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Influence Of Gender and Locale on Academic Achievement of High School Students in Nagaon District, Assam

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Abstract

The purpose of the investigation is to examine, compare and explore the academic success of the students who were studying in high schools and to analyse the factors like gender and locale influence on their educational performance. The sample of the study comprises 1266 students collected from both rural and urban areas of Nagaon district of Assam, using a simple random technique. The researcher had considered the marks obtained by the sample students in their high school leaving certificate (HSLC) examination 2025 as a tool of academic achievement. In Assam, the HSLC examination is organised and operated by the Assam State School Education Board, Division I (erstwhile SEBA). Percentage, mean, standard deviation, and t-test were adopted to analyse the data. Microsoft Excel and SPSS software were used to compute the data. The research demonstrated no significant gender-based differences in academic achievement. However, in regard to the locale, a disparity was observed in academic achievement.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Gender, High school students, Level of Academic Achievement, Locale.

Introduction:

Education is a fundamental, evolving, ongoing process that helps people to acquire knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviours, and gives them the tools they need to deal with the problems they face in life. Education is necessary for the development of intellectual, emotional, social, and moral capacities, thereby preparing individuals for meaningful participation in societal pursuits. The primary objective of education is not just to pass on information; it is also to help people grow and become responsible citizens.

The main objective of going to school in the formal education system is to do well there, which shows how well students are doing in their studies and how well the educational goals are being met. A school's success is best measured by its students' performance. It shows how well the students have learned what they were supposed to learn. Because of this, teachers, parents, the community, and politicians all consider academic success a

useful way to judge how well schools are doing. Therefore, knowing what makes students do well in school is important for making education better and fairer. Education is important for people to learn how to think critically, solve problems, and make decisions. These tools are necessary for establishing peace in educational institutions by bringing people together. In the formal education system, academic success is how well a student does in various subjects taught in school. It shows how well students know the material, understand basic concepts, and use what they learn. Students' examination scores or continuous assessment are commonly used to evaluate their academic achievement. In high school, grades, grade point average (GPA), percentage scores, and results from board examinations given by a number of central and State Government-recognized educational boards are typically used to evaluate students. Schools typically provide tests, unit tests, half-yearly examinations, and yearly evaluations to see how well students are doing in school.

Several things can help you do well in school. It is not just one thing that influenced it; it's the combined effects of personal, social, economic, and institutional factors. In general, these factors can be put into three groups: learner-related, socio-economic, and school-related.

- Learner-related factors include intelligence, aptitude, motivation, interest, attitudes toward learning, self-confidence, study habits, emotional well-being, health, and learning styles. This section includes gender because boys and girls might learn in different ways.
- Socio-economic factors significantly influence academic achievement. The factors that influence academic achievement include parents' education, the family's income, the parents' jobs, the home environment, the ease of access to school for children, parental involvement in their education, and the family's cultural background. The place, whether it's a city or a country, is a big social and economic factor that affects educational opportunities.
- School-related factors include the teacher's credentials and experience, the way they teach, the classroom environment, the relationship between the teacher and the students, the school administration, and the language of teaching.

All of these things work together in complicated ways to decide how well students do in school. Gender and locale have received significant attention in educational research. Therefore, examining particular factors, like gender and geography, may give us a better idea of how social and structural variables affect high school achievements. The main purpose of educational reform is to improve quality, fairness, and accessibility. Many educational authorities have put a lot of work into making learning better and closing the gap in academic achievement between different groups of students.

The number of students enrolling in school in Assam has gone up. The rate of attrition is going down at all levels at the same time. Different categories of students show uneven levels of results. Nagaon district is an important place in Assam's socio-cultural history because it is where the great socio-cultural reformer Srimanta Sankardev was born. It includes both cities and the countryside, and the economy and society are very different in each area, which can lead to varying educational resources and opportunities that affect student performance. High school education is crucial for children because it prepares them for further education. Therefore, it's really important to look at how well students do

in school at this level. While numerous studies have examined academic achievement in relation to gender and geography across various regions of India and worldwide, there exists a significant deficiency of research specifically focused on high school students in the Nagaon district of Assam. So, the investigation was planned to bridge the gap.

