ShodhSamajik: Journal of Social Studies
July-September 2026 3(2)
https://shodhsamajik.com/

Original Article

INDIAN KNOWLEDGE PERSPECTIVES ON CAREER ASPIRATION AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

Nisha Mishra [1*], **Dr. J. N. Yadav** [2]
[1] Research Scholar, Education, Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India
[2] Supervisor, Education, Shri Rawatpura Sarkar University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India

ABSTRACT

Career aspiration represents an important developmental outcome during the senior secondary stage, as it influences students' educational choices, occupational directions, and long-term personal development. Within the framework of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), career development is traditionally understood as a holistic process that integrates self-awareness, interest, aptitude, values, and social responsibility rather than merely achieving occupational success. However, in the contemporary educational context, students' career aspirations are increasingly shaped by various psychological and academic factors within a rapidly changing socio-educational environment.

The present study investigates career aspiration among senior secondary school students from the perspective of the Indian Knowledge System, with special reference to educational interest and self-concept. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. A sample of 200 senior secondary school students was selected through a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using standardized instruments measuring educational interest, self-concept, and career aspiration. Appropriate statistical techniques, including mean, standard deviation, correlation analysis, and t-test, were used to analyze the data.

The findings of the study indicate that both educational interest and self-concept have a significant and positive relationship with career aspiration among senior secondary students. The results also reveal that students with higher self-concept demonstrate stronger career aspirations than those with lower self-concept. The study emphasizes the relevance of Indian knowledge principles such as self-awareness, balance, and purposeful living in guiding meaningful career choices. The findings have important implications for educators, career counselors, and policy makers in integrating Indian knowledge perspectives into school-based career guidance programs.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System, Career Aspiration, Educational Interest, Self-Concept, Senior Secondary Students, Holistic Education, Career Guidance

INTRODUCTION

Career aspiration plays a vital role in shaping an individual's educational direction and future occupational identity. The senior secondary stage is a decisive period in which students begin to align their interests, abilities, and self-perceptions with potential career pathways. In India, career development has historically been embedded within the broader philosophical framework of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), which emphasizes self-realization, balance, ethical responsibility, and social contribution.

*Corresponding Author:
Email address: Nisha Mishra (Nisha.Mishra@outlook.com)

Received: 25 July 2026; **Accepted:** 12 August 2026; **Published:** 28 September 2026
DOI: 10.29121/ShodhSamajik.v3.i2.2026.165
Page Number: 203-210
Journal Title: ShodhSamajik: Journal of Social Studies
Journal Abbreviation: ShodhSamajik J. Soc. Stud.
Online ISSN: 3049-2319, **Print ISSN:** 3108-2009
Publisher: Granthaalayah Publications and Printers, India
Conflict of Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interests.
Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.
Authors' Contributions: Each author made an equal contribution to the conception and design of the study. All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript for publication.
Transparency: The authors affirm that this manuscript presents an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study. All essential aspects have been included, and any deviations from the original study plan have been clearly explained. The writing process strictly adhered to established ethical standards.
Copyright: © 2026 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.
With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.

The Indian knowledge tradition views career not merely as a means of earning a livelihood but as a purposeful engagement aligned with one's dharma (duty), karma (action), and swabhava (inner nature). In contrast, modern education systems often prioritize external success indicators such as income, prestige, and competition. This shift has made it essential to examine how internal psychological factors like educational interest and self-concept interact with career aspiration in contemporary schooling.

Educational interest reflects students' engagement and inclination toward academic activities, while self-concept represents their perception of their own abilities and worth. Together, these factors significantly influence students' career decision-making. Integrating Indian knowledge perspectives with educational psychology provides a holistic framework to understand career aspiration as both a personal and societal construct.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The conceptual framework of the present study is based on the principles of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), which emphasizes self-awareness, balance, ethical responsibility, and purposeful living. Within this framework, educational interest and self-concept are considered important psychological factors that influence the development of career aspiration among senior secondary school students. Educational interest reflects students' engagement with learning activities, while self-concept represents their perception of their abilities and personal identity. These factors collectively contribute to the formation of meaningful career goals aligned with the broader values of the Indian knowledge tradition.

