



Influence of Gender, Locale, And Types of Schools on Educational Aspiration of High School Students in Nagaon District, Assam

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Abstract

This study examines, compares and explores the educational aspiration of high school students in Nagaon District, Assam and to analyse the influence of demographic variables namely gender, locale and types of schools on their educational aspiration. A sample of 1266 students was selected using stratified random sampling ensuring representation from both urban and rural areas. Data were collected using standardized Educational Aspiration scale developed by Dr. Yashmin Ghani Khan (2019). Descriptive statistics, including percentage, mean and standard deviation were computed. Data were analysed using t-test and one-way ANOVA. Result revealed that there is a significant difference in educational aspiration of gender and locale. However, no difference was found in educational aspiration by types of schools. The study highlights the critical role of gender and location in shaping students' educational aspiration.

Keywords: Educational Aspiration, Gender, High school students, Level of Educational Aspiration, Types of Schools, Locale.

Education is a lifelong process which helps in the all-round development of an individual. The great educationists of the world consider education to be the most powerful tool in developing human resources and also in social transformation. The main objective of education is not only to disseminate academic knowledge but also to develop good and innate qualities in individuals for their personal growth as well as the growth of society. Educational institutions play a great role in developing the intellectual, social, and emotional qualities of the learners. It is the educational aspiration which reflects the future educational goals and planning of students. It also influences students' motivation, academic expectation, career planning and achievement in education. Students those who have very high educational aspirations tend to spend less time in fruitless activities and pay much interest in educational achievement and make plans for their future. According to Sirin, Diemer, Jackson, and Howell (2004, as cited by Mishra, 2020), "Aspirations have been defined as the educational and vocational dreams that students have for the future". Again, "Aspiration means a strong desire to achieve

something high or great. Aspirations, however, usually can not the achievement of something high or great. These also address both present and future perspectives" (Pandian, 2019).

Different researchers have defined educational aspiration in many different ways. According to Fraser & Garg (2011, as cited by Mishra,2020), "Educational aspiration reflects educational goals an individual set for himself/herself. It is important as it encourages and energizes the individual to achieve them". To many people, educational aspiration meant the wish to attain a certain level of education based on personal goals. It is strongly related to academic achievement, self-confidence, self-reliance, academic engagement, future academic goals and planning. Many researchers are of the opinion that the educational aspiration of students is shaped by family and socio-economic background, school and peer encouragement, etc. The students who are consistent, confident, intelligent, courageous, and have a definite goal can do well in their examinations and can develop an extreme level of aspiration. In influencing educational aspiration, family-related factors, parental education, occupation, and socio-economic status all play an important role. The school factors also play a significant role in the formation of learners' educational aspirations. Again, in the upliftment of a student's aspiration level, teachers' educational qualification and teachers' training, teaching-learning environment in the classroom, peer activities, and availability of resources in the school all contribute a lot. On the other hand, demographic variables like gender, locale, types of schools, etc., also influence the educational aspiration. Geographical locations determine a student's access to resources and exposure to careers, which leads to a division between urban and rural areas. Thus, it is important to understand how these factors influence the educational aspirations in promoting educational equality and success in students. In India, several educational policies and programmes have been introduced to reduce the educational differences between males and females, rural and urban, and different types of schools as a whole. Assam has a wide range of socio-cultural, economic and geographical factors influencing the educational conditions. Till date, a good number of studies on educational aspiration have been done in India and Assam. However, there are few studies that investigated the joint effect of gender, location and types of schools on the educational aspiration of high school students in Assam. From the literature review it has been seen that a study was done on the educational aspiration of secondary school students of Nagaon town. Hence, it is necessary to study the educational aspirations of the students of the whole district irrespective of their location and types of schools. The absence of evidence for particular regions represents a significant geographical and population gap. This research is based on the important theoretical models, the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986) and the status attainment theory (Sewell et al., 1969; Blau & Duncan, 1967).

Literature Review:

Previous researchers have carried out various studies to investigate the impact of gender, locale and types of schools on high school students and their educational aspiration. But based on gender, they have produced mixed results. While many of the researchers are of the opinion that there is no significant difference in education aspiration among the students of both urban and rural backgrounds. Again, some other researchers, while examining different types of schools, found no significant difference.

