CHAPTER II
review of reported literature

Conceptual foundations of the research investigation along with the empirical studies related to educational and occupational aspirations are covered in this chapter.

Under conceptual framework, a brief report of the work done on the concept of level of aspiration is presented, followed by a note on its specific application as related to the fields of education and occupation. Later, the theories and explanations for differences in the educational and occupational aspirations based on socio-economic status and gender are discussed.

Empirical evidences on educational and occupational aspirations are covered in two sections. Under each section, the results of the relevant studies conducted in other countries and in India are reviewed separately, followed by a note on what contributed for taking up the present study. Further, the existing lacunae in the research on educational and occupational aspirations of women students are pointed out, suggesting the need for research investigations on various aspects related to the subject.
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The terms 'Educational Aspiration' and 'Occupational Aspiration' are specialized usages of the generic term 'Level of Aspiration'.

The concept of level of aspiration was first introduced by Hoppe (1930, as cited in Premathha Devi Chandra, 1989) while making a reference to 'the degree of difficulty of the goal towards which a person is striving'. A series of experiments conducted by Frank (1935) and others revealed that the level of performance in a task is not judged as 'success' or 'failure' in terms of the absolute degree of accomplishment, but in terms of the 'Level of aspiration' or goal one sets in that particular line of achievement. Setting aspiration levels or goals implies judgement of future attainment. The level of aspiration or goal gives a direction to the conduct of a person.

In the years that followed, a number of researchers contributed to the study of and theories on level of aspiration, whose contributions can be summarized as follows:

The salient findings of the studies on Level of aspiration

1. Level of aspiration increases after success and decreases after failure (Frank, 1935; Festinger, 1942).
2. Level of aspiration is influenced by cultural and socioeconomic factors (Gould, 1939; Boyd, 1952).
3. Level of aspiration increased with age (Fales, 1937; Anderson, 1940; as cited in Premlatha Devi Chandra, 1989).

4. Motivation and instructions influence level of aspiration (Preston and Bayton, 1941).

Summarizing the theories on level of aspiration Premlatha Devi Chandra (1989) outlined the common features of the theories presented by Festinger, 1942; Lewin, Dembo, Sears, 1944; and Atkinson, 1958; as follows:

1. Selection of a particular aspiration level is a function of its resultant valence.

2. Resultant valence is determined by satisfaction anticipated from attaining that alternative.

3. Most individuals select a level of aspiration which is slightly above their past level of performance.

4. As performance changes, level of aspiration changes.

5. When one compares one's score with relevant others, the scores of others are taken into consideration in selecting a level of aspiration. If scores of others are better than their own, individuals raise their aspiration and if others' scores are poorer than their own, the individuals lower their aspirations.

6. Individuals evaluate their performance in accord with the discrepancy between performance and previously chosen level of aspiration, a level of performance below the level of aspiration is related unfavourably and a performance above the level of aspiration being related favourably.

7. When individuals evaluate their performance poorly, they engage in coping behaviours intended to reduce threat to their self-esteem.

Based on Lewin, Dembo, Festinger and Sears (1944), Bhargava (1972) developed a model depicting four typical sequence of events in a level of aspiration situation, which is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Performance</th>
<th>Action Goal</th>
<th>Next/Now</th>
<th>Reaction to setting of LOA</th>
<th>Performance</th>
<th>New Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal Discrepancy</td>
<td>Attainment</td>
<td>Feeling of success or failure related to the difference of levels at 3 and 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Difference between 2 and 1)</td>
<td>Discrepancy (Difference between 3 and 2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 2. Typical sequence of events in a level of aspiration situation.

(Source: Bhargava, V.P. (1972), A study of level of aspiration and need for achievement. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to Agra University.)

