



## Educational Aspirations of Higher Secondary Students

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### Abstract

The present study aims to explore the level of educational aspirations among higher secondary students in Thiruvallur District, Tamil Nadu, and examine the influence of gender, type of school, and residential location on their aspirations. Utilizing a normative survey method, a random sampling technique was employed to select students from various government and private schools in rural and urban areas. The data were collected using the Educational Aspirations Rating Scale developed by Dr. K.B. Jadhav (2016). Descriptive and differential statistical analyses were conducted. The findings reveal that the overall level of educational aspirations among students is satisfactory. However, significant differences were observed based on gender, type of school, and area of residence. Specifically, girls, private school students, and urban residents exhibited higher educational aspirations compared to their counterparts. The study highlights the role of demographic variables in shaping students' academic ambitions and underscores the need for targeted interventions to uplift aspirations among underrepresented groups.

**Keywords:** *Educational Aspirations, Gender, Location, Management.*



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### 1. Introduction

Education is a powerful instrument for personal and societal advancement. At the higher secondary level, students face critical decisions that influence their future educational and career pathways. Educational aspirations refer to the level of education an individual hope to attain, and they are shaped by various personal, familial, social, and institutional factors. These aspirations not only reflect a student's ambition but also affect their motivation, academic performance, and career choices. In India, especially in districts like

Thiruvallur, there exists a diverse student population, ranging from urban to rural, economically advantaged to underprivileged, and from various cultural backgrounds. Understanding the educational aspirations of higher secondary students in this region is essential for planning educational interventions, guiding students effectively, and addressing inequalities in access to opportunities.

This study aims to explore the nature and determinants of educational aspirations among higher secondary students in Thiruvallur district.

It seeks to examine how factors such as gender and school environment influence students' future goals. The findings of this research will offer insights that can inform educators, counselors, and policymakers in supporting students to realize their academic and professional dreams.

## 2. Review of Literature

**Ganesan & Rani (2023)** had examined the relationship between students' self-reported educational aspirations and their actual academic performance. The authors found a moderate positive correlation, suggesting that higher aspirations tend to coincide with better achievement. They also identify key school-level supports (e.g., counseling, extracurricular opportunities) that strengthen this link.

**Kumar & Mehta (2022)** had focused on a diverse adolescent sample, this study investigates how gender and parental socioeconomic background shape students' future educational goals. Girls reported significantly higher aspirations than boys, and students whose parents had attained at least secondary education were more likely to aim for professional or postgraduate studies. The authors advocate targeted mentoring for boys and those from less-educated families.

**Patel & Sharma (2021)** through a comparative design, this research studied rural and urban secondary students in terms of their educational ambitions. Urban students expressed stronger and more varied aspirations (including professional and overseas study), whereas rural students were more likely to limit their goals to local colleges or vocational training. The paper highlights infrastructure and career-guidance disparities as underlying factors.

**Das & Joseph (2020)** had studied how attending a government versus private higher secondary school influences students' aspirations in India. Private-school attendees reported significantly higher aspirations, attributing their ambition to better resources, teaching quality, and peer environments. The authors call for policy measures to elevate government schools' guidance programs and learning environments.

## 3. Objectives of the Study

- To find out the level of educational aspirations of higher secondary students
- To find out if there is any significant differences between
  - ❖ The boys and girls students
  - ❖ The students studying in government and private schools
  - ❖ The students living in Rural and Urban Area.

## 4. Hypotheses

- The level of the educational aspirations of higher secondary students is low.
- There is no significant difference between
  - ❖ The boys and girls' students
  - ❖ The students studying in government and private schools
  - ❖ The students living in urban and rural area.

## 5. Method of the Study

Normative survey method was employed to collect the data of Higher Secondary level in Thiruvallur District of Tamil Nadu. Random Sampling technique has been adopted for the selection of the sample in Taluks of Thiruvallur District. Further, this study correlates the variables like Gender, Type of School, Location of living of the students with respect to Educational aspirations. Educational Aspirations Rating Scale constructed and validated by Dr. K.B. Jadhav, (2016) was adopted to study the educational aspirations of higher secondary students. Statistical techniques such as descriptive and differential analysis were applied in data analysis.

