

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AMONG GUJJAR PASTORALISTS: A STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF RAJOURI DISTRICT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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Abstract

Educational aspirations can be defined as the specific elements of learning that student's favour, as well as their chosen methods of engaging with these elements (Gasperoni, 2009). However, providing education to those who reside in isolated, remote, and underdeveloped regions remains a constant challenge for educational authorities. The Gujjar Pastoralists are tribal people who spend their entire life in rearing cattle's (pastoralism) to earn their livelihood. However, the Gujjar pastoralists are living isolated life in tribes from the main stream of the economy. Apart from this, the miserable socio-economic conditions of the Gujjar pastoralists are the main reason for their educational backwardness. In fact, the level of educational aspirations among the Gujjar pastoralist students are low (average and below average). It is mainly that the socio-economic conditions of these students are miserable and they are leaving school at early age to earn some livelihood to support their families. Moreover, the educational level of aspirations among the female students of Gujjar pastoralists are somehow better than male students, but parents are giving less importance to the education of the female students and indulge them into homemade activities.

Keywords: Gujjar Pastoralists, Educational Backwardness and Educational Aspirations

Introduction

Educational aspiration plays a crucial role in predicting the academic achievement and educational Preferences of the students. It can be viewed as an element of academic achievement motivation, which centres on the intense drive for success and the establishment of specific goals to excel in particular educational domains or attain a specific grade. There exist numerous theoretical frameworks that seeks to explain educational aspirations and their subsequent impact on future behaviour of the students (Rajesh and Chandrasekaran2014). In this context, the Dominant Model refers to a sociological theory known as status attainment, which places emphasis on ambition as a cognitive condition that serves as a driving force for teenagers in their pursuit of academic achievement (Khoo and Ainsley, 2005).Therefore, the concept of educational aspiration acknowledges that both the personal and social dimensions, such as parental social class or student's perceptions of their own personal attributes are significant transferring factors. Moreover, the aspirations have been attributed to parents in particular because they give their

children the chances, encouragement, and support they need to learn (Garg, Kauppi, Lewko, Urajnik, 2002). The issue of educational aspiration is approached differently in socio-economic models but the view on aspirations for higher education is simply a rational evaluation of students' social and economic situations.

Therefore, the term “Level of Educational Aspirations”, is related to the goals that people have for themselves in terms of their education, whether the smart classroom activities have an impact on their academic performance or not. Hence by this explanation, one can conclude to say that some individuals pursue higher education to appease their parents', while others' needs assimilating academically and socially to campus life. According to Robert (1980), men's educational goals are more influenced by their aptitude, their high school grades, and the encouragement and guidance of close friends and family. So, an aspiration is a strong desire for great performance that is influenced by one's family background as well as how one's family interacts, communicates, and behaves. Moreover, aspirations characterized by (Cooper, Arkelin, and Tiebert 1994) are as hopes and ambitions that are impacted by interpersonal circumstances. Apart from this, an individual's level of aspiration is defined as his or her expectations or ambition. It is a prediction of one's future performance in a specific endeavour. Therefore, the level of aspiration is defined as an individual's ambition in a dynamic situation, which means an individual's goals or expectations in regard to the goodness of his own future performance for a given task (Channa, et,al, 2022). Nonetheless, education is a multifaceted process and form of engagement that pertains to individuals within the realm of human existence. The ongoing endeavour to enhance students' abilities in managing their immediate surroundings and meeting their requirements is a persistent pursuit. While education is an integral aspect of human existence, its efficacy in aiding individuals is contingent upon the presence of sufficient levels of educational aspirations. Individuals possess goals throughout all periods of their lives, motivating them to strive for personal growth and improvement (Devi, &Swargiary,2019).

