

Vol 5 Issue 8 Sept 2015

ISSN No : 2230-7850

International Multidisciplinary
Research Journal

*Indian Streams
Research Journal*

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RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2230-7850

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CAREER CHOICES AND CAREER ASPIRATIONS OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: A SURVEY IN GULBARGA CITY



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ABSTRACT

Education and career planning is playing significant role in future career aspirations of the females. Pre-university course is major step in getting clear idea about future careers in the relevant subject fields. As such, present study is made to assess the career choice and career aspirations of female students studying in pre-university courses. Totally 400 female students studying in pre-university colleges in Gulbarga (Kalaburagi) city was surveyed and questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. Though females are aimed for higher education and careers, still, few of the female students are facing restrictions from their parents. Further, there are conventional beliefs that have become obstacles to female higher education. Hence it is suggested to the parents to provide freedom to females to choose their careers and encourage their female children in higher education so as to fulfill their career aspirations.

KEYWORDS : *Career Choices, Career Aspirations, Pre-University Education.*



INTRODUCTION:-

Girls' education has been neglected since medieval period in India. Many of the orthodox and conventional beliefs were prevailed earlier and such beliefs have become obstacles for female education. Such beliefs also reserved women's position to household work or kitchen work only. As such, it was believed that women were only for household work and such work include cooking, caring of elders and children, looking after household work and not going for outside work. Though few of the women were getting education, it was treated as

economic burden to families as they are going out with their husband after marriage. Even marriage of girls was involved huge expenditure in terms of marriage expenses and dowry. Due to all these reasons, female education was neglected in India till the last 3-4 decades.

Education has been regarded as the most significant instrument for changing women's subjugated position in the society. It not only develops the personality and rationality of individuals but qualifies them to fulfill certain economic, political and cultural functions and thereby improves their socio-economic status. With the globalization, the female education has been increased and awareness of

their career is also increased. As such, females are more concerned about their future career now. Career is a term defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as an individual's "course or progress through life (or a distinct portion of life)". It usually is considered to pertain to remunerative work (and sometimes also formal education). A career is mostly seen as a course of successive situations that make up a person's occupation.

Government has realized the importance of female education and as such, it encouraged female education by formulated policy of free and compulsory education. Later, Globalization and liberalization policies increased educational and employment opportunities for women. As such, significance of female education was increased. As part of these developments, the privatization has been increased the education and employment of females and new professions and employment opportunities are increased for women. Consequently, more females are participating in education in all the occupations and professions now. Even subject specializations in professions were increased and females are also participating in scientific and technical subject disciplines.

Sociologists are interested in career choice and development primarily because of their consequences for socio-economic inequality and mobility. Occupation is a strong determinant of a person's status within the community, earnings, wealth, and style of life. To the extent that young people follow the same or similar occupations as their parents, the inequalities linked to work will be perpetuated from one generation to the next. Thus sociological interest in occupational choice initially focused on mechanisms of intergenerational mobility- what came to be called the process of stratification. Initial work examined the linkage between fathers' and sons' occupations (Kirkpatrick and Mortimer, 2000).

As girls are increasingly participating in education, they are more concerned about their higher education, professional education and future career aspirations. As such, career choices of females have many aspects. Even females are also facing problems while getting education and going for career of their own choice. Hence, it is essential to study the career choices and career aspirations of the females.

To get professional education or subject-specific education, pre-university education is basic foundation. During their pre-university education, the students learn about different professions that are derived from their group of subjects such as Arts, Commerce and Science. Hence, female education, career choice and career aspirations are assessed better during their pre-university education. In this respect, the present study assessed the career choice and career aspirations of female students studying in pre-university courses in Gulbarga (Kalaburagi) city in Karnataka.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is made:

- + To study whether females of different castes are participating in pre-university education;
- + To look into the future career and career aspirations of female students; and
- + To study the parents' cooperation of female students in achieving career of their own choice.