Literature Review:

Numerous investigations weres performed to examine the impact of gender and locale in shaping the educational achievement of high school students along all levels of students. The findings of most studies clearly indicate that gender and locale do not have a significant influence on academic achievement.

- Chavda (2015), in his study, found that female students were better than their male counterpart of the Gir-Somnath district in regard to academic outcomes. The reason for this is that the girls were more hard-working and studious than the male students, which helped the girls to produce a much better result in the examinations.
- Preeti Bala & Shaafiu (2016) performed a study and explore the untapped area of academic achievement in relation to problem solving ability and examination anxiety among students in the Maldives. The enquiry indicated that no significant difference could be found in the academic achievement among the boys and girls in the Maldives, suggesting that gender did not exert a meaningful influence on students' academic performance.
- Gogoi (2017), in his study, noticed that the academic performance between girls and boys had a significant difference which was similar to the findings of Chavda in 2015. This difference was specifically noticed in the case of both boys and girls in the urban area, while it was completely reversed in the rural area.
- Saikia (2017) investigated urban and rural school students of the Lakhimpur district of Assam in order to measure academic success. A lion's share of students from both localities shows low performance in their results, as mentioned in the data.
- Shajimon et al. (2017), in their study on the academic achievement of post-metric students studying in senior secondary schools, demonstrated that there was no significant difference between males and females; further, the study revealed the same effect in the case of locality.
- Raj & Tamizhselvan (2022) study confirmed that the academic results of both boys and girls in high schools were the same. No remarkable difference was observed.
- Saikia (2021) carried out a study to find out the relation between academic achievement and the gender of secondary school students. Where the researcher demonstrates in this way, "The academic performance of 10th-grade students of Dhemaji district is better than that of Lakhimpur district of Assam. The male 10th-grade students have lower academic achievement in comparison to female 10th-grade students in both districts. "
- Jain & Kumar (2024) found no significant gender differences in academic achievement among secondary school students in Uttarkashi district of Uttarakhand is concerned. However, they recorded significant differences based on locality (rural vs urban) and type of school (government vs private).
- Jha & Jha (2024) observed the issue of academic performance from the angle of role of school type. Their investigation revealed significant differences between

private and government school students. Gender differences were significant in government schools but no such differences were observed in private schools, indicating that institutional factors may moderate gender disparities.

- Singh & Pandey (2025) mentioned that gender and locale have a significant impact on influencing the educational achievement of students who were continuing their studies at the secondary level.
- Mallai & Humtsoe (2025) examined no gender disparities in the overall academic performance of the school students of the Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya. However, subject-wise analysis revealed that female students performed better in English, while no significant difference was found in mathematics, science, and social science.

Significance of the investigation:

Educational performance of the students is analyses by the examination process in educational institutions regarding prescribed course of study. Students are promoted to higher classes based on their performance shown in the examination. Academic achievement is considered a vital form of education that gives immense pleasure to students, whereas the degree of academic achievement varies from student to student. It is influenced by various constraints. In various forms of education, academic performance acts as an indicator of knowledge acquired by students in educational institutions. Academic achievement is an essential component of the learning process, so studies have been conducted worldwide to find the right direction to improve the academic performance of students. The main aim of the researcher in conducting the study is to determine the variables and constraints that impact academic achievement among different categories of high school students.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study academic achievement of high school students with respect to gender.
2. To study academic achievement of high school students with respect to locale.
3. To study the level of academic achievement with respect to gender.
4. To study the level of academic achievement with respect to locale.

Methodology of the study:

Population: High school students studied in class X of Nagaon district constitute the population.