Figure 1

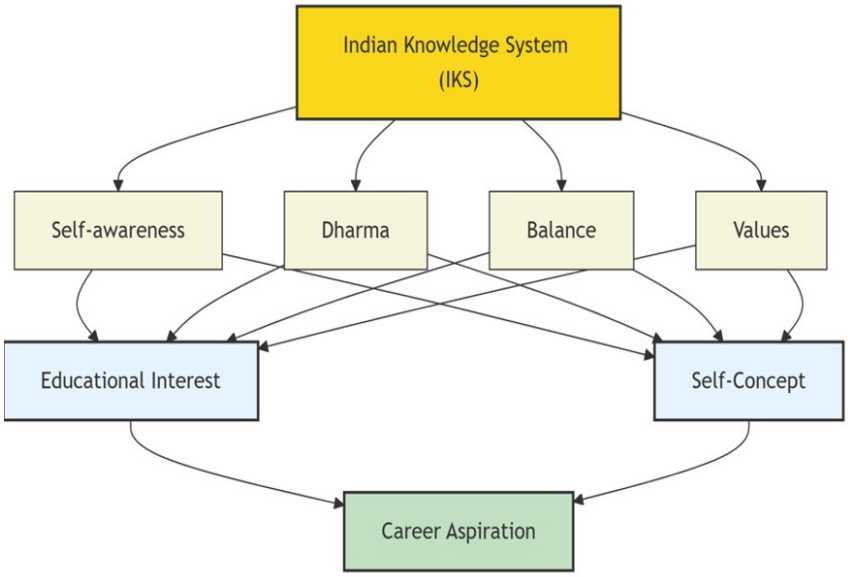


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework of Career Aspiration Based on Indian Knowledge System

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Sharma (2018) emphasized that Indian philosophical traditions view career development as a process of self-discovery and social responsibility. The alignment of personal interest with societal needs is considered essential for meaningful work.

EDUCATIONAL INTEREST AND ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT

Hidi and Renninger (2006) reported that educational interest plays a crucial role in sustaining motivation and long-term academic engagement, which directly influences career-related goals.

SELF-CONCEPT AND CAREER ASPIRATION

Marsh and Craven (2006) found a strong positive relationship between students' self-concept and their academic and career aspirations, suggesting that a positive self-image enhances confidence in career decision-making.

CAREER ASPIRATION AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Super (1990) highlighted adolescence as a critical phase for career exploration, during which self-concept crystallizes into occupational aspirations.

HOLISTIC EDUCATION AND CAREER GUIDANCE

Singh (2021) argued that integrating Indian knowledge values into career guidance practices promotes balanced decision-making and reduces career-related anxiety among students.

RESEARCH GAP

Although previous studies have examined educational interest, self-concept, and career aspiration among students, most research has focused mainly on psychological and academic factors. Very few studies have explored career aspiration from the perspective of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), which emphasizes self-awareness, balance, and purposeful living. Therefore, there is a need to study the relationship between educational interest, self-concept, and career aspiration within the framework of Indian knowledge perspectives, particularly at the senior secondary level where students begin to make important career decisions.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1) To study the relationship between educational interest and career aspiration among senior secondary school students.
2) To examine the relationship between self-concept and career aspiration among senior secondary school students.
3) To compare the career aspiration of students with high self-concept and low self-concept.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between educational interest and career aspiration among senior secondary school students.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between self-concept and career aspiration among senior secondary school students.

H_{03}: There is no significant difference in career aspiration between students with high self-concept and low self-concept.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive method was considered appropriate because the study aimed to investigate the existing relationship and influence of educational interest and self-concept on career aspiration among senior secondary school students.

This research design helps in collecting data from a large group of respondents in their natural educational setting and enables the researcher to analyze psychological and educational variables without manipulating them. The design was therefore suitable for examining how students' educational interest and self-concept contribute to the development of their career aspirations.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The population of the present study consisted of senior secondary school students studying in Classes XI and XII.

These students represent a crucial stage in the educational system where they begin to develop career goals and make decisions regarding higher education and professional pathways.

For the purpose of the present study, the population included senior secondary students from schools located in Raipur district of Chhattisgarh.

SAMPLE AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

A sample of 200 senior secondary school students was selected using a simple random sampling technique. The simple random sampling technique was used for selecting the participants. This technique provided equal opportunity to each student in the population to be selected and helped minimize sampling bias.

