Ginzberg et al (1951) and gave the restatement of the theory as: Occupational choice is a life-long process of decision-making in which the individual constantly seeks to find the optimal fit
between career goals and the realities of the world of work. With further improvements, the final statement of the theory was given by Ginzberg (1984) as: Occupational choice is a life-long process of decision making for those who seek major satisfaction from their work. This leads them to reassess repeatedly how they can fit between their changing career goals and the realities of the world of work.

The contributors of this theory amounted to elaborate four significant variables viz. reality factors, educational processes, emotional factors, and values which were deemed to be important in career choice. The reality factor causes the individual to respond to the pressures of the environment; the amount and the kind of education one acquires limits or facilitates the scope of career choices; the personality and emotional factors have important vocational implications; and the values are deemed to influence the quality of the choices made.

**Tiedeman and O’Hara’s Career Development System**

Tiedeman and O’Hara (1963) viewed career development as a function of the developing self, becoming differentiated and comprehensive. Crucial decisions occur at stages such as high school, college, marriage and taking one’s full time work position. The decision-making process evolves through the four stages, which are:

1. **Exploration:** Various goals are considered at this stage. The individual may review past experiences, consider abilities, weigh the desirability of goals, predict the results of his actions, and try out roles in his imagination. He differentiates courses of actions and estimates the desirability and practicability of each.

2. **Crystallization:** Considering values, goals and possible rewards, the individual prepares to move towards a specific direction. There is a stabilization of thoughts. The individual gets ready to make an investment along the lines that seem most desirable.

3. **Choice:** A choice of decision follows crystallization. The individual can state what he wants to do or be. The goal may range from very tentative to quite firm. Much depends on the adequacy of the crystallization process that leads to the choices.

4. **Clarification:** This step concludes the differentiation phase of decision making.
Clarification involves further analysis of the choice and provides an opportunity for the review and resolution of doubts and uncertainties. It enables the individual to complete his concept of himself in the new situations.

1.2.3 Some Other Theories

Social Learning Theory

Krumboltz (1990) gave the concept of social learning theory of career decision making and stressed the importance of biological inheritance as well as that of environment in all its complexity in the career decision making process. People bring a set of genetically and socially inherited characteristics to their particular environment. The personal attributes and environment interact to produce self-views which influence the individual’s work related behaviours. These behaviours are shaped and modified by natural or programmed reinforcement contingencies. The theory also stressed the importance of the skills acquired by individual in decision making and their subsequent use in career choice remains throughout life than what an individual chooses as life work. Krumboltz (1990) identified four important factors as individual’s career decision path:

(a) Genetic endowment and special abilities: Such inherited attributes as race, gender, physical appearance and special abilities involving motor, intellectual and perceptual behaviors etc. influence what career the individual will choose.

(b) Environmental conditions and events: Conditions such as number and nature of job opportunities, labor laws, union rules; social policies such as retirement etc. exert their influence in a planned or unplanned manner.

(c) Past learning experiences: An individual’s learning experiences influence the development of career preferences and skills and the selection of a particular skill.

(d) Task Approach Skills: The task approach skills are modified by experience and feedback regarding their outcomes.

Krumboltz (1990) has generalized a set of propositions about the relative influence of various learning experiences and defined the learning experiences into two types:
(1) Instrumental Learning Experiences

These are those learning experiences in which an individual acts on the environment directly with observable outcomes. The major components of the instrumental learning experiences are antecedents, behavioral responses and consequences as shown in Figure 1.4 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Antecedents</th>
<th>Behaviours</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genetic Endowment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Directly observable results of action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special abilities and skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>Covert reactions to consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned and Unplanned environmental conditions or events</td>
<td>Covert and Overt Actions</td>
<td>(Cognitive and emotional response)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task or problem</td>
<td>Impact on significant others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1.4 : Showing General Model of Instrumental Learning Experience

(2) Associative Learning Experiences

These are those learning experiences in which an individual perceives a connection between stimuli and environment. The general model for association learning experiences is represented in the form of a circle as shown in figure 1.5. The upper part of the circle specifies the circumstances through which the individual is exposed to the paired stimuli. The lower left area of the circle represents the positive or negative stimuli or consequences. An arrow connects the lower quadrants to signify that the formerly neutral stimulus or model acquires the affective characteristics of positive or negative stimulus through the process of stimulus pairing.
Roe’s Need Theory

Roe (1957) theory of career choice has been classified as need theory of career choice. She begins with the individuals early psycho-social experiences in the family, and traces their effect on formation of needs and patterning of psychic energy. According to her, child rearing practices create major differences in personality and adult behaviour patterns including career behavior. She gave a set of general statements in relation to the role of the individual’s genetic background as well as involuntary expenditure of psychic energy, combined with the need primacies as determined by early satisfactions and frustrations. The combined influence of genetic factors and need hierarchies give shape to ultimate selection of a career.

Roe (1957) opined that the early childhood experiences are particularly determined by child’s relations with the parents. At a conceptual level she gave three types of parental behaviors which are as: emotional concentration on the child (either over-protecting or over demanding); avoidance of the child (expressed either
as emotional rejection or as neglect); and acceptance of the child (either casually or lovingly).

Roe and Lunneborg (1990) in the latest version of the theory gave five propositions on the origin of interests and needs:

(1) Genetic inheritance sets limits on the potential development of all characteristics, but the specificity of the genetic control and the extent and nature of the limitations are different for different characteristics.

