

STUDENTS PERSISTENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

*Dissertation Submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY



SASMITA MOHANTY

ZAKIR HUSSAIN CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110 067

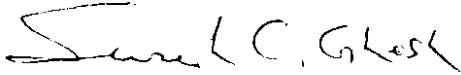
1996

Date :

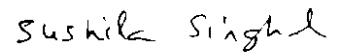
CERTIFICATE

This to certify that the M.Phil Dissertation entitled "**STUDENTS PERSISTENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**" submitted by **Sasmita Mohanty** in Partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or to any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.



Prof. S.C. Ghosh
Chairperson.



Prof. Sushila Singh
Supervisor

CONTENTS

Chapter I (Introduction)	01	-	23
Chapter II (Review of Literature)	24	-	43
Chapter III (Methodology)	44	-	54
Chapter IV (Results)	55	-	75
Chapter V (Discussions)	76	-	95
Chapter VI (Conclusion)	96	-	101
Bibliography	102	-	107

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the course of this work I am fortunate to have received cooperation from more than one quarter.

I'm grateful to my supervisor Prof. Sushila Singhal, without whose cooperation this work would have been impossible.

My special thanks to my centre chairperson Prof. S.C. Ghosh and other faculty members Prof. Geeta Nambisan & Prof. Karuna Chanana.

Friends! They are really a helpful lot. My special thanks to Sununani, Mixy, Piku, Anupama, Ravinder, Urvashi, Vijaya, Rita and Venkatesh. I thank them all. I owe my debt to my parents. Nothing would have been possible without the presence and support of my family.

Sasmita Mohanty
SASMITA MOHANTY

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Student attrition from higher education is a major problem of higher education and needs to be studied on as the central point of attention in education psychology. A study of educational psychology without an understanding of the problems that lead students to drop out makes no sense. A review of the attrition of students from higher education would help us to know the basic problems that student of higher education are facing and in making programmes and policies towards eradicating these problems. A large number of dropout would lead to an operational and financial failure of the institution. Thus attrition problem needs to be paid attention.

Though many researches have been done on demographic data of dropout, there are relatively little research on the factors of dropout. The background characteristics and psycho-socio factors that lead a student decide whether to dropout or persist are still to be explored.

As students dropout rate decides many operational factors in educational institution, it needs to be well

studied on and the factors with explored. To understand dropouts it is necessary to define dropouts and distinguish it from persistent student students who have education before completing a degree are dropout where as the non-dropouts are the persisters. Earlier it was thought that a students socio-economic status is the single most factor on which students decision to dropout or persist depend. But with a closer look at the dropout process made researchers realise that students socio-economic status is one of the many background characteristics that affects students decision, along with many other variable determine the same.

Students who are persisting definitely have some things distinguishingly different from dropout students that makes the students decide to persist.

Researcher on student persistence have taken dozens of variables as the deciding factor in student persistence. These factors range from students background characteristics: such as age, sex, religion, family size, socio-economic status, family aspiration to environmental and organisational factors such as college environmental.

institutional size and location relationship with faculty and peers, extracurricular activities, provision of scholarship etc, motivations and personality factors such as personality difference between persisters and dropouts, educational and occupational interest, motivational levels and commitments etc. These researches however, have been done referring to some theories and can be classified under the broad categories of theory taking the kind of factors they emphasis on.

The STATE OF THEORY ON STUDENT DEPARTURE

One way of distinguishing theories of student departure from each other is done by researchers by the emphasis on different individual and environmental forces in the shaping of student behaviour. Roughly the past theories can be categorize into one of the five types, each with its own particular focus and level of analysis. These can be described by the terms 'psychological', 'societal', 'economic', 'organisational' and 'interactional'.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORIES OF STUDENT DEPARTURE

Psychological models dominated the thinking of researchers in the decades immediately following the second world war. They argued that student behaviour is primarily the reflection of student attributes, specially those that describe the individual's psychological characteristics. Models such as those by Summerskill (1962) and Marks (1967) point to the image of intellectual attributes as shaping the individual's ability to meet the academic challenges of college life, while those by Heilburn (1965), Rose & Ilton (1966) stress the role of personality, motivational and dispositional characteristics in influencing the students' ability and/or willingness to meet challenges.

Typically, research of this type has sought to distinguish stayers and leavers in terms of personal attributes that account for differing responses to supposedly similar circumstances. Heilburn (1965) argued that dropouts were likely to be less mature, more likely to rebel against authority and would tend to be less serious in their endeavors and less dependable than persisters. Rose

and Ilton (1966) argued that student leaving is an immediate reflection of maladjustment and directed hostility. Students with high hostility who are unable to adjust to the college tend to direct their hostility to their problems toward the institution and either leave higher education altogether or transfer to another institution. However, their views share a common theme, namely, that retention and departure are primarily the reflection of individual actions, largely due to the ability and willingness of the individual to successfully complete the tasks associated with college attendance. More importantly, such models invariably see student departure as reflecting some shortcoming and/or weakness of the individual. Leaving is, assumed to be a reflection of an individual's personal failure to measure up to the demands of college life. Though external forces may matter, the individual alone bears the primary responsibility for persistence.

There is some merit in this view, as individual actions matter and intellectual and personality attributes influence student persistence. At the same time, there is no substantial body of evidence to suggest that leavers are

consistently different in personality from stayers or that such a thing as 'drop out personality' exists. Rather, one is led to believe that the observed differences in personality attributes of stayers and leavers are situationally determined.¹

II. SOCIAL THEORIES OF STUDENT DEPARTURE

At the other end of the spectrum are environmental theories of student departure which emphasize the impact of wider social and economic forces on the behaviour of students in institutions of higher education. One variant of the environmental perspective, referred to here as 'societal theories of student departure' sees educational attainment as only one part of the broader process of social attainment and the success or failure of students in higher education as being moulded by the same forces that shape social success generally. Rather than focussing on individual dispositions, societal theories have concerned

1. Vincent Tinto. *Theories of Student Departure Revisited*. In John C. Smart (ed.) *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, 1986, New York: Agathon Press.

themselves with those attributes of individuals, institutions and society such as social status, race, institutional prestige and opportunity structure that describe the individuals' and the institutions' place in the broad hierarchy of society.

For example, Karabel (1972) and Pincus (1980) like most conflict theorists have argued that social institutions in general (and higher education in particular) are structured to serve the interests of the prevailing social and educational elites. In their view, student departure must be understood not as an isolated individual event, but as part of a larger process of social stratification which operates to preserve existing patterns of educational and social inequality. Thus, it is argued that individual social status, race and gender are particularly important predictors of student success and that high rates of departure in the two year colleges reflect the desire of educational organizations to restrict educational and social opportunity to particular groups in society.¹

1. Clark, 1960, Pincus, 1980.

Other theorists, who share the structural functional view of society, see the outcome of schooling as a reflection of the largely meritocratic contest among individuals for social attainment (Duncan et al 1972, Sewell & Hauser, 1975, Featherman and Houser, 1978). In their view, differences in educational attainment and therefore, in patterns of student departure, tend to mirror differences in individual skills and abilities rather than social status *per se*. Social theories of departure often stress the role of external forces in the process of student persistence, which mainstream frequently insensitive to the institution-specific character of the student retention. Though useful in the aggregate, that is, in describing broad trends in retention in society generally, these theories are less useful in explaining the institution-specific forces that shape the varying forms of student institutional departure.

III. ECONOMIC THEORIES OF STUDENT DEPARTURE

Derived from economic theories of educational

attainment, the work of researchers such as Jensen (1981), Iwai & Churchill (1982), Manski & Wise (1983), Voorhees (1984) share the view that individual decisions about persistence are not different in substance from any other economic decision that weighs the costs and benefits of alternative ways of investing one's scarce economic resources. More importantly, economic theories unlike societal theories generally seek to take account of institution-specific forces by arguing that individual weighing of costs and benefits necessarily reflects individual experiences within a given institution setting. Nevertheless, economic theories are generally insensitive to the social or non-pecuniary forces inside and outside institutions that colour individual decisions regarding persistence. Understandably, all such theories emphasize the importance of finances and financial aid in student retention (e.g. Iwai & Churchill 1982, Slampen & Cabera 1980) and have been unable to explain how various forms of departure arise within institutions of higher education. Indeed, financial forces, are for most students paramount in retention decisions. The one exception to this conclusion concerns financial aid in the

form of work-study arrangements. Within limits as expressed by hours worked, this form of financial aid has consistently been shown to effect persistence positively (e.g. Astin 1975).

Though there is little doubt that financial considerations are important to the continued persistence of some students, most notably those from working class and disadvantaged backgrounds, they tend to be of secondary importance to the decisions of most other students. The reasons are two-fold. First, the effect of finances upon persistence is most often taken up in decisions regarding college entry, that is, whether to attend, where to attend, and in what form (full time or part time) to attend (Manski & Wise 1983). Second, though students frequently cite finances as reasons for withdrawal, those reasons normally reflect other forces not associated with finances such as dissatisfaction with the institution.

It might be observed that economic theories may be better suited to the analysis of retention at the level of the system than at the level of institution. Over time, for

instance, it is quite likely that the availability of different types of financial aid (e.g. the shifting of aid from outright grants to loans) together with changing economic conditions in the marketplace, do influence the aggregate rate at which cohorts of students are able to complete their college degrees. But even here the track record of such analyses is spotty. As Oosterbeek (1989) observes, there is much to be done before such theories can be gainfully employed in the study of retention in higher education.

IV. ORGANISATIONAL THEORY OF STUDENT PERSISTENCE

Organisational theories are concerned with the impact of environmental factors on student behaviour. However, rather than focussing on broad social and economic forces, their attention centres on the effect of the organisation of higher educational institutions. Like studies of role socialization and worker productivity and turnover organisational theories of departure (Kamens, 1971 and Bean, 1983), see the occurrence of student departure as reflecting

the impact of the organization on the socialization and satisfaction of students.

Typically, researchers have looked at the effect of organisational dimensions, such as bureaucratic structure, size, faculty-student ratio and institutional resources and goals on the aggregate rates of student institutional departure. though individual attributes are sometimes included, they are not of primary theoretical interest. Kamen's multi institutional study (1971) for instance, focussed on the impact of organisational size and complexity of student role socialization and retention. He argued that it larger institutions with distinct student "charters" would have lower student attrition and higher rates of persistence because of the superior capacity to allocate students to the more prestigious positions in society. Such "charters" are a reflection, not only of institutional resources but also of links that larger institutions maintain with different occupational and economic groups. Bean's study takes a somewhat different view of departure in that it looked at the impact of organisational attributes and rewards on retention and persistence through their

impact on student satisfaction. It is argued that institutional rates of retention - that is student turnover would be heightened by institutional policies that increase students' participation and enhance their rewards for 'work' in the institution.