The ambitions held by students during their academic tenure have a significant impact on their subsequent behaviour. Therefore, the concept of student aspiration is an often-employed word within the field of education. Initial investigations have contributed to our comprehension of ambition as a manifestation of the want to attain and enhance, which means that the aspiration can be defined operationally as the cognitive capacity of students to recognize effectively and establish objectives for their future endeavours. It is widely perceived that the motivation and aspirations of students are intertwined, combining several elements that drive their dreams for the future. An individual's aspiration level not only reflects their current state but also encompasses their desired future state in relation to a given situation. The concept of educational aspiration or vocational choice is predicated upon an understanding of individual attributes (Raja& Pandian, 2016).

Nonetheless, the level of aspiration exhibited by an individual has a significant role in inspiring their career preferences. The level of aspiration is typically impacted by two distinct categories of things. There are two main elements that influence individuals: environmental forces and personal characteristics. Environmental influences encompass various determinants, such as parental aspirations, societal norms, peer influence, social values, competitive dynamics, and group

cohesion, among others. Conversely, personal characteristics become a prominent role in defining an individual's level of desire as they progress in age and have a heightened awareness of their strengths and interests (Madarasova, et.al, 2010). These personal elements encompass determinants such as desires, individual traits, previous encounters, values, areas of interest, gender, and socio-economic status. The dimensions encompassing aspirations are Career Aspiration, Social Aspiration, Economic Aspiration, Personal Aspiration, and Educational Aspiration (Gupta& Bashir, 2017).

The pastoral nomadic group residing in the northern state of Jammu and Kashmir India, exhibits a perpetual migratory lifestyle, transitioning between the plains and mountains during the summer and winter seasons, respectively. This migratory pattern is closely associated with their primary means of sustenance, which revolves around the rearing and herding of cattle. The tribe has long relied on a diverse array of livestock, including cows, buffaloes, goats, and sheep, as a vital resource. These animals play a crucial role in the tribe's sustenance, as they provide a source of dairy proteins for their diet. Additionally, the livestock contribute to the tribe's agricultural endeavours by supplying labor and manure for their fields (Tazeem&Khadam,2016). However, there is a strong educational backwardness among Gujjar tribe of Jammu and Kashmir. The educational backwardness is mainly associated with their poor socio-economic background. Moreover, the issue of the Physical access, Medium of instruction, Pedagogy, Teacher's training, Teacher's attitude, Cultural Context are some of the various concerns which create hurdles for the education of Gujjar tribe. Apart from these aspects pastoral nature of their society and least participation in the education of their children are another unsettled area which need to be meticulously analysed and addressed for making education sustainable and joyful (Saxena & Kumar, 2016). The present paper explores the level of educational aspirations among Tribal Gujjar Pastoralist Students in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir.

Review of Literature

Goel (2004) investigated the impact of the family environment on educational ambitions. The study consisted of 100 students (50 males and 50 females) samples, spanning in age group from 16 to 20 years. The results of the study revealed that girls are having significantly higher educational aspirations than boys. As a result of the autocratic environment at home, males reported experiencing more rejection than girls, who felt more support.

Park (2008) evaluated the amount of educational aspiration and student disengagement across students with two parents and those having a single parent. According to the findings of the study, students with single parents are less aspirations and more likely to be disengaged than their counterparts with two parents.

Siddiqui (2014) brought light to the fact that academic anxiety affects students at all educational levels on a regular basis. Academic success depends on having low anxiety among students, a high degree of anxiety shows to be harmful for students. Several researchers working in the field of education is focused on the academic anxiety. According to various subject experts, the socioeconomic factor has an impact on students' motivation, goals, anxiety levels, adjustment, and other aspects of education. Therefore, the overall results of the study revealed that female students

and students from low SES schools suffer more from academic anxiety. With the exception of socioeconomic status, interactional effects do not significantly differ on scholastic anxiety.

Rajesh (2014) highlighted that a person's level of aspiration is a measurement of how confidently students can reach their own goals in the future, taking into account their current abilities, prior experiences, and potential for effort. These attempts are a result of his prior experiences, his ability to pursue the goal, and whether those experiences were success- or failure-oriented. Additionally, the level of aspiration of secondary school students was to be investigated in relation to contextual factors such household location, sex, school administration, and medium of instruction. 300 samples from secondary school students of Chennai city schools were used for sampling. Data were gathered using a standardised "Level of Educational Aspiration Test" created by Yasmin Ghani Khan (1999). Results reveal that the boy's aspirations were lower than girls' aspiration. The study also revealed that Tamil-medium student's aspirations are lower than those of English-medium students.

