

«Social Structure of the Talented Students in Kerman»

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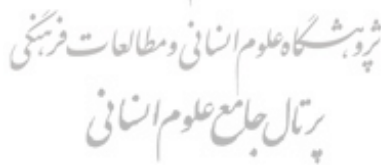
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it is only through the pursuit of talent through education that the potential talent can be realized in order to make possible for young boys and girls to get ultimately absorbed in occupations and professions which are regarded with a higher prestige. Socialization of children with respect to social stratification is only the beginning, but all the necessary facilities are provided by the parents. It may be pointed out here that it is not only the parents who take interest in the study of their young boys and girls, but their elder brothers or sisters also both interest in and help them in their studies.

Family provides emotional stability for these students as our sample shows and hence facilitated their education.

Talented students, at least, like to retain the status which they have enjoyed by belonging to certain families and are also desirous of improving upon it by following an educational career, which has not been followed by their parents. The study of talented students displays the vital link between social stratification - ranking of occupations, importance of family, schooling, peer groups, as well as associates - and cultural values which motivate the students to realize their potential talent in society. Of, course, such actualization would help them as well as their families in enjoying higher social status, income, standard of living etc, besides stratification.

parents relations with each other; 41% of students found it "good", 36% of them found it "excellent", 14% pointed out that these relations were "medium" and only 3% said that these relations were "bad".

Conclusion:

Functional division of labour, though very necessary, results in stratification, because various kinds of duties are ranked into different classes. Social status thus comes to be linked with the kind of occupation one obtains. In societies such as Iran's which are trying to develop industrially, technologically and economically, it is very important to have occupations and professions which would ensure such developments.

In order to man such occupations, it is necessary to identify talent, as we have seen before, and also to nurture it, again as has been embodied in the presentation of data particularly with reference to family. It is more important not only to identify talent, but also to provide facilities for its flourishing.

It is through family that the importance of social stratification, particularly by ranking occupations into higher and lower, is conveyed to the child. It is but natural that the level of education in a family, its income and its social status play an important role in influencing the educational career of young boys and girls. It should be mentioned that

The relationship between the social status of the family and kinds of mutual friends is also significant. This was not at all surprising, because of the identical social status, their life style is the same and adjustment is rather easier between them. Their parents, too, will not have objected to their friendly relations as families are socially acceptable to each other. Direct relationship between the family income and the companionship of these students with the students coming from different groups stresses the importance of cultural similarity, if not identity.

Relations within family:

Data collected confirm our assumption: 165 (39%) students explained their relations with their parents "good", but the majority of them were quite satisfied with the treatment given to them by their parents and therefore, as many as 211 (50%) students have described such relationship as "excellent". Only 5 (1%) students replied negatively and 9% of students in the sample pointed out these relations as "medium", which also confirms the typical middle class background where the parents play significant roles in the achievement of their children, their mental health, level of satisfaction, happiness and so on.

In the order of importance, the relation between brothers and sisters holds the "second" position. They were also asked about their

Income of the family was found to be very important in influencing the choice of the subjects for study, the performance and so on., significant relationships were found between the family income and the reason for the selection of the subject of study.

A clear relationship is borne out between the kind of family living place and the grade marks obtained by these talented students. Similarly, there is a significant relationship between family living place and the reasons for the selection of subjects of study by the students. It should be remembered that social status of the family is automatically ascribed to the birth in a particular family. That status may be retained by the person or he may enhance it through higher education and hard work; this means that a combination of ascribed and achieved statuses has affected the position of that individual. The average status of the family, therefore, plays a very significant part or role in influencing the decision of the students as to the subject of study, which are not purely their own, but moulded in the process, the grade obtained and their performance. This is borne out by exploring the relationship between social status and grade marks. The social status of family also influences the regularity of the study and affects the choice of fields of general study. Thus, the social status of the family prompts an individual to aspire for better while attempting for the retention of the same status. Talented students have not proved themselves as an exception to this.

businessmen, merchants, teaching profession, armed forces, etc.

We have to note that these talented students were mainly interested in medical sciences, engineering and basic sciences, but less than 30% of fathers were engaged in related professions. 29% of fathers were employed in civil services, 16% were in armed forces and the percentages of businessmen and skilled labour were 11% and 13% on the whole. Fathers' occupations which are inherited traditionally can not be performed by their children when opportunities and challenges are more numerous today. Therefore, the relationship between subjects chosen and father's education and occupation is not direct, but by obtaining higher grade marks these talented students have shown their desire to maintain the family status. Mother's occupation has also influenced grade marks and supported the above condosion.