## 6. Analysis of the Educational aspirations Scale Scores

A more detailed study of educational aspirations of higher secondary students in higher secondary has been made by calculating the mean and standard deviation of the scores of the higher secondary students belonging to different sub-samples which is tabulated as below:

**Hypothesis:** There is no significant difference between boys and girls higher secondary students.

**Table-1: Mean and Standard Deviation for educational aspirations scores of higher secondary students**

Variable	Category	Number 'N'	Mean 'M'	SD
	Total sample	350	125.11	11.52
Gender	boys	150	117.66	12.23
	girls	200	121.23	11.56
Management Type	Government	224	125.80	10.25
	Private	126	135.34	11.26
Location	Rural	156	123.20	12.51
	Urban	194	127.40	11.36

It is evident from the above table that there is a variation in the means and standard deviation of the scores in different sub-sample. They also show striking differences in the educational aspirations of the different sub-samples.

To sum up the following conclusion is reached in respect of the hypothesis formulated under objective at the beginning of the study. The students' educational aspirations in is satisfactory, though there is a wide disparity in the mean and standard deviation of the different sub-samples.

#### 7. Summary for the descriptive Analysis for Educational aspirations scores

- The student's educational aspirations is satisfactory.
- Girls students perform better than the boys' students
- Private school students perform better than the government school Students.
- Students living in urban area perform better than the rural area Students.

#### 8. Differential analysis of students' educational aspirations scores of higher secondary students

**Hypothesis 2a.:** Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between boys and girls higher secondary students.

**Table-2: Comparison of Mean Educational aspirations Scores of Boys and Girls**

Group	Number N	Mean M	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance at 0.05 level
Boys	150	117.66	12.23	3.97	significant
Girls	200	121.23	11.56		

#### Gender and Educational aspirations

The 't' test has been applied to find out whether the difference between the educational aspirations scores of boys and girls students in higher secondary is not significant. The 't' value is found to be 3.97 and it is not significant at 0.05 level. It is concluded that the difference in educational aspirations between boys and girls students is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant difference between boys and girls higher secondary students.

#### 9. Comparison of mean educational aspirations scores of students studying in Government and Private schools

Hypothesis 2b.: There is no significant difference between higher secondary students studying in government and private schools

**Table-3: Comparison of mean educational aspirations scores of higher secondary students studying in government and private school**

Group	Number N	Mean M	Standard Deviation (SD)	't' value	Level of Significance at 0.05 level
Government	224	125.80	10.25	4.80	Significant
Private	126	135.34	11.26		

The 't' test has been applied to find out whether the difference between the educational aspirations scores of higher secondary students studying in government school and private school is significant or not. The 't' value is found to be 4.80 and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, it is concluded that the difference in educational aspirations scores between the higher secondary students studying in government school and private school is significant. The null hypothesis is rejected.

#### **10. Comparison of mean educational aspirations scores of students living in rural and urban area.**

Hypothesis 2c.: There is no significant difference between higher secondary students studying in Rural and Urban schools

**Table-4: Comparison of mean educational aspirations scores of higher secondary students living in Rural and Urban areas**

Group	Number N	Mean M	Standard Deviation	't' value	Level of Significance at 0.05 level
Rural	156	123.20	12.51	6.20	Significant
Urban	194	127.40	11.36		

The difference between the students living in Rural and Urban areas is real and significant. To sum up, the following conclusion has been reached in respect of the hypothesis formulated under objective. There is a significant difference between the higher secondary students living in rural and urban areas. The Urban area students have more educational aspirations than the rural areas. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected.

#### **11. Summary for the findings of Educational aspirations scores**

- The student's educational aspirations is satisfactory.
- There is a significant difference between boys and girls higher secondary students
- The difference in educational aspirations scores between the higher secondary students studying in government school and private school is significant
- There is a significant difference between the higher secondary students living in rural and urban areas.
- Girls students perform better than the boys' students
- Private school students perform better than the government school Students.
- Students living in urban area perform better than the rural area Students.

#### **12. Conclusion**

The study concludes that educational aspirations among higher secondary students are at a satisfactory level but are significantly influenced by gender, school type, and living area. Girls tend to have higher educational aspirations than boys, private school students surpass their government school peers, and urban students demonstrate stronger aspirations compared to rural students. These findings suggest that disparities in educational environment and access to resources may contribute to variations in aspirations. Therefore, policymakers and educators should implement supportive strategies and inclusive educational practices to bridge these gaps and foster higher aspirations among all student groups, especially in rural and government school settings.

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