

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION : Education is considered as the physical, intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of the individual into a complete man. Every child that enters the portals of education, enters with a cultural heritage, with particular psychological traits bearing within him the effects of his family environment and social surroundings.

To be human is to be social as the word 'human' stands for conforming to expected norms of existing society. And thus socialization is as old as human race. But both education and socialization are continuous life long processes. To be more specific, education is society's formal mechanism for helping the process of socialization. As the society is moving towards rapid changes, parents have become inadequate model for children and the agency of formal education has come into existence. Like the family, the school is an institution whose explicit mandate is to socialize.

But the most significant point in the role of school in the process of socialization, is that it deals with children as groups and not as individuals. Consequently the influence of the school upon the individual child is always mediated in the setting of the peer group. For which the importance of school peer group as a socializing ^{agency} can not be ignored.

As a subset of school peer group, classroom peer group can also claim its own uniqueness. By its nature, it is composed of members more similar than dissimilar to each other by virtue of their age, developmental level and interests. The very compulsory element in classroom

group membership on the one hand distinguishes it from other types of groups, while on the other side it tends to making it a reference group for most of the adolescents. Again it also provides the student with a standard of comparison for his competencies. The classroom therefore serves as a reference group for the students mostly in comparative sense, although it is also a source of norms and values.

Although influence of peer group is evident in all the stages of development, adolescence is the most susceptible period for that. Completely contradictory views are found on adolescence regarding this influence process. Some pertinent questions emerge out of those views and these are as under :

1. Whether adolescent sub-culture is quite distinct from the adult culture or just a reflection of the later?
2. Whether the adolescent sub-culture can influence aspirations, values and attitudes of the adolescents?
3. Whether in educational setup it can be used as a supplementary strategy.

In order to have a clear understanding and satisfactory answer for the questions emerged from the theoretical background, a study was undertaken and the problem was stated as under :

PEER INFLUENCE AND EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS : A STUDY IN RELATION TO
THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.

Selection of variables : The two variables emerge from the title of the thesis were :

- 1) Peer Influence
- 2) Educational Aspiration

The theoretical background of the study suggested for inclusion of some other independent variables and these were;

- 3) Intelligence
- 4) Socio-economic Status
- 5) Area of institution (rural/urban)
- 6) Nature of institution (boys/girls/coed)

The major dependent variable for the study :

- 7) Academic Achievement.

Objectives of the study : The following were the selected objectives of the study.

- 1(A) To study the effects of area of institution, nature of institution and their interaction on peer influence of the students.
- 1(B) To study the effects of intelligence and socio-economic status and their interaction on peer influence of the students.
- 2(A) To study the effects of area of institution, nature of institution and their interaction on educational aspiration of the students.

- 2(B) To study the effects of intelligence, socio-economic status and their interaction on educational aspiration of the students.
3. To establish the regression equation for academic achievement in relation to intelligence, socio-economic status, peer influence and educational aspiration -
- A) for the total sample
 - B) for rural and urban groups
 - C) for boys, girls and coeducation school groups.

Accordingly, twenty two hypotheses were formulated. The formulated hypotheses stated the functional relationship between dependent and independent variables. Again hypotheses formulated for regression analyses denoted the notion of prediction of dependent variable on explanatory variables.

Methodology: The review of related studies revealed different approaches to study the selected variables. In the perspectives of the review of related literature and theoretical background a model was hypothesized for the present study. The major aim of the study was to examine the impact of peer influence and educational aspiration on academic achievement of the students in the final year of the ~~xx~~ secondary stage.

Therefore, the hypothesis that 'interaction with peers and level of educational aspiration can facilitate academic achievement of secondary students' was tested

through a regression analysis model. The model also took into consideration the other independent variables, viz., intelligence, socio-economic status, area of institution (rural/urban) and nature of institution (boys/girls/coed).