Out of the total number of 425 gifred students, 61% of students had expressed their preferences for the study of medical sciences, and 21% for engineering which was expected, as these professions are well recognised sociallay and paying, too, that means upward mobility, because the choice of subjects lead to medicine and engineering.

After finding out the relationships between parent's education/occupation and their children's avarage marks, field of general study, I.Q., marks/etc. the relationship between the family as a whole and the factors affecting performance of these students were examined .

proper guidance of others. Since 15% of fathers were illiterate and 244% of them were educated only up to primary level, others had obtained minimum secondary education and 22% of mothers were illiterate, basically, parents of the students were themselves interested in their children's education. Therefore, their taking interest in the education of their children is not at all surprising.

Interrelationships between father's education and their average marks, field of general study, and I.Q. Marks, were examined. Such relationships between mother's education and the above variables were also taken into consideration to measure the impact of family, as a group, on the performance of these students. It was noticed that parents' education have a significant influence on the above factors which facilitate educational achievements.

Similarly, father's occupation was thought to be an important determinat in the education and occupation of the children to determine whether these students were interested to continue the occupation or profession of their fathers and were, therefore, desirious to take the required education for the same profession. The general distribution of father's occupation is: 32% of fathers were self - employed, whereas 63% were goverment employees. The nature of their job can further be classified in various categories such as medical profession, engineering services, civil - services, farming, unskilled labour, skilled labour,

relationships, if any, between the social factors treated as independent variables and their performance judged by their IQ, average marks, their social relations with other students and peer groups, their participation in sport, leisure activities, social and extra-curricular activities.

Results of our investigation were thus drawn and presented after a careful study of inter-related social factors. Thus, attempt has been made to relate social structural components like family, educational system, friends, companions, aspirations and values to the identification, nurturing and the requisite efforts to realise potential talent by linking it to the occupational structure. As we saw before, occupational structure and particularly the preference for certain professions, occupations directly reflect the values and system of social stratification. Further, the system of stratification impels one to at least retain one's status in a given hierarchy if not improve upon it.

رتبه‌های علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرهنگی
رتبه‌های جامعه‌شناسی
A summary of the results:

Family and its relationship with student's performances:

Father's education and occupation were considered important in influencing the choice of subject by the students in the sample. Thought as many as 81% of students had clearly stated that the subjects were chosen by them purely because of their personal interests, the students were in fact not mature enough to decide their career without the

students from 24 high schools/ technical high schools have been considered as sample for our study. This survey covers students recommended by the teachers/ grade marks obtained by the students in examination and also by subjecting students to the Raven's Progressive Matrices Test.

First of all a questionnaire was given to teachers to name exceptionally talented students. after their teacher's recommendation their average marks were taken. Finally, the students were chosen by subjecting them to the Raven's Progressive Matrices Test. Out of 5329 male students, 438 students were interviewed and 186 boys were selected. Likewise, out of 5259 female students, 619 students were interviewed, and 259 girls were included in the sample. Finally 425 students were chosen from the first year, second year, third year and fourth year in different subjects. Since the present study is an investigation of talented students only, students with IQ above 120 were selected.

In a study of such nature, from a sociological perspective, it was necessary to define talent in sociological terms to make it relevant to the study. Our questionnaire included 91 questions covering important variables like family background, schooling, peer groups, performance and their aims and goals realized. We subjected empirical data to statistical analysis, using the chi-square test to determine significant

takes place inside the family and by the family.

We read in Talent and Society: " The general importance of socialization for personality development has by now been so well documented and treated so extensively elsewhere that there is no reason to review the material here...G.A. Friedman had demonstrated that in a sample of eight cultures McClelland's measure of an achievement imagery is directly related to early and severe child training".¹³

It continues : " In another study, Winter Bottom has matched mother's stated expectations for age of mastery with their eight-to- ten-years- old children's achievement scores. In keeping with the hypothesis, children with high achievement scores were associated with mothers who had reported that they expected mastery at early ages." ¹⁴

Methodology:

This study is the first study of its kind in Iran. Gifted and talented students of high school level in Kerman City, the capital of the province of Kerman in South Eastern Iran, were chosen for investigation. According to the last Iranian population census (1986), the number of students at different levels: primary, intermediate, high school and university is 161717. According to the data collected from the education office, Kerman City's 19785 students were studying in high schools. These

they altogether give a comprehensive understanding of what a family is.