VARIABLES OF THE STUDY

The present study included the following variables:

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

1) **Educational Interest** Educational interest refers to the degree of students' curiosity, engagement, and preference toward academic subjects and learning activities.
2) **Self-Concept** Self-concept refers to students' perception, belief, and evaluation of their own abilities, competencies, and personal worth.

Dependent Variable

Career Aspiration Career aspiration refers to the level of ambition, goals, and expectations that students have regarding their future career or occupation.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF VARIABLES

Educational Interest: Educational interest refers to the degree of students' curiosity, engagement, and preference toward academic subjects and learning activities.

Self-Concept: Self-concept refers to students' perception, belief, and evaluation of their own abilities, competencies, and personal worth.

Career Aspiration: Career aspiration refers to the level of ambition, goals, and expectations that students have regarding their future career or occupation.

TOOLS USED FOR DATA COLLECTION

1) Educational Interest Inventory

Educational interest was measured using the Educational Interest Inventory developed by Dr. S. P. Kulshrestha. The inventory measures students' interest in different academic areas and learning activities.

The tool has been widely used in educational research and possesses satisfactory levels of reliability and validity.

2) Self-Concept Scale

Self-concept was measured using the Self-Concept Scale developed by Dr. Mukta Rani Rastogi. The scale measures students' perception about their abilities, confidence, and personal characteristics.

The instrument includes statements related to academic, social, and personal aspects of self-concept and provides reliable scores for research purposes.

3) Career Aspiration Scale

Career aspiration was measured using the Career Aspiration Scale developed by Gregor and O'Brien (2016). The scale measures students' ambition, career goals, and motivation toward professional success.

The instrument has been validated in educational research and demonstrates acceptable levels of reliability.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE TOOLS

All the tools used in the present study were standardized instruments and have been previously tested for reliability and validity by their respective authors.

The reliability of the instruments was established through methods such as test–retest reliability and internal consistency, while validity was ensured through content validity and construct validity.

Therefore, the tools were considered appropriate and suitable for measuring educational interest, self-concept, and career aspiration among senior secondary students.

PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher visited selected senior secondary schools and obtained permission from the school authorities to conduct the study.

The purpose of the research was explained to the students before administering the tools. The students were assured that their responses would remain confidential and would be used only for research purposes.

The questionnaires were distributed to the students and clear instructions were provided. After completion, the questionnaires were collected and checked for completeness.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

The collected data were analyzed using the following statistical techniques:

Mean

Mean was used to determine the average score of students on educational interest, self-concept, and career aspiration.

Standard Deviation

Standard deviation was used to measure the dispersion of scores from the mean.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between educational interest and career aspiration and between self-concept and career aspiration.

t-Test

The t-test was used to compare the career aspiration scores of students with high self-concept and low self-concept to determine whether the difference between the groups was statistically significant.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data collected from senior secondary school students were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques in accordance with the objectives of the study. Mean and standard deviation were calculated to understand the distribution of scores on educational interest, self-concept, and career aspiration. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between educational interest and career aspiration as well as between self-concept and career aspiration. In addition, the t-test was applied to compare the career aspiration of students with high and low self-concept. The results obtained from the statistical analysis are presented and interpreted in the following tables.

Table 1

Table 1 Correlation Between Educational Interest and Career Aspiration

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r-value
Educational Interest & Career Aspiration	200	68.45	8.21	0.62

Interpretation:

Table 1 shows the correlation between educational interest and career aspiration among senior secondary school students. The obtained correlation coefficient (r = 0.62) indicates a moderately strong positive relationship between educational interest and career aspiration. This suggests that students who demonstrate higher levels of educational interest are more likely to possess stronger and clearer career aspirations. Therefore, it can be inferred that educational interest plays an important role in shaping the career goals of senior secondary school students. The result also leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{01}), which stated that there is no significant relationship between educational interest and career aspiration.

