Chapter II

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

* *Theoretical overview*
* *Review of the related studies*
* *Conclusion*

The review of related literature is a crucial aspect of any research endeavor. It provides an overview of historical perspective, development, deviations and new development of research in that area and also guides to identify the methods appropriate to the present problem under investigation.

The literature review is an integral part of the entire research process and makes a valuable contribution to almost every operational step. It has value even before the first step; that is when we are merely thinking about a research question that we may want to find answers through research journey. In the initial stages of research it helps to establish the theoretical roots of study clarify ideas and develop methodology, but later on the literature review serve to enhance and consolidate knowledge base and helps to integrate findings with the existing body of knowledge. It also helps to bring clarity and focus to research problem, improve methodology, broadens knowledge base in research area and provide contextualize findings.

Vockell (1983) has pointed out that the main purpose of the study is to put the hypothesis to be examined in the research report in to its proper context. Secondary purposes of this part of the report are to provide readers with guidelines regarding where they can look to find more information and to establish the authors credential by letting readers know that the researcher is aware of what has been going on with regard to current and related topics. The review of literature provides some insights regarding strong points and limitation of the previous studies. It enables the investigator to improve his own investigation.

It is very essential for every investigator to be up to-date in his/her information about the literature related to his own problem already done by others. It is considered the most important pre-requisite to actual planning and conducting the study. The researcher can take advantages from similar or related literature as regards to methodology, data collection procedure adopted and conclusion drawn. He can justify his own endeavor in the field. Turney and Robb (1971) state, “the identification of a problem, development of a research design and determination of the size and scope of the problem, all depend to a great extent on the care and intensity with which a researcher has examined the literature related to the intended research’’.

A valid investigation can’t be done without careful consideration of the previous attempts related to it. The review of literature also helps in providing placement and direction for the study to fit into its existing body of knowledge.

In this chapter the investigator discuss the theoretical overview of Educational Aspirations and review of related studies conducted in the area Educational Aspirations.

* Theoretical overview
* Review of related studies

**Theoretical overview**

**Aspiration**

**Origin of Concept and Definition**

The construct of aspirations find its origin in the experimental research on "level of aspiration" conducted in the early 1930s. Although work in this area contributed to our understanding of human behavior, many of the findings were produced from "within the laboratory" and thus had few implications for students or schools.

The concept of "level of aspiration" was first noted by Dembo (1931/1976) in an experiment designed to investigate anger. In an effort to evoke frustration and anger, subjects were asked to engage in tasks that were either very difficult or impossible to perform. An unintended consequence of the experiment was that subjects formulated their own, medial aim when the original objective was too difficult to attain. Early level of aspiration experiments explored the conditions for success and failure experiences (Frank, 1941). In those instances, success and failure experiences were inferred from the general behavior of the subjects. The attempt to operationalize the concept of aspirations was made through the quantification of such measures as height, rigidity or mobility and responsiveness. These all represented specific goalsetting behaviors, such as the number of times the level of aspiration moved in the same direction as the preceding performance (i.e., responsiveness). In 1931 the first major psychological experiment related to level of aspiration was conducted by Hoppe. He examined factors that influenced goal-setting behavior by measuring the effect of success and failure on individuals' decisions to raise or lower their level of aspiration. Hoppe's research introduced the notion that experiences of success and failure were indicative of intermediate goal attainment. Hoppe concluded that "the experience of a performance as a success or failure does not depend alone on its objective goodness, but on whether the level of aspiration appears to be reached or not reached" (Frank, 1935a).

During the 1940s the definition of level of aspiration underwent further refinement. Social comparison theory indicated that within groups there are pressures toward uniformity. Given this phenomenon, it is not unreasonable to assume that the aspirations of students are influenced by standards implicitly or explicitly set by the school and/or peers. It is regarded as "the level of future performance in a familiar task which an individual explicitly undertakes to reach" (Adams, 1939; Frank, 1941). Indeed, comparisons of the adequacy of performance to the task were supplemented by references to the performance of the group (Lewin, Dembo, Festinger, & Sears, 1944; Sears, 1940). Success and failure experiences were manifested through the social environment. Ultimately, Frank (1941) viewed level of aspiration as the "final integration of complex and constantly shifting personal and situational factors." Some of these factors have been identified in the literature. For instance, the level of aspiration situation was thought to pose a threat to self-esteem. To deal with this perceived threat, individuals employ two strategies: they try to do well and they manipulate their level of aspiration. In this sense, level of aspiration characterized "a compromise between the subject's evaluation of his ability with respect to the difficulty of the task and his desire to achieve a high level of performance-that is, between a judgment and a goal" (Frank, 1941). Levels of aspiration experiments have significantly contributed to subsequent interpretations of the concept of aspirations; however, they were of limited scope and direction.

Numerous investigations during that era attempted to quantify aspiration level by engaging subjects in a variety of tasks and questioning them in a multitude of ways as to their intended performance. Frank (1941) recognized that statistical analyses of this nature were "clearly too superficial to cast much light on the dynamics of the level of aspiration." He reported that the "significance of [these] studies of the level of aspiration lies in their demonstration of a promising experimental approach to problems of success and failure, of the formation of goals, and the genesis of the 'self' and its relations to personality structure, achievement, and the social environment." Social and cultural factors undoubtedly influence level of aspiration.

The definition of aspirations can be contextualized from both the present and future perspectives. For these reasons, it is hypothesized that a student with aspiration is one who is involved in various activities for both their inherent value and enjoyment and their connection to future goals. The social construct of the term aspirations lends itself to a variety of definitions and interpretations. Does it refer to goals, expectations, or dreams? Intentions? Performance motivation? Should aspirations be viewed from a short term or long term perspective or both? Is it a general, overall measure or context- specific? Is it a value-laden or value-neutral concept? Thus, "Aspirations" embodies several different meanings, and thus deserves clarification.