Despite the differences between the varied definitions given by scholars, there is an undeniable fact accepted by all social thinkers, that the family is the basic unit of the society. What is important to us about this basic unit of the society is its immensely deep effects on its members. Every aspect of a child's life is affected by the institution of the family, so is the manifestation of a person's talent. This is the linking point between the family as a social institution and the social manifestation of a talented child. As it is commonly accepted, a person's talent may bloom very early and may also fade away very soon. Different researches show that the role that a family plays in the life of a child (specially in the early years of life, i.e. up to the age of 10), the way that a family performs its basic functions (such as the socialization of a child), and the general situation created by a family in which the child grows up are all of vital importance in the early blooming or fading away of a talented individual. "We might even speak of certain families as being 'talents' in developing their sons not in terms of genes".¹¹ "So society may well expand some of its energy looking for the potential talent situations as well in persons."¹² Family performs different functions. Of them all, we take into consideration the function of the socialisation of the child. Family is the first social institution with which a child comes into contact. The first process of a child's socialization

academic achievement, which really facilitates the absorption in the higher echelons of society.

Therefore, the most important social factors responsible for the realization and development of talent are : 1) Family, 2) Education (Schooling), 3) Peer groups, and 4) Aims and goals. We have focussed our attention on family in this paper.

Family:

Family as the basic unit of the society has been defined by E.W. Burgess and H.J.Locke in their book, "Family" as " a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood, or adoption; constituting a single household, interacting and intercommunicating with one another in their respective social role of husband and wife, mother and father, brother and sister; creating a common culture."⁸

Kingsley Davis defines family in somewhat different terms. He says, family is " a group of persons whose relations to one another are based upon consanguinity and who are therefore kin to one another".⁹

Family is also defined as "a basic kinship unit, in its minimal form consisting of a husband, a wife and children. In its widest sense, it refers to all relative living together or recognized as a social unit, including adopted persons." ¹⁰

Whatever shortcomings each of the above definition may have,

characteristics.

A talented person seeks to uplift himself in the system of social stratification as a sort of reward that he expects for himself because of the talent that he has. So we may pay more attention to Merton's fourth process of social stratification, i.e. the process of rewarding. M. Tumin classifies 'rewards' under three general headings.:

"(1) property, or rights and responsibilities over goods and services; (2) power, or the ability to secure one's ends, even against opposition; (3) psychic gratification, any nonmaterial resource or response from others that brings contentment, well-being, or pleasure."⁷ While family provides requisite prestige and status to its members, to begin with, without a sufficient degree of talent and the relevant nurturing by family and school the possibility of being absorbed in higher strata becomes far-fetched. It must be accepted that adequate education and continuous academic performance of a higher order is extremely vital for getting absorbed in prestigious occupations, professions, etc. Therefore, the essential support from the family must be forthcoming. Equally important is the special facilities provided by the school in terms of special schools for the talented as well as the special attention paid by teachers to such gifted children. Relevant choice of subjects and the support by peer groups is also important. The cultural system plays no smaller role in the realization of potential talent through relentless

own characteristics and potentialities is not and can not be separated from the rest of the society. It embodies social factors which are common to the society but are comparatively of a higher quality which make the situation favourable for the production of talented individuals.

Social Stratification and Talented individual:

A talented person becomes an important issue in connection with the structure of stratification in a stratified society.

The system of stratification in any society determines the social status of each and every individual as a member of that society. But it is observed that the talented individuals seek higher social statuses compared to others who come from the same social class. Indeed a talented person, wants to enjoy a higher social status than what he is already in.

This is the link between social stratification and social structure of talented persons in a society. M.Tumin writes "If systems of stratification are ancient, universal, and basically a like in their main features, there must be some common social processes that bring such system into being, shape them, and maintain them. Four such processes can be identified: 1) differentiation 2) ranking 3) evaluation and 4) rewarding"⁶. Each one of these four processes has its own

A- BRIEF REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

D. McClelland believes that the term 'talent' is ambiguous. He opines that talent "sometimes refers to an aptitude or ability in the person, and sometimes it refers to talented performance by the persons i.e. behaviour which goes beyond the ordinary in meeting some criteria or desirability."⁴ He further explains that "when we say that we want to identify talent, we mean simultaneously that we want to find people who have potential talent now and who in addition will, on a subsequent occasion, turn in a talented performance."

...We usually measure potential talent by sampling behaviour in one situation and actual talent by sampling what may be a different kind of behaviour in a different situation."⁵ Although the term "talent" is rather ambiguous we may formulate our understanding of the term and say that: "talent is a quality with a person which enables him/her to perform in any field that he or she is acting, in a way that is considered to be above the general average by the rest of the members of a group or a society. So he/she will be put in a higher social status for his/her better performances as a kind of reward bestowed upon him/her by the group or society in which he/she is a member.