Kumari (2015) Highlighted the significant influence played by family-home in moulding students' Level of Aspiration regardless of the family's socio-economic status. As a result, parents should be well-versed in the many positive and negative reward mechanisms that can aid in elevating their children's aspirations. If parents want their children to be able to keep up with their high educational aspirations, they must work hard to create a harmonious and supportive home life for them.

Osama Jaber (2016) examine the correlation between aspiration level, critical thinking, future anxiety, and motivation to learn among students. The study utilised a sample of 81 students from the Faculty of Engineering and Faculty of Education at Najran University. The researcher utilised several measurement tools in their study, including the 'Motivation to Learn Scale of Gaber and Al-Marei' (2014), the California Critical Thinking Skill Test (CCTST-2000), the Aspiration Level Scale, and the Future Anxiety Scale. The obtained Pearson's Correlation Coefficient value suggests a statistically significant association between the urge to study and the levels of aspiration, critical thinking, and future fear ($P \leq 0.01$). The stepwise regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship between the degree of aspiration and desire to learn. The results indicated that the amount of aspiration significantly predicts motivation to learn.

Darsana C. and Purabi B. (2020) conducted a study examining the relationship between the level of aspiration and achievement motivation among higher secondary students. The primary aim of the study was to investigate the correlation between the level of aspiration and achievement motivation among students in higher secondary education. The research was conducted in the Kamrup region of Assam, India. The researcher utilised a descriptive survey methodology and employed stratified random sampling to obtain a sample of 168 students, ensuring equitable representation across strata. The present study indicates that a statistically insignificant association exists between the level of aspiration and accomplishment motivation among students in higher secondary education.

Panda (2021) examines the academic anxiety of secondary school students in relationship to their socio-economic background in Balangir District using survey and descriptive methods of research.

Sample size consists 100 students (50 Boys and 50 Girls). The Academic Anxiety Scale developed by A. K. Singh & Dr. A. Sen Gupta as well as 'Socio-Economic Status Scale' developed by Kupuswami was used for the data collection. Author found that there is a significant difference between Male and Female Student, Government and Private School and the study has further revealed that SES is an important variable which affects the academic anxiety in an adverse manner in the occupation and education indicator.

Srivastava (2022) investigated the association between socio-economic position and the level of academic anxiety among senior secondary school students in Odisha's Balangir District. A total of 100 students (50 boys and 50 girls) from two public and two private schools were used for the study. It has been demonstrated that socio-economic position has a considerable impact on senior secondary school students' academic anxiety.

The Gujjar community in Jammu and Kashmir are considered to be living Below the Poverty Line (BPL), which indicates that they have a low standard of living with miserable life. Despite the fact that Gujjar community are engaged in cattle rearing (pastoralism) and are isolated from the social community. The main occupation of this community is cattle rearing but some of the people have now participated in various agricultural activities, and other casual labor activities as they are unable to meet both the ends with cattle rearing. The educational level of these Gujjar pastoralists are very low as their children are leaving schools at early age and are joining in rearing the cattle to support their families financially. Moreover, the level of educational aspirations among the Gujjar students are also low as their socio-economic conditions are poor so they believe that going for work to earn the livelihood at early age will help their families to meet both ends. However, the level of educational aspirations among the Gujjar female students are higher than male students as they female students in Gujjar community are getting very less opportunities to get enrolled at schools than the male students. Therefore, the present section explores the gender wise educational aspirations of male and female students of Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Objectives:

1. To explore the level of educational aspirations among male and female Gujjar Pastoralists students of Rajouri district.
2. To study the level of educational aspirations among rural and urban Gujjar Pastoralist students of Rajouri district.

