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Effects of Gender-difference, Rural-Urban background and Educational aspiration on Educational Achievement of Secondary School Students

Abstract : The present study aims to examine the effects of rural-urban background, gender-difference and educational aspiration on educational achievement of Secondary school students. For this purpose, out of a total sample of 300 (50% rural and 50% urban; and again 50% boys and 50% girls) 80 students were selected randomly. A 2x2x2 factorial design (representing two backgrounds : Rural-Urban, two sex : Boys-Girls and two levels : High-Low of educational aspiration) was adopted, and 10 respondents were kept in each cell. Average scores of two consecutive exams. Obtained by Students were treated as educational achievements. Educational achievement scores were analyzed by computing a mixed ANOVA. Results revealed significant main effects of gender-difference, rural-urban background and educational aspiration on educational achievement of the students. Interaction effects of two or more variables were found insignificant.

Key words: Gender-difference, Rural-Urban, Educational aspiration and Educational achievement.

Introduction & some reviews : Educational achievement is a central construct of educational psychology, around which whole educational psychology revolves. It is generally meant as examination marks or grade, test scores or ranks given by the assessee teachers; based upon a class or grade curriculum. One who received higher marks or upper grades, is treated as having enriched cognitive abilities, like intelligence, concentration, motivation etc. It is also assumed as future life achievement bases, though it is not singly responsible. Thus, educational achievement refers to the level of success a student attains in their academic pursuits, typically measured by grades, test scores, and completion of educational milestones. It

encompasses both cognitive and non-cognitive skills, as well as social and emotional development.

Student achievement is the basis of nearly every aspect of education and serves as the primary outcome variable in most educational research studies.

Educational achievement of a student is influenced by several factors, among them their motivation, like educational aspirations, locality of their inhabitation, from where they receive resources for educational attainment, socio-economic status of their families, gender difference, etc.

Researches have shown that aspiration is a key predictor in the continuation of schooling and improved academic performance (Davidson, 2006; Xu, 2002). Higher aspiration was consistently associated with higher academic achievement (Armstrong & Crombie, 2000; Kim, 2005).

Manjunath, D.R. (2020) found that students who exhibited higher levels of educational aspiration also demonstrated higher academic achievement, when compared to their peers with average or low aspiration.

Ali, M.I. (2018) studied a sample of 240 boys and 210 girls of class XI from rural-urban schools and found that -

- (i) High educational aspiration acts as a strong positive predictor of academic achievement.
- (ii) Urban Students typically display higher academic achievement compared to their rural counterparts.
- (iii) Girls often exhibit better or at least comparable academic achievement compared to their boys counterparts.

In the present article educational aspiration, rural-urban backgrounds and gender of school students are taken as independent variables and educational achievement as dependent one.

Objectives of the study : Some major objectives were as under :

- (i) To assess the sex-role difference on academic achievement.
- (ii) To assess the effect of rural-urban background on academic achievement.
- (iii) To assess the effect of educational aspiration on academic achievement,
- (iv) To assess the interaction effects of sex x rural-urban locale x educational aspiration on academic achievement.

Hypotheses of the study : Following hypotheses were formulated for achieving the above objective :

- (i) There would be a significant difference between boys and girls on academic achievement.
- (ii) There would be significant differences between rural and urban students on academic achievement.
- (iii) Respondents having high and low levels of educational aspiration would differ significantly on their academic achievement.
- (iv) There would be significant interaction effects of sex x locale x EA (educational aspiration) on academic achievement of the respondents.

Methodology :

(a) The Sample : Sample units were selected from different rural-urban secondary schools of Darbhanga district. A total of 300 students were selected on stratified random sampling technique in the following manner -

Locale	Gender	
	Boys	Girls
Rural	75	75
Urban	75	75

All were studying in class 10th and agreed to participate in the study. Their age ranged from 14.5 yrs to 17 yrs.