- Rajesh & Chandrasekaran (2014) conducted a detailed study on gender difference in the level of educational aspiration of students of Chennai city. The study shows that in this respect a clear significant difference exists. The researchers found boys had less aspiration for education than their counterparts.
- Mahmood Alam (2018) study showed that the students of class X in Sambhal district have dissimilarity in educational aspiration about gender, but there is no significant difference in the case of locality, i.e. urban and rural.
- Bora (2021) has discussed about the students of class X from char areas of Barpeta district and their educational aspirations. No significant difference was found in the investigation between males and females regarding their educational aspiration.
- Sarma (2021) Sarma conducted an inquiry to find out the educational aspiration of the students who studied in classes IX and X. The researcher had collected 348 samples from the secondary schools of Nagaon town of Assam. According to the researcher no significant difference was exists in educational aspiration between male and female students in Nagaon town. The researcher restricted the research to males and females. The study was also limited by the choice of a limited number of schools from an urban area.
- Nashirul (2023) has studied the educational aspiration of the students of secondary schools studying in class IX and X in different schools of Murshidabad district. There is a big difference in the ambition of boys and girls. The girls had a relatively higher educational aspiration than did the boys. Again, the gender differences for the urban students and rural students were statistically significant. Boys from rural and urban areas had lower educational aspirations than girls. However, the researcher found no significant difference based on locality.
- Khakhlari & Balakrishnan (2024) report highlighted a significant difference in educational aspiration score between male and female students of Udalguri district in Assam. Moreover, their study also examined the educational aspiration of both students studying at government and private higher secondary institutions. They found that the difference in educational aspiration between the two types of schools, as mentioned above, was not statistically significant. The same result was observed in the case of the students who belonged to rural and urban areas.
- Mary Kurbah (2024) in her study regarding educational aspiration collected data from 804 students of East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya and did not find any significant effect of gender and location at 0.05 level of significance. The researcher also observed a significant difference between the tribal and non-tribal students.
- Maya & Jayanthi (2024) in their study on educational aspiration of students studying at the secondary level in Malappuram district in Kerala found that gender differences were statistically significant. No such differences were observed in location and school types.
- Azyu et al. (2025) in their study took a sample of 200 students of Siaha, which is in Mizoram. Researchers collected data from secondary schools controlled and administered by the government and private agencies. Most of the students were

found in the average category of educational aspiration. No significant difference was observed in educational aspiration between government school and private school students. A similar result was observed in relation to gender.

- Lalneihsang (2026) investigated the desire of students in terms of education who were reading in high school. The survey covered 291 students from government, private and aided high schools of Aizawl West Constituency. The study found that the educational aspiration with respect to gender was not statistically significant. The study found that the educational aspiration with respect to locale was also not statistically significant.

Significance of the study:

The educational aspiration indicates the level of desire and expectations of the students. Educational aspiration is an important socio-psychological variable, which reflects students' educational goals and future planning. It is very much needed to know the career choices and plans of the students. Teachers and guardians need to be aware of the educational expectations of their students and children. Then only they can guide them accordingly and make the way smooth to reach the goal. The inquisitiveness of the teenagers helps them to gain knowledge regarding anything. If their inquisitiveness can be channelized in the right direction, then it would be in a position to understand them and be able to make decisions regarding their future education. Therefore, it is important to study the educational aspiration of students at high school level. Students with higher educational aspiration tend to be more motivated to study and persist longer in learning and achieve better academic outcomes whereas students with lower educational aspiration shows lower interest and lower persistence in education (Bandura, 1997; Atkinson, 1957; Locke & Latham, 2002). Hence, the researchers need to find the underlying causes why the students are interested in the reading and learning process and vice-versa. To know this systematically, the researcher should study the educational aspirations of the students at high school level. The study is also relevant in the context of National Education policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes equitable, inclusive, and quality education by reducing gender and regional disparities and providing equal learning opportunities for all students (Ministry of Education, 2020). The results of this study may help the administrators, teachers, guardians and policy makers to adopt necessary strategies that encourage higher educational aspirations especially in favour of low educational aspiration students and thus enrich them.

Objectives of the study:

1. To examine the level of educational aspiration with respect to gender.
2. To examine the level of educational aspiration with respect to locale.
3. To examine the level of educational aspiration with respect to types of schools.
4. To compare the level of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to gender.
5. To compare the level of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to locale.
6. To compare the level of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to types of schools.