Aspirations can be defined as a student's ability to identify and set goals for the future, while being inspired in the present to work toward those goals. This construct of aspirations has two major underpinnings: inspiration and ambitions. Inspiration reflects that an activity is exciting and enjoyable to the individual and the awareness of being fully and richly involved in life here and now. It is depicted by an individual who becomes involved in an activity for its intrinsic value and enjoyment. An individual with a high level of inspiration is one who believes an activity is useful and enjoyable. Ambitions represent the perception that an activity is important as a means to future goals. It reflects individuals' perceptions that it is both possible and desirable to think in future terms and to plan for the future. This way of viewing student aspirations is unique in that it combines the motivational components of the present (inspiration) with the future (ambitions). Ideally accepted definition is - an individual with aspirations must exhibit behavioral traits reflective of both ambitions and inspiration. That is, they must have the ability to identify and set goals for the future while being motivated in the present to progress toward those goals. Work began with its focus on educational goals, through the historical analysis and experience in schools.

It is seen that the concept of aspirations being played out in virtually all arenas of personal growth. Specifically, aspirations can and must be recognized not only with respect to educational attainments, but vocational and perhaps, most importantly, quality of life issues as well. Occupational or vocational aspirations are more focused in the field of Education and Psychology. Educational Psychology dates back to the 5th century BC, when Democritus first emphasized the role of family in education and training of children. By the end of 19th century, the role of heredity and environment became a theme of discussion and researches were conducted on various aspects of education like learning, motivation, emotion, personality and individual difference. Aspirations especially occupational aspirations have been studied in relation to motivational determinants (Kumar, et al., 1986; Dabir, 1986), intelligence, creativity and SES (Bharadwaj, 1978).

**Educational aspiration**

Aspirations begin to be shaped early in child’s life, but are modified by experience and the environment. Aspirations tend to decline as children mature in response to their growing understanding of the world and constraints imposed by previous choices and achievements. This decline is particularly marked for those, who face multiple barriers. Aspiration means a strong desire to achieve something high or great. Aspirations, however, usually can not the achievement of something high or great. These also address both present and future perspectives. According to Hurlock (1973), “Aspiration means a longing for what one has achieved with advancement on it’s as its end”.According to Sirin, Diemer, Jackson and Howell (2004), “Aspirations have been defined as the educational and vocational dreams that students have for the future.”

Educational aspiration is an important variable in predicting academic achievement and may be seen as an element in academic achievement motivation, focusing as they do on the desire for success and the development of goals to succeed in particular educational fields or to gain a particular degree. There are different theoretical perspectives on the interpretation of educational aspiration and its significance for the future behavior. The Dominant Model is the sociological theory of status attainment, which stresses aspiration as a cognitive state that motivates or drives adolescents to strive for academic success (Khoo and Ainsley, 2005). The model recognizes that both personal dimension (e.g. the impact of others or students perception of their own personal attributes) and social dimension (e.g. quality of schooling or parental social class) are important transmitting factors. Parents, in particular, have been seen as the most significant in shaping aspirations because they provide the opportunities, encouragement and support for their children’s learning (Garg, Kauppi, Lewko, Urajnik, 2002). However in economic models, the problem of educational aspiration is viewed from a different perspective. They portray educational aspiration as a purely rational assessment of students’ economic and social circumstances. There are three groups of factors of educational aspiration: background factor, personal factors and environmental factors. Background factors comprised of social and demographic attributes such as age, gender, socio-economic status and family structure. The personal factor is psychological in nature and is composed of an individual’s personal attitude towards education, school and work. The environmental factors include aspects of social support as parental involvement, affecting the individual. The influence of these factors is well documented in the literature (Garg, Kauppi, Lewko, Urajnik, 2002).

Educational aspirations are influenced by multiple intrapersonal and systematic factors (Gottfredson, 2002). Some individual factors related to students’ aspiration include their level of intrapersonal skills, self-reliance, self-control, self-concept and low mature responsibility (Marjoribans, 2002). Systematic variables related to educational aspirations include students’ socio-economic status (SES), the level of family’s engagement in their children’s education, ethnicity, race, family aspiration and level of parental education.

Education is a process and kind of activity in relation to human beings. It is a continuous attempt to develop all capacities of the students to control their neighboring environment and to fulfill their needs. Although education is a part of human life, it cannot help the pursuers unless they have the required amount of educational aspirations. The term level of aspiration is best explained as a frame of reference involving self-esteem. When level of aspiration is centered on the field of education we may refer to it as level of educational aspiration. It is considered as a concept, referring orientation towards educational goals spaced in a continuum of difficulty and social prestige and arranged in an educational hierarchy.

Garg et.al (2002) studied that the impact of family factors had their influence on shaping student’s educational aspirations through their impact on attitudes, extra-curricular reading towards homework, school and perceptions of students of their parent’s educational aspirations. Koa (2003) analyze that educational aspirations are a significant predictor of eventual educational attainment. Singh (2011) examined the educational aspirations in high school students and found that girls have less educational aspirations than boys.

The educational aspiration is a topic that lies on the edge of economic analysis. The aspirations are studied rather by sociologists and psychologists than economists. There are different theoretical perspectives on the interpretation of educational aspirations and their significance for the future behaviour. The dominant model is the sociological theory of status attainment, which stresses aspirations as a cognitive state that motivates or drives young people to strive for academic success (Khoo and Ainsley, 2005). The model recognizes that both personal dimension (e.g. the impact of significant others or students’ perception of their own personal attributes) and social dimensions (e.g. quality of schooling, or parental social class) are important transmitting factors. Parents take part in shaping aspirations because they provide the opportunities, encouragement and support for their children’s learning (Garg et al., 2002). However, in economic models the problem of educational aspirations is viewed from a different perspective. They portray educational aspirations as a purely rational assessment of students’ economic and social circumstances. Students may aspire to continue in post-compulsory education as a result of a realistic evaluation of both push factors as, e.g. the avoidance of unemployment, and pull factors, such as higher expected earnings in the long term. In this framework educational aspirations have no motivational overtones. There are only rational judgments based on current economic circumstances.

