

CAREER ASPIRATIONS AMONG THE GRADUATE STUDENTS IN VELLORE DISTRICT

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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate Career Aspirations among Graduate Students in Vellore District. The questionnaire was used for data collection from 739 graduate students by using multi-state sampling method with three different colleges namely Government, Aided and Self-finance colleges affiliated Thiruvalluvar University in Vellore District. The research adopted descriptive design. The data were analyzed using the descriptive statistics from the Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS 20 version). The study has found that there is association between students' career aspiration and by their gender, stay place (Domicile), course of studying, academic performance, motivational persons for their career decisions. The graduate students are a crucial human resource for promoting the development of a country. They are also the movers of change in the socio-economic and technological innovation. Present graduate students have strong desire to achieve something high or great. The career aspirations include, Teaching, Any good jobs (govt. or private), Business, Administrative, Technical, Defense & security and Legal services. The study used various statistical methods such as; chi-square test, t-test and ANOVA test. The various suggestions given here would certainly help the graduate students, parents, teachers and educational institutions join hands to provide clear career guidance, motivation to choose better career towards their successful life.

Key Words: Career Aspiration, undergraduate students

Introduction

The graduate students are a crucial human resource for promoting the development of a country. They are also changers, in the field socio-economic and technological innovation. The present graduate students have possessed certain career goals, which seem to be strong desire and achieve something high or great. According to supper (1999) says that the career aspiration which is refers to setting of goals, objectives and achieve desired profession or ambition of the graduate students. The graduate students' career aspirations includes, Teaching, Clerical jobs, Business, Administrative, technical, defense & security and legal services. According to Kim (2004), Domenico (2007) the development of individuals' career aspirations could be influenced by gender, socioeconomic status, family support, parental expectations and cultural values. The graduate students' aspirations are generally higher than their expectations, but it is aspirations that tend to decline as children mature into young adults, in response to a growing awareness of the world (Armstrong, P. I. and Crombie, G. 2000). There is a growth in the demand for analytical and managerial work like that of scientists, engineers, attorneys, executives and perhaps economists. Services workers: such as security guards, truck drivers, housekeepers, waiters, salespeople etc. White collar jobs like that of secretaries, bookkeepers, insurance adjusters, bank tellers, telephone receptionists has collapsed. These changes have resulted in a polarization of work the hollowing-out of the distribution of job tasks (Agarwal and Pawan: 2006).

Concept of Career Aspiration

An aspiration which is refers to identify and set goals for the future, which is conditioned by a present inspiration for work to attain those goals (Quaglia, R. J & Casey, C.D, 1996). Career Aspirations begin to be shaped early in children's life, but are modified by experience and the environment. Students' Career Aspirations have a tendency to decline as students mature, in response to their growing understanding of the world and what is possible and to constraint compulsory by previous choices and achievements (Gutman & Rodie Akerman: 2008). The students set a career to maintain motivation towards achieve something for success.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The graduate students may not have heard about career aspirations. However, it is essential for every student to know more about career aspiration. If graduate students want to grow, they should start thinking about future. When students are being asked about their career aspiration, they would be expected to think of something related to their long term and short term career goals as well as objectives based on their career path planning. It is very important for one to plan in advance. Hence, it is time for start thinking about their career aspirations and set career road-map. This study has classified into different types of career aspirations as follows. **Teaching Career:** One of the noblest professions in the world of careers is teaching profession. A teacher is not merely one who imparts skills or information but one who enables the integral growth of the whole individual. **Government Jobs:** A country needs capable, skilled, and efficient administrators who can do their work on behalf of the people. Government jobs encompasses all those jobs right from planning, monitoring and implementation of all the government's responsibilities. Most young people who graduate from institutions prepare themselves and long to get into a government department as their career. **Business and Marketing Fields:** Business is an economic system in which goods and services are exchanged for one another or money, on the basis of their perceived worth. **Administrative Fields:** Under direction, performs complex clerical and administrative work tasks in support of one or more persons serving in an administrative or professional capacity; completes schedule administrative tasks directly related to the work of their administrators and performs other related work as required. The administrative jobs are Bank Manager, HR Manager (Human Resource), IAS (Indian Administrative Service), IPS (Indian Police Service) etc. **Technical:** Technical job skills refer to the talent and expertise a person possesses to perform a certain job or task, which is called as hard skills. Technical skills are those abilities acquired through learning and practice. The technology skills applied in Computer, MCA, Engineering, ITI and Diploma. **Defense & Security:** Every country requires large number of personnel in the field of defense and security such as Navy, Army, Air Force, Industry Security Force, Police Force and Border Security force and various other domestic Security recruitments are held in large number every year by the central and state government. **Services:** The service fields are Bank, Library, Fire Service Department, Public Parking, Public Transport, Education, Parks and Recreational Areas, Police, Postal Services, Sewerage, Security Services, Sports Fields, City Police, Telecommunication Services, Traffic Services, Waste Removal, Water Provision, social work etc.

