

**CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO PARENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT**

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***Abstract***

*During adolescence children start to give a serious thought about their future, which is certainly influenced by the encouraging attitude of the parents. The present study focuses on the relationship between career aspirations and parental encouragement of adolescents. A sample consisted of 100 students (50 girls & 50 boys) from Secondary Schools of the Union Territory of Chandigarh, was selected by using random sampling technique. The Career Aspiration Scale by Daljeet Rani (2017) and Parental Encouragement Scale by Dr. R. R. Sharma (1988) were employed to collect the data. Descriptive statistics like mean, median, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Kurtosis were computed to see the general nature of the data. Pearson Product Moment method was applied to find the relation between the variables. The outcome revealed that both, Adolescent boys and girls possess same level of Career Aspirations and there is no discrimination on the part of parents in providing encouragement to their children. Further, there is a non significant but positive relation between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement.*

**Keywords: Adolescents, Career Aspirations, Parental Encouragement**

**INTRODUCTION**

In modern age of fierce competition and perfection, the adolescents are facing the crucial task of making career decision which should be well matched with the successful and contended future. The role of parents in child's development is of utmost importance, with vital information about new career paths and keeping in mind the interests and ability of their ward, parents can facilitate the process of career selection for them. According to Singh (2011), "*Parents play a significant role in development of adolescents- All the intellectual, moral, physical, social, emotional and educational needs are fulfilled at home*".

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The home environment acts as a deciding factor in shaping up the personality, likes and dislikes as well as their aspirations and achievements. Aspiration contributes in setting a target to achieve which creates a “desire” or “will” in an adolescent. Formation of a strong desire and ambition motivates individual to strive hard to achieve that goal. Such motivation is keenly required if one has to succeed in life. Sekar and Mani (2013) stated that, “*every successful individual after reaching his/her goal finds that his/her success is because of the help and support of his/her parents*”. The support given by parents exerts significant influence on children’s interests, aspirations, attitudes and achievement. Strong and supportive parents contribute to the growth of strong and success oriented achievement drive in their children. Parents have prime responsibility to play in allowing them to explore their wider social environment and to encourage the development of acceptable social skills. Encouragement building up cognitive and perception ability in a child is a major concern in the upbringing of the child. O’Brien (2001) considered that there are many variables that can effect a student's career aspiration. Some researchers feel that genetics accounts for 80 per cent of an individual’s potential, while others feel that the environment affects their potential. Adolescents having supportive, firm and affectionate parents boost their confidence so as to explore more satisfying career choices. Encouraging attitude of parents give wings to the dreams of their children.

### **Career Aspirations**

Aspiration refers to the level of education/occupation for which a person aspires. In general, aspiration means the visualization of the individual regarding future occupation or settlement. It indicates what a person wants to be in his future life irrespective of the limitations imposed by reality.

Career aspirations are goals that one has set for themselves to reach a certain point in their professional life. To achieve this vision, one should accomplish the different small missions that take them to their goals. Career aspirations vary from person to person. A person’s career aspiration is closely integrated into their dreams and happiness. Career-Aspirations include a chosen profession or occupation to which a student aspires to join. It measures the strength of intention of an individual to be active in a particular field.

### **Parental Encouragement**

Parents play a vital role in the life of a child. They are the main support system for the child. Parental encouragement is of great significance in developing psychological as well as academic behavior of a child.

The term parent comes from Latin word ‘parentem’ and was originally used in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, implies a caretaker of the offspring in their own species, and parenting is a socialization process in which parents pass on to their children, adolescents and young adults their cultural values, beliefs, traditions and norms as well as other socially and culturally desirable behavior and attitude in order for them to be good citizens of the society. The relation between parent-child is of paramount importance as it shapes a child’s identity, life choices and overall behavior. It also has an impact on their social, physical, emotional and psychological well being. Parents, thus hold the most powerful and responsible position for a child. Being the first mentors, they have to be very vigilant and watchful to give proper guidance and support to the child at every stage of his life. Even though each child is different and special in his capabilities, parents are the ones who can shape and assist their children without fail. Children who receive encouragement are more resilient, because they are focused and have firm faith to change the circumstances through strong determination and not to get shaken by adversity. In the words of Sharma (2020), “*Parents who actively interact with children, help them develop crucial cognitive skills like critical thinking, clear perspective and able to making connections, thus eventually thrive to be successful*”.