(2) The degree and avenues of development of inherited characteristics are affected not only by experiences unique to the individual but also by all the aspects of the general cultural background and the socio-economic position of the family.

(3) The pattern of development of interests, attitudes, and other personality variables with relatively little genetic control is primarily determined by individual experiences, through which involuntary attention is channeled in particular direction.

(4) The eventual pattern of psychic energies, in terms of attention directedness is the major determinant of interest.

(5) The intensity of these needs and of their satisfaction and their organization are the major determinants of the degree of motivation that reaches expression in accomplishment.

**Decision-Making Theories**

Decision-making theories focus on the way in which the individual utilizes information and self-knowledge in making the successive choices involved in career development. Hershenson and Roth (1966) conceptualized vocational development as a decision-making process in which two trends pervade repeated choices. The range of possibilities is narrowed, and the strength of those that remain is increased. Katz (1963, 1966) specified the choice-points in school that require decisions and emphasized the importance of the value system as the synthesizer of perceptions, needs, and goals in vocational choice. He also described a model combining the three systems used by the individual that are an information system, a value system, and a prediction system. Gelatt’s (1967) theory illustrated the cyclical process of decision-making in vocational choice and development, effects of past experiences, and the
relationship of immediate, intermediate, and distant decisions. A number of guidance programs utilize decision-making concepts to facilitate vocational development and improve decision making (Tolbert, 1974).

The development of a person through stages of maturity parallels the educational and vocational choice processes. These two processes interact with one another. In the continuity of career development, educational and vocational choices are seen as a series of acts forming crucial factors for personal development. The personality of an individual has an essential influence on decisions, because picking up a choice behavior involves a series of inter-dependent decisions which are, to some extent, irreversible. Ginzberg et al. (1951) identified the “maturational stages” phenomenon in which certain systematic and predictable series of tasks relating to choice-maturing processes are ultimately faced as a function of the changes in maturity that occurs during adolescence. The stages are called fantasy, tentative, and realistic. As an individual matures, he copes with the tasks, self-insights, and information about alternatives available to him in different life-periods. There is a persistent compromise between wishes and possibilities. The synthesizing and compromising process narrows down the range of choices considered by an individual. They also identified four sets of factors which influence the vocational choice-maturing process as individual values, emotional factors, the amount and kind of education, and environmental pressures.

From the above discussed career development theories, it is clear that there are several different viewpoints regarding career development of an individual. Parson (1909), Williamson (1965), and Klein and Weiner (1977) concluded that success of an individual in a particular career is directly proportional to understanding of his own traits. Super (1955) made a profound contribution to career development by introducing the concept of career maturity. Roe (1957) proposed human genetics and early childhood experiences as the basis for his theory of career development. Holland (1985) contended that choice of a vocation is an expression of one’s personality.

1.3 CAREER MATURITY

The development of an individual through stages of maturity parallels the educational and vocational choice process. These two processes interact with each other. In the continuity of career development, educational and vocational choices are seen as a series of acts forming crucial factors for personal development. The greater
the career maturity, the greater is the probability that the individual is able to make wise, sincere and satisfactory decisions with regard to career choices. It enables the individual to cope with developmental tasks at different stages of vocational development.

The concept of career maturity was introduced by Super (1955) who called it vocational maturity and defined it conceptually as the place reached on the continuum of vocational development from exploration to decline. As with other developmental phenomena, individuals vary along a continuum of maturity relative to career choice processes. Career maturity is thus the degree which one has reached in cognitive, emotional, and other psychological factors whereby one acquires the capacity of making realistic and mature career choices. Originated from the developmental theory as vocational behavior, career maturity has been defined as congruence between individual’s career behavior and his expected behavior. The closer the correspondence between the two, the greater is individual’s career maturity. It envisages that choice of an occupation is a process spanning throughout the life (Crites, 1974a, 1974b, 1978).

Crites (1978) defined career maturity as the extent to which the individual has mastered the vocational development task including both knowledge and attitudinal components, appropriate to his or her state of career development. It involves forming interest, making consistent and competent choices and developing attitude towards career.

Bernardelli, DeStefano, and Dumont (1983) stated that career maturity has been associated with realistic self-appraisal, environmental experience, family cohesion, and several personal characteristics such as intelligence, locus of control and self-esteem.

Thompson and Lindeman (1981) defined career maturity as the readiness to deal with career development tasks that are appropriate to one’s stage in life. This statement indicates that career maturity measurement does not refer to individuals’ attributes but to the career related attitudes and competencies.

Savickas (1984) considered career maturity as the extent to which an individual has acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to make intelligent, realistic career choices. It is the readiness of an individual to make an informed, age-appropriate career decision and cope with appropriate career developmental task.
Spokane (1991) considered that career maturity is based on the direct assistance given to an individual to promote more effective decision-making, intensive counseling to help resolve career difficulties and enhancement of person’s career development to enable him make more effective career decision.

Herring (1997) pointed out that career maturity is a life-long process focused on identifying and acting on the students’ goals, in which the school counselor uses a repertoire of synergetic strategy.

The basic necessity for career maturity is self understanding. It implies understanding by the individual of different kinds of learning, the bases of the choices of occupations and the use of information for career planning, out of which the best alternative is taken up. Mature career preferences, interests, aspirations and choices are important components for developing vocationally mature behavior of an individual.

