



CAREER ASPIRATION OF SCHOOL GOING SLUM ADOLESCENTS IN RELATION TO THEIR SELF-CONCEPT

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Abstract:

The main objective of the study is to find out the difference in career aspiration of school going slum adolescents in relation to their self-concept. Survey method has been used. The investigator has selected 200 school going slum adolescents from 10 secondary schools by using purposive sampling technique. For collection of data, the investigator has used, self-concept questionnaire by R. K. Saraswat and career aspiration scale constructed by the investigator. For analysis of data the t-test and coefficient of correlation were calculated. The finding of the study revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between self-concept and career aspiration among school going slum adolescents.

Keywords: career aspiration, self-concept, slum education, economic growth

1. Introduction

Education plays a vital role in economic growth of any economy. With increasing urbanization, urban migration has led to a serious problem of increase in urban slums. These urban poor usually consist of semi-skilled or unskilled labour. The poor condition of these urban poor in slum areas is mainly due to their inability to compete with skilled labour class and afford a decent standard of living. The educational level of Slum residents in India is very low and there is an urgent need to improve the educational attainment level of urban poor for better economic growth. Educating the semi-skilled and unskilled labour is the need of the hour.

Since it first appeared in the 1820s, the word slum has been used to identify the poorest quality housing, and the most unsanitary conditions; a refuge for marginal activities including crime, 'vice' and drug abuse; a likely source for many epidemics that

ravaged urban areas; a place apart from all that was decent and wholesome. Today, the catchall term “*slum*” is loose and deprecatory. It has many connotations and meanings and is seldom used by the more sensitive, politically correct, and academically rigorous. But in developing countries, the word lacks the pejorative and divisive original connotation, and simply refers to lower quality or informal housing.

The term “*slum*” is used in the Report to describe a wide range of low-income settlements and poor human living conditions. A simple definition of a slum would be “*a heavily populated urban area characterized by substandard housing and squalor*”. This straightforward description reflects the essential physical and social features of slums, but more meat needs to be put on these bones. Today, slums have come to include the vast informal settlements that are quickly becoming the most visible manifestation of urban poverty in developing world cities. Such settlements are known by many different names and are characterized by a variety of tenure arrangements. In all cases, however, the buildings found there vary from the simplest shack to permanent and sometimes surprisingly well-maintained structures, but what most slums share in common is a lack of clean water, electricity, sanitation and other basic services. Slums can be divided into two broad types: “*slums of hope*” and “*slums of despair*”. The first are settlements on an upward trend, largely made up of newer, usually self-built structures, and that is in or has recently been through a process of development, consolidation and improvement. The second group comprise “*declining*” neighbour hoods in which environmental conditions and services are in a process of seemingly inevitable decay. Unfortunately, the history of slums in Europe, North America and Australia has demonstrated that, without appropriate interventions, slums of hope can all too easily yield to despair, a self-reinforcing condition that can continue for a very long time.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica defines slums as “*...residential areas that are physically and socially deteriorated and in which satisfactory family life is impossible.*” Bad housing is a major index of slum conditions. By bad housing is meant dwellings that have inadequate light, air, toilet and bathing facilities; that are in bad repair, dump and improperly heated; that do not afford opportunity for family privacy; that are subject to fire hazard and that overcrowd the land, leaving no space for recreational use.

For the purpose of the survey in 1993 and 2002, NSSO adopted the definition of slums as “*A slum is a compact settlement with a collection of poorly built tenements, mostly of temporary nature, crowded together usually with inadequate sanitary and drinking water facilities in unhygienic conditions*”. Such an area, for the purpose of this survey, was considered as “*non-notified slum*” if at least 20 households lived in that area. Areas notified as slums by the respective municipalities, corporations, local bodies or development authorities are treated as “*notified slums*”.

A UN expert group recently recommended to policy makers and international bodies what they consider to be a more “*operational definition*” of a slum, one that is intended to enable better targeting of improvement programmes aimed primarily at resolving the physical and legal problems faced by slum dwellers. According to these experts, a slum is an area that combines to various extents the following characteristics:

- Inadequate access to safe water;
- Inadequate access to sanitation and other infrastructure;
- Poor structural quality of housing;
- Overcrowding;
- Insecure residential status.