As in formal organizations, organizational decision within higher education necessarily affects the satisfaction of all members with organization, students as well as staff. In this respect, organizational models are especially appealing to institutional planners concerned with the restructuring of organization to achieve greater institutional effectiveness, for they focus on organizational attributes that are directly alterable by administrative action. These models should be appealing to researchers interested in comparative analysis of institutional retention. For, they make it possible to highlight how different organizational structures are related to different retention outcomes among relatively similar student bodies.

However, organizational theories such as Bean's (1983) and to a lesser extent Kamen's (1971), lack explanatory power in that they do not show that the non-organizational attributes eventually impact on student decision to stay back or leave. The theories normally do not point out the intervening factors, such as student sub-cultures and patterns of student-faculty interaction, that serve to transmit the effect of the organisation to student behaviour. Nor do they explain why different types of students take on different types of leaving behaviour within the institution. They are not well suited to explaining the patterns of departure/resistance that arise among different types of student within the institution.

V. INTERACTIONAL THEORIES OF STUDENT PERSISTENCE

Interactional theories hold that student behaviour reflected both individual and organizational attributes. Interactional theories of student departure have taken the view that student leaving reflects individual's experience in the total culture of the institution as manifested in both formal and informal organization of the institution.

They stress the role of informal organization (e.g. students groups and sub-cultures) and the importance of patterns of personal interaction among students, faculty and staff in shaping student departure. They argue that student departure necessarily reflects the interpretation and meaning that individuals attach to their expressions within the institution. Though individual attributes matter, their impact cannot be understood without reference to how they relate to the understanding of that different students have of events within the institution.

They are several variants of the interactional view, such as those using the notion of role socialization and "person-role fit" to describe student departure. (Pervin & Rubin 1967, Root Man 1972). For them, socialization into the student role is central to the retention process. As a consequence, the more closely aligned with that role that students see themselves to be, the more likely they are to stay. Conversely, the greater the perceived discrepancy between the individual's perception of self and student, the greater the likelihood of departure.

In heterogeneous settings or in those with no dominant student sub-culture (e.g. non-residential colleges), the same notion may provide a less suitable account of student departure. The 'person-role fit' model tends to make the false assumption that all leavings are same in character and in source.

A more complex interactional view of departure, is of Tinto (1975, 1987). A derivative of Spady's earlier work (1970), it draws on the work of French sociologist Durkheim, (Durkheim, 1951).

Tinto's model argued that colleges are very much like other human communities and that the process of persistence is very much like those processes within communities that influence the establishment of community membership. In the multifaceted world of colleges, student decision to leave or stay back are seen as directly and indirectly influential by the individual's social (personal) and intellectual (normative) experiences in the varied communities, academic and social, that make up the world of college. The decisions to leave reflect those personal attributes that

are associated with how individuals interact with, and come to attach meaning to, the world around them. Given the person's ability to meet minimum academic standards, the model sees personal interaction or contact, especially with faculty and immediate peers, as the primary vehicle through which membership or persistence is attained (the absence of rewarding interaction being the basis of departure).

Though quite complex, the interactional models provide a more inclusive view of the departure process: one that integrates both the organizational and the psychological view, while enabling researchers to sort out the various forms of leaving that are typically subsumed under the label "drop out". More importantly, that highlight the various mechanisms through which organizations and personality impact departure. By doing so, they move from a largely descriptive view of departure to an explanatory theory that is amenable to testable hypothesis.

The interaction model is, as Peterson (1985) notes, the only theory of student persistence, which has generated a systematic testing and explanation of student persistence in

and departure from higher education (e.g. Pascarella & Terenzini 1979, 1983, Munro, 1981). In almost all cases, research supports the theoretical contention that student integration in academic and social communities of the college, are the single most important predictors of persistence following entry.

The interaction model has been particularly effective in studying the attrition/resistance among minority students. Eddins (1982), Attkinson & Richardson (1983), Bean & Hull (1984), Benett & Okinaka (1984), Donovan (1984), Pascarella (1985), Nettles et.al (1986), Fox (1986), Pascarella et al (1989) & Noral (1987). Studies such as those by Suen (1983) & Flemming (1984) highlighted the importance of group membership and perceptions of acceptance of minority persistence. They support the notion that the prevailing ethos of a community, specifically its support can be critical to minority persistence. The same is true of studies focusing on the persistence of non-traditional students (Metzner & Bean 1987, Swift 1987) and deaf students (Stinson, 1987).

Studies on attrition level typically assumed that measures of interaction are suitable proxies for a student's integration into the college, though this need not apply for all students. Some students may perceive themselves as involved even though their formal contact with the faculty is minimal (students who learn through correspondence) while others may see themselves as alienated even though contact with faculty may be frequent. The quality of contact holds the key to understanding the person's perception of involvement.

Interaction models have tended to overlook the effect of formal aspects of the institution on student behaviour. The adoption of organisational model makes it possible to trace more accurately the direct and indirect effects of organizations on students' behaviour. Available evidence suggests that one of the primary effects of the organisation on student departure is indirect through its influence on the character of the social and intellectual communities within the college (formal academic policies, such as requiring faculty to take attendance, which may alter not only the nature of classroom instruction but also the

character of the academic communities of the college. Such policies may have thus wider, though often unintended impact on student retention that extend beyond initial policy goals.

On a different level organizational attributes such as size, vertical differentiation, and workload, may also influence persistence through their impact on student-faculty contact. As regards the effect of institutional size, a recent multi-institutional study of persistence over years found that institutional selectivity and size both have negative indirect effect upon persistence. In the later instance, increased size has a negative impact upon social integration and contact with faculty, which in turn has a negative indirect effect upon persistence.

The inclusion of organizational variables in current interactional theories of departure can lead to a more complete guide for administrative policy formation. It may also do so by pointing out the various and often unintended ways in which formal administrative actions impact upon student departure. Combining the interactional and

organisational theories may also serve as an effective tool for the comparative study of student departure in different institutional settings. They may make it possible, for instance, to analyse more carefully the ways in which different organizational structures impact upon institutional rates of student departure. Though some very informative attempts have been made to use existing interactional models for this purpose (e.g. Pascarella and Chapman, 1983; Pascarella and Wolfe, 1985, Stecker et al 1988; Williamson and Creamer, 1988), the research has only begun to scratch the surface of the multi-layered effects of different institutional settings on student departure.

STOP OUT, TRANSFER AND SYSTEM WITHDRAWAL

TH-6436

Most of the recent theories on attrition have focused on the distinction between staying or leaving. They have not sought to explain why it is that some will withdraw only temporarily (stop outs), some will transfer to other institutions (inter-institutional transfer) while others will withdraw from higher education altogether (institutional departure).

It must be recognised that not all such departures are similar in character. Some, in fact, have little to do with events internal to the college but reflect instead either the effect of events outside the college or the impact of particular type of individual goals. Some depart only temporarily with the intention of returning. They 'stop out' rather than 'drop out'. In these cases, external events are much more important than the events internal to the college. Rather than being pushed out, they are usually pulled away from college attendance by external forces, often those associated with work or family. It should be noted, however, that not all 'stop outs' are intentional in this way. In some cases the person first leaves without intending to return and only afterwards reconsiders. The later decision to return is not associated with an earlier decision to leave.

It is also evident that some individuals enter college with the intention of transferring to another institution prior to degree completion.

It is seen that researcher on college departure has been exploratory, designed to identify significant relationships without referring to a theoretical framework or focussing on system attrition. There have been numerous studies on dropout rates (and particularly dropouts in schools and truancy) but there has been relatively little research on students persistence in higher education. Tinto, Biddle Bank and Slavings, Pascarella and Terenzini studied American Students. This model present study aims at identifying some psycho-social factors associated with students persistence in higher education.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The present section focuses on studies conducted in the area of student persistence in higher education.

Though theory development and research on student attrition in higher education has been largely an American phenomenon, studies have also been carried out in some other countries. However, in most cases, research has been exploratory in character and/or focused on system attrition. In no case, has research been carried out using the interactional theories of student departure.

Among the various researches on student persistence, the work of Spady and Linto has been dominant ones which precipitated the maximum number of researches.

Spady (1970) views the college as a social system with its own value and social structures. Using Durkheim's theory of suicide as base, he builds upon it a descriptive theory of drop out behaviour. Spady assumed that social conditions affecting the drop out of students from the social system of college would resemble those resulting in

suicide in the wider society, namely, insufficient interactions with others in the college and insufficient congruency with the value patterns of the college collectivity. Tinto (1975) developed his model on the earlier work of Spady (1971). An outgrowth of Durkheim's theory of suicide. Tinto's model is based largely on degree of fit between the individual student and the institutional environment. The model suggests that students come to a particular college or university with a range of background traits (race, academic, achievement, aptitude, family education, financial context, etc.), which lead to initial commitments, both to the goal of graduation from college and to the specific institution attended. Both the background traits and initial commitments are hypothesized to influence not only the academic achievement but also the students' social and academic integration. Other things being equal the greater the person's level of social and academic integration, the greater is the institutional commitment and commitment to the goal of graduation from college. Tinto's model has been known as an interactional model of college attrition and retention.

Another important research precipitating further investigation has been the theoretical model of achievement behaviour, in which behaviours are defined in terms of persistence, choice and performance. This model proposed by Parsons and Colleagues (1983) provides a framework for specifying the casual relationships among aptitude, socialization, attitude and other affective factors. In a study Ethington (1990) examined Parson's model of achievement behaviour. he examined the two constructs that were hypothesized to directly influence persistence. First was the value placed on college attendance and the second was the expectations for success in college. He found only the first one having significant influence on persistence. Level of degree aspiration also had a strong and significant influence. In this study, Ethington also found that prior achievement of students had the strongest total effect on any of the variables in this model.

Pascarella and Terenzini (1979) did an extensive investigation on the main and interaction effects of students' characteristics and measures of social and academic integration on voluntary freshman withdrawal

decisions. After controlling for the influence of twelve student-entering characteristics, they found that the thirteen measures of social and academic integration contributed significantly in the explanation of voluntary withdrawal from college. Students entering characteristics were found to influence the specific measures of social and academic integration.

Another research which precipitated further work was done by Biddle, Bank and Slavings (1985). Data of a large mid - western university were analysed. With ability levels, grades, academic majors and many other characteristics of the students' controlled, the effects of social influences on students persistence remained significant. Parents and peers were found to have stronger influence than faculty members on the persistence of students. Normative influences were found to be stronger than the modelling influences.