Sharma (2002) in her study found some qualitative differences in the aspiration of child and parents especially when it came to educational and career option. It was observed that, ‘children of some highly qualified and aspirant parents were not so highly aspirant whereas some mild aspirant parents had aggressively aspiring adolescents’. Sharma (2015) in her research concluded that the parents are active managers in influencing their children’s career development. Teachers and parents should encourage the children towards the choice of vocation and the students should be motivated to take the initiative to gather information on vocational field that they are interested in, this will improve their ability to take decisions about future career. Roma and Baliya (2016) in their study indicated significant positive relationship between the variables of

parental encouragement and educational aspiration of male and female students. Gupta and Bashir (2017) in their research study entitled, “*Educational Aspiration of Secondary School Students: Influence of School Environment and Parental Encouragement*” showed that encouraging attitude of parents and a healthy school environment helps students to aim higher educational aspirations. Rani (2017) in her study reported that adolescents who were aspiring high in their career have good family values, high socio-economic status and score good in their previous class. Katara, Balda and Sangwan (2018) did the study titled, “*Parental encouragement and educational aspirations of high school children*”. The results elucidated that there was significant positive correlation between parental encouragement and educational aspirations of children. In a study conducted by Jamba (2019) revealed that parental involvement plays a significant predictor role in the career decision making of school students.

### **EMERGENCE OF THE PROBLEM**

The educational system has changed substantially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As a result, parents have had to take up new responsibilities to meet the requirements of fast changing era. Making a career decision is main developmental job during adolescent years, which is an interesting phase to observe in Indian context where most of the adolescents still depend on their parents for important decisions like education and career etc. Adolescence is the phase when students are under high stress due to biological, emotional and related psychological changes.

A well planned career is instrumental in a happy and satisfied life. Parents can help their children from making mistakes in selecting career, however the times have changed and their children have a very different environment to deal with and sometimes their choices don't match with the choice of their parents especially when the parents are not well informed about the various avenues.

Reviewing of the available related literature revealed lacunae in research about the relationship between career aspiration and parental encouragement of the adolescents led the investigator to take up the present study that aims to determine the relationship between career aspirations of adolescents and parental encouragement.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present study was conducted to attain the following objectives:

1. To study the Career Aspirations of adolescents with respect to gender.
2. To study Parental Encouragement of adolescents with respect to gender.
3. To study the relationship between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement of adolescents.

### **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

The present study was conducted to test the below mentioned hypotheses:

1. There exists no significant difference in Career-Aspirations of Adolescents with respect to gender.
2. There exists no significant difference in Parental Encouragement of Adolescents with respect to gender.
3. There exists no significant relation between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement of Adolescents.

### **DESIGN OF THE STUDY**

#### **Method**

Descriptive survey method has been used for the conduct of the present study.

#### **Sample**

The sample of the present study was selected randomly from Secondary Schools of Chandigarh. Though, the data collected was of more than 100 students, but data of only 50 boys and 50 girl students was put to analysis.

#### **Tools used**

The following standardized tests were used for the present study:

1. Career Aspirations Scale (CAS) by Daljeet Rani (2017)
2. Parental Encouragement Scale (PES) by Dr. R.R.Sharma (1988)

### **DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

The study was limited to 100 students (50 girls and 50 boys) of Secondary Schools located in the Union Territory of Chandigarh.

### **FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION**

Interpretation and discussion based on difference between career aspiration of girls and boys are explained in the foregoing paragraphs.

