



## Rural-Urban disparity in student's academic achievement: Evidence from four secondary school's in Pulwama and Srinagar districts of Kashmir Valley

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### Abstract

The present study looked at the school location to indicate the rural-urban prediction of academic achievement of secondary school students. Sample of the study constituted 260 secondary school students belonged to rural and urban areas. The sample was selected randomly from two districts (two secondary schools in each district) of Kashmir valley. An information schedule was used to measure the academic achievement of secondary school students. One hypothesis was formulated and tested. Mean, percentage and t-test were employed for data analysis. The study proven that there is a significant difference between rural and urban secondary school students on various grades of academic achievement. Rural secondary school students were found to have better academic achievement levels than their urban counterparts. It is recommended that academic achievement gap between rural and urban locations should be bridged by providing the favourable school climate facilities and incentives should be granted to teachers teaching in rural areas.

**Keywords:** academic achievement; rural-urban disparity; secondary school education

### 1. Introduction

The construct of education is considered as the most important ingredient for overall development of nation. It acts as a catalyst for an individual to move from darkness to enlightened state, from poverty to rich, from infirmity to healthy, from tense to relax, from bumpy to luxury life, from unsocial to social life. It grows one's productivity and efficiency. Education develops the intellectual ability, moral capacity and technical competency of an individual (Tuan, 2009, as cited in Dorleku, 2013) [6]. Through the process of education, individuals' become cultural members in a society. Education distributes its fragrance to all human kind. It acts as a good companion until the individual or society is alive on the lovely planet of ours. The personality of an individual or nation becomes balanced and wholesome by the virtue of education.

Formal, non-formal and informal types are various agents of education. All these agents of education are important but formal education is considered to be as the most important one. In order to have formal education, there is a requirement of a holy place usually called *school* where a nice niche occurs between pupils, teachers and external community. Almost in every country there are three common structures of education: primary, secondary and higher education. Primary education acts as a base, secondary education acts as a bridge course and higher education is the extension of secondary education. Hence, secondary education stretches a central line and cements up both primary as well as secondary education. Quality education is the cry construct for every nation. Until there is quality education, nations are not going to progress and develop. India is facing a challenging task as for as quality of secondary education is concerned. The terminal product of secondary education is most unemployable in India

which is considered as one of main reasons behind weakest educational set up at secondary level (Venkataiah, 2001) [28].

The mature fruit at any level of education is considered as academic achievement of students. It is the output of any activity related to education. Academic achievement is the knowledge attaining ability of students after they have acquired instructions or training practice (Crow & Crow, 1969; Pandey, 2008) [5, 23]. Usually measured by standardized tests or teacher made tests and expressed in grades, percentages or marks, academic achievement is simply the excellence in a subject or group of subjects of an individual or group of individuals (Trow, 1956; Mehta, 1969; Good, 1973; Kohli, 1975) [27, 15, 11, 13].

High academic achievement is a determinant of further and continuing education (Schnepf, 2006) [25], higher socio-economic status (Eurydice, 2004), better career opportunities with high wages (Joppke & Morawska, 2003) [12], higher problem solving abilities (Mir & Parray, 2018) [18], high emotional intelligence levels (Mir, 2017) [17], etc. School location in terms of rural urban dichotomy has been studied by various researchers and a significant difference was found between rural and urban secondary school students on academic achievement (Obe, 1984; Bratte, 2000; Owoeye, 2000; Mehera, 2004; Onoyase, 2015) [19, 4, 22, 14, 21]. There are also a good number of researchers who revealed an insignificant difference between rural and urban secondary school students on academic achievement (Gana, 1997; Ajayi, 1998; Ajayi & Ayodele (2001) [10, 1, 2].

### 2. Rationale of the study

The present study has been undertaken to study the rural-urban disparity in secondary school student's academic achievement in Kashmir valley. Academic achievement is the

aggregation of marks (percentage) obtained by secondary school students in their previous year examination conducted by JK BOSE. The present study tried to investigate whether rural and urban dichotomy predicts the academic achievement of secondary school students. After going through extensive reviewed literature, investigators have not found any study focussing on academic achievement of secondary school students conducted in Kashmir valley. This has prompted investigators to choose an unbeaten area at secondary school level. It is hoped that present study will be helpful to all education stakeholders in designing the favourable school climate and removing the rural-urban disparity so that academic achievement for students can be strengthened.

**3. Objectives of the study**

The study was designed in order to achieve the following major objectives:

1. To study the academic achievement of secondary school students.
2. To compare the academic achievement of secondary school students with respect to rural-urban school location.