'The level of aspiration' presupposes a goal which has an inner structure, called by the name of 'ideal goal'. This goal may be 'too difficult' or 'too easy' for the person at the present. Knowing this, the goal seeker may set his goal at a place for the next action. This is called 'action goal' which is usually taken as a criterion for the 'level of aspiration' for an individual at a given time. This does not mean that the individual has given up his 'ideal goal'. The action goal is within the whole goal structure of the individual. There may be a number of more or less realistic goal levels. The goal may be too high i.e., dream goal or very low, both unrealistic for the person.
Differing from the above mentioned category of unrealistic goals, there may be goal(s) lying between the two extremes or may lie near the action-goal. The distance between the ideal-goal and the action-goal is called inner discrepancy. There is another discrepancy between the level of the action goal and the level of expected performance which is known as goal expectation discrepancy. It depends upon 'subjective degree of probability' which the individual holds as the confidence level keeping in view of his chances of reaching upto his action-goal.

Explaining the time sequence Bhargava (1972) further adds that the difference between the level of the new goal and the level of last performance is called Goal Discrepancy and the difference between the Goal Level and that of the new performance is called Attainment Discrepancy. Attainment Discrepancy is one of the basis of reaction of point 4. For the Dynamics of the Level of Aspiration, point 2 (setting of level of Aspiration) and point 4 (reaction to achievement) are significant. The Goal Discrepancy is said to be positive if the new level of performance lies above the level of immediate past performance. If the new level of performance lies below the level of past performance the Goal Discrepancy is negative.

The occurrence of events in a level of aspiration situation in
time sequence, as presented by Bhargava holds good as related to educational and occupational aspirations also. However, when a person is aspiring for an occupation for the first time, as is the case of respondents in the present study, the first event depicting past performance in the above model does not apply to past performance in achieving an occupation aspired for. But, it may apply to the general performance of an individual in other related fields like education or technical training.

Application of the general concept of level of aspiration on more specific levels called 'Occupational aspiration level' and 'Educational aspiration level' had been done by Haller and Sowell (1957). According to Haller and Sowell the terms 'level of occupational aspiration' and 'level of educational aspiration' are special instances of the concept of level of aspiration. Level of aspiration is defined as orientation toward a goal, and level of occupational aspiration and level of educational aspiration indicate orientation toward an occupational goal and an educational goal respectively.

The studies that followed on educational aspirations and occupational aspirations of students examined the association of these aspirations with other correlates like gender, social background such as caste status, community status, educational and occupational status of parents; parental expectations, socio-
economic status, rural-urban background, achievement and intelligence and tried to offer explanations for differences based on socio-economic status and gender.

THEORIES OFFERING EXPLANATION FOR THE DIFFERENCE IN EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF STUDENTS BELONGING TO DIFFERENT SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRATA

Most of the studies carried out in other countries on educational and occupational aspirations of students with different socio-economic backgrounds were based on theoretical formulations known as 'Life Chance Hypothesis', 'Achievement Syndrome' and 'Lateral Transmission of Values'.

LIFE CHANCE HYPOTHESIS

This formulation reasons out that since factors like money, specialized training and effective contacts which affect access to high positions are relatively less available to individuals belonging to certain sections of society, people from such strata are likely to have low educational and vocational aspirations (Rosen, 1956).

ACHIEVEMENT SYNDROME

The notion of achievement syndrome is based on the argument that different social classes are not equally socialized with
respect to two components of the achievement syndrome Viz., achievement motivation which provides internal impetus to excel, and culturally imported value orientations which define, direct and implement achievement behaviours (Rosen, 1956). Hence, the educational and occupational aspirations of pupils from different socio-economic strata may reflect preference for different areas of achievement.

LATERAL TRANSMISSION OF VALUES

A theoretical formulation based on the notion of the achievement syndrome and the intergroup exchange of norms in the event of desegregation is known as the lateral transmission of values'. The formulation suggests that: "(a) There is a specific set of values that facilitate achievement, (b) these values are in fact possessed by many ... middle class children, (c) inter-racial mixing of minority children into classrooms that have a numerical majority of middle class white children and consequently also have a middle class norm structure, will result in minority children internalizing these achievement related values, and (d) in conjunction with the higher achievement level that is normative in the middle class school, possession of these values will lead to improve academic achievement" (Miller and Gentry, 1980).
Although the kind of inter-community segregation that prevails in the USA is not seen in India, the youth from socially privileged and deprived sections of the society may differ with respect to educational and occupational aspirations and anticipated difficulties in the way of future education and achieving the occupations aspired for. In spite of the prevailing reservations for scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward castes for entry into various educational courses and occupations, tough competitions for seats in professional courses and for prestigious occupations, caste and community influences and regional considerations are the factors that may contribute to making higher education and occupations linked with higher education less attractive to those perceiving themselves as less privileged.