The above descriptions highlight that career maturity is not thought of as a static goal rather it is conceived as developmental in the direction of an ideal goal. Career maturity is a life-long process which focuses on identifying and acting on the individual’s goal. Since career maturity is an aspect of general maturity, it would be expected that characteristics of generally mature behavior would also tend to be relevant to vocationally mature behavior. Greater career maturity and stronger support systems would significantly predict career decision-making, self efficacy and vocational expectations of the individuals (Conkel-Ziebell, 2010).

1.3.1 Dimensions of Career Maturity

If vocational development is a continuum and vocational maturity a point on this continuum, it becomes imperative to specify the dimension along with vocational development that takes place and vocational maturity is measured. Super and Overstreet (1960) examined five dimensions of career maturity and these dimensions are:

1. Orientation to vocational choice consisting of concern with choice, use of resources, and general occupational information.
2. Information and planning about preferred occupation consisting of specificity of information one has about his/her preferred occupation, the specificity of individual has a vocational preference.
3. Consistency of vocational preference is the extent to which one’s vocational preferences are consistent over a period of time, within occupational fields, within occupational levels, and within occupational families.

4. Crystallization of traits including indices such as interest, maturity, vocational dependence, realism of attitudes towards work, degree of patterning of measured interests, and work values.

5. Wisdom of vocational preferences consisting of the relationship between preferences and abilities, activities and interests.

Crites (1974a) viewed that career maturity includes both cognitive and affective dimensions. The cognitive dimension of career maturity is represented by career choice competencies (career decision making skills), whereas the affective dimensions of career maturity is represented by attitudes towards career decision making processes.

Super and Thompson (1979) gave six dimensions of career maturity as:

(a) Extent of planning;
(b) Use and evaluation of resources in exploration;
(c) Career decision-making referring to the student’s knowledge and application of career decision-making;
(d) Career development information;
(e) World of work information;
(f) Information about the preferred occupation.

An individual’s vocational maturity is defined by his standing along these dimensions in relation to either chronological age and expected life stage or the behavior of others coping with the same developmental tasks (Super, Crites, Hummel, Moser, Overstreet, and Warnath; 1957).

People who possess relatively high levels of career maturity are likely to obtain success and satisfaction in their careers because they display more awareness of the career decision-making process, often think about alternative careers, relate their present behavior to the future goals, possess high levels of self-reliance in making career decisions, are committed to making career choices, and are willing to acknowledge and concede to the demands of reality (Savickas, 1984). Thus a career
mature person has the capacity to make an appropriate and realistic career choice and decision. A career mature person has the ability to identify specific vocational preferences which will help him to attain his specific goal.

1.4 CONCEPT OF FAMILY

The family is a social institution through which our social heritage is transmitted. The family’s responsibility for the socialization of children is not less important than their physical care. It links the individual to the larger social structure. It is through the family that the society is able to elicit from the individual his necessary contribution. Each family creates a structure of roles in keeping with the functions it assumes, and it creates an atmosphere for children in which they find their ways of living and growing. In a good family atmosphere, individual needs are met, values are transmitted, and healthy attitude is developed. All the family members, young and old alike have powerful influences over others because of their long-term intimate associations. Such influences are especially true in the case of plastic minded children whose personalities grow or wither in the climate created by those who parent them.

The family system operates through a structure of roles, facilities for family members to exist and grow, a network of relationships, and patterns of communication. The significant people in the family system exert influence on career orientation, self concept, and career development in general (Super, 1957; Roe 1957; Holland, 1985; Roe and Lunneborg, 1990). The changes in the nature of family organization and relationship ideals, and expectations about family functioning have produced important effects on the all round development of children including career related behavior. The role of the family as a social unit influencing career behavior is more significant in terms of imparting interpersonal skills as a part of occupations.

Johnson and Medinnus (1969) opined that family is socio-biological unit that exerts the greatest influence on the development and perpetuation of the individual behavior. The psychological atmosphere of a home may fall into any of the four quadrants, each of which represents one of the four general combinations: acceptance-autonomy, acceptance-control, rejection-autonomy, and rejection-control, shown in figure 1.6.
Acceptance
Autonomy ▲ Democrat (Love)
▼ Rejection (Hostility)
Control —► Autocratic

Figure 1.6: Showing Four Quadrants of Psychological Atmosphere at Home

The aspects such as parental behavior, parental child rearing practices, and parental acceptance and rejection are important factors which influence the cognitive development of the child. The factors, relevant to the child’s cognitive development, include academic achievement of parents, socio-economic status, maternal employment, family size and birth order.

Hurlock (1973) maintained that from contacts with family members, children lay foundation for interests and attitudes towards people, things and life in general. As social horizons broaden and children come in contact with peers outside the home, these early foundations, laid in the home, may be changed and modified, though they are never completely eradicated. Instead they influence later attitudes and behavior patterns.

Johnson (1973) observed that in the family, the child acquires his initial status, the basic structure of his personality and his initial resources for making his contribution to society as an individual. Usually family obligations cannot be delegated to others as specialized responsibilities as they can be in the case of occupation. Home is the most important part of the child’s social network, because the members of the family constitute the child’s first environment and are the most significant people around them (Jerslid, 1975).

Luckey (1974) opined that that family structure and functions are inextricably inter-woven with the economic and the vocational pursuits of persons.