These characteristics are being proposed because they are largely quantifiable and can be used to measure progress toward the Millennium Development Goal to significantly improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

However slums are defined, the question remains “*why do they exist?*” Slums come about because of, and are perpetuated by, a number of forces. Among these are:

- Rapid rural-to-urban migration;
- Increasing urban poverty and inequality;
- Insecure tenure;
- Globalization.

2. Slum population in Ludhiana

Increasing urbanization is emerging as the most pervasive and dominant challenge as well as opportunity facing our country, today. Urban population in India has grown from 78.9 million in 1961 to 286 million in 2001 and is estimated to be doubled in next 25 years. Cities and towns are centres of agglomeration economies, investments, technology, innovation, economic growth and tertiary jobs. Ludhiana in Punjab is a city with an approximate population of 2 million. There are nearly 250 slums in the city with an estimated population of about 3lakhs. Of these, only half the slums come under the category “*authorized*” and therefore “*identified and recognized*” by the Municipality. The Christian Medical College in Ludhiana recently undertook a survey of health/nutrition conditions in these slums as part of its effort to involve its students in its teaching programme of re-orientation of its undergraduate medical curriculum, through regular contacts with the slum population. In this article, some of the data which emerged from the base-line study are briefly presented. This study was supported by the Ministry of Health, Government of India, and was funded by USAID.

3. Problems of slum adolescents

Slum Adolescents are often one of the most neglected and voiceless groups within our society. They are either treated like children, or nudged prematurely into adult roles. Their desires and hopes for the future are now emerging from a status of childish dreams and being subjected to the often harsh scrutiny of reality. Many youth must relinquish their childhood dreams as a result of the restrictions of their personal situations. This issue is especially grim since many adolescents are forced into work by economic pressures, have no stable family life, and are ignored or shunned by society. Their wishes wither as they struggle for their own and their family's survival. This tragic loss is one that perpetuates and worsens the cycle of poverty and marginalization. There are a number of problems that slum adolescents face. Some of these are following:

- Social problems
- Child labour
- Internal and external corruption
- Gender Inequality

4. Survey of related literatures

Barbara, Sebastian, and Dale Huntington (2004) conducted a study on the effect of a livelihoods intervention in an urban slum in India: do vocational counselling and training alter the attitudes and behaviour of adolescent girls? By focusing whether an experimental intervention for girls aged 14–19 that provided reproductive health information, vocational counselling and training, and assistance with opening savings accounts in slum areas of Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh, India had an effect on their attitudes and behaviours. A quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test design was used in which adolescent girls aged 14–19 residing in the intervention-area slums were compared with girls of the same age residing in control-area slums. Although the livelihoods program was acceptable to parents and feasible to implement, the project had only a minimal impact on the behaviour and attitudes of adolescent girls in the experimental slums. The greatest changes between the baseline and the end line surveys were found in those outcomes that most closely reflected the content of the intervention. Girls exposed to the intervention were significantly more likely to have knowledge of safe spaces, be a member of a group, score higher on the social skills index, be informed about reproductive health, and spend time on leisure activities than were the matched control respondents. No effect was found on gender-role attitudes,

mobility, self-esteem, work expectations, or on number of hours visiting friends, performing domestic chores, or engaging in labour-market work.

Shah and Sen (2008) conducted a survey on education mapping in a slum area: an analysis of the dynamics of demand and supply. The survey results show that the construction of schools in the area does not necessarily mean that all slum children will all attend school. There are number of factors which affect the learning period of a child, and the most important, as discussed in the focus group discussion section, is environment. Without improving or providing the basic liveable conditions of a slum, an atmosphere conducive for the child's learning cannot be created, no matter how many schools are constructed, the problem of lack of learning and eventual drop puts will remain. Apart from appalling living conditions, the slum children are not receiving good quality education. The schools are overcrowded, the class sizes are large and the low student teacher ratios are a cause of concern. As it is clear household surveys that most of these families prefer private schools but in most cases they cannot do so because of income constraints. Their school choices make it clear that they are aware of the distinctions in the qualities between corporation, government and private schools