Some factors that influenced student persistence and have been researched are:

ECONOMIC FACTORS

Researches on economic factors leading to attrition reveal that most students dropout when they cannot afford to continue at college. Iffert (1957) found that the financial reasons were ranked third in importance by students as a reason for their dropping out.

Iffert (1957) concluded that the financial aid programs were insufficient and the funds should be used solely for grants, instead of being distributed through other forms of financial aid (such as loans of work-study). Iffert's post hoc evaluation of the distribution of financial aid resources showed that if the resources had been used only for grants, an additional 80,000 students would have graduated from college in the four years during which this study was conducted.

Medsker and Tilery (1971) found out that economic factors exert a strong influence on college completion. Students supported by parents, scholarships, or personal savings tend to remain in college. Medsker and Tilery also

argued that public junior college students, as a group, come from families in income groups that are lower than those of the university students. The student who works at a job while attending college has a reduced time for studies. Thus, a job may interfere with satisfactory progress. Moreover, the job offers the student an alternative to remaining in college (Astin, 1972).

Fields and LeMay (1973) have reported from their findings that receiving financial aid will increase the chances of the student's enrolling in college, regardless of the type of aid (grants, loans or work-study).

The research by Jensen (1981), Iwar and Churchill (1982), Manski and Wise (1983), Voorhees (1984) shared the view that individual's decisions about persistence are not different in substance from other economic decisions in that they weigh the costs and benefits of alternative ways of investing their scarce economic resources. All these studies emphasized the importance of financial aid and finances in students' retention.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Research has indicated that factors associated with family background are also important to the child's educational attainment and performance in college. The most important of these factors are the quality of relationships within the family and the interest and expectations parents have for their children's education. It is seen that the families where parents are more open, democratic and supportive and have less conflicting relationship with their children, tend to produce children who are more persistent (Congdon, 1964; Merrill, 1964). College persisters seem to get more parental advice, praise and express more interest in their college experience. According to Hackman and Dysinger (1970), persisters have parents who express greater expectations for their children's further education. Astin (1964), Eckland (1964b), Lembesis (1965) and Mc.Hannon (1965) have shown that family's socio economic status is inversely related to dropout and positively to persistence. Astin (1964) in a 4-year longitudinal study of 6,600 high aptitude students, found that father's education, mother's education, father's occupation, mother's occupation each had

a significant direct and positive effect on students persistence at college over a four year period.

In contrast, Reitzes and Murtran (1980) using a larger set of variables and more statistical controls, reported that father's education and family income had no direct effects on the educational plans of undergraduates, although parental characteristics exerted some indirect effect through students' past academic performance.

Children from lower status family seem to dropout more often even when intelligence has been taken into account (Sewell and Shah, 1967).

Rosman and Kirk (1970) through their research did not find any significant relationship between father's occupation and students persistence i.e., students whose fathers were in lower occupational positions do not dropout at significantly higher rates.

Ecklands Study (1965) demonstrated that, over a 10 year's period, SES variables become significant in

predicting which students will return to college after dropping out.

To summarize the findings on familiar background it appears that college persisters are more likely to come from families whose parents are more educated.

Anderson and Munro (1981) from a National Longitudinal Study of high school class of 1972, (which measured parental influence), used different regression models for analyses of data for this study. Both reported that parental aspirations had significant effects on students attrition.

Sewell and Hauser (1980) supported the mediated process of influence through internalization. Through this process, parents include their aspirations into the minds of children and thus influence them through internalizing the decision to stay or leave. Additional support to claims about the indirect effects of family background has come from Aitken (1982), who noted that the academic performance of university freshmen and found significantly higher if their parents had college degrees. Though SES factors are

commonly believed to influence persistence, research has provided equivocal results. There has been little agreement as to the effects and significance of SES factors on rates of attrition.

Slocum (1956) reported that only 35% of the dropout samples felt that their parents were very much interested in the student completing college as contrasted with 81% of the parents of those who did not dropout.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Wise family students' own ability level is a determinant of college persistence. Individuals' own ability is a measure of different aspects of individual competence. Sewell and Shah (1967) found that individual's measured ability was nearly twice as important in accounting for dropout as was the social status of the family. Among the various measures of ability, most of the researches on dropout and persistence have focussed on ability as demonstrated through grade point performance. This is because it corresponds more closely to the individual's

ability to achieve within an educational setting with social and academic requirements not too different from that of the college (Astin, 1972).

With respect to past academic achievement and grade performance, many studies have shown it to be the single most important factor in predicting persistence in college (Ammons, 1971; Astin, 1970; Kemens, 1971; Mock and Yonge, 1969; Blancheild, 1971; Chase, 1970; Morrisey, 1971 and Summerskill, 1962).

Demitroff (1974) asserted that academic factors are the most reliable predictors of attrition, concluding that it is the only variable that can be usefully employed as a predictor and that adding other variables does not greatly improve prediction.

Astin and Iffert (1977) found that scholastic aptitude is only half as stable in prediction as high school rank. it can not separately predict college persistence.

Researchers have found it important to distinguish between drop outs, who are academic dismissals and those who are voluntary withdrawals with this regard, because the latter often score higher on various measures of ability and their grade performance is higher than the former ones (Coker, 1968, Hackman and Dysinger, 1970, Taylor, 1970, Rossman, Kirk and Sexton, 1965). Hackman and Dysinger (1970) were able to distinguish between persisters, transfers, voluntary withdrawers and academic dismissals in terms of the interaction between an individual's level of academic performance (as measured by grade point average) and the level of commitment to the goal of college completion. They found out that:

- a. Students with solid academic competence but moderately low commitment to college completion tended to withdraw voluntarily from college, often to transfer to another institution or re-enroll at the same institution at a later date (i.e. Stop out).

- b. Students with poor academic qualifications but moderately high commitment tended to persist in college till completion or until forced to withdraw for academic reason (i.e. academic dismissals); and

- c. Students with both low commitment to college completion and moderately low academic competence tended to withdraw from college and not transfer to another institution or re-enroll at a later date (i.e. permanent drop out).

Johnson and Rossman (1973), in their study made a distinction between the voluntary and non-voluntary type of drop out. They found that there was no difference in scholastic aptitude measures between non-drop outs and voluntary withdrawals, who are presumably the students most likely to transfer and re-enroll later. On the other hand, there was a significant difference between voluntary and non-voluntary withdrawals on measures of scholastic aptitude.

Summerskill (1962) examined 35 studies. In all studies he found a highly significant relationship between attrition and college grades. He found that poor grades are far more stable predictors of attrition, than good grades are of retention, since successful students drop out in large numbers than would be expected. he reported that though a large percentage of drop out students in his studies had poor grades, a small percentage considered their grades to be an important factor in the decision to drop out.

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

The researchers using psychological models have sought to distinguish between stayers and leavers in terms of personal attributes that help to account for differing responses in supposedly similar circumstances. Those models dominated the thinking on retention in decades immediately following the World War II, whereas models such as those by Summerskill (1962) and marks (1967) pointed out the importance of intellectual attributes in shaping the individuals ability to meet the academic challenges of college life. At the same time, models by Heilbrun (1965)



and Rose and Elton (1966) stressed the role of personality, motivational and dispositional characteristics in influencing the students' ability and/or willingness to meet those challenges. Rose and Elton argued that students with high hostility who are unable to adjust to the college tend to direct their hostility towards the institution and either leave higher education altogether or transfer to an institution. Students' retention or persistence is more a reflection of the individual actions.

Heilburn (1965) found that the main personality difference between persisters and non-persisters was in their Socialization (So) and Responsibility (Re) scores of personality tests such as the MMPI. Scores on these subscales revealed that students who persist are higher in the Socialization measures of personal maturity, freedom from rebellion and authority problems, and in the capacity to live with others without friction. The Responsibility scores show higher levels of seriousness of thought, development of values and dependability. Heilbrun also found that persisters are more confirming and self-sufficient.

Vaughan (1968) concluded that persisters are less impulsive than the drop outs, have a deep emotional commitment to education and are able to profit from their past experiences than the drop outs. According to him, voluntary withdrawals have almost the same scores on different measures of personality, except social integration. In this respect, college withdrawals seem to be more egoistic and tend to manifest greater oversensitivity. Another interesting finding regarding personality as a predicting factor in college persistence has been revealed by Rose (1965). He found that there were no significant differences in the anxiety level of persisting students and drop out. Both groups scored quite high on this variable, as measured by Rotters Incomplete Sentences Blank. This high anxiety level, however, did not disrupt the functioning of the students who persist. Other factors affecting the drop outs made their anxiety level much more intolerable for them and played a much more important role in their emotional attrition from college.

Students who are college persisters seem to be more able to adapt to the "college milieu". They are more mature, agreeable, confirming, cooperative and self-sufficient, whereas drop outs are generally more impulsive, impetuous, critical, unconventional, aloof and assertive, likely to over-emphasize personal pleasures, rebellious against authority, resentful of college academic and social regulations, self-centered and uncertain about future (Astin, 1965); Blanchfeild, 1971; Johnson, 1970; Manager, Butcher and Mandal, 1974), etc.).

PEER RELATIONS

With regard to integration in college system composed of one's peers. On the other hand Iffert (1957) noted that only 15 percent of his drop outs described themselves as 'lonesome' while at college. Cope and Hewitt, Flacks (1963) and Johnes (1962) found that social integration via friendship support is directly related to persistence in college.

Although researchers do not show a direct causal relationship between peer group influence and withdrawal or persistence, Carew (1957) showed that students characterized by "higher acceptance" had significantly higher Grade Point Averages than students with 'low acceptance'.

Reitzes and Mutran (1980) reported that the importance of college friends did not affect the educational expectations or college performance of 396 sophomores, juniors and seniors at a large midwestern university.

FACULTY RELATIONSHIP

Several studies have shown that dropouts were more dissatisfied than persisters with their relationship with their professors (Hannah, 1969; Slocum, 1956).

Following the suggestions made by Spady (1971) and Tinto (1975), Pascarella and Terenzini observed on the basis of that faculty-student contacts are an important component of both the academic and social integration of students, which in turn, are important predictors of attrition of

students. Evidence from a number of studies (Gekowski and Schwartz, 1961; Pascarella and Terenzini, 1976, 1977; Spady, 1971) suggested that such aspects of student-faculty relationships as the frequency of student-faculty informal contacts beyond the classroom are in fact positively associated with student persistence. Later researches by Pascarella and Terenzini and Doby and Iverson (1983) at public universities, however, failed to replicate these findings. Pascarella and Terenzini suggested that such differences in findings across studies represent real differences among the institutions studied, but it may also be true that academic and social contacts with faculty at some institutions, especially private ones, have more attrition-related context than they do at other institutions.