(b) Tools used : Educational Aspiration Scale (EAS) : Hindi version, constructed by Professor V. P. Sharma and Anuradha Gupta (2005, NPC, Agra) was used to assess the level of respondents' educational aspirations. The scale has altogether 45 items/statements in a paired form and respondent has to choose one statement and indicate it, putting a tick mark (✓) in the box, given in front of each statement. Respondents have to judge their response on that, which statement of a pair is more valued for the present exam, marks obtained, or in coming exams, or in ever future such exams.

The range of scores varied 0 to 45, and higher total marks indicated aspiration level in a fair amount.

Educational Achievement : Marks obtained by the students in their school exams of 9th and 10th grade were taken from school records and were treated as educational achievement scores, exams, scores were averaged for the analysis purpose.

(c) Procedure of Data Collection : Only one scale of educational aspiration was used on the total sample units in a natural classroom setting, dividing them into small groups of 20 - 25 students in each group. This arrangement was done to prohibit any noisy environment, and to make clear understanding of instructions, given on the front page of the scale.

(d) Scoring : Scoring of the responded scale was done as per the instructions of the scales manual.

Statistical Analysis and interpretation : Scores obtained on EAS were first cut into two groups High & Low, cutting on a calculated value of median. Thus, 2×2×2 (two sex, two locale and two levels : High-Low of educational aspiration) factorial design of ANOVA were computed, taking educational/academic scores of respondents in each cell. Altogether we had 8 cells and in each cell, 10 respondents' academic achievement scores were taken on a random basis .

Result of ANOVA was displayed on the following Table - 01 :

Table – 01 :
Summary of ANOVA

Sources	Sum of squares	df	Mean sum square/variable	F	P
<u>A</u> Sex(Boys- Girls)	64.8	1	64.8	5.05	<.05
<u>B</u> R-U Locale	96.8	1	96.8	7.54	<.01
<u>C</u> H-L (EA)	204.8	1	204.8	15.96	<.01
Interactions					

A×B(Sex×Locale)	14.4	1	14.4	1.12	Ns
A×C(Sex×EA)	19.6	1	19.6	1.53	Ns
B×C(Locale×EA)	14.6	1	14.4	1.12	Ns
A×B×C -	4.6	1	4.6	0.36	Ns
Bet group -	419.4	7	59.9	4.67	<.05
Within/Error	866.4	72	12.83	-	-
Total -	1285.8	79	-	-	-

Table – 02 :

Mean (of Boys & Girls)

Boys	78.65
Girls	80.45

F=5.05, P= <.05

Above Table - 01 & 02 revealed significant mean differences of boys and girls educational achievement - girls scores were superior to their boys counterparts. Thus, the findings confirmed our hypothesis number 01, Gender difference played an important role in academic achievement of secondary school students. It also contradicted the finding of Mansi Bera & Prof. Pramanik, K.C. (2025).

Table – 03 :

Mean educational achievement score of Rural-Urban Students

Rural	78.45
Urban	80.65

F =7.54, P = <.01

Above Table - 03 clearly revealed that educational achievement of urban students was significantly higher to their rural counterparts. Thus, the findings confirmed our hypothesis no. 02 and it also substantiated the previous findings of Mansi Bera & Prof. Pramanik K.C. (2025).

Table – 04 :

Mean educational achievement scores of High and Low educational aspirants

High EA	81.15
Low EA	77.95

F =15.96, P = <.01

Viewing above Table - 04, we found that students of high educational aspiration scored higher in education achievement in comparison to their low educational aspirant counterparts and the obtained F-value was highly significant beyond .01 level of confidence. Thus the finding confirmed our hypothesis no. 04 and it also substantiated the previous findings of Manjunath, D.R.(2020); Ali, M.I. (2018); and Mansi Bera & Prof. Ramanik, K.C. (2025).

Interaction effect of sex x locale and educational aspiration on students' educational achievement was found insignificant ($F = 0.36$), which suggested additive effects of these variables. Thus, our hypothesis no. 04 was not confirmed.

Conclusions : On the basis of findings, we may conclude the results as under -

- (a) Sex of students played an important role in their academic achievement.
- (b) Rural-urban backgrounds had an important bearing on academic achievement of students.
- (c) Educational aspiration of students influenced much of their academic achievement.

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