METHODOLOGY

The research design of this study is Descriptive Research Design. The design describes the students' career aspiration. The colleges were stratified into three namely Government, Aided and Self-financed. Since, the number of colleges in each category is not equal, an inclusion criteria was used to narrow down the eligibility. The

colleges irrespective of their category which have completed 20 years of its existence were included for the study purpose. From each category, one college was selected by using lottery method. Hence, the sampling design used for this was Multistage Sampling. The total number of samples of the study was 739 undergraduate students. The data collected from the primary respondents were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). Chi-square test, t-test and ANOVA were used to find out the significant difference or associations among the variables.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table - 1
Students' Career Aspiration

| Career Aspiration | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Teaching | 192 | 26.0 |
| Any Good Jobs (Clerical Jobs) | 104 | 14.1 |
| Business | 45 | 6.1 |
| Administrative | 85 | 11.5 |
| Technical | 86 | 11.6 |
| Defense & Security | 109 | 14.7 |
| Legal Services | 28 | 3.8 |
| <i>Not Decided</i> | 90 | 12.2 |
| Total | 739 | 100.0 |

As per the above table found that a little more than one fourth (26.0%) of the students said that they aspire to become a teacher or a professor. More than one tenth (14.7%) of the students are keen to become defense and security. Another important finding reveals that more than one tenth (12.0%) of the students have not yet decided their career. It is found that majority (87.8%) of the undergraduate students have career aspiration in various fields.

Support Received for Career Decision

Graduates need to be guided for appropriate decision making for their career and especially the rural students. The following table reveals in detail the guidance or support given to the respondents for making decision on their career by their parents, teachers, friends, neighbours, relatives and others.

Table - 2
Support Received for Career Decision

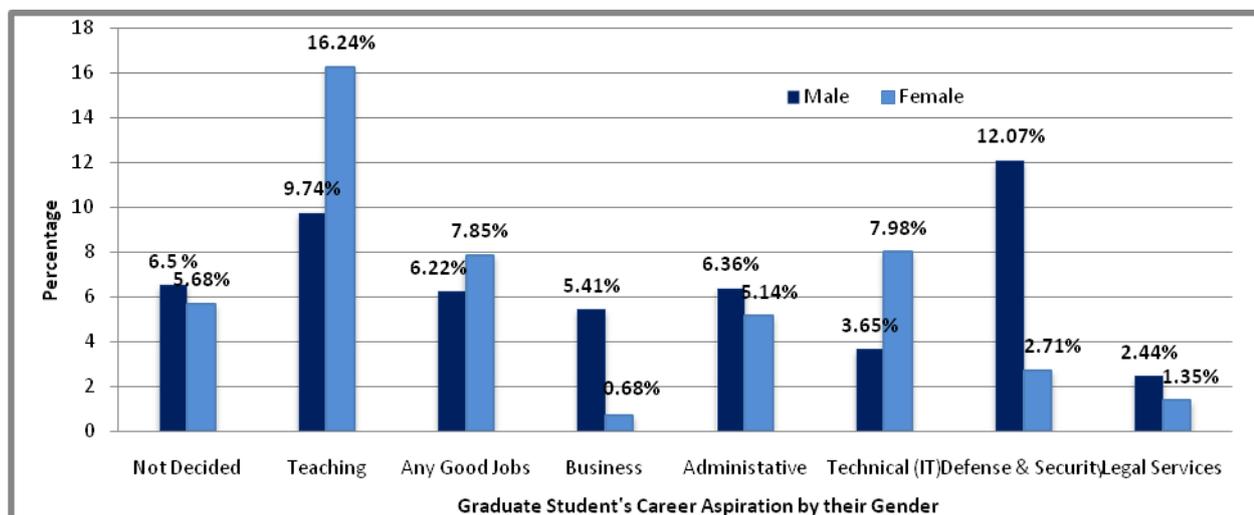
| Supporters | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <i>Parents</i> | <i>534</i> | <i>72.3</i> |
| Friends | 67 | 9.1 |

| | | |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Teachers | 60 | 8.1 |
| Relatives | 40 | 5.4 |
| Neighbours | 25 | 3.4 |
| Others | 13 | 1.8 |
| Total | 739 | 100.0 |