Davis (1962), Gekowski and Schwartz (1961), Katz and Sanford (1969), Mc Keachie (1964), Panus & Astin (1968) etc. have shown through their studies that a positive interaction facilitates the development of healthy attitudes towards bearing and towards the college. These studies have also shown that dropouts were more disastified with their

professors than the persisters and experienced a barrier between themselves and their professors that prohibited close contact (Hannah, 1969).

Slocum (1956) reported from his study that 66% of the dropouts were dissatisfied with their faculty relationships as compared with 49% of the persisters.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Number of students' persisting in higher education and research is reduced to almost one third of the students enrolled in high school. What are the factors that lead some students to persist and not all? Is it the background factors that compel some students to leave and others to persist? Are students' with higher aspirations more persistent? Do students' relationship with faculty and peer influence their decision to stay or leave? Some of these commonly observed phenomena led to this study having the following problem statement:

PROBLEM STATEMENT:

Whether students' persistence in higher education is influenced by their background characteristics such as their socio-economic status and family encouragement, peer and faculty relationships; their satisfaction with the institution, and degree aspirations.

OBJECTIVES

The principal objective of this study is to find out whether student persistence in higher education is related to their socio-economic status, family encouragement, degree aspiration, faculty and peer relations, and institutional satisfaction. The specific objectives are:

- 1) To find out the relationship between socio-economic status and persistence for post graduation and M.Phil students.
- 2) To find out whether students' degree aspiration are related to their persistence.
- 3) To ascertain the relationship between students satisfaction with the institution and their persistence.
- 4) To ascertain the relationship between students' relationship with the faculty and their persistence in college.

- 5) To find out the influence of peer relationship on students' persistence.
- 6) If family encouragement towards education is a factor of students persistence.
- 7) To find out whether students at post graduate and M.Phil levels differ in their persistence.

These objectives led to the following assumptions:

- 1) It is assumed that students of M.Phil have a higher socio-economic status than students in post-graduation. As the cost of education to continue for research is high it is expected that only better SES background persist from M.Phil.
- 2) It is assumed that students of M.Phil will have a higher degree aspiration level than their counterparts at M.A./M.Sc. level.

- 3) Those who are satisfied with the institution are more likely to stay back. Institutional satisfaction, which takes into account the students overall satisfaction with the institution including administration, examination system, grading, department etc. It is assumed that students in research will have more institutional satisfaction than Post-graduate students.
- 4) It is assumed that students in M.Phil will have a closer relationship with faculty than post-graduate students.
- 5) Astin (1980) has said one's relationship with peers influence the decision to choose a particular course and the next enrollment. It is assumed in this study that students in M.Phil will have better peer-relationships.
- 6) It is assumed that for M.Phil students family encouragement will be higher than post-graduate students.
- 7) Post-graduate students will have a low persistence score than M.Phil students.

HYPOTHESES:

- 1) There will be a significant difference between the SES of M.Phil and P.G. students, and between science and arts students.
- 2) The degree aspiration level of post-graduate and research students will differ significantly.
- 3) Post-graduate and research students will differ significantly in their institutional satisfaction.
- 4) The post graduate research and P.G. students will differ significantly with regard to their relationship with the faculty.
- 5) There will be a significant difference between the nature of peer relationships of P.G. and M.Phil Students.
- 6) For post-graduate and M.Phil students the family encouragement will differ significantly.

- 7) The relationship between socio-economic status and persistence will be different for post-graduate students and research students.
- 8) There will be significant difference in the relationship between degree aspirations and persistence for P.G. and M.Phil Students.
- 9) The relationship between institutional satisfaction and persistence will be significantly different for post-graduate and research students.
- 10) For post-graduate and research students the relationship between faculty relationships and persistence will be significantly different.
- 11) There will be significant difference in the relation of between persistence and peer relationship for P.G. and M.Phil students.

12) The relationship between family encouragement and persistence will significantly differ for P.G. and M.Phil Students.

SAMPLE

160 students were chosen from Delhi University. 80 were Post Graduate and 80 were M.Phil Students either from Science or Arts streams, without any pre-selection bias. They were of both sex (Male and female) group. Most students were in the age group 21 to 26 years.

RESEARCH DESIGN:

As the study was done after the event took place, an ex-post-facto design was used. 160 students were taken for the study and were given questionnaire.

DEFINITION OF VARIABLES:

socio-Economic Status: - In this study, socio-economic

status is defined to conclude the income, education and occupation of both the parents taken together.

Degree Aspiration - The students' highest aspired degree.

Institutional Satisfaction - It is defined as the students' overall satisfaction with the university administration, examination system, grading, department and management of the university.

Faculty relationship - It is defined as the kind of closeness or distance a student maintains with the teachers.

Peer Relationship - It is defined as the closeness and distance a student maintains with other students.

Family encouragement - It is defined as the interest shown by the parents in the students education.

Persistence - It is defined as the students diligence, ability to work hard and sticking to a particular job over a long period of time, despite outside threat, versatility,

divergent thinking, planning and study habits taken together.

TOOLS USED

- 1) An extensive questionnaire consisting of 60 questions was used. It measured students socio-economic status, family encouragement, faculty relationship, peer relationship, institutional satisfaction and persistence. All questions were to be responded in a four choice format of likest type -
- 2) Students personal information sheet.

PROCEDURE

The researcher started conducted the study by giving the extensive questionnaire to the students individually. Before giving the questionnaire the researcher gave instructions to the students informing them that the data collected would be used for research purpose and will not be

disclosed, so the students should read and answer the questionnaire as accurately as possible. The answers to questions were in the form of four alternatives, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Scores for each alternatives ranged from 3 to 0 depending on the answer marked. For example if the answer was strongly agree the score was 3 and if strongly disagree the score was 0. For each variable the scores were summed up separately. This way the total sum of each variable for all the subjects were found out. Then the total sample was divided into sub-groups on the basis of their educational level, educational stream and sex of the individuals. On educational level, students of M.A. were coded as group 1 and M.Phil students as 2. On educational stream, students of science were coded as 1 and Arts as 2 and on the basis of sex, female students were coded as 1 and male students as 2.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Data collected were analysed using statistical procedures for means, standard deviations, correlational

analysis and t-values. The t-test was used to know the significance of mean differences for different variables and different groups.

Correlational analysis was used to know the correlation existing between different variables.

CHAPTER IV

RESULT

MEAN DIFFERENCES

The difference between the mean scores of M.A. and M.Phil students on all the variables taken was tested by using t-test.

Table 1: t-values on all the variables for M.A. and M.Phil students.

M.A Students			M.Phil Students			t-Value	
Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N		
SES	13.20	3.69	80	12.82	3.47	80	1.59
DA	12.97	8.21	80	17.33	9.30	80	2.89**
IS	21.48	4.67	80	22.03	6.44	80	1.62*
RF	22.70	5.28	80	21.91	4.93	80	.25
RP	18.67	5.01	80	16.11	2.50	80	1.99*
FE	8.11	2.45	80	9.10	2.39	80	1.22
PER	16.54	6.17	80	18.94	5.17	80	2.20**

Results showed that the mean score for M.Phil. Group was higher than M.A. group with a difference of 4.36. This implied that the M.Phil. group had higher degree aspiration than M.A. students. The standard deviations for both the groups were quite high signifying that the scores were scattered widely. There were some students in the group who experienced very low degree aspirations whereas there were

others who experienced very high degree aspirations. The t-value was significant (2.89; $P < .01$) implying a significant difference between the mean scores.

Apart from the degree aspiration, other variables which showed significant mean differences were family encouragement, persistence, institutional satisfaction and peer relationships. M.Phil students had a higher mean score on persistence than M.A. students, with a difference of 24. Thus, it was seen that M.Phil students were more persistent than M.A. students. The t-value was 2.20 showing a significant difference. In peer relationships the M.A. students had a higher mean score of 18.67, with M.Phil students a mean score of 16.11. There was a difference of 2.56. And the t-value was 1.99 which was significant at $P < .05$ level. This meant that the M.A. Students had a more extensive peer relationships than the M.Phil students. On family encouragement, the M.Phil students again had a higher mean score with a mean difference of .99 and t' value of 1.22 which was insignificant showed that the two groups did not differ significantly with regard to their family

encouragement. With regard to the results in relationship with faculty and socio-economic status there were no significant difference among the mean scores either.

The data was separated on the basis of the stream to which the students belonged and the results were analysed separately.

Table 2: t-values for Science and Arts students

	Science Samples			Arts Samples			t-Value
	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	N	
SES	36.25	8.24	80	37.13	6.92	80	.64
DA	7.33	4.47	80	5.85	5.88	80	1.96*
IS	14.02	4.35	80	12.91	4.32	80	1.39
RF	22.15	3.55	80	20.59	4.49	80	2.11**
RP	9.15	2.35	80	10.33	2.80	80	2.54**
FE	14.00	3.79	80	13.87	2.36	80	1.56
PER	28.13	4.06	80	26.40	4.42	80	2.23**

Results showed that students in science and arts differed significantly with regard to their score on persistence, peer relationship, faculty relationship and degree aspiration. On the scores of persistence, the students of science had a greater mean score with a mean difference of 1.73 than the Arts students. This implied that the science students actually experienced greater

persistence than arts students. A significant t-value of 2.20 ($P < .05$) implied a significant difference between the mean scores. With regard to the score on peer relationship, the mean score was greater for the arts students with a significant t-value of 2.54 implying that the arts students had a closer and more personal relationship with peers than the science students. On faculty relationship the science students had a greater mean score with a significant t-value of 2.11 ($P < .05$), signifying that they had a better relationship with the faculty than did students of arts stream. The mean difference on faculty relationship was 1.56. With regard to the t-value on degree aspiration of both science and arts students, it was seen that there was a significant t-value of 1.96 ($P < .01$). The mean score was greater for science students with the difference of 1.98 from the arts students.

Correlation analysis was done for different groups separately.

Table 3 Correlations analysis for the total samples (N=160)

	SES	DA	IS	RF	RP	FE	PER
SES	1.00	.22*	.18	.19	.21	.13	.18
DA	.22*	1.00	.55**	.49**	.14	.17	.59**
IS	.18	.55**	1.00	.45**	.24*	.18	.47**
RF	.19*	.49**	.45**	1.00	.23*	.07	.50**
FE	.13	.17	.18	.07	.03	1.00	.20*
PER	.18	.59**	.47**	.50**	.33**	.20*	1.00

* significant at .01 level/** significant at .001 level

The correlation matrix for the total sample shows that among the variables that have high correlation are persistence with degree aspiration ($r = .59, P < .01$). This signifies that for the total sample persistence is related more significantly with degree aspiration.