Maccoby and Martin (1983) presented two dimensional classification of parenting. The fourfold picture included authoritarian-autocratic pattern, indulgent-
permissiveness pattern; authoritative-reciprocal pattern and indifferent-involved pattern.

Academic Dictionary of Sociology (2005) defined family as a social form in which several important human services or needs are met; intimacy, discipline, affection and the reproduction of labor power. In a family system, old generation provides new generation with all the food shelter, clothing, health care, socialization and recreation required to turn them into decent human beings.

Encyclopedic Dictionary of Education (2005) defined family as a unit consisting of a head of house hold and one or more additional individuals who are related in some manner (most often by genetic connection).

Bhardwaj (2001) considered family as the first unit with which the child has continuous contract and it is also the most powerful medium through which value system develops.

Dhall (2007) opined that the term family is usually applied in both narrow and broad sense. In narrow sense, it refers to the nuclear or immediate family, meaning parents and their children. In the broad sense, it refers to the extended family, meaning not only the parents and children but also such other relatives as grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces and nephews that are either related by blood or marriage. From it stem the attitudes and behavior habits that set the pattern for social development and adjustment. The child in the family is the recipient of whatever constructive influences may result from the interrelations of his family with the social order.

The ability to look into the future and to think independently reflects personality factors which evolve from the family situations in which children are reared. Parental desires, their economic conditions, the cultural atmosphere at home, the examples set by parents, the education the parents have, all play an important role in influencing the career choices of their children. If they belong to upper social classes they expect their children to enter occupations in keeping with the family’s position.

1.4.1 Family Climate

The economic status, attitude and behavioral experiences of parents and family environment, all influence the child’s behavior and attitudes, both directly as well as indirectly (Murdock, 1949).
Fraser (1959) proposed four aspects of home environment, which are likely to overlap to a greater or less degree. These aspects of home environment are:

(a) Cultural: It includes factors like the educational level of the parents, the books in the home, the leisure interests, and their reading habits.

(b) Material: This aspect is concerned with the income of the parents and the siblings, and general living conditions in the home.

(c) Motivational: This aspect is concerned with parents’ attitude towards the child’s educational progress and the future employment.

(d) Emotional: This aspect is concerned with the degree of harmony at home, the emotional security of the child, and the interest taken by the parents in the child’s general welfare.

Moos and Moos (1986) defined family environment as the degree of commitment, help and support of the family members provided to one another. The climate prevailing in the home varies from culture to culture, society to society, and family to family.

Wiltfang and Scarbecz (1990) defined family climate as the characteristics determining the social status of the parents like educational level, occupational status and professions of the parents as well as the quality of the residence, working conditions of the parents and relations of the siblings.

Grolnick and Slowiaczek (1994) opined that environment in which the family lives as a setting of learning which has vital effects on the child, is known as family environment.

The family climate affects the child’s cognitive and social development, which in turn influences his/her self-confidence, self-reliance, assertiveness, personality characteristics, coping skills, academic motivation and success (Pfeiffer and Aylward, 1990). The future career of the adolescents depends upon their educational plans which are chalked out by them under their parents’ guidance. These plans are based on the degree of interest of parents and of the adolescents towards the career they aspire. The parents with a good educational background are capable of developing the interest of their children in their school education by various means. The educated parents may take interest in the school work of their children and acquaint the
education. But the role played by the parents in educational and vocational plans of their children differ from family to family.

In this complex and changing society, sometimes the parents feel handicapped to explore the new avenues of vocations and at the same time they are ill-equipped to guide their children to choose the right vocation suitable to their capabilities. Therefore, the task of planning the career of the child is the joint responsibility of the family and the school.

1.5 CONCEPT OF SCHOOL

The school is a social institution established by the society for the purpose of preparing the young to participate in that society. School constitutes an integral part of society, and acts as the most important agent of socialization, which involves the development of students’ natural, intellectual, emotional and moral potentialities. Schools are required to meet the challenging needs of the society. School as an organization and as a subsystem of the broader educational system is, in fact, a complete total system in itself, where input (pupils) are converted into output (citizens) through various processes of instruction, guidance and experience.

In the development of personality of the individual, the school is a third factor, the first two being, family and the playgroup. The school not only acts as socializing agency and as an agency of social control but also performs the function of community service. School shapes the future of the country by achieving the complete development of the future leaders. They are the guardians of the society’s future leaders of the nation. Along with it, the school also performs the important duty of preparing the individuals to lead a good life.

Good (1959) defined school as an organized group of pupils pursuing defined studies at defined level and receiving instructions from one or more teachers frequently with the addition of other employees and officers such as principal, various supervisors of institutions and a staff of maintenance workers usually around in a single building or group of buildings.

Corwin (1965) considered that schools are complex system of organizations. An organization is made up of people in a rationally stable interaction system. The relationships that form in the system constitute its structure, which is the basis of the organization’s stability; the structure is comprised of positions, which endure as membership changes.
Waller (1965) stated that the school is a closed system of social interaction, which exists wherever, and whenever teachers and students meet for the purpose of giving and receiving instructions.

Parsons (1967) opined that school has three levels of authority over the basic functions: institutional, managerial and technical. The institutional level tries to link the school with its environment. The managerial level controls the internal administrative functions of the institution. The technical level is concerned with teaching-learning process.

Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (1994) considered school as an institution for educating children. Freiberg (1999) said that the school is the common meeting place for future generations as well as where adults outside the family unit can interact with youth, to help shape their futures through positive role modeling and continuous interaction.