The education itself creates better economic perspectives and is a necessity in today’s world. Education is also important for the economic and social position of a person. The better educated people are the wider perspective and the better material and social position. The share of highly trained workers is a crucial asset in providing and sustaining fast economic growth. From the economic point of view, aspirations create a strong stimulus for younger generations. They are determined by the economic and social position of the family and by a social and economic surrounding.

Usually parents expect that their children at least retain the same socio-economic status. Therefore, aspirations and the economic process of forming them can be linked to the economic theory of clubs (Buchanan, 1965). However, a possibility of preventing consumption by entire groups of people is limited, but it is also a non-rival good in that its consumption by one individual does not curb the consumption of another individual.

On the other hand, there exist differences in accessibility to education. The most obvious is between towns and rural areas. Usually various educational institutions are located in the former, while in most cases just only one is available in the latter. Moreover, this no choice option in rural areas may influence the process of aspirations formation.

The problems in economic studies on educational aspirations are twofold. The first is that a vast majority of the research on educational aspirations concentrates on surveying young pupils, because correlation coefficient between educational intention and the achieved result is high (Khoo and Ainsley, 2005). However, adolescents are usually not independent in their educational decisions as it is assumed in economic models of choice, and up to some particular point are commanded or guided by parents. On the other hand, parents may have unrealistic educational aspirations for their children, especially those who strive to provide income support for the family. Many researchers indicate that economic pressure has a negative impact on parents (see Trusty et al., 1997). Economic stress lowers the educational expectations simply because parents are devoted to providing income for their family. The second is also methodological in its nature. The personal and environmental factors are difficult to measure and hard to quantify. Both factors require the inclusion of psychological variables, however, this is always problematic in quantitative researches. There is neither well established theory, nor strong empirical evidence.

Educational aspirations have been studied intensively by different disciplines to explain educational disparities, including psychological, social-psychological, sociological and economic perspectives (Domina et al. 2011; Rojewski 2005). Yet, despite the frequent use of the term ‘educational aspirations’, which is generally used to refer to the educational goals students set for themselves, there is no single and universally accepted definition or common agreement as to what the term means (Lent et al. 1994; Quaglia and Cobb 1996; Rojewski 2005). A variety of terms like plans, decisions or preferences are commonly used – sometimes interchangeably – as they are all essentially viewed as goal terms that primarily differ along dimensions such as the degree of specificity and proximity to the choice implementation (Lent et al. 1994; Rojewski 2005).

For instance, career goals have often been referred to as aspirations when they are assessed remotely in time from the decision situation and do not demand commitment or reality considerations, whereas terms like expressed choices, plans or decisions are more frequently used when goals are assessed near or at the point of transition (Lent et al. 1994, p. 85). The importance ascribed to student aspirations derives from the acknowledgment that human behavior is not only regulated by external influences but that it is also extensively motivated by self-influence. While aspirations may be concrete or vague, the essence of the idea is that desired future events will direct and motivate effort in the present and thereby increase students’ chances to succeed in the educational system (Bandura 1986, 1991; Caprara et al. 2008; Lent et al. 1994; Quaglia and Cobb 1996; Rojewski 2005). To take into account that expressed aspirations may not necessarily reflect the outcomes an individual realistically expects to achieve; the literature makes a clear theoretical distinction between idealistic and realistic aspirations, which are also referred to as aspirations and expectations in the international literature (Hanson 1994; Rojewski 2005; Spenner and Featherman 1978).

Idealistic aspirations refer to desired attainment levels, which are not limited by constraints such as level of educational performance and the family’s financial resources (Hauser and Anderson 1991, p. 270; Rojewski 2005, p. 133). Realistic aspirations relate to the perceived likelihood of success and reflect the level of education students realistically expect to complete (Haller 1968, p. 484; Rojewski 2005, p. 133).

Besides the use of subjective data to predict later attainment outcomes, student aspirations are frequently assessed to provide information on their belief-formation and decision-making processes, which cannot be investigated by means of the analysis of objective transition data (Jæger 2007; Manski 2004). For instance, data on students’ idealistic and realistic aspirations is commonly collected to provide information on the congruence or discrepancy between the two, and to thereby obtain insight into students’ views toward their particular circumstances, abilities, and the likely effects of perceived barriers and future opportunities (Gottfredson 1981; Ma and Wang 2001; Rojewski 2005).

Theory of neighborhood effects put forward by Simon (2007) states that the presence of working and middle class neighbors serve as a positive aspire for promoting conventional behavior. The author describes that the presence of that may increase the quality of schools, social networks and thus enhances the level of aspiration for education i.e. educational aspiration increases, life satisfaction also increases. For the betterment of satisfaction it is to be known that the individual differences, internalized personal values, level of ambition, achievement, differences in the goals etc, must be developed. The better perception of opportunities fuel educational aspiration and life satisfaction.

Nurturing aspirations and potential theory of excellence by Grimmett (2007) says that to achieve excellence, potential has to be shaped, directed, and guided into an intentional purposeful and relatively structural force, named educational aspiration. It is highly related to commitment, hard work, determination, and perseverance. Simon (2007) studied the effect of neighborhood context on the college aspirations of Afro-American adolescents. The results showed that concentrated neighborhood disadvantage exert a significant influence on college aspiration even when accounting for the micro level context of adolescent. Over all the findings suggest that living in a disadvantaged context lowers Educational aspiration.

**Review of related studies**

Jain and Shah (1974) aimed to examine the extent to which sociocultural variables such as religion, age, education, occupation and type of family of the people were related to their educational aspirations. In their study age was found to be a significant factor in influencing the aspirations of an individual. There seemed to be a positive relationship between the education of the household and his educational aspirations.

Klailat (1981) examined the relationship of socioeconomic status to the educational aspirations and expectations for sixth and ninth grade pupils. The results showed that all the 29 mediating variables, grades and parental encouragement consistently had the largest effects, and background variables do not have a direct effect but are mediated through the social psychological variables. In general, more of the variance in educational aspirations and expectations can be explained by grades, sex and nationality.