The other variables that are related significantly are institutional satisfaction with degree aspiration ($r = .55$), faculty relationship with degree aspiration ($r = .49, P < .01$), persistence with institutional satisfaction ($r = .47$), faculty relationship with institutional satisfaction ($r = .45$), peer relationship with institutional satisfaction ($r = .24$), persistence with faculty relationship ($r = .50$) and persistence with peer relationship ($r = .33$). The results imply that persistence, for the total sample is correlated significantly with many other variables significantly for

the total sample, mainly the students' degree aspiration, institutional satisfaction, faculty relationship and peer relationship are correlated with their persistence in college significantly. Next to persistence, institutional satisfaction is the variable that is correlated with maximum other variables. Socio-economic status was correlated with degree aspiration ($r = .22$) with institutional satisfaction ($r = .18$), with faculty relationship ($r = .19$), with peer relationship ($r = .20$). Faculty relationship is correlated with family encouragement ($r = .23$), persistence with family encouragement ($r = .20$).

Then correlation matrix for Post-graduate and M.Phil Students were taken and compared on the basis of different variables.

Table 4: Correlation matrix for post-graduate students

	SES	DA	IS	RF	RP	FE	PER
SES	1.00	.14	.15	.15	.22	.14	.25*
DA	.14	1.00	.56**	.53**	.07	.13	.47*
IS	.15	.56**	1.00	.51**	.17	.34*	.53**
RF	.15	.53**	.51**	1.00	.31*	.33*	.54**
RP	.22	.07	.17	.31*	1.00	.29*	.39*
FE	.15	.13	.34*	.33*	.29*	1.00	.58**
PER	.25*	.47*	.53**	.54**	.39*	.58**	1.00

N = 80/* = $P < .01$, /** = $P < .001$

Analysis of the correlations for postgraduate students (N=80) shows that many variables are correlated significantly at $P < .01$ level, institutional satisfaction with degree aspiration ($r = .56$), faculty relationship with degree aspiration ($r = .53$), persistence with degree aspiration ($r = .47$), faculty relationship with institutional satisfaction ($r = .51$), institutional satisfaction with family encouragement (.34), institutional satisfaction with persistence ($r = .53$), faculty relationship with persistence ($r = .54$), peer relationship with persistence ($r = .39$) and family encouragement with persistence ($r = .58$) socio-economic status with persistence ($r = .25$), faculty relationship with family encouragement ($r = .33$), peer relationship with family encouragement ($r = .29$). This infers that persistence for post-graduate students is significantly related to all the variables. This also implies that for post-graduate students their faculty relationship is correlated highly with their degree aspiration, persistence, peer relations and their institutional satisfaction significantly and highly meaning that students who had high score on faculty relationship in this group also had a high score on persistence, their

institutional satisfaction was also high comparing to other students. Moreover, they had a more close and positive relationship with their peers in comparison to students who had a lower faculty relationship.

The correlation for the M.Phil students. We find completely different results that the results for post-graduate students.

Table 5: Correlation between different variables for M.Phil students.

	SES	DA	IS	RF	RP	FE	PER
SES	1.00	.26*	.23	.20	.19	.15	.16
DA	.26*	1.00	.56**	.42*	.21	.20	.70**
IS	.23	.56**	1.00	.41*	.33*	.19	.45*
RF	.20	.42*	.41*	1.00	.16	.01	.49*
RP	.19	.21	.33*	.15	1.00	.12	.30*
FE	.15	.20	.19	.21	.12	1.00	.16
PER	.16	.70**	.45*	.49*	.30*	.16	1.00

N = 80

* = P < .01

** = P < .001

Results show that, for M.Phil students, their persistence is correlated highly with their degree aspirations, ($r = .70, P < .001$). It implies that students in M.Phil have a higher degree aspiration level and it is correlated strongly with their persistence. Other variables that are significantly correlated for M.Phil students are

degree aspiration with institutional satisfaction ($r = .55$, $P < .001$), institutional satisfaction with persistence satisfaction with persistence, ($r = .45$, $P < .001$), faculty relationship with persistence ($r = .49$, $P < .001$), faculty relationship with degree aspiration ($r = .42$), faculty relationship with institutional satisfaction ($r = .41$), socio-economic status with degree aspiration ($r = .26$, $P < .01$), institutional satisfaction with peer relations ($r = .33$, $P < .01$) and persistence with peer relationship ($r = .29$, $P < .01$). The results show that for students in M.Phil., their persistence correlates highly with degree aspiration and to many other variables such as institutional satisfaction, faculty relationship, and also to peer relationship to a certain extent. Family encouragement is not correlated with any other variables. Socio-economic status is correlated only with degree aspiration, implying that for these students socio-economic status does not influence any other variables except the degree aspiration. Similarly family encouragement is not significantly correlated with any other variables. Degree aspiration is significantly related to persistence, with faculty relationship ($r = .42$, $P < .001$), and institutional

satisfaction ($r = .55$, $P < .001$), meaning that for M.Phil students, faculty relationship and institutional satisfaction are significantly correlated with degree aspiration. Peer relationship is related to persistence ($r = .30$) and institutional satisfaction ($r = .33$) only at .01 level.

If we compare the correlation matrix for M.A. and M.Phil students, it can be seen that peer relation and family encouragement correlate differently with other variables. The persistence for postgraduate students is correlated significantly with their peer relationship, whereas for M.Phil students there is no significant correlation between persistence and peer relationship. Similarly, for post graduates, the relationship with peer is correlated significantly with faculty relations and family encouragement, but for M.Phil students this is not so. Thus it can be inferred that for M.A. students, peer relationship is important whereas, in case M.Phil students, it does not play any such significant role.

Again, for post-graduates, family encouragement is seen to be correlated with persistence ($r = .58, P < .001$), faculty relationship ($r = .32, P < .01$), peer relationship ($r = .29, P < .01$) and with degree aspiration ($r = .34, P < .001$), whereas, for M.Phil students, family encouragement is not correlated significantly with any other variable.

Though degree aspiration is correlated with persistence, institutional satisfaction and faculty relationship for both M.Phil and M.A. students, the degree of correlation differs for both the groups. For instance, M.Phil students show a very high correlation between degree aspiration and persistence ($r = .70$) than for M.A. students. The correlation between degree aspiration and institutional satisfaction for both the M.A. and M.Phil groups, is somewhat similar, signifying a significant relationship. Again, degree aspiration is correlated with faculty for both the groups.

For M.A. students, their faculty relationship is strongly correlated with all the variables except socio-economic status. For M.Phil students, their is no

significant relationship between faculty relationship and peer relationship ($r = .15$) and faculty relationship and family encouragement ($r = .01$). For both groups, the faculty relationship is strongly related with persistence.

Socio-economic status as a variables is not correlated with any other variables for both the groups, except persistence for M.A. students ($r = .25, P < .01$), and degree aspiration for M.Phil students ($r = .26, P < .01$) though significant only at .01 level for both variables.

Now lets take a look at the correlation between the different variables for students of different educational stream.

Table 6 Correlation for different variables for science students.

	SES	DA	IS	RF	RP	FE	PER
SES	1.00	.19	.16	.22	.26*	.46*	.38*
DA	.19	1.00	.56**	.39*	.24	.20	.63**
IS	.16	.56**	1.00	.49*	.36*	.19	.21
RF	.22	.39*	.49*	1.00	.27	.01	.56**
RP	.27	.24	.36*	.27	1.00	.09	.21
FE	.46*	.20	.19	.01	.09	1.00	.28*
PER	.38*	.63**	.21	.56**	.21	.28*	1.00

* = $P < .01$

** $P < .001$

Results show that for science students, persistence is correlated only with variables of socio-economic status, ($r = .38, P < .001$), degree aspiration ($r = .63, P < .001$), faculty relationship ($r = .56, P < .001$) and family encouragement ($r = .28, P < .01$). This may imply that for science students their decision to stay back in college is influenced only by degree aspiration, socio economic status, relationship with family and family encouragement.

Peer relationship is correlated significantly only with institutional satisfaction ($r = .35, P < .001$). It is not correlated with any other variables.

For students in science , faculty relationship is seen to be correlated with persistence ($r = .56, P < .001$) meaning that their persistence is influenced by their faculty relationship. Faculty relationship is correlated with degree aspiration ($r = .38$), and institutional satisfaction, ($r = .48, P < .001$).

Institutional satisfaction is seen to be correlated only with degree aspiration ($r = .56, P < .001$) and faculty

relationship ($r = .49$), but not persistence. In case of the correlation between persistence and institutional satisfaction the r value is only $.2136$ signifying no significant relationship. Persistence, for science students is not influenced by their institutional satisfaction.

Degree aspiration has a significant relationship with persistence in case of science students, with an r value of ($r = .63$). Degree aspiration is also correlated significantly to institutional satisfaction ($r = .56$) and faculty relation ($r = .39$).

For science students, socio-economic status is correlated only with persistence and family encouragement ($r = .47$), signifying that for science students socio-economic status is not an important variable in influencing their degree aspiration, institutional satisfaction, faculty and peer relation. Family encouragement is correlated with socio-economic status ($r = .47, P < .01$) and persistence ($r = .28, P < .01$). This implies that socio-economic status, by influencing family encouragement directly, also influences

persistence. Thus family encouragement plays a significant role in influencing persistence.

Results for science students differ from arts students quite significantly. Persistence for arts students is correlated with all the other variables. Variables with which persistence is seen to be correlated at $P < .001$ level are students degree aspiration ($r = .53$), satisfaction with the institution ($r = .37$) and relationship with faculty ($r = .42$). With socio-economic status, peer relationship and family encouragement, persistence has a significant correlation at .01 level the r value being .30, .32 and .30 respectively.

Degree aspiration is correlated with students institutional satisfaction ($r = .51$, $P < .001$), faculty relationship ($r = .59$, $P < .001$) and persistence ($r = .53$, $P < .001$) significantly. For arts students, the degree aspiration is correlated to their socio-economic status at $P < .01$ level ($r = .28$). Faculty relationship for arts students is correlated significantly with degree aspiration ($r = .59$), institutional satisfaction ($r = .38$) and

persistence ($r = .42, P < .01$). Thus faculty relationship is correlated with persistence for arts students.

Institutional satisfaction is correlated to persistence ($r = .37$) and relationship with peers, implying that arts students' persistence is correlated to their institutional satisfaction through a better peer relationship. Students with better peer relationship are likely to be more satisfied with their institution and likely to persist. Peer relationship is correlated only with persistence ($r = .32, P < .01$) and institutional satisfaction ($r = .27$). Socio-economic status of arts students is correlated to their degree aspiration, persistence and family encouragement at $P < .01$ level.