Scherman (2002) described that school setting comprises of various components such as principal, administrative staff, maintenance staff, educators and learners who work together and cannot exist independently of one another for the purpose of education but each has a unique activity. The principal is in charge of the management of the school, ensuring everything precedes smoothly. The administrative staff is a core part because they ensure learners enroll in the school, payment of school fees and other administrative tasks vital for the running of the school. The maintenance staff ensures that the school is neat and presentable while the educators are responsible for transferring and facilitating in the acquiring of the necessary knowledge and skills that will assist them throughout their lives. These components of the school system are shown in the figure 1.7.

Figure: 1.7 Showing Components of School System
What a society is and what it wants to be is reflected in its educational system. School is a focal point of social interaction in the total social agencies and influences, in building the personality of the growing child. In short, every school presupposes a social system, which is mirrored in its instructional programs as well as in its management and operation.

1.5.1 School Climate

The dictionary meaning of the word ‘climate’ is ‘character of something.’ So according to this meaning, school climate can be considered as character of a school. It is an over-all philosophical, psychological, social, cultural, aesthetic and managerial environment prevailing in every nook and corner of the school. School sets a special environment where a certain quality of activity and occupation are provided with the job securing child’s development on desirable lines. It appeals to one’s sensitivities, emotions, preferences, expectations, feelings, attitudes, ego and value system. The school climate is to be experienced and even inhaled. It is largely product of a direct and deliberate policies, plans and actions.

Halpin and Croft (1963) defined school climate as the personality of an organization or institution which includes the social interactions between the principal and the teachers and among members of the teaching staff. The school climate consists of interpersonal relationships within the group and between the groups and its leader.

Griffith (1964) proposed that there are two types of school systems open and closed. A closed system is independent of its environment and does not describe the school system as organization. In an open system, there is an input-output relationship with its environment. It maintains itself in steady state and is self-regulating. On the basis of behavior of the individuals (the manager, the principal, and the teachers), which very much counts in forming a school climate, the school set ups are of three types: autocratic or authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire type of set up.

Tagiuri and Litwin (1968) identified climate as the set of internal characteristics of organization as perceived by its members. Dressel (1976) used school climate interchangeably with school environment and defined school climate as all the physical, social, psychological factors, conditions, circumstances, and influences which interact to give the school a unique and peculiar visible or perceived image. Such factors include facilities, grounds, and architecture, type of school
traditions, previous achievements, value orientations, social and economic standard of
the school, standard or level of discipline, standard of performance, and sense of duty
of members of the school community. Also it includes organizational structure,
characteristics of the principal, staff and students, quality of material and activities
available.

Moos (1979) defined school climate as the social atmosphere of a setting or
“learning environment” in which students have different experiences, depending upon
the protocols set up by the teachers and administrators. This social environment is
divided into three categories-relationship, personal-growth or goal-orientation and
system maintenance and change.

Nwankwo (1979) referred school climate as the general we-feeling, group sub-
culture and interactive life of the school. Bisht (1982) defined school climate as the
psychological environment of a school perceived by its students.

Hoy and Miskel (1987) referred to school climate as the heart and soul of a
school, psychological and institutional attributes that give a school its personality, a
relatively enduring quality of the entire school experienced by members, which
describe their collective perceptions of routine behavior, and affects their attitude and
behavior in the school. Sweeney (1988) referred school climate as a term used to
describe how people feel about their school.

Lindelow (1989) defined school climate as the feelings that an individual get
from experience within a school system. More specifically, climate is the composed
of norms, expectations and beliefs, characterizing the school social system as
perceived by its members.

Gonder and Hymes (1994) defined school climate as the atmosphere within a
school and reflects the attitudes (such as trust, respect and cohesiveness for example)
that are shared by members of subgroups such as the learners, educators, principal and
school population as a whole.

In Dictionary of Education (2005), school climate has been defined as the sum
of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school
that cause it to function and react in a particular way. Some schools are said to have a
nurturing environment that recognizes children and treats them as individuals; others
may have the feeling of authoritarian structures where rules are strictly enforced and
hierarchical control is strong. Diversity of teaching practices and the relationship
among administrators, teachers, parents and students contribute to school climate. The school climate refers mostly to the school’s effect on the students.

In short, it can be concluded that school climate is a powerful force and plays a pivotal role in the all round development of the child. The school climate consists of the prevailing conditions in the school affecting the life and activities of the individuals. It is the combination of all the organizational factors, expectations and beliefs characterizing the school system as perceived by its members. It greatly influences students’ achievements, personality, values and accomplishment of school’s objectives. A conducive and an open climate which allows pupil’s freedom of thoughts and expressions, would reflect in the positive attitude and performance of pupils in all aspects.

1.6 EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION

The word ‘aspire’ refers to the ambition, expectation or desire, which has yet not been fulfilled and a man still works for it. Aspiration refers to the level of education or occupation for which a person aspires. In general aspiration means the fantasy of the individual regarding future occupation or settlement. It indicates what a person wants to be in his future life irrespective of limitations imposed by reality.

Aspiration refers to a longing for and striving after something higher than one self and one’s present status. This longing may be enabling or uplifting or it may be unwarranted presumptuous. It is somewhat closer to ambition but more realistic than ambition. Aspiration serves as an active psychological force. Aspirations are both a predictor and a product of one’s abilities, personal attributes, socialization and experiences. An individual always strives to grow, to improve and to become more capable. Every individual has his own needs and for the satisfaction of these needs a person thinks, plans and aspires more and more.