EXPLANATIONS RELATED TO DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS BASED ON GENDER DIFFERENCES

Gender based differences in educational and occupational aspirations are explained as having their roots in "... that combination of attitudes, role expectations, behaviours and sanctions known as socialization process" (Fitzgerald and citites, 1980).
Due to differences in role expectations, boys and girls are subjected to different societal demands, and since role playing is usually in conformity with role expectations and demands, male and female students may also be expected to differ in their educational and vocational aspirations (Khan, 1985).

Culturally oriented sex role of motive to avoid success (achievement motivation) in women influences the goal setting process. Sex role training ingrained in the girl child from early years develops the belief that achievement strivings are incompatible with femininity and successful achievement can be accomplished at the price of loss of femininity and social rejection which leads to avoid achievement (Horner, 1972).

Bhogle and Murthy (1990) investigated the viability of the construct of fear of success in Indian College undergraduates and determined a few of its psycho-social correlates. Results of the study showed that the concept of fear of success as visualised by Horner and Fleming (1977) clearly exists and is therefore operative in the Indian context. Sex differences were noticed with girls exhibiting higher fear of success. Those with a high need for affiliation and low need for achievement also had high fear of success. In addition, high fear of success was also seen in students coming from small families and those with working mothers.
Fitzgerald and Crites (1980) while reviewing the literature pertaining to career psychology of women indicated that the traditional subjects appeared to have projected their achievement needs onto their future husbands. Lipman-Blumen (1972) also reported support for a similar hypothesis of vicarious achievement motivation.

Ginzberg et al., (1966) suggested that the implementation of a self-concept through the choice of an occupation may be complicated for women by a perceived split in the role demands of wife/mother and worker resulting in frustration and conflict.

Myths about women and the world of work also are reported to be affecting women's achievement and career motivation. Some of these false notions are (a) women are out ill more than male workers, (b) training women is a waste of resources because they do not work as long as men, that is, they drop out of the work force to marry, (c) women take jobs away from men who need them, (d) the employment of mothers leads to juvenile delinquency, and (e) men do not like to work for women supervisors. Despite the fact that all of these statements are not true, belief in them persists in a large segment of the population (Fitzgerald and Crites, 1980).

Farmer (1976) reviewed the literature on achievement and
career motivation in women and suggested that such motivation differs from that of men as a result of the following factors: (a) reduction in academic self-confidence, (b) fear of success, (c) vicarious achievement motivation, (d) home-career conflict, (e) myths about women and the world of work, (f) lower risk taking in females, and (g) sex-role orientation.

Thus, sex role socialization has a pervasive influence on women's achievement strivings and thereby influences their goal setting behaviour. If steps are taken to ameliorate this influence, then it can be expected to result in a raise in female aspirations. Stake's (1976) study on the effect of information regarding group performance norms on goal-setting in males and females offers support to this expectation.

Stake (1976) reported that subjects of both sexes set higher goals for themselves when told that members of their sex typically outperformed those of the opposite sex on the experimental task. She suggested that sex differences in goal setting may reflect the cultural norm that prescribes higher achievement among males. Counsellors may find that providing women with information that contradicts this expectation is an effective means to raise female aspirations.

Yanico (1978) demonstrated that after reading sex-fair
career information, subjects modified their stereotype ratings of occupations, suggesting that it is thus possible to change attitudes about the appropriateness of traditionally male occupations for women through the use of occupational information.