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant difference in the level of educational aspirations among male and female Gujjar Pastoralists students at secondary level
2. There is no significant difference in level of educational aspirations among rural and urban Gujjar Pastoralists students at secondary level

Limitations of the study

The present study is confined only to the Gujjar Pastoralists students of Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir

The study only takes secondary school children of the Gujjar Pastoralists of Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir into consideration

Methodology

The research design for the present study is descriptive research. It aimed to find out the level of educational aspirations among Gujjar Pastoralists students of Rajouri district at secondary level. The population of this study comprises of all the selected secondary schools students in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir.

Tool used in the Study

Level of Educational Aspiration Test developed by Dr. Yasmin Ghani Khan was used for gathering the data

Sample of the Study

The students from selected high schools (Government and Private Schools) in Rajouri District were chosen as sample for the study by using simple random sampling technique. Thus, a total of 200 high school students both boys (100) and girls (100) were selected for this study.

Collection of the Data

Collection of data was done by the investigator by personally meeting with students and distributing the questionnaire by giving important directions. A proper rapport was established to collect the pertinent data.

Statistical Techniques Used

In the present study following statistical techniques were used

- Descriptive Analysis (Mean & Standard deviation)
- ANOVA (F-ratio)

Results and Discussions

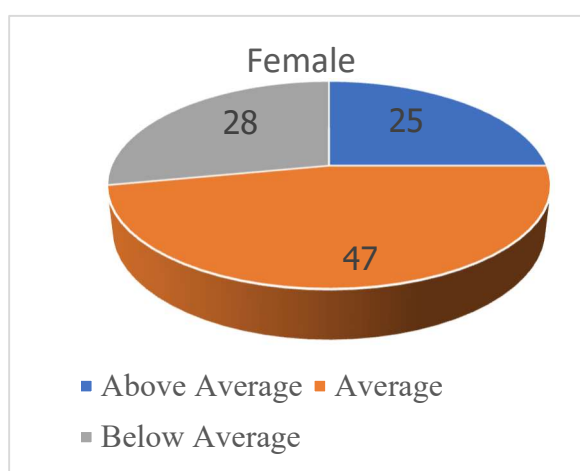
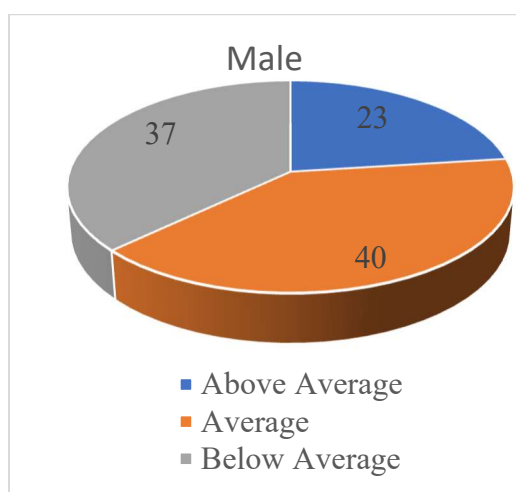
Table 1 below reveals that among male students the highest percentage of the male students are having average educational aspirations which consists 40.0 percent of the students, whereas 37 percent of the students are having below level of educational aspirations and only 23 percent of the students are having above average level of educational aspirations. Similarly, in case of the female students the highest proportion of the female students which consists 47.0 percent of the students are having average educational aspirations, whereas, 28.0 percent of the female students are having below average educational aspirations and only 25 percent of the female students are having above average educational aspirations.

Table1: Gender wise educational aspirations of male and female students of Gujjar pastoralists of Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Gender	Above Average	Average	Below Average
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Male	23 23.00 47.92	40 40.00 45.98	37 37.00 56.92
Female	25 25.00 52.08	47 47.00 54.02	28 28.00 43.08
Total	48 24.00 100.00	87 43.50 100.00	65 32.50 100.00

First row has *frequencies*; second row has *row percentages* and third row has *column percentages*



Rural-Urban wise Level of Educational Aspirations among the Male Gujjar Pastoralists students in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir

The present section explores the area wise level of educational aspirations among male students of Gujjar community at Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. The table reveals that among male students' 38.71 percent each of the male students of Gujjar community in rural areas of Rajouri district are having average and below average educational aspirations whereas 22.58 percent of the students are having above average level of educational aspirations. Similarly, in case of the urban areas, 57.14 percent of the male students of Gujjar community in urban areas are having average level of educational aspirations, whereas 28.57 percent of the students are having above average level of educational aspirations and 14.29 percent of the students are having below average level of educational aspirations among the male students of Gujjar community in the urban areas of Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore, the overall results reveal that majority of the male students of Gujjar community in both rural and the urban areas of the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir are having average level of educational aspirations.