Hurlock (1973) defines aspirations as longing for what is above one's achievement level with advancement on it as its end.

Conger (1977) suggested three distinguishable stages on the maturation of vocational choices as-fantasy, tentative and realistic stage. These stages with regard to educational aspiration also seem to be plausible. He further suggested that in early and middle (fantasy period) one’s aspirations are determined by glamour of jobs where as during adolescence (tentative period) these are influenced by social status or prestige of the job. During this period adolescents become aware of their educational
qualification, needs for these jobs and the level of educational aspiration is set keeping in view the financial and academic conditions.

Walberg (1989) defined educational aspiration as a strong desire; an eagerness to learn. Young people’s aspiration guide what they should learn in school, how they should prepare for adult life, and what they should eventually do.

Thus, educational aspiration is the degree to which an individual sets his educational goal realistically in relation to his physical and mental attributes and in accordance with environment. But educational goals which an individual sets for his own self, differ from one individual to another due to certain factors. Teachers may influence student’s aspiration level by the nature of goal imposed on the student and the willingness of the teacher to insist upon realistic goal setting by the student.

Educational aspiration represents a person’s orientation towards particular academic goals. The term educational aspiration is based on the knowledge of traits. The aspiration level of an individual is an important motivating factor. It is a frame of reference involving self-esteem or alternatively experiences, that is the feeling of failure or success.

Educational aspiration of an adolescent can be measured by asking him to predict what performance he expects in a test, what he plans for his future education and what his outlook is towards higher education. He allows his abilities to determine what he will do or attempt to do. Adolescence is a time when important choices have to be made. In high school years the student decides what subjects to take and the decision is based on his plans for his higher education. To make a wise choice, one must have a realistic idea of the kind of person he is and can become.

1.6.1 Level of Educational Aspiration

Everyone aims at reaching a definite goal and sets a desire for distinction which has an inner structure and is known as level of aspiration. The concept of level of aspiration was first introduced by Hoppe (1930) as the degree of difficulty of the goal towards which a person is striving. He concluded that the nature of level of aspiration of an individual might reflect his personality patterns as shown in figure 1.a below.
The subject tends to set his own goal (level of aspiration) within the shaded area in which he can experience success or failure. If task is ‘too easy’ then the person experiences no sense of success, even though he accomplishes the task. Similarly if a task is ‘too difficult’ then the person has no sense of ego involvement as one is bound to fail. The intermediate range is realistic.

Hoppe (1930) said that levels of aspiration are chiefly determined by two sets of opposing principles in the individual which are: ego forces which tend to set high goals even at the cost of failure and pleasure principles, which seek success thus lowering the aspiration level.

Drever (1952) in his Dictionary of Psychology defined the term level of aspiration as a frame of reference involving self esteem or alternatively as a standard with reference to which an individual experiences i.e. has the feeling of success and failure.

Ali (1973) used the concept of level of aspiration as a motivational construct. It refers to the process of setting a goal by an individual in the activity to be performed.
This also depends on the individuals’ knowledge of the past performance in the particular task.

Sexena (1981) considered level of aspiration as a concept referring to orientation towards educational goals, spaced in a continuum of difficulty and social prestige and arrangement in educational hierarchy.

Lindsay and Stravel (2007) viewed that the level of aspiration changes with the task difference and it varies with the psychological developmental phases of the individual.

**Table 1.1: Showing Stages of Development and Behavioral Symptoms of Individuals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Development Stage</th>
<th>Behavioral Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Infant (Dependent)</td>
<td>Hysterical, dysfunctional, hopeless, depressing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Child (Dependent)</td>
<td>Needy, clinging, manipulating, expecting others to satisfy their demands and to make them happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Adolescent (Pseudo-independent)</td>
<td>Passive, aggressive, rebellious, isolated in own world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Adult (conventionally independent)</td>
<td>Accountable, responsible, respectful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Elder (Interdependent)</td>
<td>Feel the sense that everything is the manifestation of the reality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level of aspiration is a psychological construct, which reflects a cognitive type of motivation of the individual. It may be viewed in terms of 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. An individual’s aspiration level represents him not only as he is at any particular moment, but as he would like to be at some point in the future. Level of aspiration is an index of the person as an individual and as a member of the society, which is determined by the amount of self esteem he needs to maintain. It is an important motivating factor. It is a frame of
reference involving self-esteem or alternative experiences, that is, the feeling of failure or success.

Level of aspiration is an individual’s expected outcome. It refers to the estimate of one’s future performance in a given task. There is not any individual who is devoid of ambition in some or other form. Level of aspiration pertains to goal setting and consequently goal achievement. Persons with an equal amount of ability may also differ in their goal setting behavior. One may set one’s goal very high, others very low and still others may set near their performance level. Thus in choosing the life-goals and in doing activities people differ largely in their expectations and aspirations.

In short, level of aspiration is the expected level of achievement. The level set is, in fact, the compromise between the desire for success and the desire to avoid failure. The first pushing the level up and second pulling it down.

1.6.2 Determinants of Level of Aspiration

Level of aspiration is influenced by two types of factors that are environmental and personal. In early childhood, before the child is old enough to know what his abilities, interests and values are, his aspirations are largely shaped by his environment. As he grows older and is more aware of his abilities and interests, personal factors have a greater influence, but many of his aspirations, his values, for example are still environmental in nature.