O'Neil et al. (1980) reported the results of their preventive intervention to help women understand the effects of sexism and their past sex role socialization. They conducted a 4-week workshop to enhance the awareness of college women (N=60) about sex role and career factors and expand their sex role attitudes and self-concepts. In the workshop a 28-minute colour videotape was presented followed by discussions in small groups. The workshop expanded women's masculine sex-role self-concept and changed their attitudes about the appropriateness of two stereotype masculine career areas (investigative and enterprising).

EMPIRICAL FOUNDATIONS

Most of the research studies in the fields of educational and occupational aspirations dealt with high school children. Only a few researchers have studied these aspects as related to students in higher education.
The focus of most of the research was on determinants of educational and occupational aspirations and a few studies focussed on related attitudes and values. Moreover, greater number of studies were found to have given attention to occupational aspirations.

A. EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND OTHER CORRELATES

The empirical work on correlates of educational aspirations of students demonstrated the salience of various factors like social background, socio-economic status, influence of parental aspirations and related attitudes of both parents and respondents.

WORK DONE IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Majority of the studies on educational aspirations in other countries focussed their attention on high school children. Initially, they examined the variations in the educational aspirations of youth based on gender differences, rural-urban background, community of residence, social class, parental education and occupation. Later on the attention is being shifted to more in depth aspects like variables that may facilitate parental influence; and the influence of relevant attitudes and
values on educational aspirations of the respondents. The results of the work done in other countries can be consolidated as follows:

1. Gender differences

(i) Among girls educational aspirations are not related to residence (rural-urban background), whereas among boys educational aspirations are found to be associated with residential background. However, the association could not be explained by intelligence (Haller and Sewell, 1957).

(ii) Educational opportunity explains the difference in the educational aspirations of girls based on their community of residence, i.e., adolescent residents of smaller communities having lower aspirations than the adolescent residents of larger communities (Boyle, 1966).

2. Rural – Urban Differences

The urban youth tend to have higher levels of educational aspirations than those of their rural counterparts (Haller and Sewell, 1957; Schwartzweller, 1968).
3. Influence of Social Class

The youth of higher class origins are more likely to aspire for high educational goals than are the youth of the lower class origins (Stephenson, 1957; Lipset and Bendix, 1960; Bender et al., 1967).

4. Influence of Father's Education

The proportion of youth expressing higher educational aspirations varies positively with the educational level of father (Ellis and Lane, 1963; Krauss, 1964; Rehberg and Westby, 1967; Sewell and Shah, 1968).

5. Influence of Father's Occupation

The educational aspirations of youth are positively associated with the occupational level of the father (Rehberg and Westby, 1967).

6. Influence of Parental Aspirations

Parental aspirations (Menlemn, 1983) and accuracy of offspring perceptions of parents' aspirations (Smith, 1982) have the strongest influence on students' aspirations for higher education.
7. Influence of School Factors

Of the social determinants, school factors exert the weakest influence on educational aspirations of students (Menlemn, 1983).

8. Influence of Attitudes Towards Education

Students' personal attitudes toward education exhibit a very great influence on youths' educational aspirations (Menlemn, 1983).

The above review of research going on in other countries on educational aspirations is in no way exhaustive, as it is intended only to give an idea of the work being done on educational aspirations outside India.

RESEARCH WORK DONE IN INDIA

The studies undertaken in India on educational aspirations mostly concentrated on male college students or school children of both the sexes, with a few paying attention to the parental aspirations for their children's education.

Following the footsteps of the researchers abroad, the work on the subject is initiated in India, to explore the factors influencing the educational aspirations of Indian students. These studies sought to study either the differences based on
gender and rural-urban background or the influence of social background (i.e., Caste, Parental education, occupation and income of the family) or socio-economic status as such. The findings of the available researches on these aspects are by and large in consonance with the results obtained in the investigations conducted abroad. The findings of a few relevant Indian studies available are as follows.