If we compare the correlations for science and arts students, it is found that there are certain basic difference between the two groups. For students of science, persistence is related significantly only to degree aspirations ($r = .64$), family encouragement ($r = .56$), faculty relationship ($r = .56$) and socio-economic status ($r = .38$). But there seem to be no significant correlation

between persistence and institutional satisfaction neither between persistence and peer relationship. However, for arts students persistence is correlated significantly with all the variables at .01 level. This may imply that for students in arts, their staying back in college for higher education is influenced by their degree aspiration, socio-economic status, institutional satisfaction, faculty relationship, peer relationship and family encouragement. All these factors combined together influence the students' decision to stay back in college. Whereas, for science students, their decision to persist in higher education is not influenced by their peer relationship and institutional satisfaction.

Table 8: Correlation of Male students

	SES	DA	IS	RF	RP	FE	PER
SES	1.00	.27*	.18	.18	.24	.15	.28*
DA	.27*	1.00	.29*	.28*	.22	.26*	.65**
IS	.18	.29*	1.00	.27*	.38*	.20	.27*
RF	.18	.28*	.27*	1.00	.30*	.06	.18
RP	.24	.22	.38*	.30*	1.00	.07	.42*
FE	.15	.26*	.20	.07	.07	1.00	.23
PER	.28*	.65**	.26*	.18	.42*	.23	1.00

N = 80

* = P < .01 level

** = P < .001 level

If we look at the correlations for male students, we

find that persistence for male students is correlated with degree aspiration the r value being .65 ($P < .001$); and peer relationship ($r = .42$, $P < .001$). For male students persistence is also correlated with socio-economic status ($r = .28$, $P < .01$) and institutional satisfaction ($r = .27$, $P < .01$) to some extent, the implication being that decision for males to stay back in college depends on their degree aspiration, peer relationship, socio-economic status and institutional satisfaction. Their family encouragement and faculty relationship donot play an important role in their persistence. Faculty relationship is correlated with institutional satisfaction ($r = .21$, $P < .01$) and peer relationship ($r = .30$, $P < .01$). Socio-economic status is related to degree aspiration ($r = .26$, $P < .01$) and degree aspiration with persistence ($r = .28$, $P < .01$). Family encouragement is correlated to degree aspiration ($r = .26$, $P < .01$).

Now let us take a look at the correlation table for female students.

Table 9: Correlation table for female students.

	SES	DA	IS	RF	RP	FE	PER
SES	1.00	.30*	.19	.17	.23	.30*	.28*
DA	.30*	1.00	.47*	.42*	.07	.41*	.69**
IS	.19	.47*	1.00	.41*	.43*	.17	.28*
RF	.17	.43*	.41*	1.00	.07	.23	.31*
RP	.23	.07	.41*	.07	1.00	.22	.26*
FE	.30*	.41*	.17	.23	.22	1.00	.44*
PER	.28*	.69*	.28*	.31*	.26*	.44*	1.00

N = 80

* = P<.01

** = P< .001

From the results, it is obvious that for females, family encouragement plays a important role. In case of males, family encouragement is associated only with their degree aspiration, whereas for females family encouragement is correlated with socio-economic status ($r = .30$, $P<.01$), degree aspiration ($r = .41$), and also persistence in college ($r = .44$, $P<.001$).

Peer relationship is not correlated significantly with any other variable, except with their institutional satisfaction ($r = .41$) and persistence ($r = .26$, $P<.01$).

Degree aspiration is correlated significantly to females' socio economic status ($r = .30$), family encouragement ($r = .41$) and to persistence ($r = .69$). Socio-economic status is correlated significantly with degree aspiration ($r = .30$), family encouragement ($r = .30$) and persistence ($r = .27$). For females their satisfaction with the institution is correlated with degree aspiration ($r = .47$) faculty relationship ($r = .41$), peer relationship ($r = .41$) and persistence ($r = .28$). For males also the institutional satisfaction was correlated with the same variables. For males, the faculty relationship ($r = .27$, $P < .01$) did not play an important role as did peer relationship ($r = .38$, $P < .001$), whereas for females both played equally significant role.

Family relationship for females is correlated significantly with their degree aspiration ($r = .42$, $P < .001$), institutional satisfaction ($r = .41$, $P < .001$) and persistence ($r = .31$, $P < .01$).

For female students their decision to stay in college and go for higher education seems to be depending on all the

other variables. Persistence has a significant correlation with family encouragement ($r = .44$, $P < .001$), socio economic status ($r = .27$), institutional satisfaction ($r = .28$), faculty relationship ($r = .31$) and peer relationship ($r = .26$). It means that persistence for girls is correlated maximum with their degree aspiration and family encouragement, while for male students the persistence did not correlate with faculty relationship and family encouragement.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the analysis are discussed in the light of the hypotheses tested.

The first hypothesis was that there will be a significant difference between the socio-economic status of M.Phil and M.A. students, and between science and arts students. The t-test analysis showed that there was no significant mean difference between M.A. and M.Phil. students. Similarly the science and arts group did not show any significant mean difference. So the first hypothesis was rejected.

This result is supported by Summerskills (1962), who aptly stated that though SES factors are commonly believed to influence attrition, research has provided misleading results. Eckland (1965) argued that the source of much of this ambiguity was due to methodological flaws. Studies by Little (1959), Rossman and Kirk (1970) found no significant relationship between fathers occupation and the attrition of college students; i.e. students whose fathers were in lower occupation did not dropout at significantly higher rates.

Eckland (1965) found father's occupation to be significant for those students who were in the lower quartile of their high school class in predicting who would join college.

Iffert (1957) discovered that the median income of families of students who withdraw was significantly lower than students who did not dropout. But he cautioned against the conclusion that family income is a factor in determining withdrawal. Eckland (1965), Iffert and also Astin (1973b) concluded from their studies that when one looks at the percentage of family income spent on college education (after taxes), there is no difference between the dropouts and persistent students. Astin's (1973b) and Eckland's (1965) analysis of factors related to attrition strongly suggested that family income is not a direct factor in attrition.

Parental education has been found to be related to attrition decisions in some studies. Chase (1970), Eckland (1965), Panos and Astin (1968), Fransworth (1959), and Slocum (1956) have found a relationship between the level of parental education for both parents and the probabilities

that the student will persist through college. There has not been much research on the separate effects of mothers and fathers education, but Fransworth (1959) concluded that if the child comes from a family background where educational and intellectual achievement are valued, then the student is more likely to absorb these values and be more inclined to complete college. However, this does not appear to be one of the major factors in persistence.

Morrisey (1971) found that social status (SES variable) differentiates between dropouts and persistent, but not in the expected direction. His results documented the fact that students whose families have low socio-economic status have higher retention rates. He suggested that this may be related to social mobility factors; i.e., students from lower social classes have more motivation to achieve (and graduate) because a college education is a means of improving one's social position. However, Sewell and Shah (1967) and Tinto (1975) found inverse relationship between socio-economic status and persistence even when intelligence is controlled.

The second hypothesis was that the research students and the post graduate students will differ significantly with regard to their degree aspiration. It was seen through different previous studies that people with higher expectancies had a greater vigour towards action and thus persisted more. Expectations for success in college and perceived value of college comprised our definition of the variable of degree aspiration. The expectancy-value models (e.g., Atkinson, 1964; Crandall, 1969; Weiner, 1972, 1974) ascertain that expectation for success and the subjective value of the outcome influenced the actual outcomes.

There seemed to be a significant mean difference between the degree aspiration of M.A. and M.Phil students, the t-value being 2.89. The M.Phil students had a higher mean score than the M.A. students.

This result supports that found by Astin (1964), Bucklin and Bucklin (1970), Coker (1968), Kerbs (1971), Medsker and Trent (1968), Sewell and Shah (1967) and White (1971). These researchers suggest that once the individual's ability was taken into account, it was his

commitment to the goal of college completion that was most influential in determining college persistence. Whether measured in terms of educational plans, educational expectations, or career expectations, the higher the level of plans, the more likely was the individual to remain in college. Sewell and Shah (1967), found that level of educational aspirations and plans held by individual was by far the strongest independent influence upon college completion, once family social status and ability were taken into account.

The third hypothesis was that post graduate and research students will differ significantly in their institutional satisfaction. Institutional satisfaction was defined as the individuals overall satisfaction with the university administration, examination system, grading, department and management of the university. Questionnaire on this contained questions based on these aspects. Institutional satisfaction thus is one study comprises what Tinto (1975) in his model referred to as social integration and academic integration. In Tinto's model social and academic integration concerned the overall satisfaction of

the individual with the university. For Tinto, together with background characteristics, the initial goal commitments are hypothesised as influencing, not only how the individual will perform academically, but also how he or she will interact with and subsequently become integrated into, the institution's social and academic system. Other things being equal, the greater the individual's level of integration towards the institutions, the greater is his or her subsequent commitment to the institution and commitment to the goal of college graduation, respectively. These subsequent commitments, in turn, are seen, along with levels of integration as having a positive influence on persistence.

A significant mean difference is found between the M.A. and M.Phil students with regard to their institutional satisfaction with the M.Phil students showing a greater degree of satisfaction. Again, from the correlation analysis it is seen that for students of M.Phil the correlation between institutional satisfaction and persistence is greater than the correlation value for M.A. students. This shows that students in M.Phil who are

assumed to be more persistent have a greater institutional satisfaction than students of post graduation. So this hypothesis is accepted.

The fourth hypothesis was that students of M.Phil and M.A. will differ significantly with regard to their relationship with faculty.

The amount of contact the student has with faculty, the students' evaluations of the faculty, and amount of his or her satisfaction with these interactions have been the most common measures used to assess the influence of faculty on the attrition of students. Following the suggestions made by Spady (1970) and Linto (1975), Pascarella and Ierenzini (1977) argued that faculty student contacts are an important component of both the academic and social integration of students, which, in turn, are important predictors of the attrition of students.

This hypothesis was tested by taking the mean difference again. It was seen that the M.Phil students had

a mean score of 21.91 and M.A. students 20.70 with a difference of 1.71 in faculty relationship.

Though Pascarella and Terezini (1977) had supported their argument that faculty relationship is important component of student persistence and attrition through findings from several studies concluded at a private university, later their research at public universities failed to replicate these findings. Pascarella and Chapman suggested that these difference in the effects of faculty. Student interactions across studies represent real differences among the institutions studied, but it may also be true that academic and social contacts with faculty at some institutions, especially private ones, have more attrition- related content than at other institutions.