Environmental determinants:

1. Parental Ambitions: Parental ambitions influence the level of aspiration of the child. Parents always expect more from their first born, and therefore, the level of aspiration may be higher for the first born than that for those born later.

2. Social Expectation: Society expects more and more from some people than from others. It is generally assumed that one who is successful in a particular area may also be successful in other area, if he wishes.

3. Peer Pressure: Friends may encourage or discourage a child for anything. If they encourage him, it is possible that he will develop a tendency of high goal setting.
4. Culture: Cultural traditions are important factors for setting the goal better and rich cultural background helps the child in fulfilling high expectations.

5. Social Value: It also varies with the area of achievement. Social rewards and prestige also work as a reinforcer.

6. Competition: Competition with siblings and peers in the hope of showing better than others is also an affecting factor for level of aspiration.

7. Group Cohesiveness: It is also considered as a determinant of goal-setting. One does better and sets high goal when he is acting in a group.

Personal Determinants:

1. Wishes: If one needs to achieve something or he has high achievement motivation, his level of aspiration for achieving will be higher, and thus his wishes influence the level of aspiration.

2. Personality: The personality traits also determine the kind and strength of his aspirations.

3. Past Experiences: The previous success strengthens one’s aspirations whereas failure weakens it.

4. Values and Interests: Personal values and interests also determine the extent of level of aspiration.

5. Sex: It is generally said that the boys and girls differ in their aspiration because of their different interests, goals and expectations of family and society.

6. Socio-Economic Background: It is noticed that middle and upper group have higher degree of aspiration than those of lower group.

7. Racial Background: Minority groups aspire higher than majority group. It is just a sort of compensation on the part of minority groups.

Apart from the above factors, socio-economic status, norms, traditions, level of attainment and superstitions play an important role in determining level of educational aspirations.

Thus, the education of the students from the development point of view emphasizes that educational and vocational development should be an integral part of education. Each individual student has, therefore, to be considered as a whole, with main concern given to all aspects of his all round development (i.e. physical, social,
intellectual, emotional, spiritual as well as vocational aspect). It is important to learn about the influence of various types of environment on the growth of development of adolescents which in turn promote the educational aspirations.

1.7 NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the past, customs and traditions had a great impact on the life and work of people. The people had no freedom to make career choices. The child usually adopted the vocation of his father. But in the modern times, bread earning is one of the important aspects of vocation. Industrialization, urbanization and democracy with its natural consequences of mass education and equality of opportunity have brought tremendous changes in the hierarchy of occupational and vocational selections.

Nowadays, an adolescent is expected to make career choices at the school stage. At the time of entry into senior secondary stage, which is a stage of diversity of curriculum the adolescent has to select particular stream of studies: science, commerce, arts or vocational subjects. Indian Education Commission (1964-66) has rightly stated that Secondary education must be vocationalized to a large extent and in higher education, a great emphasis should be placed on agricultural and technical education. Even though career development is a lifelong process and does not remain static in the life of a progressive individual, still an adolescent is expected to make career choices at the time of senior secondary stage, which is a stage of the diversity of career. Thus, it becomes imperative for an adolescent to engage in academic decision making processes which have important repercussions for the future (Gonzalvez, 2008).

The choice of a career especially among diverse options is usually a herculean task and is very important in life (Osipow, 1983). These career choices determine the future role of an individual in the world of work. Vocationally mature and right decision at this stage not only leads to personal growth, but also facilitates in making the best use of nation’s human resources. National Policy on Education (1986) also recommended the need to introduce vocational education at the eighth level on experimental basis.

India’s most pressing need, as a developing nation is to increase production. Accordingly, there is a need to search for talent and eliminate wastage of ability to provide opportunity for the full development and utilization of differential potential all along the vocational spectrum. Choice of a career, however, is not an exclusive
intellectual process in which various possibilities of entering a career are assessed. One’s own personal factors such as personality, aspirations, self-esteem and self-concept play an important role in career decision-making.

Career maturity assumes a great importance in the life of adolescents for their proper future placement. It is a pre-requisite ability to make a wise choice towards particular occupation and represents development along a continuum. The counselors and the students, and the teachers with whom they work, need an understanding of the types and characteristics of career patterns.

The family is a dynamic network of interdependencies that exerts functional influence on the behavior of an individual member. By the time the child begins to go to school, he has already acquired many of the social patterns, has developed a definite personality, has a body of habits and knowledge and also has an attitude that significantly influences his formal education in the school and his entire future adjustment in life. He tries to evaluate the educational accomplishments in relation to the vocation aspired by him. He realizes what his responsibilities will be when he grows into adulthood. All his aspirations, values and goals are indirectly influenced by the family situations in which he is moulded during the whole childhood period (Mahale, 1987). Hence, family plays an important role in the career decision making of the adolescents and acquaint the children with the career plans relating to education. As a child grows in the family, there is a need for parents to maintain an accurate and balanced perception of the child. Not only do parents influence their children’s vocational and educational aspirations (Drabeck, 1967; Haller and Portes, 1973; Sewell, 1981), but they also play a significant role in youngsters’ career planning and decision-making. Children need parents for encouragement, emotional support and behavioral guidance and to set ideal goals. So, it is contingent on counselors and others to help parents provide the kind of family context and specific assistance appropriate to adolescents for their career choices.