**Hypothesis-1**

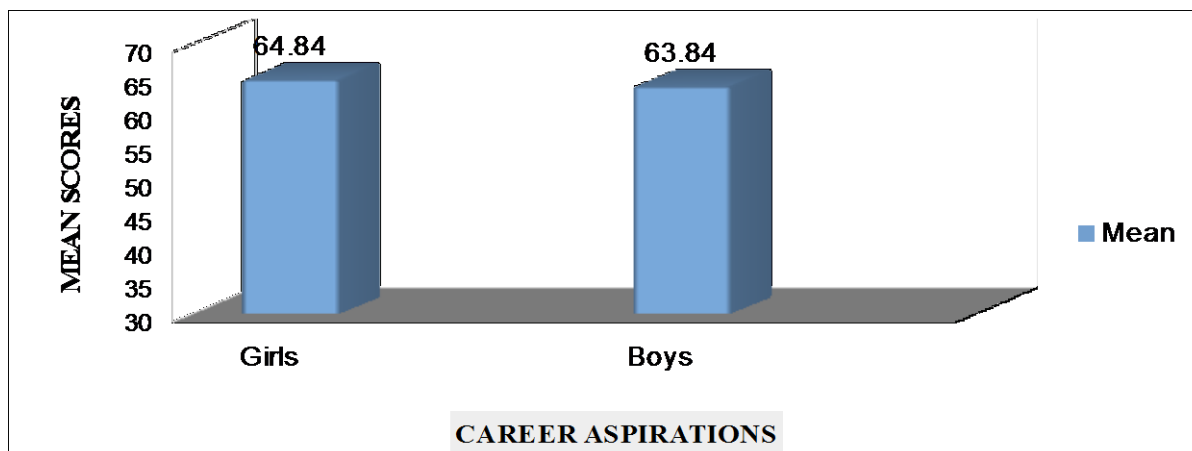
$H_{01}$  - There exists no significant difference in Career Aspirations of adolescents with respect to gender.

The above hypothesis was tested by using T- test. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table – 1: Difference in the Career Aspirations of girls and boys

Variable	Type	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Remarks
Career Aspirations	Girls	50	64.84	11.247	0.47	Not significant
	Boys	50	63.84	9.865		

Figure – 1: Bar Graph showing the Mean Scores of Career Aspirations of Girls and Boys



**Interpretation**

Table 1 represents Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of Career Aspirations of girls and boys. This table shows that the mean scores of Career Aspirations of girls and boys are 64.84 and 63.84 respectively, which is approximately same.

The calculated t-value of Career Aspirations of girls and boys is 0.47, which is less than the table value of 1.66 at 0.05 level of Significance. Hence, the hypothesis “There exists no significant difference in Career Aspirations of adolescents with respect to gender” is retained, which implies that both girls and boys do not differ much in career aspirations.

Interpretation and discussion based on difference between parental encouragement of girls and boys are explained in the following paragraphs.