The fifth hypothesis that there will be a difference in the nature of peer relationships between M.Phil and M.A. students is partially accepted. From the results it is found that M.A. students had a mean score of 18.67 and M.:Phil students had a mean score of 16.11 with a t.value of 1.99 which is significant t .05 level. It implies a significant

difference among the means of both the groups and the result favouring the M.A. group having a greater mean. Thus, M.A. students seem to be having a more closer relationship with peers than do M.Phil students.

Psychologists and sociologists are in general agreement that the peer group forms the most significant external influence on the college student and is second only to the personal characteristics of the student. Biddle, Bank and Slavings (1990) came to the conclusion that peer norms had significant direct effects on the students' persistence. Peer norms also had significant indirect effect on students' persistence by means of behavioural intentions.

The sixth hypothesis concerned the students' family encouragement and that there will be significant difference in the family encouragement of students of M.A. and M.Phil. The results show the student of M.A. having a mean score of 8.11 and M.Phil. students have a mean score of 9.10 in family encouragement with a difference of .99. The t-value is 1.22 which is not seen to be significant. This means that there is no significant mean difference between the two

groups with regard to their familial encouragement. The mean score is high for the M.Phil students meaning that the M.Phil students have a better family encouragement than M.A. students. This hypothesis was thus rejected.

From their study Trent and Ruyle (1965) had concluded that the interest and expectations that parents have for their children's education influences the children's persistence in college directly. They found out that college persisters seemed to be not only to get more parental advice, praise and expressed interest in their college experience, but they also had parents who expressed greater expectations for their children's further education. Hackman and Dysinger (1970) also found similar results in their study. It appears that parental expectations may have as much influence upon the child's persistence in college as the child's own expectations for oneself (Hackman, Dysinger, 1970). Sexton (1965) from his study concluded that parental expectations and aspirations influenced children's aspirations and expectations and thus their achievement motivation, as well as educational and occupational aspiration.

However several studies have also refuted this as a principal factor of student persistence. For example, Rossman and Kirk (1970) failed to find any significant relationship between parental aspirations and student persistence. Barger and Hall (1965) found that 80% of dropouts believed that their own aspirations corresponded with their parents aspirations, and only 6% had any serious conflict between the two sets of aspirations.

The seventh hypothesis concerned the relationship between socio-economic status and persistence of M.A. and M.Phil students. From the correlation analysis the results showed that the correlation value of persistence and socio-economic status for M.A. students is .2535 and for M.Phil. students it is .1642. This suggests that for both the group socio-economic status as a separate variable is not very significant

As has been true in other areas of educational performance, the likelihood of an individuals persisting in college has been shown to be related to the characteristics

of the family to which he/she belongs. But there seems to be little evidence that socio-economic status influenced the individual's decision to stay on level directly. The family's socio-economic status appears is found inversely related to dropout (Astin, 1964; Eckland, 1946; Lembesis, 1965; McMannon, 1965; Panos and Astin, 1968; Swell and Shah, 1967; Wegner, 1967).

The hypothesis relating to the degree aspiration and persistence of M.a. and M.Phil students is accepted. The results show that for M.A. students r value between persistence and degree aspiration is .46 where as that of M.Phil students is .70 showing a vast difference between the two values. Though it is seen that for both M.A. and M.Phil students, degree aspiration is significantly related to persistence of the students still, for M.Phil. students this relation seems to be higher. Degree aspiration, is the variable that has maximum correlation with persistence in comparison to other variables. Marks (1967) attempted to find out the relationship between dropout/persistence and aspiration level of students. His results showed that those students who are expected to dropout do dropout in

significantly high percentage; those students who expected to drop-out had low aspiration and value expectations and were less committed to their educational values. Thus students with low degree aspiration are more likely to dropout and more persistent students are more likely to have a higher level of aspiration. Marks' findings have been supported by the present study as well as by other researchers (Marcia, 1966; Sewell and Shah, 1967, Trent and Ruyle, 1965). Astin (1973b) found a significant difference between the degree aspirations of persisters and dropouts in that students with moderate to low intentions of receiving a degree had less chance of obtaining the degree in four years.

The ninth hypothesis that there will be a significant difference in the relationship between institutional satisfaction and persistence for M.A. and M.Phil students is accepted. The correlation value for the two variables for M.A. students is found to be .53 which is significant at $P < .001$ level. For M.Phil students also the correlation is found significant at $P < .001$ level. Though the correlation value differed, in both the groups, students seemed to be

satisfied with their institutions on an average. This could be because of the fact that samples were taken from renowned universities in an urban area.

Hypothesis concerning the correlation between persistence and faculty relationship was accepted. The correlation value was to be .54 for post graduate students and .49 for M.A. students. It implied that both M.A. and M.Phil students' persistence was related to their relationship with faculty. The quality of the relationship between a student and her or his professors is of crucial importance in determining satisfaction with the institution. Several studies have shown that dropouts were more dissatisfied than persisters with their relationship with their professors, and experienced a barrier between themselves and their professors that prohibited close contact (Hannah, 1969, Slocum, 1956). Interestingly, the later study reported that 66% of the dropouts were dissatisfied with faculty relationships, as compared to 49.7 of the persisters. Iffert (1957) found that most students rated faculty interactions very low despite giving them high marks for strictly academic qualities.

The tenth hypothesis that correlation between peer relationship and persistence will be different for both the groups was tested through correlations analysis. The results showed that the M.A. and M.Phil students had correlational value which were significantly different. It is seen that the r value of persistence and peer relationship for M.A. students is .39 which is significant at $P < .001$ level, whereas for M.Phil Students the correlation value is .31 which is significant at $P < .001$ level This implied that for M.A. students the persistence was more closely related to their relationship with peers than M.Phil students.

Positive experience within a peer group is associated with academic performance, which has a bearing on attrition. Carew (1957) showed that students characterised by "high acceptance" had significantly higher GPA's than students with "low acceptance". On the other hand Iffert (1957) noted that only 15% of his dropout described themselves as "Lonesome" at college. Summerskill (1962) reported that "Lonesome" students ranged from 4% to 17% in the studies of

dropouts which he surveyed with a medium value of 10%. Thus it appears that social isolation is not a major factor in attrition though students having more social acceptance have a slightly greater chance of persisting.

The quality of the relationship with peers seems to be an important factor, as are the values that the peer groups endorse (Panos and Astin, 1968). Thus, a social group with negative attitude towards the college or towards education as a whole is more likely to have a greater number of its members dropout, even if the social life of that group is extremely satisfying for its members. Similarly, the social group with positive value for college and education is more likely to have a positive impact on its members and they are more likely to persist even though they do not maintain a broad social life, or the social life for the members is not very satisfying (Pentages and Creedon, 1978).

The next hypothesis was regarding relationship of family encouragement with persistence. It was found that the correlation value between persistence and family encouragement was very significant for M.A. students (r

=.58, $P < .001$), but not for M.Phil students, implying that for M.Phil. students persistence was not related to family encouragement significantly. It influences students decision to stay by influencing his intellectual values and achievements and also his/her expectation and aspiration. Pentages and Creedon (1978) found out that parental encouragement acts as a variable independently on persistence of high school students. Once the children are in college, parental encouragement no longer exerts independent control. It influences the educational and intellectual values and expectations of the students, and indirectly influences the children's persistence.

On the whole the results show that students' persistence is related most with their degree aspiration, institutional satisfaction and faculty relationship. Peer relationship and faculty relationship relate to students persistence and influencing his satisfaction with the institutions and together they constitute the factor, what Tinto (1975) called social integration. Degree aspiration which shows from students personal values and expectations and influences student persistence in college by influencing

his academic goal commitment. The higher the degree aspiration, the more is his endeavor to achieve the academic goals. Students institutional satisfaction stems from his overall satisfaction with the administration, personal relationships, management, examination and grading system and then to students' persistence, by influencing both his academic and institutional goal commitment.

A comparison of groups on the stream chosen by the student, it was found that science students' persistence was related to their degree aspiration, socio-economic status, faculty relationship and family encouragement, but not to students' peer group relations and institutional satisfaction. For science students, the correlation between persistent and degree aspiration was more than arts students. It implied that science students who are persistent had a higher degree aspiration than arts students. For arts students institutional satisfaction and peer relations alongwith other factors were related significantly to students' persistence. One explanation for this would be that science students in general are known to be more engrossed with their academic goals than social

goals. For this they also had a greater correlation between degree aspiration and persistence and also persistence and faculty relationship than arts students. While comparing their means on peer and faculty relationships it is seen that science and arts students differ significantly. Arts' students secured a higher mean on peer relationship, while the science student's were high on faculty relationship.

Science and arts students did not differ significantly on socio-economic status. One reason why the two groups did not differ significantly on socio-economic status is that samples were taken from Delhi University where the students generally were from a comparatively higher socio-economic background. Arts and Science students also differed significantly on persistence.

When students were compared by gender, it was found that female students had a much higher correlation between persistence and family encouragement than male students. It means that females who are more persisted in the higher education had a higher family encouragement than their male counterparts, implying that for male students family

encouragement was not important factor in persistence. For both the groups, degree aspiration had significant correlation with persistence, implying that degree aspiration irrespective of gender was an important factor in persistence. Moreover, for males faculty relationship was not related to persistence, whereas for females their relationship with faculty was correlated significantly to persistence. Boys had a higher correlation between persistence and peer relationship than girls.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed at finding out the influence of some psycho-social-organisational factors on student persistence. 160 students were taken from Delhi University, 80 from M.A. and 80 from M.Phil. The main objective of the research was to find out whether student persistence in higher education was related to their socio-economic status, degree aspiration, family encouragement, faculty and peer relationship and institutional satisfaction. An extensive questionnaire was prepared which dealt with questions relating to the measured dimensions and students personal information sheet was also used.

The questionnaire used Likert scale. All the scores were summed up for different variables and their mean scores calculated for M.A. and M.Phil students separately. A t-value analysis was done for each variable for M.A. and M.Phil Students. Again scores of students from arts and science stream were separated and then t-value was calculated. The mean differences were found out also for arts and science students, and for M.A. and M.Phil students.

Then correlation analysis was done to investigate the relationship between different variables and of different variables with persistence of students in higher education. Correlation analysis was done separately for M.A. and M.Phil students, for arts and science students and also for male and female students.

Analysis showed that the students' decision to dropout from college or persist for higher education is a result of deliberation over a period of time and over different issues. These issues include the students' problem in different fields. The reasons are complex behind student persistence or withdrawal and cannot be tapped through questionnaires and relatively short interviews.