So there has to be a special occasion to make him bloom and to be recognized as a talented person. This special occasion which has its

D.C. McClell and A.L. Baldwin have analysed functional characteristics of various performance situations like school, professions, various occupations, etc. According to them we need to do longitudinal research which will shed indirect light on individual relationships by testing different individuals at different stages of development.² While considering the determinants of performance, they grouped (or classified) variables in the following four classes.

Illustrative analysis of the determinants of
performance considered "talented" in terms of its
desired effects

A	B	C	D
Antecedent Conditions	A person with certain charac- teristics	Asituation with certain characteristic	Desired outcomes
produce-	who interacts with	to produce performance sith	
heredity	abilities	working conditions	working
cultural values	emotional stability	skills required	efficiency
family structure	values	values required	occupational
Social-economic status	motives	motives required	ranks
parent's attitude	characteristic	stability required	school grades
	modes	type of persons	salary earned
	modes of res- ponse(trait)	in the situation	community service
			good morale
			successful
			Leadership
			social effectiveness
			Inclusion in
			American men
			of science ³

The study of education in relation to social stratification and mobility is comparatively recent in the developing countries. Sociological investigations in different countries have confirmed that differences in level of educational attainment and differences of talent are mainly due to social background. The analysis of the social background of students in investigations of higher learning is available now. A brief review of studies conducted in undeveloped and underdeveloped countries indicates that:

- I- The students come almost entirely from the middle class and upper class and almost none from the lower class.
- II- Children of the "dominant class" are able to take full advantage of educational opportunities.
- III- As a whole, privileged groups have responded properly to modern education.
- IV- Family is an important factor influencing admission to higher and professional education.¹

It may, therefore, be noted that purely genetic and psychological aspects do not influence educational achievements.

Aspirations, though important for achieving aims and objectives, can not be realized without talent, motivation, support, etc.

Thus, education is significant not only for the enhancement of status but also for the retention of it.

be very useful in later life for performing important tasks to ascend the individuals who require skill.

Therefore, talent is related to skill, hence concept of talent is dynamic and not static, since it is related to time. Hence it means overall stages of development, such as technology, science, economy, political framework, and the urgency to catch up with the pace of the progressive world.

A talented person climbs the pyramid of social stratification, if he/she has got sufficient facilities and nurturing, for family, class, culture and education reflect as well as represent the stratification. So talented persons seek to uplift themselves in the system of social stratification as a sort of reward that they expect for themselves, because of the talent they enjoy.

Talent has to be understood and studied in the context of the talented persons in a society. This is the link between social stratification and social structure.

In a society like Iranian one which is trying to progress industrially, technologically and economically, it is very important to develop skills which are required for sophisticated occupations and professions.

The educational system is the most important mechanism which contributes to the reproduction of the existing social structure.

nurtings have important roles for talented individuals to make them skilled. Skills will come on the basis of informal nrturing during the whole life a talented individual via family, peer groups, neighbours, social values, etc. It also comes through formal nurturing provided by school, college, etc.

The general environment of the family, parents' educations, occupatins, statuses, and also the facilities which family provides for the talented child, not only monetary facilities, but also non-monetary facilities, have a major influence on the performance effcency of the child. The parents who enjoy high education try to provide high education for their children. Thus, they improve the talents of their children and finally affect the children's social statuses by influencing their choice of occupations. If a child gets more education, the he will obtain higher level of occupation and will have higher social status. Finally a person who enjoys a high social status, will have more authority and power.

Society should utilize talent, formal nurtuning also provides necessary education. It must be kept in mind that proper education and continuous high academic performance are extremely vital for one to get absorbed in a prestigious profession.

The ability to master complex situations and new challenges in the academic sphere, enhances the logical and analytical faculty which will

Social Structure of the Talented Students in Kerman (Family Factors)

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Any complex society, developing and traditional, needs more and more talent and skills to further the aims of developmental plans, even to maintain the existing level of efficiency.

Social factors facilitating the development of talent are important. These factors are family, peer groups, occupation, profession, income, culture, values, education etc.

A child is socialized by various social institutions like family, class, religion, education etc. Thus, with the growing age, he/she is motivated to obtain social position. The social system which prompts an individual to prove his/her worth generates "inequality" too/by distributing statuses.

We should take into consideration that formal and informal