Hypotheses of the study:

- **H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of high school students with respect to gender.
- **H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in the different levels of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to gender.
- **H₀₃:** There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of high school students with respect to locale.
- **H₀₄:** There is no significant difference in the different levels of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to locale.
- **H₀₅:** There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of high school students with respect to types of schools.

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 148schools are located in rural and 20 are in urban area.
- Total number of private high school is 130. Out of which 114 numbers of schools are located in rural and 16 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.

Table 1:
Details of the total population of the study

Types 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

Types 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

Level of Educational Aspiration Test (LEAT) standardized by Dr. Yasmin Ghani Khan (2019) is used.

Statistical Technique

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

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, locale and types of schools.

Group	Category	N	Percentage
Gender	Male	512	40.44
	Female	754	59.56
Locale	Urban	287	22.67
	Rural	979	77.33
Types of Schools	Govt./Prov.	753	59.5
	Govt. Aided	81	6.4
	Private	432	34.1

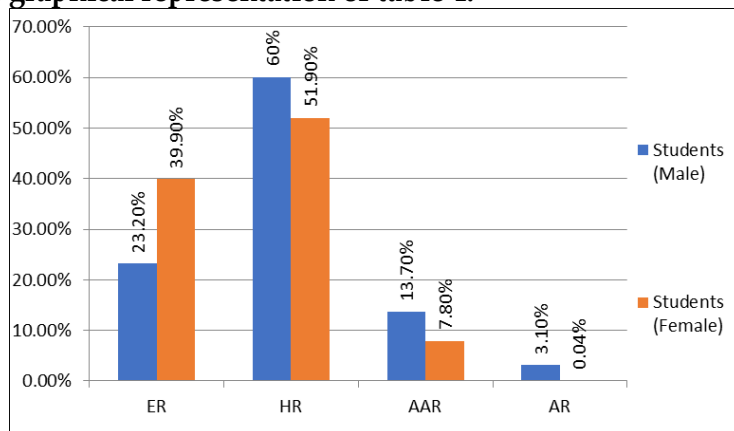
Table 3 indicates that the 1266 high school students are taken as sample for the study of which 512 (40.44%) are male, 754 (59.56%) are female, 287 (22.67%) are urban, 979 (77.33%) are rural, 753 (59.5%) are govt./prov. schools, 81 (6.4%) are govt. aided and 431 (34.1%) are private school students.

Table 4:**Distribution of sample based on gender in relation to educational aspiration.**

Range of Educational Aspiration	Number of students		Percentage		Level of Educational Aspiration
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
56 and above	119	301	23.20	39.90	Extremely Realistic
49-55	307	391	60.00	51.90	Highly Realistic
42-48	70	59	13.70	7.80	Above Average Realistic
32-41	16	3	3.10	0.04	Average Realistic
Total	512	754	100	100	

Table 4 reflects that 23.20% of male students are extremely realistic in educational aspiration, 60% students are highly realistic, 13.70% and 3.1% are above average realistic and average realistic respectively. 39.9% of female students are extremely realistic, 51.9% of female students, 7.8% of female students and 0.04 of female students are highly realistic, above average realistic and average realistic respectively. From the above findings it is found that the percentage of female students is higher than that of male students in the extremely realistic level of educational aspiration. However, male students constitute a higher percentage than female students in the highly realistic level of educational aspiration.

Following is the graphical representation of table 4:

**Table 5:****Distribution of sample based on locale in relation to educational aspiration.**

Range of Educational Aspiration	Number of students		Percentage		Level of Educational Aspiration
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	
56 and above	358	62	36.60	21.60	Extremely Realistic
49-55	514	184	52.50	64.10	Highly Realistic
42-48	94	35	9.60	12.20	Above Average Realistic
32-41	13	6	1.30	2.10	Average Realistic
Total	979	287	100	100	

Table 5 reveals that 36.6% of rural students are in the extremely realistic level of educational aspiration, 52.5% of rural students, 9.6% of rural students and 1.3% of rural students are in the highly realistic, above average realistic and average realistic level of educational aspiration respectively, in case of urban students 21.6% fall under the extremely realistic category, 64.1%, 12.2% and 2.1% belong to highly realistic, above average realistic and average realistic categories respectively. It is seen that the percentage

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of rural students is higher than that of urban students in the extremely realistic level of educational aspiration. However, percentage of rural students is lower than that of urban students in the highly realistic level of educational aspiration.

