

C H A P T E R X

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The first chapter presents an introduction and points out the importance of interest as a psychological concept. It also outlines the broad objectives of the inquiry and the scope of investigation.

In chapter two attempt has been made to review the concept of interest. It is felt that the concept of interest requires further clarification. This is why the present chapter raises some pertinent questions as to the nature of interest and also some factors involved in interest. While some fundamental issues as to the function and development of interest have been acknowledged, the recent trends in interest assessment have also been taken into account for exploratory purposes.

Chapter three reviews the various approaches to the measurement of interest. The measurement of any variable, of course, has to depend upon the concept. At the same time the study of the variable cannot reach objectivity unless its measurement is attempted on a scientific basis. The same remark applies as well in the case of interest. A review of the approaches to

the study of interest has, therefore, been considered relevant so as to form a separate chapter. In spite of the various approaches to the measurement of interest, no single method has been found adequate and this points out the need for a combined approach to the assessment of this complex variable.

Chapter four presents a review of the concept as well as the assessment of interest revealing the possibility of an interaction between inherent needs and propensity on the one hand and environment on the other. This has a deeper implication in the sense that interest undergoes a developmental process under certain environmental conditions. There have been a few studies reflecting upon the relationship between interest and environment. The present chapter accounts for those attempts with implications.

Chapter five presents in detail the specific purposes and procedure of the investigation. The purpose of the inquiry is twofold: (i) evolving methods of studying interest of the undergraduate students, (ii) studying the relationship between the interest patterns and environmental factors viz. area of residence, father's occupation, course of studies etc.

Before conducting the inquiry, the following

hypotheses were formulated:

- (a) At the undergraduate level in India interests are identifiable.
- (b) There are some broad basic patterns of interest inspite of an overlap in some types of interest (e.g., Technical, Science, Agriculture).
- (c) Interests tend to be influenced by environmental factors like father's occupation, area of residence, family tradition.

The test and techniques consisting of four different types of tests have been reported along with the rationale behind the construction of these tests.

It has been considered desirable to make a combined approach to the assessment of interest by including an inventory, an information test, a situational test and a projective test designed to measure interest from various angles.

As the construction and validation of tests and techniques for the present investigation formed a formidable part of the work, the investigator had to be less ambitious about the size of the sample than

she had expected. It was, therefore, decided to take a representative sample both for pilot study and main inquiry rather than a complete survey. The following points were, however, kept in view, while selecting the sample:

- (a) Every area: rural (residential and agricultural) and urban (industrial, commercial and residential).
- (b) Various courses of study viz. fine arts, technical, commerce, agriculture, humanities and science.
- (c) Different socio-economic strata and family backgrounds of the sample.

The last section of chapter five presents the data - their treatment, analysis and results. In addition to the correlational techniques, centroid analysis has been attempted for finding out the basic interest patterns and also the factor loadings of each sub-test on the general factor of interest in each of the six areas. With a view to finding out the effect of environmental factors on each type of interest, analysis of variance and other allied statistical techniques have been employed.

Chapter six presents the theoretical framework including the rationale underlying the construction of the tests and techniques used in the present investigation.

Chapter seven reports the pilot study in detail. The aim of the pilot study was mainly to explore the suitability of the tests constructed as well as to gather the reactions of the subjects to the tests for the purpose of necessary revision. The size of the sample selected for pilot study was highly selective so as to form criterion groups. Each of the six groups consisted of 30 students from each course of study at the preparatory or first year level as reported by their teachers to be expressing their involvement in respective areas of interest.

The purpose of forming the criterion groups was to find out whether each item could discriminate between the respective criterion group and the rest of the sample. This procedure was considered for the purpose of item validation while the factorial validity has been sought for finding out the extent to which each subtest is measuring the respective interests.

The results of the item analysis justified the retention of the majority of items as only one or two

items belonging to each interest area had to be dropped out from each subtest.

The results of the centroid analysis also proved favourable for the retention of each sub-test contributing significantly to the entire test battery.

Chapter eight reports the details of the main investigation in respect of sample, tests and techniques and results. As indicated earlier, the sample was rather representative consisted of 300 undergraduate students drawn from various institutes, areas and family backgrounds. For practical purposes, the number belonging to each course of study was kept 50. Besides the tests already mentioned, a questionnaire constructed for collecting the environmental data was also administered with a view to relating them to interests. The results of the main investigation support the hypotheses in essence. Three basic dimensions of interest emerged out of the factorial analysis. The 'F' ratios derived out of the analysis of variance are mostly significant proving the main effect of all the environmental variables on most of the fields of interest. Besides, the interaction between some of the variables also, comes out significant.

Chapter nine presents the salient points of

the investigation in the forms of results. The scope for further research has also been outlined in the same chapter.

Chapter ten summarises the entire purpose, procedure and results of the investigation along with a critical appraisal of the work.

Conclusions

A review of the literature in the field of interest measurement discloses the fact that interest and motivation are important variables to be taken into consideration either for educational planning or allocation and guidance in a developing democracy^{and} study of the development of interest has an important bearing on educational planning. The recent trend in interest measurement encouraged further attempts to evolve objective methods for assessment of interest and analysis of the basic dimensions there of. One of the considerations which prompted the investigator to take up this study is to check up whether the apriori classification of interest into the six different categories would prove too specific without any reference to psychological findings. The results of the factor analysis, however, suggests three basic

dimensions with certain indication of dichotomy. Although, the study did not yield conclusive evidence of the three basic dimensions of interest beyond doubt. It has at least indicated a terrible overlap between the so-called interest areas.

Another important objective of the investigation has been to relate the interest scores to the outside forces including values for the purpose of throwing light on the development of interest. It is felt that more important consideration is, 'how to create motivation and interest in the desired direction in a developing nation?' This study forms a preliminary step to that end.

As regard the main findings of the investigation the following deserve mention:

- (1) Interests are identifiable at the undergraduate level. This finding is derived from the analysis of the ranges, means, standard deviations of the interest scores varying from group to group, interest to interest.
- (2) These are three basic patterns of interest inspite of considerable overlap between

interest areas. The basic dimensions may be identified as: (a) practical-scientific (b) creative-aesthetic, (c) manipulative-computational. This finds its support from the results of the factor analysis.

- (3) The main effect of environmental factors included under the scope of the present study on most of the types of interest is significant. There also exists a significant interaction between a number of environmental variables. Both the findings find support from the result of the analysis of variance.