1. Gender Differences

Thakur (1977) in his study on educational achievement of children cited the results of a number of studies which investigated the impact of sex difference, socio-economic status and academic achievement on educational aspirations. These studies by Shah (1960), Desai (1962), Shastri (1962), Patel (1965), Ahmed (1968), Honda (1968), Chitra (1969) and Shah (1971) revealed that the independent influence of socio-economic status of student families is much greater than that of academic performance on their educational aspirations, although the magnitude of independent influence of both socio-economic status and academic performance on educational aspirations of females was greater than on those of males.

2. Rural - Urban Differences

The study of Singh and Sinha (1967) on agricultural college students and that of Pandey (1973) on male college students
revealed that students with urban background have higher level of educational aspirations than students from rural areas.

Rural youth of Pandey's study largely aspired for high academic degrees while urban youth largely aspired for high professional degrees. Pandey explained that the difference in the aspirations of the two groups is due to the difference in their exposure to the value of professional and technical education.

3. Influence of Parental Education

Education of parents is found to be a vital factor in determining the educational aspirations of youth. Pandey (1973) in his study on male college students (N = 500) of Varanasi District reported a marked and significant association between parental education and educational aspirations of youth, suggesting that the parents with high level of education motivate their children more to obtain high academic and high professional education than the parents with low level of education. The aspiration for low academic and low professional degrees is found to be directly related to the level of parental education.

4. Influence of Parental Occupation

Studying the influence of level of fathers' occupation on
students' educational aspirations Pandey (1973) found a significant positive association between the two.

5. Influence of Economic Status of the Family

Economic status of the family is found to be another social factor having a significant positive association with students' educational aspirations (Pandey, 1973).

Mathur (1974) studying the causes of frustration in adolescents and its relation with the level of aspiration reported that adolescents have a higher level of educational aspirations than their economic conditions would permit.

6. Influence of Caste

Caste is not found to be a factor having any clear correlation with educational aspirations of youth (Pandey, 1973).

Though caste is not found to be associated with the educational aspirations of youth who are in higher education, it is felt relevant to cite the study of Bhatia (1970) on parental aspirations related to education for the children in a sample of 78 heads of scheduled caste households. Only a very few of the subjects aspired to provide better education to their children. Thus, low or no parental aspirations for educating their
children, especially in underprivileged sections of the society, can result in providing no education for their children. Explaining this trend, the investigator wrote that the low level of aspiration for children's education appears to result from a lack of appreciation of the value of education as a means to wider occupational choice and social mobility.

Influence of caste on determinants of educational choices at graduate level is studied by Beena and Uniyal (1986). Since an attempt is made in the present study, to know the reasons for the choice of faculties of study of the respondents, the results of the investigation by Beena and Uniyal are being cited. The objective of the study was to ascertain the relative importance of the factors, i.e., self-interest, parental advice, teacher's influence, school's influence, employment and professional prospects, achievement in previous classes and less labour demanding quality, in the selection of educational courses. Self-interest was found to be the most effective variable among the undergraduates (N=1050) of various faculties (Arts, Science and Commerce) in the selection of their educational choices. The first determinant of the educational choices of students was found to be independent of their caste belongingness.

The review of relevant empirical studies suggests that limited research has taken place on educational aspirations of
youth and that too the influence of only a few variables is studied. Even related to these few variables, need for further research is suggested by the investigators, to establish the specific influence of these variables on educational aspirations. Further, little attention has been given to the study of the educational aspirations of female college students, in spite of the encouragement being given to women's education since the International Women's Year, 1975 in terms of increased educational opportunities and provision for free education for girls upto higher education. Hence, the present study seeks to explore the quality of educational aspirations of female undergraduate students (as part of the study) both realistic and ideal aspirations, along with the reasons behind these aspirations or lack of them. Since, the influence of socio-economic status is supposed to be vital and can not be overlooked for a meaningful explanation of educational as well as occupational aspirations, the study attempts to study the role of socio-economic status in determining the educational and occupational aspirations of women students in higher education. Since, the related attitudes are found to be exerting a significant influence on educational aspirations of women, the study also aims at exploring the influence of attitude towards equality of women on educational as well as occupational aspirations of the respondents.
The theories and explanations cited under conceptual foundations and the empirical evidences on educational aspirations and other correlates point out the need for further research on various aspects. The influences of self-concepts, the attitudes of students and their parents toward women's education, parental aspirations for their daughters' education and the related perceptions of girl students and attitudes related to sex stereotypes on educational aspirations of female students are yet to be explored.

B. OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND OTHER CORRELATES

Correlation of level of occupational aspirations has been studied with a number of variables such as socio-economic status, parental background, social class, intelligence, academic achievement etc.

RESEARCH WORK DONE IN OTHER COUNTRIES

The focus of empirical studies on level of occupational aspiration of adolescents is either to know the factors influencing occupational aspirations in view of the guidance and counselling needs of adolescents or to study the changing trends in the occupational aspirations of both the sexes and related influences. The findings of these studies are given below.
1. Gender Differences

Research evidence indicates that boys aspire to a higher level of occupation more than girls (Galler, 1951; Stephenson, 1955; Nelson, 1963).

Jan Curie (1982) studied the influence of sex factor in occupational aspirations of Western Australian male and female high school students (N=1514). The findings showed that most of the male and female students clustered into occupations that are traditionally seen as sex stereotyped but, there was significant overlap in the occupations chosen by both males and females. The three occupations chosen most often by females were teaching, nursing and therapy and those by males were teaching, accounting and engineering. Occupational features which females selected involved the characteristics of helping others and working with people, while males more often selected features which would provide high income, prestige and freedom from close supervision.

2. Rural – Urban Differences

Contradictory findings are reported on the influence of geographical location on level of occupational aspiration by different researchers. Positive relationship is reported between level of occupational aspiration and geographical location by Miller and Haller (1964), Jose (1971). However, contradictory
evidences are also found by some researchers. Haller and Sewell (1957) found that neither among the high school senior girls nor among boys the occupational aspirations are significantly related to residence. Hodgkins and Parr (1965) also reported similar results in their study on male adolescents.

3. Influence of Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status has often been studied in relation to level of occupational aspiration and a positive relationship between the two has been found (Miller and Haller, 1964; Bennett and Gist, 1964; Caroll and Petrucci, 1978).

4. Influence of Mental Ability and Scholastic Achievement

Studies on relationship of mental ability (Wrenn, 1974; Fielding, 1974; Perrone, 1964) and scholastic achievement (Blackburn, 1975; Gist et al., 1942) with level of occupational aspiration revealed positive association between them.

5. Other Relevant Findings

Bender et al., (1967) studied the congruence between aspirations and capabilities of youth in low-income rural areas. The major findings revealed that occupational capabilities and aspirations are not closely related and that a lack of capabili-
ties may be a more limiting factor than levels of aspiration in the occupational achievement of the rural youth.

6. Factors Inhibiting Occupational Aspirations of Women

Sedeka (1976), reported the findings of a study on women's occupational aspirations, on behalf of the WINC. The sample consisted of 150 respondents from each of the five sites i.e., Baltimore, Cincinnati, Phoenix, Denver and Miami. The study revealed that women's occupational aspirations were eclipsed by 'loss of femininity' and disapproval of parents and husbands. One woman who really wanted to be an auto mechanic eventually chose typing instead, because she feared setting a masculine example for her daughter. Family disapproval is one of the most frequently cited reason for not choosing non-traditional training, and, husbands too effectively restrained their wives from seeking jobs 'not appropriate' for women.

RESEARCH WORK DONE IN INDIA

The research being done in India on occupational aspirations is along the same lines followed in abroad. To suit Indian conditions, influences of caste and tribe are also examined. A few studies examined the value orientations of youth which influence the choice of their occupations. A brief account of the findings of relevant studies follows.
1. Occupational Aspirations of Women and Related Attitudes

Mahajan (1966) and Goldstein (1972) and Ambarao (1976) in their studies on college women of Punjab University, Bangalore and Gulbarga City respectively, found that a majority of the respondents wanted to work after college.