- The total number of government/provincialized high school is 168, out of which 148 schools are located in rural and rest are in urban area.
- Total number of private high school is 130. Out of which 114 numbers of schools are located in rural and rest are in urban area.
- Total number of Government Aided is 20, out of which 19 schools are located in rural and remaining one school is in urban area.
- Total number of students is 15378.

Table 1: Details of the total population of the study

Type of Schools	Locale		Total	Number of Students						Total
				Urban		Rural				
	Urban	Rural		Male	Female	Total 1	Male	Female	Total 2	
Government / Provincialised High School	20	148	168	293	711	1004	3272	6383	9655	10659
Government Aided High school	1	19	20	9	18	27	248	624	872	899
Private High school	16	114	130	242	214	456	1525	1839	3364	3820
Total	**37**	**281**	**318**	**544**	**943**	**1487**	**5045**	**8846**	**13891**	**15378**

Source: UDISE 2024-25

Sample: 1266 number of high school students studied in class X were taken as a sample from 54 high schools situated in Nagaon district of Assam. The stratified random sampling technique was used for data collection.

Table 2: Details of the total sample of the study

Type of Schools	Locale		Total	Number of Students						Total	
				Urban			Rural				
	Urban	Rural		Male	Female	Total 1	Male	Female	Total 2	
Government / Provincialised High School	5	23	28	72	110	182	196	375	551	753
Government Aided High school	1	2	3	4	7	11	25	45	70	81
Private High school	3	20	23	44	50	94	171	167	338	432
Total	**9**	**45**	**54**	**120**	**167**	**287**	**392**	**587**	**979**	**1266**

Tools Utilized

Marks secured by the selected students in high school leaving certificate examination held in 2025. Marks were the scale of measurement the academic achievement.

Statistical Technique

The investigator used percentage, mean, standard deviation, and test of significance for the difference between mean (t-test).

Hypotheses of the study:

- **H_{01}:** There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high school students with respect to gender.

- **H_{02}:** There is no significant difference in different levels of academic achievement of high school students with respect to gender.
- **H_{03}:** There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high school students with respect to locale.
- **H_{04}:** There is no significant difference in different levels of academic achievement of high school students with respect to locale.

Data analysis and discussion:

Data analysis and discussion can be categorised into two parts. Part I include discussion on distribution of data and Part II include data analysis by using statistical techniques.

Part I: Distribution of data

Table 3: Distribution of data of the sample on the basis of gender and locale

Group	Category	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	512	40.44
	Female	754	59.56
Locale	Urban	287	22.67
	Rural	979	77.33

Table 3 reflect the total number of students in different groups and their percentage. The sample comprises 1266 high school students of which 512 (40.44%) are male, 754 (59.56%) are female, 287 (22.67%) are urban and 979 (77.33%) are rural.

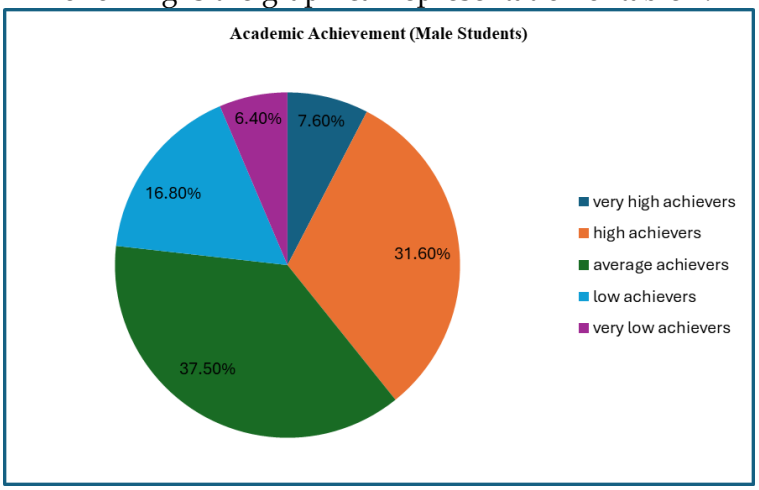
Table 4: Distribution of sample on the basis of Gender in relation to Academic Achievement.