Tsujita (2009) conducted a study on deprivation of education in urban areas: a basic profile of slum children in Delhi. The result showed the basic educational status of slum children between 5 and 14 years old. The attendance ratio of slum children is much lower than that of children in Delhi as a whole. Parental perception of education and financing education are the major constraints. Even if children are attending schools, the majority of them are over-aged. There are both demand and supply side reasons for discouraging slum children from attending schooling. As opposed to school-based surveys in previous literature, children in slums are more likely to go to government schools rather than low-fee paying private schools. Some policies are suggested.

Sunita (2011) conducted a study on dropout in secondary education: a study of children living in slums of Delhi. The analysis is based on the empirical study undertaken on the marginalized group of children living in slum areas of Delhi. The findings reveal that both the family and school related factors were responsible and appeared to be highly correlated with each other. It was also found that adolescents dropout not merely due to poverty and financial constraints but also because the schools did not respond appropriately to their special educational needs forcing them to dropout. Though the study is conducted at micro level, the analysis provides useful policy insights in terms of broader educational policies aimed at improving educational equity and quality with the adoption of appropriate intervention for focused groups at the local level.

Sufaira (2013) conducted a study on socio economic conditions of urban slum dwellers in Kannur municipality of Kerala, India. The experience of Kerala shows that the condition of the people can be improved even at low levels of economic development through appropriate public action for social provisioning and redistribution. Kerala has been able to provide for the basic needs of most of its citizen. This is revealed by comparative indicators of health, education and demographic transition. These average indicators hide the experience of communities that have been left out of the development process such as the fisher folk and the tribal's. Increasing numbers of slums constitute a major challenge to development. The result emphasizes the need for measures to improve the physical environment of the dwelling places like basic amenities of toilets, proper drainage, sewerage system and adequate water supply.

5. Objectives of the study

- To study the difference in self-concept and career aspiration of school going slum adolescents with respect to gender.
- To find out the relationship between career aspiration and self-concept of school going slum adolescents with respect to gender.

6. Hypotheses of the study

- There exists no significant difference in self-concept of school going male and female slum adolescents.
- There exists no significant difference in career aspiration of school going male and female slum adolescents.
- There exists no significant relationship between career aspiration and self-concept of school going male and female slum adolescents.

7. Methodology

The present study is descriptive in nature and survey method was used. All school going slum adolescents of Ludhiana district of Punjab constitute population for the present study. The investigator has selected 200 school going slum adolescents from 10 secondary schools by using purposive sampling technique. The classification of sample is given below:

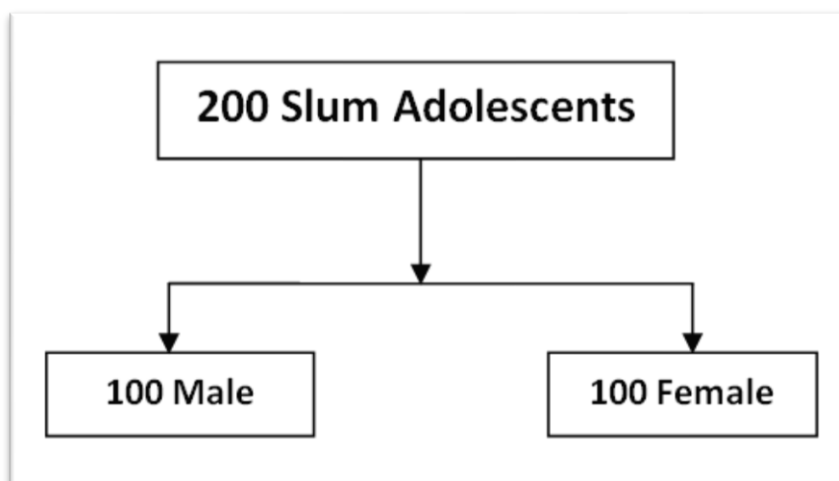


Figure 1: The classification of sample

8. Tools for data collection

For collection of data, the investigator has used following tools:

- Self-concept questionnaire standardized by R. K. Saraswat;
- Career aspiration scale constructed by the investigator.