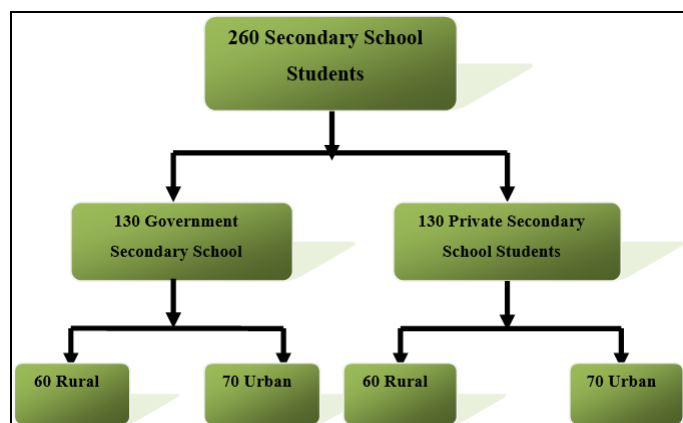
**4. Hypothesis of the study**

1. There is no significant difference between rural and urban secondary school students on various grades of academic achievement.

**5. Methodology and procedure**

**Sample**

Sample comprised 260 secondary school students (140 urban and 120 rural) from two districts (Pulwama and Srinagar) of Kashmir valley through probability sampling by using randomization. Two secondary schools (one government and one private secondary school) have been selected randomly from each district. These secondary school students were studying in class IXth and class Xth in various government and private secondary schools. The break-up of the sample is given below:



**Fig 1:** Sampling Frame

**Tool Used**

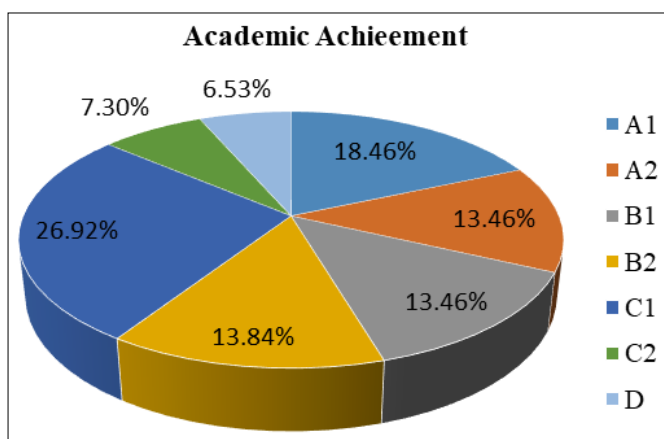
**Information Schedule:** Information schedule was constructed by investigators to identify the school location and academic performance of secondary school students. Academic achievement score of sample subjects was taken from the

official records and was measured by aggregate marks obtained by secondary school students in their previous final examination (T1+T2 examination) conducted by JKBOSE.

**6. Analysis and interpretation**

**Table 1:** Showing the percentage distribution of Secondary School Students on Academic Achievement (Composite Score)

Range of Score	Grade	No. of Students	Percentage
91-100	A1	48	18.46
81-90	A2	35	13.46
71-80	B1	35	13.46
61-70	B2	36	13.84
51-60	C1	70	26.92
41-50	C2	19	7.30
33-40	D	17	6.53
Total		260	100.0

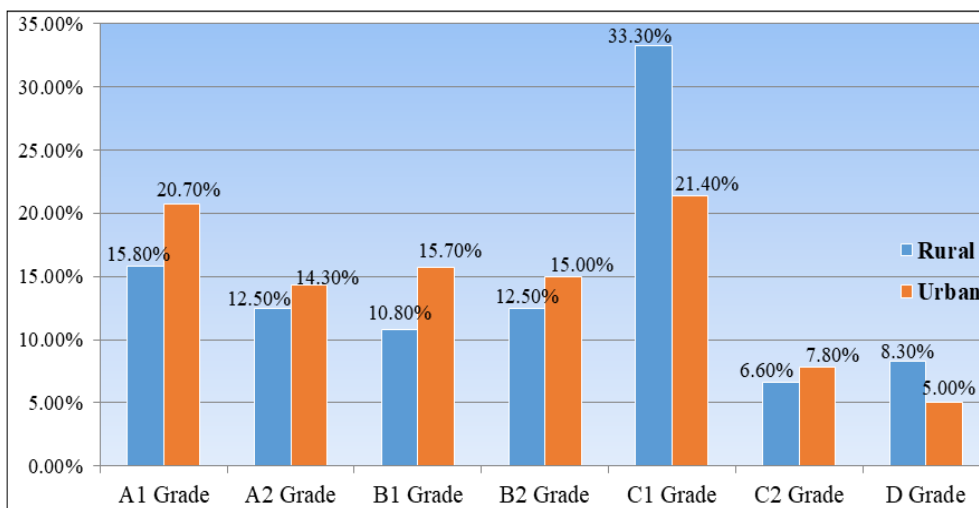


**Fig 2:** Showing the percentage distribution of Secondary School Students on various Grades of Academic Achievement (Composite Score)