Criteria for Category of Academic Achievement	Number of students		Percentage		Interpretation
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
80% & Above	39	40	7.6	5.3	Very high Achievers
60% - 79.99%	162	220	31.6	29.2	High Achievers
45% - 59.99%	192	313	37.5	41.5	Average Achievers
30% - 44.99%	86	141	16.8	18.7	Low Achievers
Below 30%	33	40	6.4	5.3	Very Low Achievers
Total	**512**	**754**	**100**	**100**	

Above mentioned table stated that 7.6% of male students are very high achievers, 31.6% fall under the high achievers, 37.5% are classified to average achievers, 16.8% of male students belong to low achievers' category, and 6.4% are identified as very low achievers.

Similarly, it is observed that 5.3% of female students, 29.2% of female students, 41.5% of female students, 18.7% of female students, and 5.3% of female students fall under different categories of achievement. The categories are very high achievers, high achievers, average achievers, low achievers and very low achievers respectively.

Following is the graphical representation of table 4.



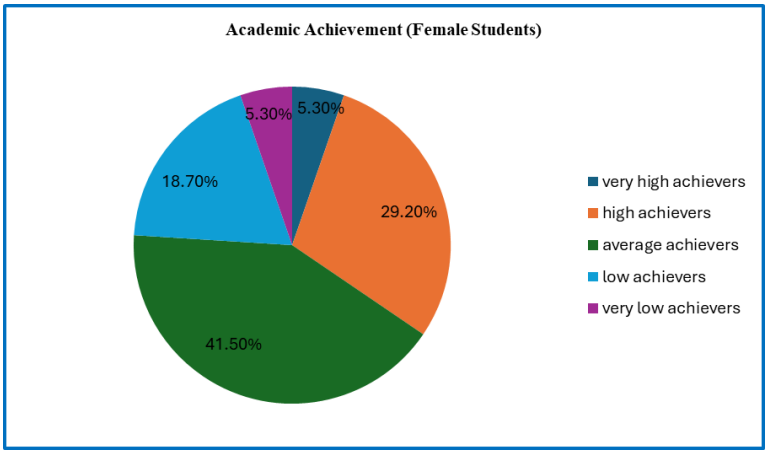


Fig 1: Distribution of sample based on gender in relation to Academic Achievement

Table 5: Distribution of sample based on locale of school in relation to Academic Achievement.

Level of Academic Achievement	Number of students		Percentage	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Very High Achievers	21	58	7.3	5.9
High Achievers	96	286	33.4	29.2
Average Achievers	123	382	42.9	39.0
Low Achievers	41	186	14.3	19.0
Very Low Achievers	6	67	2.1	6.8
Total	**287**	**979**	**100%**	**100%**

Table 5 shows the number of students as well as percentage of students in the five levels of Academic achievement for the total sample 1266 on the basis of locale.

- 7.3% of students from urban areas (N=21) are in the very high achievement level whereas 5.9% students from rural areas (N=58) belongs to same category.
- 33.4% of students from urban areas (N=96) are in the high achievement category whereas 29.2% of students from rural areas (N=286) belong to same category.

- 42.9% of students from urban areas (N=123) are in the average achievement level whereas 39.0% of students from rural areas (N=382) belong to same category.
- 14.3% of students from urban areas (N=41) are in the low achievement level whereas 19.0% of students from rural areas (N=186) belong to same category.
- 2.1% of students from urban areas (N=6) are in the very low achievement level whereas 6.8% of students from rural areas (N=67) belong to same category.

Following is the graphical representation of table 5.