Prince (1981) conducted a study in order to estimate the level of aspiration for education of the deprived community pupils, to estimate the differences in the levels of aspiration for education of the backward, deprived and forward community pupils in respect of sex, class, urban, rural, backward and' socio-economic status. The results of the study revealed that backward community pupils had highest level of aspiration which was significant as compared to forward and deprived community pupils. Deprived community rural pupils were having higher level of aspiration. There was a highly significant relationship between the levels of scholastic achievement and socio-economic status and the level of aspiration for education.

Coleman and Hoffer (1987) conclude that closeness of social relationship between students; families and schools enhance the educational aspiration of students. Authors point out that social capital in response to family relations and community social organizations is useful to develop social capital of students.

Kamat (1989) investigated the educational aspirations of backward class and non-backward class students. The study revealed that the backward class and the non-backward class students differed in their educational aspirations.

Kumar (1989) conducted a study on adjustment, attitude, interest and level of aspiration of the tribal and non-tribal students of the secondary level of the Lohit district in Arunachal Pradesh found that the tribal and non-tribal differed in terms of their levels of aspiration, non-tribal showed higher level of aspiration. Level of aspiration was not found to be related to attitude towards school, adjustment and educational interest either for tribal and non-tribal students.

Lamb (1989) from his study conducted on secondary school students in Melbourne reported that cultural consumption had a major impact in the educational aspiration of both boys and girls.

Pareek (1990) conducted a study on the self-concept, personality traits and aspirations of the adolescents studying in Central schools, state government schools and private schools in Rajasthan found that there existed no significant relationship between personality traits and level of aspiration among students from different types of schools.

McCracken and Barnicas (1991) studied differences between urban and rural schools, student characteristics and students aspirations in Ohio and found that rural youth are somewhat less likely to plan to attend colleges and more likely to plan for vocational training than their non-rural peers.

Das (1991) conducted a study on educational and vocational aspiration level of tribal and non-tribal youths of the south Gujarat region found that there was no significant difference of socioeconomic status with respect to locality on educational and vocational aspiration levels.

Rajput (1992) conducted a study on Educational Aspiration and academic achievement of secondary school students of class XI to XII of higher secondary schools of Garhwali region, covering male as well as female students belonging to Urban and Rural areas. The result reveals that the educational aspiration of students was influenced positively by their parental encouragement.

Marjoribanks (1996) observed the relationship between family contexts, adolescents’ perceptions of learning environment and their aspirations, and measures of young adults’ social-status attainment in a longitudinal study. Data was collected from 320 Australians who participated in surveys when they are 11-21 years old. The results of the investigations suggest the propositions that when family contexts were defined conjointly by parents’ aspirations and their individualistic-collectivistic achievement-value orientations: family contexts have significant associations with parents’ socialization practices, adolescents’ perceptions of socialization practices and their aspirations, and adults’ social-status attainment. Adolescents’ perceptions of parents, school settings and their aspirations mediate relationships between family contexts and young adults’ status attainment, and there are family-context differences in the nature of the associations between perceptions of immediate settings, adolescents’ aspirations, and young adults’ social-status attainment.

Teachman et al. (1997) found that family social capital has a vital role to improve the educational aspiration of children.

Kao and Tienda (1998) studied Educational Aspirations of Minority Youth and found that the relative shares of minority youth who have high educational aspirations are high from eighth to twelfth grades. However, ethnic groups differ in the extent to which high educational aspirations are maintained such that black and Hispanic youth have less stable aspirations. Their results suggest that family socioeconomic status (SES) not only contributes to ambitious aspirations in eighth grade but, more important, to the maintenance of high aspirations throughout the high school years.

Goldeberg (2001) found that the association between students’ aspiration and educational attainment has two unidirectional aspects; one is driven aspect and the other is performance aspect. The aspiration driven aspect suggests that aspiration has no achievement. Conversely, the performance aspect suggests that differences in academic performance are cause for a variance in educational aspiration when students’ academic self-concept and educational attainment have a strong association. In fact, students’ individual perception of their own performance massively influences their own decisions, whether they continue their post-secondary education or not.

Sungoh (2002) compared the educational and vocational aspiration of Doordarshan-viewing higher secondary students in Meghalaya. The findings revealed that, i. Students in general have low educational aspiration and vocational aspiration. ii. Rare viewers were found to have the highest educational aspiration followed by the occasional and regular viewers but there is no significant difference among the vocational aspiration of regular, occasional and rare viewers. iii. Female viewers have higher educational aspiration than males but male viewers have higher vocational aspiration than female viewers. iv. There is no significant difference between the tribal and non tribal viewers in their viewer educational aspiration but there is no significant difference between the tribal and nontribal viewers. v. Commerce students have the highest educational aspiration followed by arts and science but science students have the highest vocational aspiration followed arts and commerce students. vi. There is a high degree of relationship between educational and vocational aspirations of the students.

Gottfredson (2002) posits that student’s educational aspiration is influenced by multiple interpersonal and systemic factors. Social capital is the most important contributor in improving the educational aspiration which mediates the effects of students’ socioeconomic background and educational aspiration.

Buchmann and Dalton (2002) conducted a study on Interpersonal Influences and educational aspirations in 12 countries. The results indicate that peers and parents influence educational aspirations in countries with 53 relatively undifferentiated secondary schooling, like the United States, while the influence of significant others is negligible in societies with more differentiated secondary education. In these latter systems, it appears that aspirations are largely determined by the type of school the student attends; there is little room for interpersonal effects. The effects of significant others on students’ aspirations depend, in large part, on the structural features of the educational systems in which they operate.

Marjoribanks (2003) observes that students’ academic performance significantly impacts their self-concept which later enhances their educational aspiration.