The girl students preferred occupation out of personal interest as a vocation and not as a temporary measure, their most preferred occupation being teaching, followed by professional and administrative jobs (Ambarao, 1976). Ambarao examined their attitude towards employment of women and found that an overwhelming majority had a favourable attitude.

Results contradictory to the above are reported by Arora et al., (1973) in their study on unmarried women typists, clerks, stenographers and operators working in Bombay. They found that 60 percent of the respondents took to jobs as a stop gap service till they get married, and none wanted to be a career woman.

Career aspirations of Home Science students are studied by Gupta and Sohal (1972). The study revealed that Home Science students had high job aspirations for department of education followed by independent business, university service and then military service. They least preferred departmental service (Govt.), private organization, forestry and executive service.
Mohanty and Sahoo (1986) attempted to empirically examine the changing attitudes of the women students (N=155) doing post graduation in Sambalpur University with regard to the aspects of selection of husband, acquisition of jobs and social movement. The findings revealed that higher education and family backgrounds of the respondents do not help significantly in changing their attitudes for enjoying higher degree of freedom in the society. Though a majority of the respondents aspired for gainful employment, they expressed certain considerations like suitability of the job, parents' and husband's consent, aspects related to transferability etc., to take up an occupation.

2. Gender difference

Ambarao's (1982) study on occupational aspirations of college students (N=1300) revealed that men students had higher occupational aspirations than women students, suggesting that men students are more career oriented than women students. Similar results were reported by George and Mathew (1966) in their study on school leaving children.

A reverse trend is observed among adolescents in a study conducted by Mehta et al., (1987), wherein they found that girls have higher level of occupational aspirations (LOA) as compared to boys. However, scholastic achievement is not related to LOA
among girls, suggesting that their planning is not realistic but fantasy based. Lyngdoh (1975) also reported the presence of higher level of occupational aspiration among girls in comparison with boys.

Mehta et al., (1987) studied the influence of residential status, SES global index, father's educational level, number of occupations known, people known, people known not personally, intelligence and scholastic achievement on LOA of girls and boys. The results of regression analysis showed that for boys significant predictors of LOA are number of occupations known and scholastic achievement. The variables that do not predict LOA among boys are socio-economic status (SES), intelligence and people known not personally. In the case of girls significant predictors are SES, number of occupations known, people known not personally and intelligence.

In a study on first degree SC students, Tyagarajan (1986) did not find any sex differences in their occupational aspirations. Irrespective of the sex and course of study the two occupations most preferred by the respondents were Executive and Administrative service, and Clerical and related service. The two least preferred occupations were Self employment, and Skilled job.
3. Rural – Urban Differences

Pandey (1974) made a comparative study regarding occupational aspirations of rural–urban male college students (N=500) of Varanasi District. The findings revealed that urban youth mostly aspired for professional-technical occupations and rural youth mostly for white-collar jobs. As regards to aspirations to income, urban youth tended to aspire for earning more income as compared with rural youth. Urban youth also tended to show greater self-confidence in achieving their aspirations for income than do the rural youth. Rural youth gave more emphasis to social service, high pay and interest in the work respectively, where as the urban youth's basic emphasis was an interest in the work followed by high pay and social service aspect of the job. With regard to occupational mobility urban youth evinced greater tendency for upward occupational mobility than do rural youth. Other studies supporting the findings of differences based on geographical location are reported by George and Mathew (1966), Passi (1970), Reddy (1978) and Desai (1979).

Although greater number of researches show that geographical location influences level of occupational aspirations, there is some evidence to the contrary also. Mehta et al., (1984) did not find rural-urban differences in the level of expected occupations of adolescent boys.
4. Influence of Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status is found to be positively associated with level of occupational aspiration by Chopra, (1984); Pandit and Deepa, (1990). However, Mehta et al., (1984) did not find any relationship between the two. A few others found that SES is a significant predictor of LOA only among girls and not among boys (Mehta et al., 1987).