Figure 2

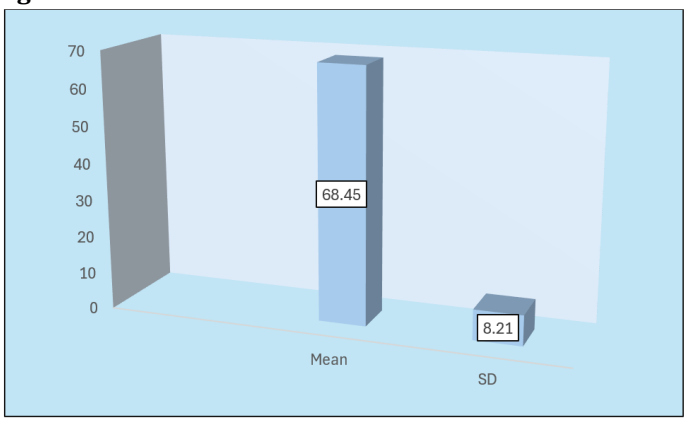


Figure 2 Relationship Between Educational Interest and Career Aspiration

Table 2

Table 2 Correlation Between Self-Concept and Career Aspiration

Variable	N	Mean	SD	r-value
Self-Concept & Career Aspiration	200	70.18	7.94	0.58

Interpretation:

Table 2 presents the correlation between self-concept and career aspiration among senior secondary school students. The obtained correlation coefficient (r = 0.58) indicates a moderately positive relationship between self-concept and career aspiration. This result suggests that students who possess a higher level of self-concept tend to have stronger and more defined career aspirations. A positive perception of one's abilities and personal worth appears to contribute to the development of clear career goals among students. The finding leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{02}), which stated that there is no significant relationship between self-concept and career aspiration among senior secondary school students.

Figure 3

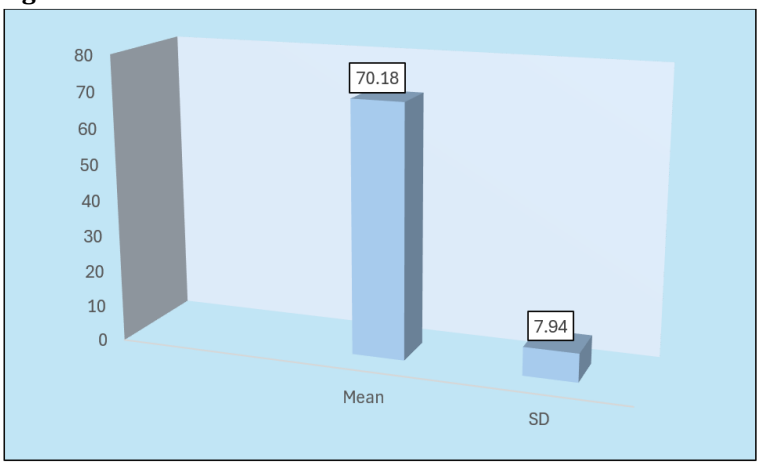


Figure 3 Relationship Between Self-Concept and Career Aspiration

Table 3

Table 3 Comparison of Career Aspiration Based on High and Low Self-Concept

Group	N	Mean	SD	t-value
High Self-Concept	100	74.32	6.88	4.12
Low Self-Concept	100	65.47	7.21	

Interpretation:

Table 3 presents the comparison of career aspiration between students with high self-concept and those with low self-concept. The mean score of career aspiration for students with high self-concept (M = 74.32, SD = 6.88) is higher than that of students with low self-concept (M = 65.47, SD = 7.21). The calculated t-value (t = 4.12) indicates a statistically significant difference between the two groups. This result suggests that students who possess a higher level of self-concept tend to exhibit stronger career aspirations compared to those with lower self-concept. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{03}), which stated that there is no significant difference in career aspiration between students with high and low self-concept, is rejected.