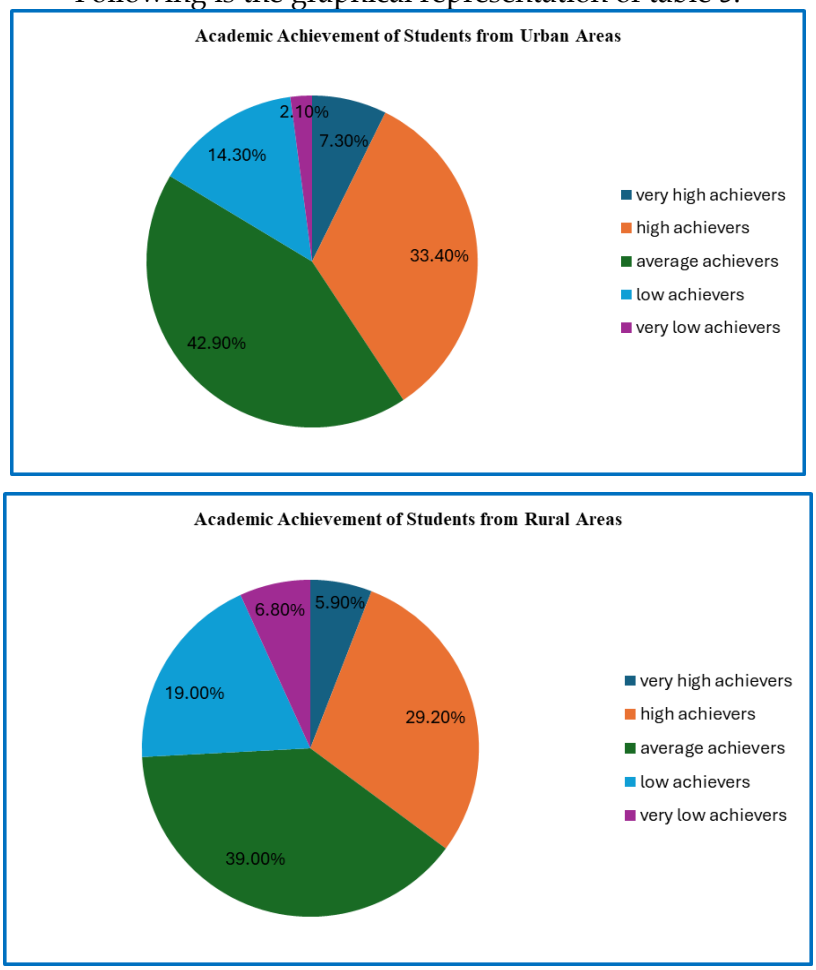


Fig 2: Distribution of sample based on locale of school in relation to Academic Achievement.

Part-II: Data Analysis
Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis: 1

There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high school students with respect to gender.

Table 6: Showing mean scores, standard deviation and t-value of academic achievement of high school students with respect to gender.

Category	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Academic Achievement	Male	512	333.22	94.493	1.006	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Female	754	327.93	87.750		

Table 6 indicates that there is no significant difference in academic achievement between male and female students. The computed t-value is less than the tabulated t-value at the 0.05 significance level. Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted, signifying that gender has no influence on academic achievement.

Hypothesis: 2

There is no significant difference in difference levels of academic achievement i.e. very high, high, average, low, very low achievers of high school students with respect to gender.

Table 7: Showing mean score, standard deviation and t-value of different level of academic achievement of high school students.