Table 2: Rural-Urban wise Level of Educational Aspirations among the Male Gujjar Pastoralists

	Above Average	Average	Below	Total
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			Average	
Rural	21	36	36	93
	22.58	38.71	38.71	100.00
	91.30	90.00	97.30	93.00
Urban	2	4	1	7
	28.57	57.14	14.29	100.00
	8.70	10.00	2.70	7.00
Total	23	40	37	100
	23.00	40.00	37.00	100.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Field Survey Data

Rural-Urban wise Level of Educational Aspirations among the Female Gujjar Pastoralists students in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir

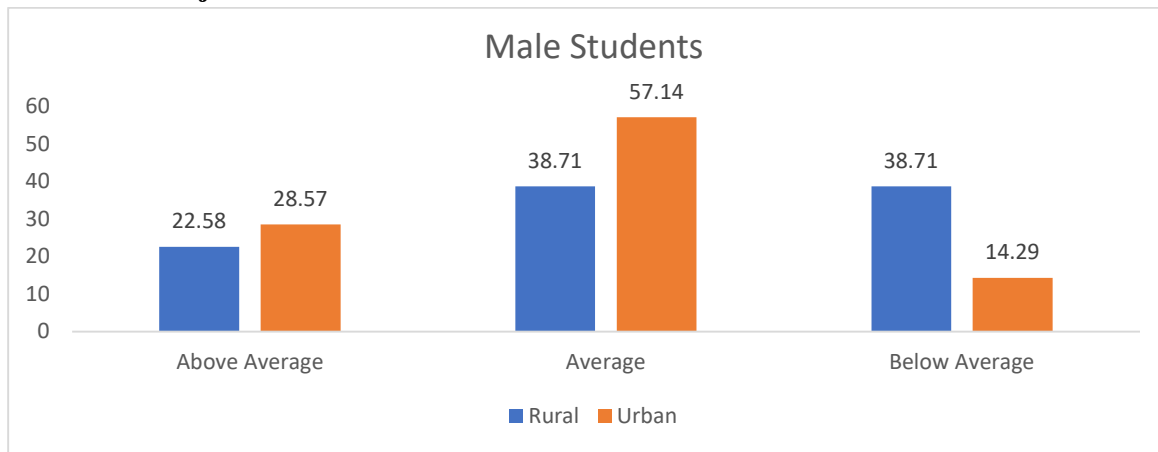
The present section explores the urban area wise level of educational aspirations among the female students of Gujjar community at Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. The table reveals that among female students' 44.19 percent of the female students of Gujjar community in rural areas at Rajouri district are having average educational aspirations whereas 30.23 percent of the female students are having below average level of educational aspirations and only 25.58 percent of the female students are having above average level of educational aspirations in the rural areas of Gujjar community in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, in case of the urban areas, 64.29 percent of the female students of Gujjar community in urban areas are having average level of educational aspirations, whereas 21.43 percent of the students are having above average level of educational aspirations and 14.29 percent of the female students are having below average level of educational aspirations among the male students of Gujjar community in the urban areas of Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore, the overall results reveal that majority of the female students of Gujjar community in both rural and the urban areas of the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir are having average level of educational aspirations

Table2: Rural-Urban wise Level of Educational Aspirations among the Female Gujjar Pastoralists

	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Total
Rural	22	38	26	86
	25.58	44.19	30.23	100.00
	88.00	80.85	92.86	86.00
Urban	3	9	2	14
	21.43	64.29	14.29	100.00
	12.00	19.15	7.14	14.00
Total	25	47	28	100
	25.00	47.00	28.00	100.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