Figure 4

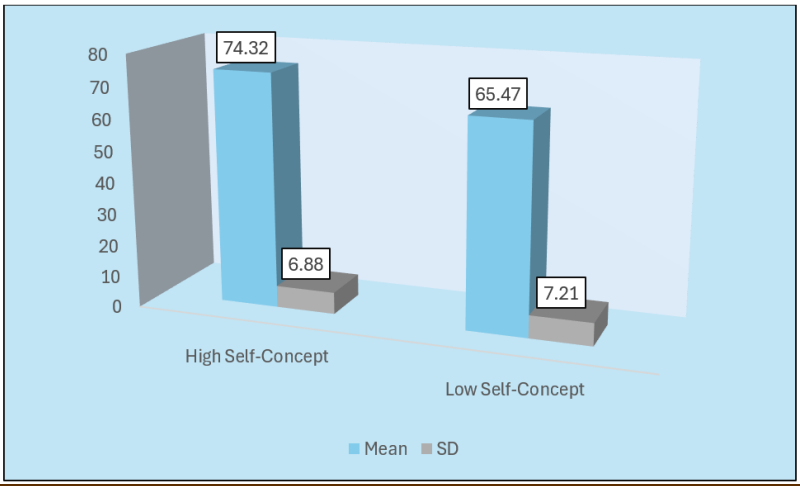


Figure 4 Comparison of Career Aspiration Based on High and Low Self-Concept

RESULTS

1) Educational interest has a significant positive relationship with career aspiration.
2) Self-concept significantly influences students' career aspirations.
3) Students with high educational interest and positive self-concept demonstrate clearer, realistic, and value-oriented career goals.
4) Indian knowledge principles support holistic career formation by emphasizing self-awareness and balance.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that career aspiration among senior secondary students is strongly influenced by educational interest and self-concept. When interpreted through Indian Knowledge System perspectives, career aspiration emerges as a holistic process involving self-realization, purposeful engagement, and social responsibility. Integrating IKS values with modern educational psychology can lead to more meaningful and sustainable career development practices.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY

The findings of the present study have important practical implications for educational institutions, teachers, career counselors, and policy makers. The results indicate that educational interest and self-concept significantly influence the career aspirations of senior secondary school students. Therefore, schools should design learning environments that promote students' curiosity, academic engagement, and confidence in their abilities.

Teachers can play a crucial role in developing students' self-concept by providing supportive feedback, encouraging participation, and recognizing individual strengths. Classroom activities that promote self-reflection, goal setting, and value-based learning can help students develop a clearer understanding of their interests and capabilities.

Career guidance programs should also incorporate principles of the Indian Knowledge System such as self-awareness, balance, and purposeful living. By integrating these values into counseling practices, students can be guided to select careers that align not only with their abilities and interests but also with their personal values and social responsibilities.

Educational policy makers may also consider including IKS-based career education modules in the senior secondary curriculum to promote holistic career development among students.

SUGGESTIONS

1) Career guidance programs should integrate Indian knowledge values with psychological counseling.
2) Schools should promote activities that enhance self-concept and academic interest.
3) Teachers should adopt holistic teaching approaches emphasizing self-awareness and purpose.
4) Policy makers should include IKS-based career education in the senior secondary curriculum.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

Bandura, A. (1997). Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control. W. H. Freeman.

Barrabeitg, G. L. (2024). Controversial Analysis of Cannabis Reclassification: Perspectives in a Narrative Review. Journal of Ayurvedic Herbal and Integrative Medicine, 4(2), 9–44. https://doi.org/10.29121/jahim.v4.i2.2024

Goleman, D. (1995). Emotional Intelligence. Bantam Books.

Hidi, S., and Renninger, K. A. (2006). The Four-Phase Model of Interest Development. Educational Psychologist, 41(2), 111–127. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep4102_4

Kumar, V. (2017). Adolescence and Career Planning. Psychological Studies, 62(4), 355–362.

Marsh, H. W., and Craven, R. G. (2006). Reciprocal Effects of Self-Concept and Performance. American Educational Research Journal, 43(3), 369–404.

National Council of Educational Research and Training. (2020). Guidance and Counselling in Schools. NCERT.

Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development. (2018). Career Readiness and Youth Development. OECD.

Patton, W., and McMahon, M. (2014). Career Development and Systems Theory. Sense Publishers. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6209-635-6

Rao, S. (2019). Indian Philosophy and Education. Indian Educational Review, 57(1), 23–35.

Savickas, M. L. (2013). Career Construction Theory. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 75(3), 239–250. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2009.04.004

Sharma, R. (2018). Indian Knowledge Systems and Education. PHI Learning.

Singh, A. (2021). Holistic Education and Career Guidance in India. Journal of Educational Studies, 15(2), 45–58.

Super, D. E. (1990). A Life-Span, Life-Space Approach to Career Development. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 16, 282–298. https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(80)90056-1

Talwar, P., and Banga, G. (2025). Socio-Economic and Statistical Perspectives on Women Entrepreneurs: Challenges and Opportunities in Punjab, India. International Journal of Engineering Technologies and Management Research, 12(8), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.29121/ijetmr.v12.i8.2025

UNESCO. (2019). Education for Sustainable Development. UNESCO.

Yash Pal Committee. (1993). Learning Without Burden. Ministry of Human Resource Development.