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS:

The study was begun with secondary literature search and the collected secondary literature formed theoretical background to the present study. It is also decided to survey female students studying in pre-university education and questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. As the area of the Kalaburagi (Gulbarga) city is vast, a sample survey of total 400 female students studying in pre-university colleges was made. Of these respondents, 200 students are studying in Government Colleges and 200 female students are studying in Government Aided Colleges or Private College. The analysis, interpretation and discussion of the primary data collected is made as under.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

The collected primary is analyzed and discussed as under.

1. Subject Stream:

It has been already discussed that, the female students studying in all the three subject streams were selected to collect the primary data. In this regard, the primary data was collected from female students studying in different streams as under.

Table No. 1. Subject Stream

Particulars	Female Students Studying in				Total	
	Government Colleges		Govt. Aided/ Private Colleges			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Arts	74	37.0	53	26.5	127	31.75
Commerce	55	27.5	62	31.0	117	29.25
Science	71	35.5	85	42.5	156	39.00
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Of all the female students surveyed, 127 (31.75%) are studying in Arts, 117 (29.25%) are studying in Commerce and 156 (39.00%) are studying in Science subjects. To maintain balance between all the subjects, more or less equal numbers of respondents were selected based on enrolments to these subjects.

2. Caste:

Similar to religion, caste determines the social culture of the female students. As many of the castes were backward and deprived from education, many of the social welfare measures such as reservation, scholarships, etc, have helped the weaker sections to gain education. In this regard, information was collected on the caste of the respondents and disclosed in the following table.

Table No. 2. Caste

Particulars	Female Students Studying in				Total	
	Government Colleges		Govt. Aided/ Private Colleges			
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Scheduled Caste	44	22.0	30	15.0	74	18.50
Scheduled Tribe	12	6.0	09	4.5	21	5.25
Other Backward Class	121	60.5	110	55.0	231	57.75
Others	23	11.5	51	25.5	74	18.50
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

As stated by all the respondents, 74 (18.50%) belonged to scheduled castes, 21 (5.25%) belonged to scheduled tribes, 231 (57.75%) belonged to other backward classes and the remaining 74 (18.50%) belonged to others or forward castes.

3. Future Educational Aims and Career Aspirations:

Now, the female students are getting educational and employment opportunities equally. As such, they are aimed towards best education and careers so as to get fulfill professional ambitions. In this regard, the primary data was collected from the respondents on the future aims in education and career of the respondents and tabulated as under.

Table No. 3. Future Educational Aims and Career Aspirations

Particulars	Female Students Studying in				Total	
	Government Colleges		Govt. Aided/ Private Colleges			
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%
Medical Practitioner/ Doctor	07	3.5	13	6.5	20	5.00
Engineer/ Technocrat	26	13.0	45	22.5	71	17.75
Administrative Officers	12	6.0	18	9.0	30	7.50
Any Government Job	92	46.0	79	39.5	171	42.75
Better Marriage Prospects	17	8.5	15	7.5	32	8.00
Any Other/ Not Thought	46	23.0	30	15.0	76	19.00
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

It is noted from the above table that, among the total female students surveyed, 20 (5.00%) aimed to become medical practitioners or doctors, 71 (17.75%) aimed to become engineer or technocrats, 30 (7.50%) aimed to become administrative officers by passing IAS, KAS, etc, 171 (42.75%) aimed to get any Government Job, 32 (8.00%) are aimed to get better marriage prospects and 76 (19.00%) have other career options or not thought anything.

4. Parents’ Co-operation to Continue Future Education:

Many of the parents think that female education is economic burden, but such assumption is disappeared in urban areas. Still, many of the parents plan for their female children’s education till their marriage. A few of the parents think for the career choice and career aspirations of their female children that their female children should become doctor, engineer and such other professionals. Even a few parents are not interested in education of their female children’s education. Hence, information as furnished by the respondents on their parents’ cooperation to continue future education is shown as under.