Khattab (2003) investigated the educational aspirations of minority students: the role of social capital and students’ perceptions. The major findings were, Palestinian adolescents have very high educational aspirations. The students (boys and girls) in the ninth grade are more likely to aspire to higher tertiary education than the students in the eleventh grade. In fact, 45% of boys and 44% of girls in the ninth grade have this aspiration, whereas the equivalent proportions for boys and girls in the eleventh grade are 38 and 33%, respectively. The differences between both grades (ages), as well as the differences between boys and girls in the eleventh grade, may reflect different processes or mechanisms that work differentially along the lines of age and gender. Both grades, both family socio-economic status and cultural capital have a strong and significant influence on students’ educational aspirations, though cultural capital has the stronger influence. Being Christian has a significant, though not very strong effect in the ninth grade, in the eleventh grade; this variable has no effect on student’s aspirations. While in both grades, students’ educational achievement and investment in homework have a strong and significant influence on their aspirations, the effect of private school is only significant in the ninth grade. Parental involvement in education is significantly related to student’s aspirations in the ninth grade, whereas it has no effect among students in the eleventh grade.

Joise and Arockiasamy (2003) carried out an investigation on educational aspiration of first and subsequent generation learners in relation to certain psychological and home factors. The educational aspiration of the first generation learners is very high, only 53% of them have high level of self-concept. 52% of first generation learners have high level of frustration. The independence level of first generation learners is less than that of the subsequent generation learners. The first generation learners have less favorable home setting than the subsequent generation learners.

Sharma (2003) explored a study on vocational maturity and level of aspiration in relation to scholastic achievement. The major findings were, i. The high achievers and low achievers were found significantly differing from each other regarding their career attitude and career competence as high achievers were found more mature towards vocational maturity. ii. The high achievers and low achievers did not differ from each other regarding their level aspiration as both were equally aspiring. iii. No difference was found between high achiever boys and girls regarding career attitude and career competence but low achiever boys were mature significantly in comparison to low achievers girls regarding their career attitude and career competence. iv. No difference was found between boys and girls in respect of level of aspiration. v. It was found that scholastic achievement has a great influence on vocational maturity but no impact on level of aspiration.

Bakar and Mohamed (2004) at Malaysia conducted study to assess the academic performance, educational and occupational aspirations of students from technical secondary schools. Two hundred forty-three students were involved in the study. The findings of the study showed that technical secondary school students have high educational aspiration. The majority plan to study for at least a Bachelor degree. About 76% of them plan to enroll in technical courses especially in engineering. About 60% of the students have an average general academic ability and about 50% have an average academic ability in mathematics and sciences. No significant correlations were observed between academic achievement and educational aspirations and occupational aspiration. The majority of the students were confident in obtaining a place for further education, the area of studies and the occupations they aspired for. Students were moderately knowledgeable about the field of studies and the occupations they aspire for. Low significant correlations were observed between academic achievement and educational aspirations and occupational aspiration.

Nayagam and Arockiasamy (2004) made an investigation on self-esteem and educational aspiration in higher secondary school students. The major findings were, self-esteem of higher secondary students is found to be high. In the case of non-metric students, their self-esteem is high (68%) followed by XII standard students (55%) and male students (52%). Female students’ self-esteem is neither high nor low. It is further inferred that educational aspiration of students is found to be low. Only XII standard students (52%) and non-metric students (57%) are found to be having high educational aspiration. Metric and non-metric school students differ significantly in the self-esteem and educational aspiration. Male XII standard students have higher self-esteem than female X standard students. Female X standard students have a higher educational aspiration than male X standard students.

Karen (2004) found that educational aspiration and self esteem of returning and traditional community college students are posses a positive relationship. There is Educational aspiration can directly predicted by their self esteem.(Ahmavaaraetal, Nayagam and Arokiasmy 2004) reported that the higher secondary school students of Tamilnadu shows a relationship between students in relation to environment. Stratified sampling was used in 400 students covering 200 from science and 200 from arts group were selected. The sample was confined to only male students of plus two levels. The tools used include educational aspiration scale, school adjustment inventory, study of values scale and study of school environment scale. The collected data were treated using mean, standard deviation and‘t’. The results revealed the relationship between Educational Aspiration of students belonging to rich school environment were significantly higher social value than their counter parts, from poor school environment groups. Students belonging to rich school environment differed significantly from that of poor school environment.

Looker and Thiessen (2004) examined the educational aspirations of 15-year-old Canadian youth. A two-stage sampling design was used, of schools and students within schools. Study found gender effect on educational plans: girls perform better in school and have higher educational aspirations. Further it revealed parental socio-economic status affects the youth plans. The study established implication of community size and frequently use of Information Technology for educational purposes for higher aspirations.

Wu and Chih-chun (2005) carried out a research on educational aspirations and high school students’ academic growth: a hierarchical linear growth model. The major findings were, a statistically positive significant bi-directional influence, however, was found between the students’ educational aspirations and their mathematics achievement across the years of the students’ secondary education. Though student’s perceptions of their parent’s educational aspirations for them had no effect on student’s subsequent mathematics achievement, student’s previous achievement mildly affected how they perceived their parents’ subsequent aspirations. Various types of parental involvement influenced their children’s mathematics achievement differently, which reaffirms that parental involvement is a multidimensional construct. Schools with more parental involvement had higher mathematics scores after controlling for the school size and poverty level of the students and families based on free and reduced lunch measure. Gender difference was only found in the initial status but not in students’ mathematics growth rate.

Khan (2006) conducted the study to find out and compare occupational aspirations of boys and girls studying in different types of senior secondary schools of Delhi. The study also aimed to identify the main occupational aspirations of students in science/social science/commerce groups in the academic stream of senior secondary schools. The study concluded no significant difference between occupational aspirations of girls and boys of all the schools taken together. However, the difference between occupational aspirations of boys and girls within each type of school was found to be significant. It was also found that students from science and commerce, both the streams have, by and large, the same aspiration level but found significant difference between the commerce and social sciences students in terms of their occupational aspirations. The occupational aspiration of girl students of social sciences and commerce streams were found to be significant.

Lakshmanan and Aruna (2006) made a study on adolescent educational aspirations and their relationship to college choice using hierarchical linear modeling and group-based mixture modeling. Major findings of the study showed that, i. Average student aspirations remained fairly stable from the eighth grade through the twelth, showing a slight but not significant increase, ii. Most of the factors considered in the study affected initial student aspirations, iii. Seven distinct clusters of aspiration trajectories can be identified; iv. Many students who had high aspirations had failed to build a wide choice set of post secondary institutions to apply to; v. Among the factors considered, educational aspirations had the strongest impact on the number of applications filed; vi. Parental expectations and involvement had effects on early student aspirations but not on the number of applications filed; vii. Students who had both high and stable aspirations from the eighth grade through the twelfth generally had a wider choice set of applications than students who demonstrated a steady increase in aspirations.