There are certain factors which are predominant in the persistence of students across educational stream and sex of students. One conclusion, was that the factors of persistence differed based on their background characteristic, educational level, stream and sex. It was found that for female students, socio-economic status and family encouragement were highly correlated to their

persistence in education, whereas for males there was no significant relationship between persistence and family encouragement. Similarly, students of science stream be have higher correlation between persistence and faculty relationship than in arts for whom a high correlation is found between peer relationship and persistence, implying that students of science who were more persistent had a closer relationship with faculty whereas as students of arts who were more persistent had an intimate relationship with peers.

A second conclusion is that though no single variable explained persistence for all groups of students, still degree aspiration was the most predominant variable for all groups by educational level, stream and gender. M.Phil students had a higher degree aspiration, yet both the groups had significant correlation between persistence and degree aspiration. Student's value expectations and aspirations influence their commitment toward goal and goal achievement. Degree aspiration though in itself was not a predominant variable, it reflected one's background characteristics. It seems that students aspirations are

inculcated through the values and expectations that the parents have towards education and intellectual achievement. Students coming from families where parents are more educated, they have greater value for education as endorsed by educational aspirations. Therefore, when these aspiration are found to be correlated highly with persistence, it reflected the students own expectations and values as well as the expectation and values of significant others.

Students socio-economic background, does not have a direct influence on the student persistence yet, it acts more as an internalized influence. As the sample were chosen from a urban university students had more or less similar socio-economic status.

Students with higher institutional satisfaction have a greater goal orientation in the sense that they are more likely to be committed towards their academic goal achievement leading to a greater degree of persistence. Satisfaction with the institution to a great extent is seen to be influenced by the college environment and the students

accommodation to the college environment. Thus it seems likely that students in better institutions have more freedom and it brings more satisfaction to the individual students, and thus be more persistent.

Students' family encouragement is highly correlated with socio-economic status and it can, influence the persistence directly. But the impact of family encouragement is lessened as the student goes to higher education. It might act as a strong variable for students who from high school to college. But after reaching a definite educational level, this influence seems lessened

A higher relation of family encouragement with persistence is found than the peer or faculty. But family encouragement alone is more influential in students decision to stay in college than peer relationship or faculty relationship.

Like all studies, this research had some limitation, it is not clear that the findings can be generalised to other campuses or to different places. The samples were drawn

from a definite university having its unique characteristics. Again it was not possible to draw longitudinal data to trace down the factors of persistence and researching how these operate. The future researches on students persistence should trace down the variables through years and see their impact on students' dropout behaviour.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aitken, N.D. "College Student Performance, Satisfaction and Retention: Specification and Estimation of a Structural Model." *Journal of Higher Education*, 1982, V.53, 32-50.
- Alexander W.Astin, "Productivity of Undergraduate Institutions", *Science*, V.136, 129-35.
- Anderson, K.L. "Post-High School Experiences and College Attrition." *Sociology of Education*, 1981, V.54, 1-15.
- Astin, A.W. "Personal and Environmental Factors Associated with College Dropouts among High Aptitude Students." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1964, V.4, 219-227.
- Astin, A.W. "Student Persistence: Some Stay, Some Don't - Why?" *College and University*, 1973, V.48, 298-306 (b).
- Bandura, A. "Social Learning Theory". Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1977.
- Bank, B.J., Slavings, R.L. and Biddle, B.J. "Effects of Peer, Faculty and Parental Influences on Students' Persistence", *Sociology of Education*, 1990, Vol.63, 208-225.
- Barnett, R. *The Idea of Higher Education*. Society for Research into higher education and Open University Press, Buckingham, 1990.
- Bean, J. "Dropout and Turnover, the Synthesis and Test of a Causal Model of Student Attrition." *Research in Higher Education*", 1980, V.12, 155-187.
- Bell, R.E. and Youngson, A.J. *Present and Future in Higher Education* (ed.). Tavistock Publications, London, 1973.
- Biddle, B.J. Bank and Slavings, R.L. "Norms, Preferences, Identities and Retention Decision". *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 1987, V.55, 322-337.
- Bleigh Donald. *Higher Education* Cassell Educational Ltd., London, 1990.

- Bruck K.Eckland, "College Dropouts who comeback", Harvard Educational Review, V.34, 1964, 402-20.
- , "Social Class and College Graduation: Some Ills conceptions Corrected," American Journal of Sociology, V.70, 1964, 36-50.
- Burton R. Clark, "The 'Cooling Out' function is Higher Education", American Journal of Sociology, V.65, 1960, 569-76.
- Carew, D.K. "A Comparison of Activities, Social Acceptance and Scholastic Achievement of Men Students". Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1966, V.44, 475-481.
- Chase, C.I. "The College Dropout: His High School Prologue." Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1970, V.54, 66-71.
- Covert, R.W. and Bean, A.G. "Prediction of College Persistence, Withdrawal, and Academic Dismissal: A Discriminant Analysis Educational and Psychological Measurement, 1973, V.33, 407-411.
- Demitroff. J.E. Student persistence. College and University, 1974, V.49, 553-567.
- Dollar, R.J. "Interpersonal Values and College Persistence". Journal of College Student Personnel, 1970, V.11, 200-202.
- Durkheim, E. Suicide J.Spansding and G.Simpson, Trans. Glencloe IL: The Free Press; 1951.
- Erikson, E.H. "Identity: youth and Crisis". New York: Norton, 1968.
- Ethington, C.A. "A Psychological Model of Student Persistence" Research in Higher Education, 1990, Vol.31, 279-293.
- Hackman, J.R. and Dysinger, W.S. "Commitment to College as a Factor in Student Attrition". Sociology of Education, 1970, V.43, 311-324.

- Hannah, W. "Withdrawal from College. Journal of College Student Personnel, 1969, V.10, 397-402.
- Heilburn, A. "Personality Factors in College Dropouts" Journal of Applied Psychology, 1969, V.49, 1-7.
- Iffert, R.F., "The Student Retention and Withdrawal Study" College and University, 1955, V. 30, 406-416.
- Iffert, R. "Retention and Withdrawal of College Students, Washington, D.C. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1958.
- Irederic k Rudolph, The American College and University, New York, Knopt, 1962.
- Jencks, C. and David, R. The Academic Revolution, Chicago: The Chicago University Press, 1968.
- John Summerskill, "Dropouts from College", In Nevitt Sanford ed. The American College, New York, Willy, 1962.
- Kogan, M. and Kogan, D. The Attack on Higher Education, Koganage, London, 1983.
- Marsh, L. "College dropouts - A Review", Personnel and Guidance Journal, V.44, 1966, 475-81.
- Munger, P. "Student Persistence in College". Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1956, V.35, 241-243.
- Munro, B. "Dropouts from Higher Education: Path Analysis of a National Sample." American Educational Research Journal. 1981, V.18, 133-41.
- Nelson, A.G. "College Characteristics associatal with Freshmen Attrition". Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1966, V.44, 1046-1050.
- New Comb, T.M. "Student Peer-group influence." In N.Sanford (Ed.) The American College. New York: Wiley, 1962.
- Osborn, R.O. "Pre-crisis Intervention. Journal of School Health, 1968, V.38, 567-575.

- Pascarella, E.P., Duby, V., Miller and S. Rasher, "Pre-enrollment Variables and Academic Performance as Predictors of Freshman Year Persistence, Early Withdrawal and Stopout Behaviour in Urban, Non-Residential University. *Research in Higher Education*, 1981, V.15, 329-47.
- Pascarella, E.T. and Chapman, D." A Multi Institutional, Path Analytic Validation of Tinto's Model of College Withdrawal: *American Educational Research Journal*, 1983, V.20, 87-102.
- Pascarella, E. and P. Ierenzini "Informal Interaction with Faculty and Freshman Ratings of the Academic and Non-academic experience of college". *Journal of Educational Research*, V.70, 1976, 35-41.
- , "Interaction Effects in Spadys and Tinto's Conceptual Models of College Dropout", *Sociology of Education*, 1979, V.52, 197-210.
- Pentages, I and C. Creedon "Studies of College Attrition: 1950-1975". *Review of Educational Research*, V.48, 1978, 49-101.
- D.J. "Prediction of Persistence in College". *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 1965, V.12, 62-67.
- Pervin, L., Reik, L. and Dalrymple, W. "The College Dropout and the Utilization of Talent". Princeton University Press, 1966.
- Reitzes, D.C. and Mutran. "Significant others and Self Conceptions: Factors Influencing Educational Expectations and Academic Performance". *Sociology of Education*, 1980, V.53, 21-35.
- Robert Panos and Alexander Astin, "Attrition among college students," *American Council of Educational Research*, V.2, No.4, 1967.
- Rootman, I. "Voluntary withdrawal from a total adult sociologizing Organization: A Model," *Sociology of Education*.

- Rose, R.A. Prediction and Prevention of Freshman Attrition. Journal of Counselling Psychology, 1965, V.12, 399-403.
- Rossmann, J.E. and Kirk, B.A. "Factors Related to persistence and Withdrawal Among University Students. Journal of Counselling Psychology, 1970, V.17, 56-62.
- Sewell, W. and Shah, V. "Socio-economic Status, Intelligence and Attainment of Higher Education." Sociology of Education, 1967, V.40, 1-23.
- Slater, M. Perception: A Context for the Consideration of Persistence and Attrition Among College Men. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1957, V.35, 435-440.
- Spady, W. "Dropouts from Higher Education: An interdisciplinary Review and Synthesis." Interchange V.1, 1970, 109-21.
- , "Dropouts from Higher Education: toward an Empirical Model." Interchange, v.2, 1971, 38-62.
- Taylor, R. and Hanson, G. "Interest and Persistence". Journal of Counselling Psychology, 1970, V.17, 506-509.
- Terenzini, P. and E.Pascarella. "The Relation of Students' pre-college Characteristics and Freshman Year Experience to Voluntary Attrition". Research in Higher Education V.9, 1978, 347-66.
- Tinto, V. "Dropout from Higher Education: A theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research." Review of Educational Research, 1975, V.45, 89-125.
- "Theories of Student Departure Revisited." In John C. Smart (ed.) Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research, 1986, V.11, P.359-384. New York: Agathon Press.
- "Leaving College", Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.

- Vaughan, R. "College Dropout: Dismissed Vs. Withdrew"
Personnel and guidance Journal, 1968, V.46, 685-689.
- Waller, C. "Research Related to College Persistence".
College and University, 1964, V.40, 281-294.
- Wilson, R.L. Wood and J.Gaff. "College Professors and Their
Impact on Students " New York: Wiley. 1975.
- Zaccaria, L and J.Creaser "Factors relating to Persistence
in an Urban Commuter University." Journal of College
Student Personnel, 1971, V.12, p.256-61.