Next to the family, is the school which plays an important role in child’s life. A school’s climate is the thread that connects the multitude of activities on a campus. The school climate differs from institution to institution. The interactions among the students, teachers and principal weaves an intricate and delicate web of the school climate. A safe, clean and well-maintained school with a positive psychological climate can foster school connectedness, which in turn, boosts students educational and vocational achievements.
School climate has to be nurtured which requires constant nourishment by reinforcing its positive elements, eliminating or correcting the negative ones, and incorporating newer elements from time to time. This is possible only through close observations, minute monitoring, participative actions and systematic research. The school system has the responsibility of assisting the youth in making competent career decisions that are appropriate to their abilities, aptitudes, interests and other personality characteristics (Salami, 2008). Link should be established between vocational and educational stream as well as school education and higher education (National Knowledge Commission, 2008).

The educational aspirations, especially during adolescent stage exert a great influence on their behavior and decision to choose a career. The early adolescent period which coincides with the late high school period is a maturity period and involves not only physical but also mental growth. Mentally a mature individual is one whose intelligence has reached its maximum growth. It is at this period that the adolescent realizes the responsibilities of life and the values of education in relation to the future career. As the child reaches adolescence the problem of his future looms up before him. The problem becomes personal and important when the decision about going to college has to be made and when they are given choice of courses in higher education. Right type of curricular choice and career decision, therefore, has come to occupy a central place in the life of adolescents. It has been identified as a key strategy for widening educational participation in life-long learning process. Therefore, it is important to know a person’s level of aspiration as it gives a good knowledge of the aspiration level of an individual both from educational and guidance point of view.

In the ever changing world, adolescents require continuous support and external assistance to choose their career according to the skills they possess to acquire and transform the same into practical commodities for better living. Therefore, the need for appropriate guidance and counseling makes it imperative for the educational planners, educators and counselors to manipulate factors and forces that affect vocational choices and vocational decision-making processes. Lack of proper guidance services may lead adolescents to opt for mismatched career options, which may further lead to frustration among the adolescents.
Although considerable research has been conducted on career maturity with other variables, however, this area of research has not been explored much. With the emergence of globalization there is privatization of organizations, as a result, there is greater emphasis on skill utilization and competitiveness. In view of these changes, there is an immediate need to bring about career consciousness among adolescents so that they are well-equipped with job information before they complete their secondary education. There is a need to guide the adolescents in planning career and making mature decisions. Both family and the school hold the responsibility of assisting the students in making competent career decisions that they are appropriate to their abilities, aptitudes, interests and other personal characteristics. Students should have multiple entry and exit options in the vocational educational stream (National Knowledge Commission, 2008). In planning the career, educational aspiration of adolescents is of paramount importance, one cannot ignore this aspect while opting for a career and hence to develop career maturity among adolescents is of great concern. An insight into the possible factors underlying career maturity would suggest the guidelines for planning various activities for the students. It may also help the teachers, parents and guidance workers for developing desirable attitude in children. Thus on the basis of above discussed factors and variables the present study has been designed to investigate career maturity in relation to family and school climate and educational aspirations of adolescents.

1.8 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

“CAREER MATURITY IN RELATION TO FAMILY AND SCHOOL CLIMATE AND EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AMONG ADOLESCENTS”

1.9 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED

Career Maturity: It is the extent to which an individual is able to master certain career developmental tasks that are applicable to his life stage. Career maturity in the present study, refers to the individual’s degree of readiness to choose, prepare and plan for future vocation; to be measured by CMI by Nirmala Gupta (1989).

Family Climate: It is the combination of external and extrinsic physical conditions that affect and influence the growth and development of the family. Family climate in the present study is an interpersonal relationship between parents and the child; to be measured by Family Climate Scale by Beena Shah (2009).
School Climate: It is described as the set of perceptions of the students about academic emphasis, student-teacher relationship, student-interpersonal relationship, physical facilities, administration, and community linkage in the school; to be measured by School Climate Scale developed by the investigator.

Educational Aspiration: It is described as a degree of person's orientation towards particular educational goals; to be measured by Educational Aspiration Scale by V. P. Sharma and Anuradha Gupta (2009).

Aided School: An aided school is that which is run by an individual or a private organisation and receives grant from government or local body.

Public School: A private school is that which is managed by an individual or a private organisation and does not receive any grant either from government or local body, and is supported by endowment and tuition fees.

1.10 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are given below:

1. To construct and standardize a tool for the school climate for the adolescents.

2. To find out differences in the career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents with respect to gender.

3. To find out differences in the career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents with respect to types of school.

4. To find out differences in the career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents with favorable, moderate and unfavorable types of family climate.

5. To find out differences in the career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents with high, average and low levels of school climate.

6. To find out differences in the career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents with high, average and low levels of educational aspiration.

7. To study the interaction of family climate and school climate on career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents.

8. To study the interaction of family climate and educational aspiration on career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents.
9. To study the interaction of school climate and educational aspiration on career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents.

10. To study the interaction of family climate, school climate and educational aspiration on career maturity (career attitude and career competence) of adolescents.

1.11 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study was confined to the following:

1. The present study was delimited to 800 adolescents studying in secondary schools of Amritsar district only.

2. The present study was delimited to students of eleventh class (boys and girls).

3. The present study was delimited to aided and public secondary schools only.