It is found from the above table that majority of (72.3%) of the students expressed that parents' support and encouragement played an important role for taking career decision. Apparently friends, teachers, relatives and neighbors have played very little role in supporting the respondents for making their career decision.

Gender and Career Aspiration

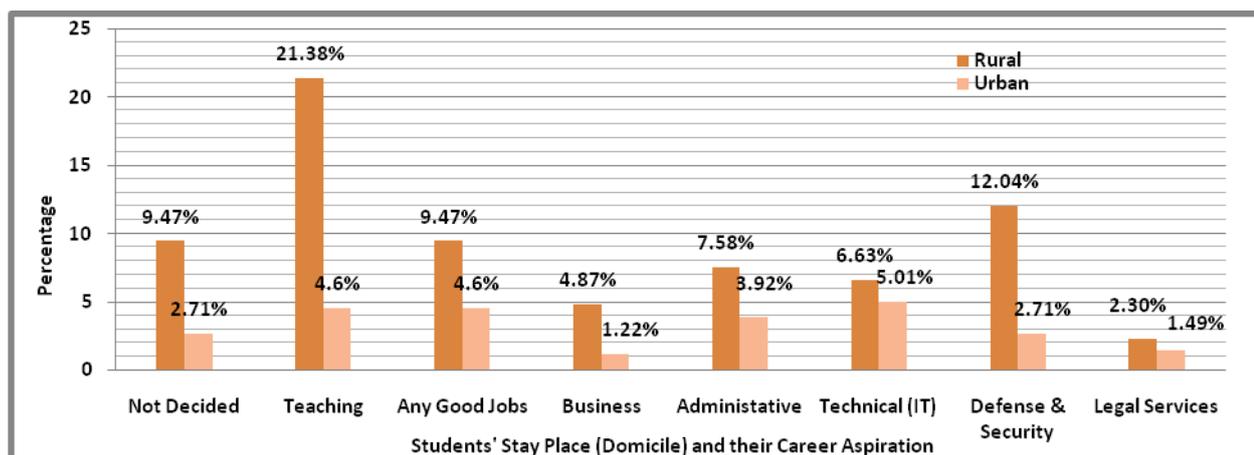
Gender is an identity that differs psychologically and sociologically with its own nature. Present job market conditions highly demand Employability skills from both the gender.



The figure reveals that more than one tenth (16.24%) of the female students are very enthusiastic to become teaching whether there are professors or teachers. Little more than one tenth (1.007%) of male students are keen to become defense & security. The career aspirations provide information about an individual's interests and expectation and tolerant by reality" (Hellenga, Aber, & Rhodes, 2002). Chi-square test was applied to find out the student's career aspiration by the Gender. Chi-square value=98.394, df-7, p=0.000. Since the level of significance is more than 0.05, H0 is rejected and it could be concluded that there is association between gender and career aspiration.

Students' Stay Place (Domicile) and their Career Aspiration

Every graduate student has a dream in early life towards their career aspiration. An attempt has been made to capture that dream aspirations of the graduate students. The present study attempt to examine the career aspiration by their native place (Domicile rural or urban).



The above table shows that majority (73.74%) of the graduate students are possessing career aspiration who are living in the rural setup. Nearly two third (26.26%) of the urban students have been possessing career aspiration. Chi-square test was applied to find out the student's career aspiration by the Gender. Chi-square value=32.315, df-7, p=0.000. Since the level of significance is less than 0.05 H0 is rejected and it could be concluded that there is association between students' stay place (domicile) and their career aspiration.

Course of Studying by Students and their Career Aspirations

Major Fields of academy is Science and Arts. Mostly science students deal with materials and chemicals whereas, Arts students deal with the behaviour and attitude of human beings. There could be an association between the career aspirations of students by the type of college in which they study. The following table categorises the career aspiration of students by their course of study.