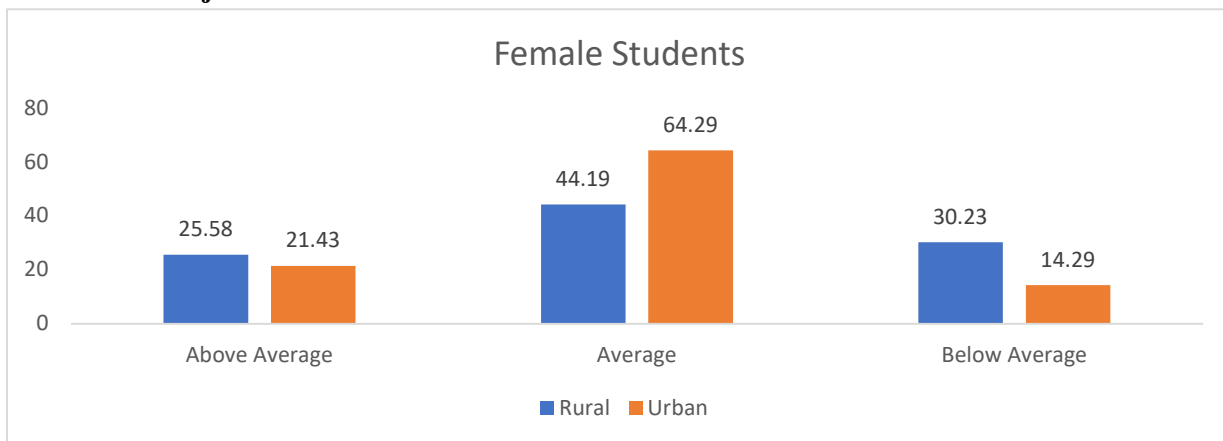
Source: Field Survey Data

Rural-Urban wise Level of Educational Aspirations among the Male Gujjar Pastoralists students in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir



Source: Calculated by Authors

Rural-Urban wise Level of Educational Aspirations among the Female Gujjar Pastoralists students in Rajouri District of Jammu and Kashmir



Source: Calculated by Authors

ANOVA Results

H0= There is a no significant difference in the level of educational aspirations among the male and female Gujjar pastoralist students in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir

H1= There is a significant difference in the level of educational aspirations among the male and female Gujjar pastoralist students in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir

The results of the ANOVA shows that there is an no significant variance among the level of educational aspirations of Gujjar pastoralists male and female students. The Prob. F value is 0.3000 which is higher than 0.05 percent of the Null Hypothesis, therefore it indicates that our Null hypothesis has been rejected and the alternative hypothesis has been accepted, which means that there is a significant difference in the educational level of aspirations among the male and female students of Gujjar pastoralists tribe.

Gender	Mean	Std.Dev	Freq
Male	2.14	.76567789	100

Female	2.30	.73105707	100		
Total	2.085	.7487175	200		
Source	SS	Df	MS	F	Prob > F
Between groups	.605	1	.605	1.08	0.3000
Within the Groups	110.95	198	.560353535		
Total	111.555	199	.560577889		

Conclusions

The school teachers should pay an extra attention to students whose falls at below average as well as to an average level of educational aspirations to improve their overall academic performance. Moreover, teachers at the schools need to be actively involved in their students' educational pursuits, and should use a variety of instructive approaches, each of which should be designed to be more engaging and more effective in luring students' attention and satisfying their intellectual needs. The above study concluded that majority of the students are having an average and below average level of educational aspiration. However, the female student's level of educational aspirations is somehow better than male students and the possible reason is that most of the Gujjar pastoralists doesn't prefer female education and the girls who are getting an opportunity to pursue their schooling are having greater wisdom for better level of educational aspirations than boys. Therefore, in order to raise the student's level of educational aspirations, the teachers must employ many tactics that are appropriate and beneficial for raising the level of educational aspirations among students.

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