Tools for the study: In order to measure different variables taken in the study, several tools were required. Accordingly two standardized tools were selected, two tools were adapted and the last tool was developed by the investigator. A succinct description of the tools are as follows -

1. "A group verbal examination of general intelligence" - Prof. K.P. Bora.
2. "Socio-economic Status Rating Scale" - Prof.S.Narain Rao.
3. An adapted version of Educational Aspiration Scale by Dr. T.B. Mathur.
4. Index of Academic Achievement: Marks secured in core subjects (English, Assamese, General Science, General maths. and Social Science) in selection examination for final H.S.L.C. examination. For reducing subjectivity in examining the scripts linear standard scores were computed from the raw scores.
5. Peer influence scale developed by the investigator where "Peer influence" had been conceptualized and defined as - "The influence of one's peers which is supposed to be measured through the degree of involvement in different activities which occur generally among classroom peers in an academic setting".

Sampling: As per the objectives and nature of the study, saturated stratified random sampling method was used for the present study. The target population of this study was all the students studying in Class X (1985-86) of the 123 Assamese medium provincialised secondary schools of Guwahati division, Assam. All the schools are under the jurisdiction of Secondary Education Board, Assam. The stratification was done according to area of institution (rural/urban) and nature of institution (boys/girls/coed). Altogether 20 schools were selected from the target population and all the students of one section of Class X of each school were selected for the purpose of data collection.

Analysis of data : The data were analysed by using statistical technique - analysis of variance and regression analysis. In total four analyses of variance (factorial design) and six regression equations were computed. In addition, after getting significant F-value, for further differentiation in case of more than three groups (boys/girls/coed) t-test was used.

Findings of the study : The findings of the study were presented in corresponding to the objectives selected.

Findings corresponding to the first objectives were stated as under :

- 1) Peer influence was stronger among the students of rural schools in comparison to urban schools.
- 2) Rural school peer group was more homogeneous in nature than urban school peer group.

- 3) Peer influence was strongest among students of boys school and least in the girls schools.
- 4) There was no significant interaction effect between area and nature of institution on peer influence.
- 5) Intelligence had no effect on peer influence of the students. Thus no significant difference was found between high intelligence and low intelligence group.
- 6) Socio-economic status of the students did not have any effect on peer influence. Thus no significant difference was found between high socio-economic status and low socio-economic status group.
- 7) There was no significant interaction effect between intelligence and socio-economic status on peer influence of the students.

The findings derived from the study denoted the fact that situational variables (area and nature of institution) had more impact on peer influence than personal variables (intelligence and SES).

Findings corresponding to the second objectives were stated as follows :

- 1) The educational aspiration of students belonging to urban schools was higher than the students of rural school.
- 2) No gender differentiation was found in this study with regard to educational aspiration. The educational aspirations of the students belonging to boys, girls and coeducational schools were found to be same.

- 3) There was no significant interaction effect between area and nature of institution on educational aspiration.
- 4) Students of high intelligence group had higher educational aspiration than the students of low intelligence group.
- 5) Students of high socio-economic status group had higher educational aspiration than the students of low socio-economic status group.
- 6) There was no significant interaction effect between intelligence and socio-economic status on educational aspiration.

Findings on educational aspiration shows a general trend of influence of all variables with the exception of nature of institution.

Corresponding to the third objective findings were stated as follows :

- 1) All the four explanatory variables considered in the study did not predict the criterion level of academic achievement to the same extent.
- 2) Intelligence was the most powerful predictor of academic achievement. It contributed 40.26% of the total variance.
- 3) Educational aspiration was the second powerful predictor bearing 8.58% of variance.

- 4) Socio-economic status was responsible for 8.22% contribution to the variance in academic achievement.
- 5) Only 0.52% variance was accountable due to peer influence which is negligible in nature.
- 5) The remaining 42.42% of the variance of the criterion was attributed to the factors not considered in the study.
- 7) More predictability was observed in rural group in comparison to urban group ($R = 52.23\%$; $U = 39.21\%$).
- 8) Highest predictability was observed in coeducational school group which accounted as 67.22% in comparison to boys school group (56.61%) and girls school group (47.38%).

The present study has attempted to analyse the nature of peer influence and educational aspiration in educational context. The findings of this study may sensitize educators to be more concerned with students' affective and other neglected variables when planning for effective education system.