Table -
Course of Studying by Students and their Career Aspirations

| Course of Studying | Career Aspirations | | | | | | | | Total |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|--------|
| | Not Decided | Teaching | Any Good Jobs (Clerical Jobs) | Business | Administrative | Technical (IT) | Defense & Security | Legal Services | |
| Science | 53 | 180 | 59 | 16 | 6 | 86 | 67 | 15 | 482 |
| | 11.0% | 37.3% | 12.2% | 3.3% | 1.2% | 17.8% | 13.9% | 3.1% | 100.0% |
| | 58.9% | 93.8% | 56.7% | 35.6% | 7.1% | 100.0% | 61.5% | 53.6% | 65.2% |
| Arts | 37 | 12 | 45 | 29 | 79 | 0 | 42 | 13 | 257 |
| | 14.4% | 4.7% | 17.5% | 11.3% | 30.7% | 0.0% | 16.3% | 5.1% | 100.0% |
| | 41.1% | 6.2% | 43.3% | 64.4% | 92.9% | 0.0% | 38.5% | 46.4% | 34.8% |
| Total | 90 | 192 | 104 | 45 | 85 | 86 | 109 | 28 | 739 |
| | 12.2% | 26.0% | 14.1% | 6.1% | 11.5% | 11.6% | 14.7% | 3.8% | 100.0% |
| | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Career aspiration is needed for all the students and it is almost same in the above table that there is almost equal proportion (Science: 89%, Arts: 86%) of students with career aspiration. Hence, it could be stated that the career aspiration need not depend on the type of course they study. The students in any course require career aspiration to excel in their lives.

Academic Performance by their Career Aspiration

Achievement in the academics has been one of the most important goals in the educational process. The following table provides the variance in the academic performance of the students by their career aspiration.

Table - 5
Career Aspiration by their Academic Performance - Independent Samples t-test

| Group Statistics | Career Aspiration | Mean | Std. Deviation | t-test for Equality of Means | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|-------|----------------|------------------------------|-----|------|
| | | | | t | Df | Sig. |
| Academic Performance | No Career Aspiration | 66.12 | 9.186 | -1.989 | 737 | .047 |
| | Possessing Career Aspiration | 68.20 | 9.256 | | | |

* N=739

The above independent sample t-test reveals that the academic performances of the graduate students significantly differ according to their career aspiration. The mean value (m=68.20) of academic performance is high among the students who possess career aspiration. The mean value of career aspiration is less (M=66.12) among the students who do not have career aspiration. The result of Independent samples t-test shows that (t=-1.989, df= 737 and P<0.05) the difference in the mean value of the academic performance is significant by the career aspiration of the undergraduate students. Hence, it could be stated that career aspiration motivated the students to develop their talents, abilities and competencies towards academic performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the descriptive analysis shows that majority (87.9%) of the graduate students have career aspiration in various fields. There is equality in the status of career aspiration according to their gender. Majority (73.2%) of the graduate students are possessing career aspirations who are living in the rural setup. Career aspiration is needed for all the students and it is almost same in the above table that there is almost equal proportion (Science: 89%, Arts: 86%) of students with career aspiration. Career aspiration motivated the students to develop their talents, abilities and competencies towards academic performance. It is found out that possession of career aspiration is almost same irrespective of the different domicile. Though there is a minor difference and there need not be any association between the career aspiration of students and the place where they stay and study.

Discussions

Since majority of students are very keen to become teaching profession. Graduates need to have a hard work and constant efforts are important to keep them focused and motivated. Efforts would include undertaking extra courses, studying additional materials, meeting experts, taking an exposure visit, becoming members in the desired groups or networks, writing competitive exam and attending conference and workshop.

This study found that most of the students are from rural background that who are much aware of the career options available in the country. This situation would lead to poor guidance from their parents. Effective career decision requires appropriate information. Therefore it is suggested that parents can be given career guidance program that they would be able to identify the aspiration of the children in their turn and motivate them.

Teachers and parents are key supporters to students in individual student career planning and their journey of exploration of self understanding. Subject choices, career aspirations and life goals. Teachers and parents empathetic of their confusion and limitations in making decisions, supportive, motivating respecting, and informative and understand that every child is unique and so there is no right or wrong choice.

Every Graduate Students need to get ready before start the Career plan.

1. Clear misconstruction on Decisions
2. Find support Partner
3. Dream and increase expectations
4. Believe that there is no wrong choice
5. Do not afraid

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