Prasteyo and Rojo (2006) investigated a study of educational and career aspirations of Semarang freshmen universities, Indonesia. The results indicated that, for both public and private university students, almost all student characteristic variables that correlate with educational and career aspirations showed a significant positive effect and the degree of its correlation for the public sample is greater than for the private counterpart. For both public and private university students, almost all parental socio-economic status indicated a positive significance for educational and career aspirations. For private students, there were some significant negative effects of parental encouragement, but on the other hand, no significant negative effects appear on educational and career aspirations. In the public university sample, almost all collegiate experiences variables that had correlation to educational and career aspirations showed significant positive effects.

Vaidya (2006) aimed to understand Educational Aspiration of Higher Secondary school students in relation to different variables like impact of interaction of family, school based and personal factors, and socioeconomic status on educational aspiration of higher secondary school students; further study made an effort to find out the relation between educational aspirations and educational achievement of 480 sample consisted of boys 240 and girls 240 from four higher secondary schools. They were selected by stratified random cluster sampling technique. Findings of the study indicated the awareness towards education was increased in the society. The study also concluded that gender, area and socio-economic status of the students have a significant group effect on their educational aspiration and type of schools; stream and standard of students do not have a significant group effect on their educational aspiration. The study concluded a positive correlation between educational aspiration and socio-economic status, educational achievement, achievement- motivation of the students and a negative correlation between educational aspiration and self-concept.

Uniyal and Prashad (2007) studied the level of aspiration and schools achievement in relation to sex and caste. The major findings were, i. The gender and achievement of students do have interactive effects on level of aspiration. ii. Boys and girls did not differ in their educational aspiration. iii. The high achiever students had a higher aspiration level in comparison to their counterpart low achiever students. iv. High achiever students from all caste categories were found to have significantly higher mean scores on educational aspiration in comparison to their counterpart.

Pardeep (2007) conducted a study on the effect of stress and educational aspirations on the academic achievement of adolescent students; found that adolescents differ significantly in their levels of stress i.e. on the basis of high and low levels of stress. High stress and low stress students differ significantly in their level of educational aspirations. Adolescents having high level of stress and low level of stress do not differ significantly in their scores of academic achievements. Educational aspirations level influences academic achievement of adolescents. The interaction between stress, educational aspirations and academic achievement was not found to be significant.

Girls consistently have higher aspirations than do boys (Schoon, Martin and Ross 2007) and concern has been noted recently about the low aspirations of males from working-class backgrounds. Parents also tend to have higher aspirations for their daughters than their sons, although this is a reversal of the situation in previous generations and there are also differences according to ethnicity. More traditional families who want their daughters to marry young are likely to hinder educational and occupational aspirations. This is a particular issue in Pakistani and Bangladeshi families.

Rai and Annaraja (2008) made a study on self-esteem and the level of aspiration of high school students in Sri Lankan refugee camps. The major findings were i. There is no significant difference between boys and girls in their self-esteem and level of aspiration. ii. There is no significant difference between students of English and Tamil medium schools in their self-esteem and level of aspiration. iii. There is no significant difference between rural and urban high school students in their self-esteem. But there is significant difference between rural and urban high school students in their level of aspiration. iv. There is no significant difference among VIII, IX and X standard students in their self-esteem and level of aspiration. v. There is no significant difference among students of government, aided and self-financing schools in their self-esteem and level of aspiration.

Raja and Rajendran (2008) investigated the level of aspiration and self concept among the college students. The findings were, 66.9% of college students have moderate level of aspiration and 70% of college students have moderate level of self concept. There is a significant relationship between level of aspiration and self-concept of the college students.

Allen (2008) conducted a study on educational aspiration and life satisfaction among teachers and students. He collected a data from students, teachers at different schools. He found that Educational Aspiration is need for life satisfaction. Life satisfaction can be possible only if a person satisfies his esteem need.

Strand and Winston (2008) studied educational aspiration in inner city schools over 800 pupil of age group 16-18 years and found no significant differences in aspirations by gender or year group but differences between ethnic groups were marked.

Salami (2008) conducted a study on educational aspiration. He collected information and he concluded that much of the researches of educational aspirations had found that individual level factors such as students personal characteristics family, socio-economic background, social class, academic history, curriculum track placement, ability level, peer groups and teachers supports, home support, commitment to schooling, parents education, play significant roles in the prediction of students aspiration for education. He pointed out that individual characteristics like motivation, achievement attitude, believes, family norms, social approval, evaluation of possible consequences, performance of a particular behavior, perceived behavioral control, etc helps to build in statement for asses aspiration for education. Personality, vocational interests, parent’s socio-economic status, also determines the educational aspirations of high school students.

Park (2008) compared the levels of educational aspirations and students disengagement between students with two parents and those with a single parent. The study was conducted over 9th and 12th grade students of Korea and found that students with single parent are much less aspire to 4 year university education and more likely to disengaged than their counterparts with two parents.

Doescher and Heather (2009) made a study on parenting with mild intellectual deficits: educational aspirations, expectations and educational attainment of their children. The major findings were, i. differences between parents with mild intellectual deficits and typical intellectual deficits in their educational expectations and aspirations for children and their children’s educational attainment; ii. The extent to which parent’s characteristics, such as occupational status, marital status, influences educational expectations and aspirations for children’s educational attainment; and iii. The extent to which educational expectations, aspirations and midlife preferences predicts children’s educational attainment among parents with mild intellectual deficits versus typical intellectual deficits.

Charles et.al (2009) studied the factors affecting the aspiration for higher education among students; he collected data from children, parents, teachers, etc. his major findings of study were; the Race, place, socio-economic inequality, unemployment, quality of housing, poverty, school facilities, crime, population etc also affects for shaping the aspiration for education.