Level of Achievement	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Very High Achievers	Male Female	39 40	514.15 510.15	25.832 23.932	0.715	Not significant at 0.05 level
High Achievers	Male Female	162 220	405.20 406.69	33.163 32.192	0.439	Not significant at 0.05 level
Average Achievers	Male Female	192 313	311.19 313.46	27.837 25.348	0.942	Not significant at 0.05 level
Low Achievers	Male Female	86 141	234.79 236.67	24.151 24.681	0.560	Not significant at 0.05 level
Very Low Achievers	Male Female	33 40	150.79 147.55	26.111 27.236	0.515	Not significant at 0.05 level

Table 7 indicates that the computed t-value for very high achievers and very low achievers are 0.715 and 0.515, respectively, at the 0.05 significance level, both of which are inferior to the tabulated t-value. Correspondingly, the computed t-value for high achievers and low achievers are 0.439 and 0.560, respectively at the 0.05 significance level, both of which are less than the tabulated t-value. For average achievers, the computed t-value is 0.942 at the 0.05 significance level, which is also less than the tabulated t-value. In all instances, since the computed t-values are less than the tabulated t-value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there are no disparities in academic achievement between male and female high school students across all levels of performance.

Hypothesis: 3

There is no significant difference in academic achievement of high school students with respect to locale.

Table 8: Showing mean score, standard deviation and t-value of academic achievement of high school students with respect to locale.

Category	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Academic Achievement	Urban	287	348.24	81.586	4.160	Significant at 0.05 level
	Rural	979	324.75	92.362		

From Table 8, it is observed that the calculated t-value exceeds the tabulated t-value at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. A notable disparity exists between urban and rural students about their academic performance.

Hypothesis: 4

There is no significant difference in different levels of academic achievement i.e. very high, high, average, low, very low achievers of high school students in respect to locale.

Table 9: Showing mean score, standard deviation and t-value of different levels of academic achievement of high school students with respect to locale.

Level of Achievement	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Very High Achievers	Urban	21	515.52	28.558	0.730	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Rural	58	510.90	23.459		
High Achievers	Urban	96	408.54	30.347	0.863	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Rural	286	405.22	33.295		
Average Achievers	Urban	123	315.85	27.771	1.581	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Rural	382	311.55	25.783		
Low Achievers	Urban	41	244.17	17.218	3.063	Significant at 0.05 level
	Rural	186	234.15	25.448		
Very Low Achievers	Urban	6	173.17	6.706	6.186	Significant at 0.05 level
	Rural	67	146.85	26.657		

Table 9 reveals that the t-values for very high achievers, high achievers and average achievers are 0.730, 0.863 and 1.581, respectively, at 0.05 significance level, all of which are lower than the tabulated t-value. In every instance, since the computed t-values are less than the tabulated t-value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that there is no significant difference academic achievement across urban and rural high school students at the levels of very high achievers, high achievers, and average achievers. The computed t-values for low achievers and very low achievers are 3.063 and 6.186, respectively, at the 0.05 significance level, exceeding the tabulated t-value. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a substantial disparity in academic achievement levels between urban and rural students among low and very low achievers.

Major Findings of the research:

- There exists no significant difference in the academic achievement of high school students based on gender. Gender has no significant impact on academic achievement.

- Significant difference is recongnised in the academic achievement of high school students according to locale. The locale of the high school students affects academic achievement.
- There exists no significant difference in the various levels of academic achievement among high school students concerning gender.
- No significant difference is found in the investigation in very high, high, and average levels of academic achievement among high school students concerning locale.
- A significant difference exists in the low and very low achievers based on locale.

Conclusion:

The impact of gender and locale on the academic performance of high school students has been investigated in this research. The research indicates that gender does not significantly influence pupils' academic performance. Boys and girls of high school students exhibit comparable levels of success, both in total performance and throughout several tiers of accomplishment. There exists a notable disparity in the academic performance of high school students based on their location. Nonetheless, this disparity is not consistent across all levels of success. No substantial difference is seen in the category of very high, high, and average. A substantial disparity is seen between low and very low achievers groups. Consequently, it may be deduced that while gender parity in academic achievement has been attained, disparities based on locale continue to exist, especially among underperforming students. The preceding discussion indicates a need for educational intervention and resource allocation to assist students in disadvantaged areas, particularly those in low and very low performance categories. Addressing these deficiencies may facilitate fair educational outcomes and improve overall students' progress.

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