Following is the graphical representation of table 5:

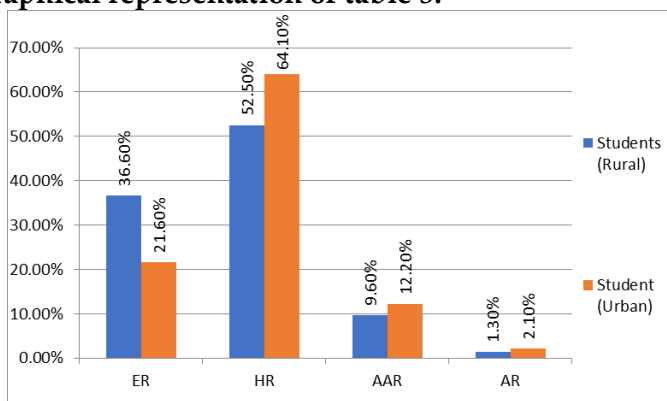


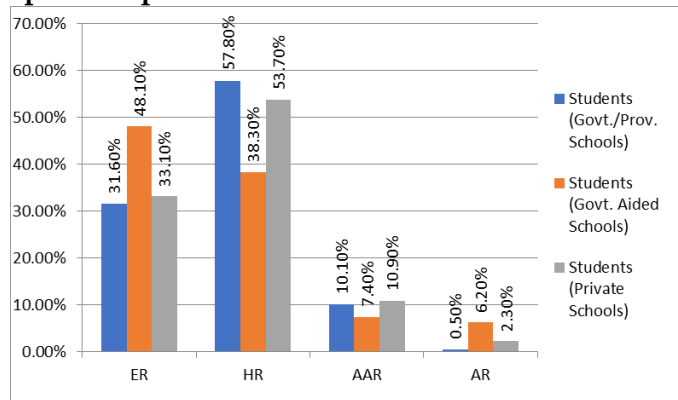
Table 6:

Distribution of sample based on types of schools in relation to educational aspiration.

Level of Educational Aspiration	Number of students			Percentage		
	Govt./Prov. Schools	Govt. Aided Schools	Private Schools	Govt./Prov. Schools	Govt. Aided Schools	Private Schools
Extremely Realistic	238	39	143	31.60	48.10	33.10
Highly Realistic	435	31	232	57.80	38.30	53.70
Above Average Realistic	76	6	47	10.10	7.40	10.90
Average Realistic	4	5	10	0.50	6.20	2.30
Total	753	81	432	100	100	100

Table 6 presents the distribution of high school students' educational aspiration according to the type of school. The findings revealed that (48.10%) of students from Government Aided Schools fall under the extremely realistic level of educational aspiration, which is the highest among the three school categories. In comparison, (33.10%) of students from private schools and (31.60%) of students from Government/Provincialised schools belong to this category. With regard to the Highly realistic level, Government/Provincialised Schools record the highest number of students (57.80%), followed by Private Schools (53.70%), while Government Aided School have the lowest number of students (38.30%). Above average realistic level, Private Schools record highest number of students (10.90%), followed by Government/Provincialised Schools (10.10%) and Government Aided schools (7.40%). In average realistic level it is notice that Government Aided Schools record highest number of students (620%), and Government/Provincialised Schools have lowest number of students (0.50%).

Following is the graphical representation of table 6:



Part-II: Data Analysis Testing of Hypothesis

Hypothesis: 1

There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of high school students with respect to gender.

Table 7:

Showing mean scores, standard deviation and t-value of educational aspiration of high school students based on gender.

Category	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Educational Aspiration	Male	512	52.34	4.461	7.264	Significant at 0.05 level
	Female	754	54.08	3.717		

Table 7 reveals that there is a significant difference between male and female students. The computed t-value is more than the tabulated t-value at the 0.05 significance level. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Educational aspiration of female is significantly higher than male. Hence gender influences the educational aspiration of high school students in the studies.

Hypothesis: 2

There is no significant difference in the different levels of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to gender.

Table 8:

Showing mean score, standard deviation and t-value of different levels of educational aspiration of high school students.