Omwangokiche (2010) designed research on the educational and occupational aspirations of U.S. youth born in Africa. These immigrants also come from different countries with different ethnicities, cultures, religions, and races. This case study makes such a needed distinction based on a small sample of high school students from Northern Sudan who lived in a small Midwest U.S. city. The Sudanese refugee youth who participated in this study had high educational and occupational aspirations, with all of them aspiring to obtain a college degree and some intending to achieve careers in medicine, dentistry, law, and engineering. These high aspirations were backed by high academic scores. Almost all students in this study came from well-educated families despite their current low socio-economic status (SES). Their current SES and minority status (MS) did not seem to affect their aspirations and academic performance. This study showed that educational and occupational aspirations are formed when students have strong social support from parents, significant others, teachers, peers, and their community, all of whom influence and reward high educational expectations and enforce the students’ cultural obligations.

Conway (2010) explored educational aspirations of immigrant and native students in urban community college and found that immigrant students who were educated in United states high schools were more likely than other students groups to aspire to college.

Talawar and Kumar (2010) conducted a study on correlation between teacher absenteeism and educational aspiration. The findings of the study are that there is high negative correlation between teacher absenteeism and educational aspiration of primary school students. There is a significant difference in the absenteeism of male and female primary school teachers. There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of boys and girls belonging to Government primary schools.

Singh (2011) conducted a study on educational aspiration in secondary school students. The major findings were, i. There is a tendency on the part of secondary school students to hold a high level of educational aspiration. ii. Sex is influencing the overall educational aspiration level. The educational aspiration level is higher in boys than that of girls. iii. Medium of learning is influencing the educational aspirations. The educational aspiration level is higher in English medium students than that of Marathi medium students.

Chandel and Vibhalaxmi (2011) compared the educational aspirations of internet users and non-users. The major findings were i. The result suggests that the under-graduates who were using the internet were comparatively higher in their educational aspirations compared to those who were not using internet. ii. Both male and female undergraduates using internet were high aspirations with regard to their future education in comparison to male and female graduates not using the internet. iii. The results revealed that the undergraduates studying in the three streams of education such as arts, commerce and science using internet had high educational aspirations in comparison to those who were not using internet.

Bregman and Blair (2011) investigated the educational aspirations: supporting college trajectories for Latino youth. Findings from this study showed that, family plays a critical role in the development of educational goals and values while peers are most influential in students’ school effort. The importance of academic self-efficacy and the potential of this construct to shape students’ college orientations. The first group of students benefit from family, teachers and peers who encourage their educational aspirations and provide concrete instructions for how to turn those goals into a reality. These students also take advantage of their access to information and resources. The second group of students’ experiences high levels of supports from significant others and engages in behaviors that prepare them for college. Finally, the third group struggles academically and does not think about their plans for after high school.

Kintrea and Clair (2011) studied the educational and occupational aspirations of young people in three locations in the UK, in London, Nottingham and Glasgow working within secondary schools. 490 students aged around 13 were individually interviewed in 2007-08, with 288 of the same students interviewed again in 2010 at around age 15 and explored the factors that shaped them and understood the contexts, structures and processes through which aspirations are formed. The study involved young people from neighborhoods with strong evidence of deprivation. The model analyzed factors in three groups: family, place and school. Study concluded that parents and families play a key role: further the study found clear alignment between what the parent say, they want for the young people and what the young people aspire to them. Factors affecting aspirations, whether from school, place or family, tend to be consistent and reinforcing, pushing young people towards or away from the fulfillment of high aspirations. The authors believed that aspirations are a reasonable focus for intervention; in order to succeed, the authors have suggested approach to intervention in needs of young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds. It is suggested that there is a need to identify and work in a focused manner with those families and communities where aspirations are weaker or poorly defined. Policies need to recognize that aspirations may be influenced by social class, culture and history or people’s direct experience of the place they live in. The focus of the work should get maximum fit between young people’s job aspirations and the kinds of jobs available in the local labour market. There is a need to expose students to a greater range of occupations and to promote a better understanding of job content.

Rothon (2011) examined the relationship between education aspiration and achievement of secondary education in deprived area of London and found girls were more likely than boys to express a wish to remain in education beyond the age of 16 and also ethnic differences, sociopsychological variables particularly self-esteem and psychological distress associated with high educational aspirations.

Boxer (2011) examined whether disconnection between educational aspirations and expectations is associated with socioeconomic status, academic performance, academic risk related behaviors and related psychosocial factors in an ethnically and economically diverse sample of early adolescents from a public middle school (N = 761). Results suggest that students who aspire to achieve more than they expect to achieve also are likely to have more economically disadvantaged backgrounds and poorer academic performance. These students also show a variety of academic and social risks. Specifically, students whose aspirations exceeded their expectations reported lower levels of school bonding, higher levels of test/performance anxiety, and elevated behavioral /emotional difficulties.

Berzin (2011), studied on Educational Aspirations among Low-Income Youths: Examining Multiple Conceptual Models. Although educational attainment of poor youths has risen in recent years, aspirations still remain below those of other youths. Multiple theories have been used to understand youth aspirations, although the frameworks have not been examined concurrently. Major findings of this study revealed with the School Success Profile to examine the influence of variables derived status attainment, blocked opportunities, and social support theories on educational aspirations. Seventy-three percent of youths aspired to go to college. The final model suggested that variables from each framework—including gender, younger age, nonwhite race, stronger home academic environment, higher levels of parent-school behavior expectations, better academic performance, greater engagement in school, and higher levels of peer and parent support—are associated with higher post-high school aspirations. The analysis suggests that all three conceptual frameworks add to the understanding of what factors arc related to youth aspirations. Understanding multiple mechanisms that improve aspirations can help social workers support low-income youths toward the goals that eventually lead to high educational attainment.

Bindu (2011) studied the Intelligence and Aspiration for higher education of higher secondary school students in Malappuram. The findings of the study implied that there is significant difference in aspiration for higher education between male and female students. The study also reveals that female students’ aspiration for higher education is higher than the male students.