Table 1 shows that majority of secondary school students (26.92%) fall under C1 grade of academic achievement. A1 grade is the next level of academic achievement revealed by secondary school students (18.46%). B2, A2, B1, B1, C2 and D grades of academic achievement are the grades respectively followed by 13.84%, 13.46%, 13.46%, 7.30% and 6.53% secondary school students. For further understanding, its graphical representation is shown in figure 2. In view of the above mentioned details (table 1) the objective no. 1 which reads as, "To study the academic achievement of secondary school students" has been realized.

**Table 2:** Showing the Percentage Distribution between Rural and Urban Secondary School Students on Academic Achievement

Range of Score	Grades	Rural		Urban	
		N	Percentage	N	Percentage
91-100	A1	19	15.8	29	20.7
81-90	A2	15	12.5	20	14.3
71-80	B1	13	10.8	22	15.7
61-70	B2	15	12.5	21	15.0
51-60	C1	40	33.3	30	21.4
41-50	C2	8	6.6	11	7.8
33-40	D	10	8.3	7	5.0
Total		120	100.00	140	100.0



**Fig 3:** Showing the Percentage Distribution between Rural and Urban Secondary School Students on various Grades of Academic Achievement

Table 2 reveals that 15.8% rural and 20.7% urban secondary school students fall on A1 grade of academic achievement. A2 grade has 12.50% rural and 14.30% urban secondary school students. B1 grade is earned by 10.80% rural and 15.70% urban, B2 grade goes to 12.50% rural and 15% urban secondary school students. Majority of rural (33.3%) and urban (21.4%) secondary school students have C1 grade. C2 grade of academic achievement is followed by rural (6.60%) and urban (7.80%), and finally D grade of academic achievement is scored by rural (8.30%) and urban (5%) secondary school students. For further understanding, its graphical representation has been done at figure 3. In view of the above mentioned results (table 2) our objective no. 2 which reads as, *“To compare the academic achievement of secondary school students with respect to rural-urban school location”* has been realized

**Table 3:** Showing the Significance of Mean Difference between Rural and Urban Secondary School Students on Academic Achievement (N=260)

Group	Mean	SD	t-value	Level of Significance
Rural	63.58	19.73	3.10	Significant at 0.01 level
Urban	70.20	19.32		

The presentation of table 3 states that the mean score of rural and urban secondary school students on academic achievement is 63.58 and 70.20 respectively. The standard deviations are 19.73 and 19.32. The obtained t-value is 3.10. From table 3 it is clear that there is a significant difference between rural and urban secondary school students on academic achievement. Since, the calculated t-value (3.10) exceeds the tabulated t-value (2.59) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, both groups differ on academic achievement. Mean differences favoured urban secondary school students. In view of the above results given in table 3 our objective no. 2 which reads as, *“To compare the academic achievement of secondary school students with respect to rural-urban school location”* has been realized and our hypothesis no. 1 which reads as, *“There is no significant difference between rural and urban secondary school students on various grades of academic achievement”* stands rejected.

**7. Findings of the study**

The findings of the study are as:

1. Urban Secondary school students have outperformed the rural secondary school students on various grades of academic achievement.
2. Rural-Urban dichotomy acts as significant predictors of academic achievement of secondary school students.

**8. Discussion and conclusion**

Conclusion of the study revealed that school location in terms of rural-urban affects the academic achievement, and urban secondary school students are better in academic achievement than rural secondary school students. The findings are supported by the findings of Obe (1984) [19]; Bratte (2000) [4]; Owoeye (2000) [22]; Mehera (2004) [14]; Sunday & Olatunde (2011) [26]; Dutta, Chetia & Soni (2016) [7]; Ellah & Ita (2017) [8]. However, the findings of Okolosi (1997) [20]; Yusuf & Adigun (2010) [29]; Mili (2015) [16]; Saikia (2017) [24] revealed that whether a student attends rural or urban secondary school, it does not mark any such difference on his/her academic achievement.

The present results may be justified on the fact that in urban secondary schools there is favourable type of school climate including facilities like availability of equipped science and computer labs, playground facilities, adequate pupil-teacher ratio, well qualified teachers, effective teaching learning strategies, trust based relationships etc. Boit (2012) [3] hold that qualified teachers prefer to serve in urban schools than rural schools due to the factors mentioned above. Such highly qualified teachers are also engaged in tuition centres to teach students in urban areas. All such factors have strengthened the academic achievement of urban secondary school students. Lack of such facilities in rural schools has influenced the academic achievement of rural secondary school students.

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