Table No. 4. Parents’ Cooperation to Continue Future Education

Particulars	Female Students Studying in				Total	
	Government Colleges		Govt. Aided/ Private Colleges			
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%
Full Extent	43	21.5	71	35.5	114	28.50
To a Greater Extent	96	48.0	103	51.5	199	49.75
Not At All	61	30.5	26	13.0	87	21.75
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Of the total female students surveyed, 114 (28.50%) have agreed that there is full cooperation from their parents to continue their education in future, 199 (49.75%) have agreed to a greater extent that there is parents’ cooperation to continue their education in future and 87 (21.75%) have not agreed to the same.

5. Extent of Freedom to Choose Career:

Many of the parents impose career choice to their female children strictly and many of the parents leave the future career choice to their children. Similarly, many of the parents also suggest merits and demerits of different careers, so that their female children can choose right career based on specific education. In this regard, the extent of freedom to choose their career as stated by the respondents is tabulated as under.

Table No. 5. Extent of Freedom to Choose Career

Particulars	Female Students Studying in				Total	
	Government Colleges		Govt. Aided/ Private Colleges			
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%
Fully Free	66	33.0	79	39.5	145	36.25
Somewhat Free	82	41.0	48	24.0	130	32.50
Not Free/ Parents’ Interest	52	26.0	73	36.5	125	31.25
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Overall, as stated by the total respondents, 145 (36.25%) are fully free to choose their career on their own, 130 (32.50%) are somewhat free to choose their own career as they are depending suggestions from their parents to choose their career and 125 (31.25%) are not free to choose their own career and their career is entirely depends on parents’ interests.

6. Future Preference after Education:

Generally, parents decide the future of female children after their education and if the parents are conventional, then they prefer marriage of their female children and if the parents are modern, then they prefer employment of their female children. In this respect, the collected primary data on future preference of the respondents after education is shown as under.

Table No. 6. Future Preference after Education

Particulars	Female Students Studying in				Total	
	Government Colleges		Govt. Aided/ Private Colleges			
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%
Employment/ Job	104	52.0	97	46.5	201	50.25
Professional Practice/ Increasing Skills	33	16.5	58	29.0	91	22.75
Marriage	17	8.5	15	7.5	32	8.00
Determined by Parents	46	23.0	30	15.0	76	19.00
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

Among all the respondents surveyed, after their completion of their education, 201 (50.25%) have mentioned that they wish to get employment, 91 (22.75%) have stated that they would like to continue professional practice in different professions like medicine, engineering, law, etc, 32 (8.00%) have remarked that they are going for marriage and 76 (19.00%) are uncertain about their future after completion of their education and as they have thought that their future is determined by their parents.

7. Factors Influence Future Education & Career of Females:

The respondents are of teen age and as such, they don't have adequate knowledge about different higher education options and careers. Still, many of them are aware about different professions in medicine, engineering, technology, education, law, etc. Even many of these respondents are also aimed to choose and achieve their future education and career in these professions. Hence, it was asked to the respondents to furnish the factors that influence their future education and career and the collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 7. Factors Influence Future Education & Career of Females

Particulars	Female Students Studying in				Total	
	Government Colleges		Govt. Aided/ Private Colleges			
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%
Caste/ Religion	35	17.5	28	14.0	63	15.75
Money	63	31.5	92	46.0	155	38.75
Gender	27	13.5	14	7.0	41	10.25
Interests of Parents	72	36.0	65	32.5	137	34.25
Any Other	03	1.5	01	0.5	04	1.00
Total	200	100	200	100	400	100

To summarize, of all the respondents covered under the study, 155 (38.75%) have stated that money influence the future education and career of females followed by, 137 (34.25%) have expressed that interests of parents influence the future education and career of females, 63 (15.75%) have remarked that caste or religion influence the future education and career of females, 41 (10.25%) have mentioned that interests of parents influence the future education and career of females and 04 (1.00%) have given

other factors that influence the future career prospects respectively.

CONCLUSION:

Though, females are getting equal opportunities in education and employment, still the conventional and orthodox beliefs such as female education is additional economic burden, females are for household work, etc. are major barriers to become obstacles to female career aspirations. Further, the restrictions of parents are acting as barriers or obstacles to female career. Hence, it is essential needed to increase awareness of parents to achieve gender equality and preference to female education and career.

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