Tali and Rosy (2012) studied the vocational aspiration of XII standard students in relation to their achievement motivation and demographic variables. The major findings were, XII standard students belonging to high and low achievement motivation do no differ significantly with respect to their vocational aspiration. Male and female XII standard students have equal aspiration and knowledge towards vocational choices. XII standard science students have inclined more serious towards their career or vocation as compare to arts students. Arts and commerce XII standard students have similar kind of aspiration on vocational preference or have equal knowledge and aspiration towards vocational choices. Science and commerce do not differ significantly with respect to vocational aspiration. XII standard students studying in private schools have more inclined towards choice of vocation than students studying in government schools.

Aggarwal (2012) administered a survey to class 12 students in one district each in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Karnataka, to gain better understanding of student aspirations, awareness levels, sources of information, key stakeholders and factors that influence their education and career choices. The result indicated that 82% of all respondents said that they had a particular job in mind when they complete their education. However, when asked to be more specific, only 73% of these respondents provided clear answers to what this job would be. The study found the direct relationship between awareness levels of students and parent’s education. These findings reflect the changing aspirations of students in India, the caste based occupations and the increasing technological intensity of occupations which limits the utility of inter-generational knowledge transfer. The results were largely consistent across gender. The responses do not vary substantially across different socio-economic backgrounds or between government and private schools. Unsurprisingly, parent and family expectations are the most important factor in determining post-school career choices. 63% of respondents "strongly agreed" and another 28% "agreed" that parent and family expectations are the reason for their choices.

Yee and Sandra (2012) designed a study to explore adolescents’ educational and career aspirations using the Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) framework, and the variables were selected with empirical and theoretical support for their possible significance to the career aspirations of Hong Kong high school students. Two separate studies were conducted. The four measures were validated using a sample of 677 secondary students in study I. In study II, data were collected from 729 secondary students. The results indicated that gender and family socioeconomic status were not associated with continuing education aspirations or career achievement aspirations. The students’ perceived academic achievement influenced continuing education both directly and indirectly through academic self-efficacy or career self-efficacy. However, perceived academic achievement was not associated with career achievement aspirations. Career-related parental support influenced continuing education and career achievement aspirations both directly and indirectly through academic self-efficacy or career self-efficacy in predicting continuing education and career achievement aspirations.

Gupta (2012) designed a study on self-concept and level of aspiration of front benchers and back-benchers. The major findings were, i. Regarding the self-concept, the front benchers were found having good self-concept while the back benchers were found having average self-concept. ii. Regarding the level of aspiration, the front benchers were found having level of aspiration high while the level of aspiration of the back benchers of average level. iii. Regarding the self-concept, there was found a great difference between the self-concept of front benchers and back benchers. iv. Regarding the level of aspiration, there was found a great difference between the level of aspiration of front benchers and back benchers.

The study conducted by Kaur and Sharma (2012) at U.T. Chandigarh on senior secondary students with an objective to study and compare the occupational aspirations of senior secondary school students studying in government and private schools with regard to gender and their home environment. The findings of the study implied that: (a) No significant differences has been found in level of occupational aspiration among students of government and private schools. (b) No significant differences have been found among students of government and private schools with regard to gender. (C) The significant difference has been found with some areas of home environment specifically in area of punishment and rejection.

Unnialungal (2012) conducted a study on the Aspirations for higher education among the secondary school students in coastal and non-coastal area of Malappuram district. The results of the study implied that there is significant difference in aspiration for higher education among coastal and non-coastal students. Non-coastal students have high aspiration than the coastal students.

Maheswari and Singh (2013) studied the impact of socio-economic status on higher education aspiration among rural girls. The results revealed that there exists a significant difference between the respondent’s higher education aspiration with regard to their overall socio-economic status, especially the dimensions of profession, property, locality and social status shown a significant difference between the higher education aspirants and non-aspirants.

Peter and Raju (2013) made a study on career aspiration among management students. The study derived that, there is significant difference between the males and females in their career aspiration. There is no significant difference between the students in the different age groups, and there weren't any significant difference among the students categorized on the basis of their specialization.

Rajesh and Chandrasekaran (2014) made a study on level of aspiration of high school students. The major findings were, i. Sex is influencing the overall aspiration level. The aspiration levels of girls are higher than that of boys. ii. There is no significant differences are observed in high school students’ level of aspiration with respect to their locality of the residence and school management. iii. Medium of learning is influencing the aspirations. iv. The aspiration levels of English medium students are higher than that of Tamil medium students.

Kumar and Gupta (2014) investigated the level of educational aspiration of higher secondary class students of government and non-government schools. The major findings were, i. There exists significant difference between XII class students of Govt. schools and students of Non-government schools with respect to the level of educational aspiration. ii. There is no significant difference with respect to the level of educational aspiration of XII class rural as well as urban students of Government schools and students of Non-government schools.

Kumar and Gurjinder (2014) investigated the influence of socio-emotional school climate on level of aspiration of senior secondary students. The study revealed that, socio-emotional school climate as perceived by the senior secondary school students does not influence their level of aspiration.

George (2014) carried out a research on educational aspiration of higher secondary school students. The major findings were, there is a significant difference between the educational aspiration of male higher secondary school students and that of female higher secondary school students. The female students possess greater educational aspiration than that of male students. There is a significant difference between the educational aspiration of rural and urban higher secondary school students. The urban students possess greater educational aspiration than that of their rural counterparts.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter the investigator tried to present a brief account of theoretical overview and review of related studies. Since the effectiveness of a research is based on past knowledge, reviews of related studies provide helpful suggestionfor significant investigation. The investigator reviewed a total of sixty four research studies related to Aspirations, Educational Aspirations, Occupational Aspirations and Level of Aspiration. Out of this, forty nine studies wereconducted in India and the fifteen studies were conducted abroad. These reviews reveal that a lot of studies were conducted in this area, but no such study is conducted in students of Lakshadweep. As year’s passes, the Lakshadweep educational sector was also developed. This prompted the investigator to take up the study in this topic.