Level of Educational Aspiration	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Extremely Realistic	Male	119	57.31	1.376	0.644	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Female	301	57.40	1.278		
Highly Realistic	Male	307	52.56	1.726	2.086	Significant at 0.05 level
	Female	391	52.84	1.763		
Above Average	Male	70	46.00	2.022	0.617	Not significant at

Realistic	Female	59	46.22	2.018		0.05 level
Average	Male	16	38.94	2.695	1.093	Not significant at 0.05 level
Realistic	Female	3	37.00	3.606		

Table 8 indicates that the computed t-value for extremely realistic, above average realistic and average realistic are 0.644, 0.617 and 1.093 respectively at the 0.05 significant level. These values are inferior to the tabulated t-value. This reflects that there are no significant differences in these categories of educational aspiration at the 0.05 significant level. But a clear disparity is observed in the highly realistic level of educational aspiration between male and female.

Hypothesis: 3

There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of high school students with respect to locale.

Table 9:

Showing mean score, standard deviation and t-value of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to locale.

Category	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Educational Aspiration	Rural	979	53.64	4.131	4.189	Significant at 0.05 level
	Urban	287	52.49	3.974		

From Table 9 reveals that 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 rural and urban students about their educational aspiration.

Hypothesis: 4

There is no significant difference in the different levels of educational aspiration of high school students in respect to locale.

Table 10:

Showing mean score, standard deviation and t-value of different levels of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to locale.

Level of Educational Aspiration	Locale	N	Mean	SD	t-Value	State of Significance
Extremely Realistic	Rural	358	57.42	1.302	1.511	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Urban	62	57.15	1.316		
Highly Realistic	Rural	514	52.78	1.765	1.490	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Urban	184	52.55	1.704		
Above Average Realistic	Rural	94	46.15	1.984	0.443	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Urban	35	45.97	2.121		
Average Realistic	Rural	13	37.85	3.051	2.538	Significant at 0.05 level
	Urban	6	40.33	1.211		

From Table 10 reveals that calculated t-value for extremely realistic, highly realistic, above average realistic are 1.511, 1.490, 0.443 respectively at the 0.05 significance level. These values are inferior to the tabulated t-value. Table 10 reveals that calculated t-value for extremely realistic, highly realistic, above average realistic are 1.511, 1.490 and 0.443 respectively at the 0.05 significant level. These values are inferior to the tabulated t-value. This reflects that there are no significant differences in these categories of educational

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aspiration at the 0.05 significant level. But clear disparity is observed in the average realistic level of educational aspiration between rural and urban.

Hypothesis: 5

There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of high school students based on types of schools.

Table 11:
Showing F-ratio of educational aspiration of high school students with respect to types of schools.

Variable	Background variable	Source of variation	df	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F-Ratio	State of Significance
Educational Aspiration	Type of schools	Between Groups	2	85.176	42.588	2.521	Not significant at 0.05 level
		Within Groups	1263	21410.591	16.952		
		Total	1265				

The result of the F-ratio in table 11 indicates that there is no significant difference in educational aspiration in relation to types of schools. Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted. The result clearly showed that types of schools do not have any influence on educational aspiration.

Major Findings of the research:

- There exists significant difference in the educational aspiration of high school students based on gender. It means gender has significant impact on educational aspiration.
- Significant difference has been recognised in educational aspiration of high school students based on locale. The locale of the high school students' impact on educational aspiration.
- There exists no significant difference in educational aspiration of high school students based on types of schools.
- No significant difference is found in different levels of educational aspiration among high school students except highly realistic level of educational aspiration concerning gender.
- No significant difference is found in different levels of educational aspiration among high school students except average realistic level of educational aspiration concerning locale.

Conclusion:

The main purpose of the study is to explore the effect of gender, place of residence and types of schools on educational aspiration of high school students. The investigation data shows that students' educational aspiration is significantly influenced by gender and locale. Table 8 of the study clearly showed that there are same educational aspirations between males and females except for the highly realistic level of educational aspiration, i.e., there is a significant difference in the highly realistic category, in the same vein, table 10 of the study also shows that the difference by locale is not statistically significant for all categories except for the average realistic level of educational aspiration. The study also found that there is no significant difference in educational aspiration in terms of the types of school. The investigation findings reveal that the concerned authorities should

Influence of Gender, Locale, And Types of Schools on Educational Aspiration... R.Majumdar & B.M.Dkhar take positive steps and motivational techniques to uplift the educational aspiration of the high school students, mainly males as well as the students inhibited in urban and rural areas. It is necessary to pay attention to it, so that positive results appear before the society.

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