5. Influence of Social Class Background

Ambarao (1982) in his study on occupational aspirations of college students (N=1300), made an attempt to explore which of the social background variables i.e., religion, caste, sex (ascripted) and social class (achieved) had a decisive and significant influence on the occupational aspirations of the respondents by applying step-wise multiple regression. He reported that social class background played a large part in contributing to the maximum variance in the occupational aspirations of respondents.

6. Influence of Father's Education

Father's educational level is not found to be related to occupational aspirations of women students (Ambarao, 1976).
7. Influence of Father's Occupation

A positive correlation is reported between high parental professional status and high professional choice of the school leaving students by George and Mathew (1966). Ambarao (1976) also found that girl students' occupational aspirations are influenced by the level of their fathers' occupation.

8. Influence of Economic Status of the Family

A study on causes of frustration in adolescents and its relation with the level of aspiration by Mathur (1974) revealed that adolescents had a higher level of vocational aspirations than their socio-economic conditions would permit.

9. Influence of Caste and Tribe

The studies on influence of caste on occupational aspirations yielded contradictory results. George and Mathew (1966) found a positive correlation between high castes and high professional choice of school leaving students. However, Ambarao (1976, 1982) reported that caste and occupational aspirations are independent and that caste as a potent factor is not determining the occupational choices of college students. He further pointed out that modern forces such as formal education, urbanization
etc., are perhaps making their in-roads into the value structure of students.

The differences in occupational aspirations of tribal and non-tribal boys were studied by Lyngdoh (1975). The findings revealed that non-tribal boys have higher occupational aspirations than tribal boys.

10. Influence of Intelligence and Academic Achievement

Gaur and Mathur (1978) in their study on high secondary school children reported that intelligence and levels of vocational aspirations are positively correlated.

However, among high school children intelligence is found to be a significant predictor of level of occupational aspiration of girls alone. No such influence is noticed in case of boys (Mehta et al., 1987).

Academic achievement of the students is found to be positively correlated with high professional choice of school leaving students (George and Mathew, 1966).

Mehta et al., (1987) studied the influence of scholastic achievement on occupational aspirations of high school boys and girls. Scholastic achievement is found to be a significant
predictor of level of occupational aspirations of boys and is not a significant factor of LOA as related to girls.

11. Influence of Aptitudes and Achievement Motive

Pandit and Deepa (1990) studying the influence of aptitudes and achievement motivation on vocational aspirations of high school boys and girls (N = 1080) found that aptitudes and achievement motivation are insignificant factors in determining their vocational aspirations.

The research evidence showed that there are differences in the occupational aspirations of college students and school children and the factors that influence them. Studying the occupational aspirations of school children some investigators concluded that during adolescence vocational preferences or expectations are at a fantasy level rather than being influenced by realistic considerations.

In view of the realistic nature of the occupational aspirations of college students, there is a need to focus on this group from the point of view of offering guidance and counseling, to give proper orientation to their educational and occupational aspirations, so that their potentialities can be put to best use for nation building. This need is more so to mobilize the potentialities of women students, a group which is
found to be socialized to aspire low and achieve low, inspite of their inherent potential to achieve the best which lies dormant, and the mobilization of which is essential for the progress of the country.

In light of the above, the present study seeks to explore the influence of socio-economic status, attitude towards equality of women, type of college and faculty of study on the educational and occupational aspirations of female undergraduate students. It also attempts to know the reasons contributing to or affecting their educational and occupational aspirations.

Though the present investigation limits its scope to the study of the above indicated aspects, review of related literature indicates the need for research on various other aspects. The knowledge of the influence of self-concepts, sex role attitudes, motive to avoid success, home-career conflict, false notions about women as related to the world of work etc., on the occupational aspirations of Indian women students is very essential to plan and execute appropriate programmes to raise the occupational aspirations of this group. Further, interventions are to be planned and implemented to ameliorate the influence of sex stereotypes, to increase the self-confidence and raise the occupational aspirations of female students, the impact of which has to be systematically assessed.