9. Techniques for data analysis

For analysis and interpretation of data t-test and co-efficient of correlation techniques were used.

10. Result analysis and main findings

A. Result pertaining to the difference in self-concept of school going male and female slum adolescents

To find out the difference in self-concept of school going slum adolescents, t-test was applied and the result is presented in Table 1.

Gender	N	M	SD	df	SEd	't' Value
Male	100	184.6	14.64	198	1.94	3.09
Female	100	190.6	12.81			

Table 1: T-test results

The Table 1 depicts that the obtained t value is 3.09 which is found to be significant at both levels. Therefore, it can be interpreted that there exists a significant

difference in level of self-concept of school going slum adolescents. Thus, H_0 is rejected. The difference in mean scores of male and female slum adolescents is graphically presented below:

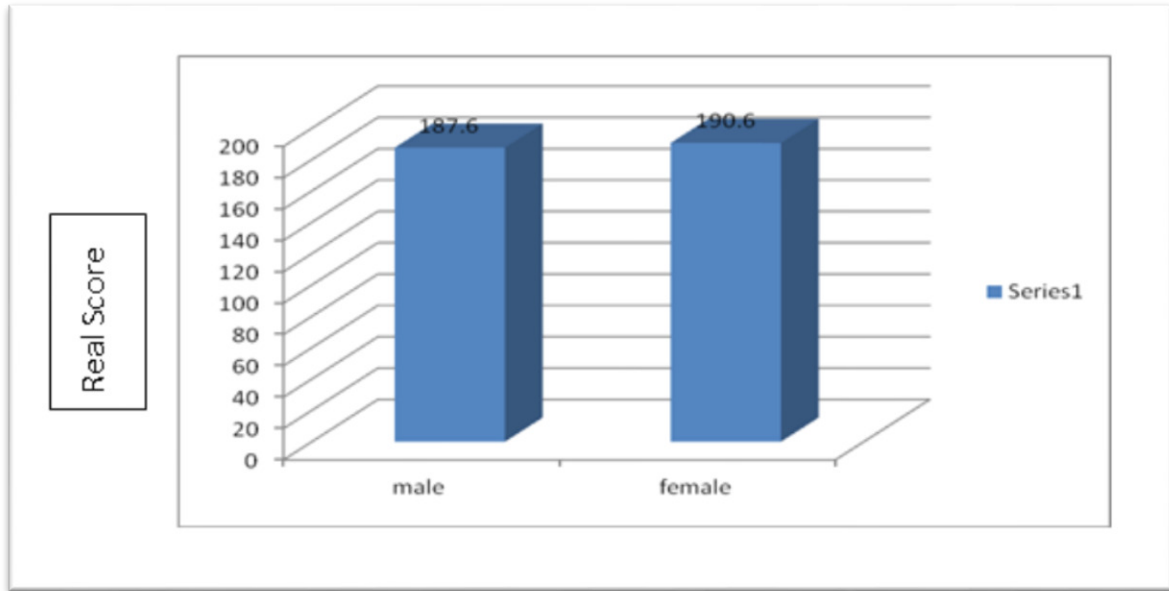


Figure 1: Mean scores of male and female in which female have better mean score than male

B. Result pertaining to the difference in career aspiration of school going male and female slum adolescents

To find out the difference in career aspiration of school going slum adolescents t-test was applied and the result is presented in Table 2.

Gender	N	M	SD	df	SEd	't' Value
Male	100	64	9.6	198	1.17	4.91
Female	100	69.75	6.71			

Table 1: T-test results

The Table 2 depicts that the obtained t value is 4.91 which is found to be significant at both levels. Therefore, it can be interpreted that there exists a significant difference in level of career aspiration of school going slum adolescents. Thus, H_0 is rejected. The differences in mean score of male and female slum adolescents are graphically presented below:

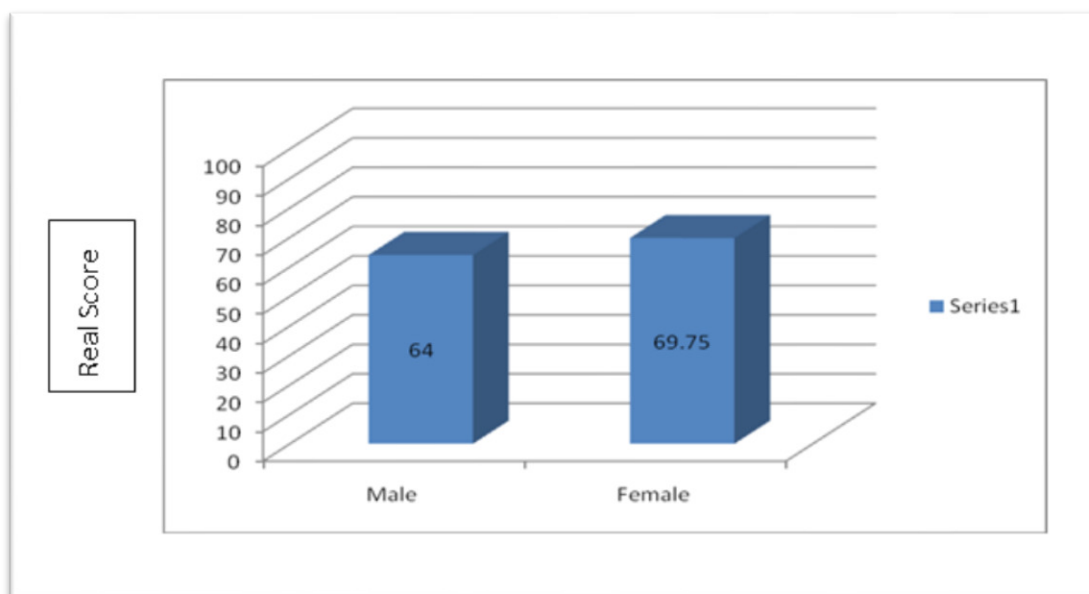


Figure 2: Mean scores of male and female in which female have better mean score than male

C. Result pertaining to the relationship between self-concept and career aspiration of school going male and female slum adolescents

To find out the relationship between self-concept and career aspiration of school going slum adolescents, product movement co-efficient of correlation was calculated and result is presented in Table 3.

Variable	N	r	Coefficient of correlation
Self-concept	200	0.14	Positive relationship
Career Aspiration	200		

Table 3: Co-efficient of correlation

The Table 3 depicts that the obtained coefficient of correlation between self-concept and career aspiration of slum adolescents is positive. Therefore, it can be interpreted that there exists positive significant relationship between self-concept and career aspiration among school going slum adolescents.

11. Main findings and conclusions

- There exists a significant difference in level of self-concept of school going male and female slum adolescents. The difference may be due to parental

encouragement, support of the teachers in participating different curricular and extracurricular activities in schools.

- There exists a significant difference in levels of career aspiration of school going slum adolescents. The difference may be due to initiation and guidance given by teachers and parental inspirations for getting a job for balancing economic condition of the family.
- There exists positive significant relationship between self-concept and career aspiration among school going slum adolescents. The existing relationship may be appropriate co-ordination between teachers and parents as well as the motivation of students to fulfill the parents' immediate needs.

12. Suggestions for further research

- Similar study may be conducted taking into account the psycho-social problems, drug addiction as well as health problems of slum adolescents.
- The sample size should be increased to get more valid and reliable information.
- Similar study can be conducted at a larger scale covering the entire state of Punjab as well as other states of India.
- Study may be replicated on the different sample of schools, colleges and for other different classes in the universities.

13. Recommendations

- Children in slums should grow up with awareness of their right to education. We should help them to get admitted to schools and to explain their parents that why education is worthwhile.
- Slum should be provided resource centres where slum children should have much needed opportunities to play, read and learn. All centres should have computers and broadband internet.
- Public meetings, training sessions and visits by staff and community volunteers should create community wide awareness of the benefits of education.
- Providing help to those children whose parents are unable to pay different fees of the school and needs-based scholarships must be provided to the students.

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