**Hypothesis-2**

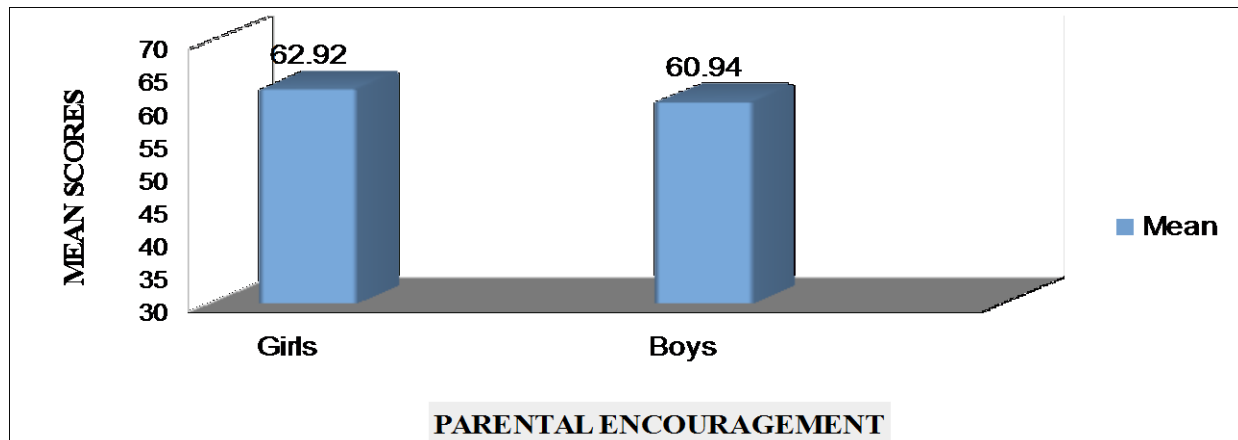
H<sub>02</sub> - There exist no significant difference in Parental Encouragement of adolescents with respect to gender.

To test the above hypothesis, T-test was employed. The results are shown in Table 2.

Table – 2: Difference in Parental Encouragement of girls and boys

Variable	Type	N	Mean	SD	t-value	Remarks
Parental Encouragement	Girls	50	62.92	9.406	0.87	Non significant
	Boys	50	60.94	13.048		

Figure – 2: Bar Graph showing Mean Scores of Parental Encouragement of girls and boys



**Interpretation**

Table 2 represents Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of Parental Encouragement of boys and girls. According to the table, Mean of Parental Encouragement for girls and boys is 62.92 and 60.94 respectively, which implies that both get almost same encouragement from parents.

The calculated t-value of Parental Encouragement of girls and boys is 0.87, which is less than the table value of 1.66 at 0.05 level of Significance. Hence, the hypothesis “There exists no significant difference in Parental Encouragement of adolescents with respect to gender” is accepted. This implies that parents do not differentiate in providing encouragement to their wards on the basis of the gender.

Interpretation and discussion based on correlation between career aspirations and parental encouragement is given as below.

### **Hypothesis-3**

H<sub>03</sub> - There exists no significant relation between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement of adolescents.

To test the above hypothesis, the raw scores obtained by students were used to calculate the Pearson’s coefficient of correlation between the variables. The result of the same is reflected in Table 3.

Table – 3: Correlation between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Degree of freedom</b>	<b>Coefficient of correlation</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Career Aspirations and Parental encouragement	98	0.085	Non significant at 0.05 level

### **Interpretation**

Table 3 reveals that the calculated value of Coefficient of Correlation between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement is 0.085, which is less than the table value of 0.193 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the hypothesis, “There exists no significant relation between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement of adolescents” is retained. Thus, implying thereby that there is a very weak positive relationship between Career Aspirations and Parental Encouragement of adolescents.



## **CONCLUSIONS**

From the study it can be concluded that:

- Adolescent boys and girls do not differ in the level of Career Aspirations.
- Parents provide same type of encouragement to both boys and girls.
- Career-Aspirations and Parental Encouragement have very weak positive relation.

## **EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

From the present study, it is observed that parental encouragement has positive effect on the career-aspirations of adolescents. The present investigation has a number of educational implications and is valuable for the education thinkers, policy makers, administrators, teachers and parents in the following ways:

- There should be regular parent teacher interaction, so that parents come to know about the progress of their child and be aware about about their likes and dislikes, as adolescents and parents have certain gaps in communication.
- Parents and teachers should make themselves more aware about career-aspirations of young adolescents, so as to guide them in selecting a career that leads to their ambition which further leads to success, satisfaction, happiness and more importantly, a contented life.
- Schools must arrange career workshops and organize career talks, so that students may get proper guidance regarding the career they aspire for.
- Parents, teachers and schools can provide a suitable environment for the development of decision making ability among adolescents related to various career avenues.

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