



## A study of educational aspirations among high school students

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### Abstract

Educational aspirations refer to the goals, ambitions, and desires an individual has regarding their education and academic achievements. This investigation was carried out to study the educational aspirations among high school students. The researchers wanted to study the impact of various personal and environmental factors which influence an individual's educational aspirations like gender, locality, type of school, type of family etc. A sample of 150 high school students from Bareilly city were taken as sample and data was collected using a self-developed tool, Educational Aspiration Scale. Mean, standard deviation and t-test were employed to analyze the raw scores. Findings of the study indicate that the greatest contributor to the educational aspirations of the high school students is their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their social support and motivation and family background aspect. The students' own perception about their academic achievement affects their educational aspirations the least. While gender, locality and type of family do not significantly influence the educational aspirations of high school students, factors like type of school and medium of instruction do have a significant impact upon the educational aspirations of high school students. Students from private schools and English medium schools do have comparatively higher educational aspirations as compared to their counterparts from government aided schools and Hindi medium schools.

**Keywords:** Educational aspiration, high school students, gender, locality, type of school, family

### Introduction

Aspirations are the hopes, dreams, and goals that individuals have for themselves. They are the desired outcomes or achievements that people strive for in different aspects of their lives, including personal, professional, educational, or even spiritual domains. Aspirations provide direction, motivation, and a sense of purpose, shaping individuals' choices and actions. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary has defined aspiration as 'a strong desire to have or do something'. Aspirations could be pertaining to career, relationships, educational, financial, creative etc. Aspirations are deeply personal and can vary greatly from person to person. They provide a sense of direction and purpose, driving individuals to set goals, take action, and work towards achieving their desired outcomes. Aspirations can change over time as individuals grow, gain new experiences, and reassess their priorities.

Educational aspirations are an important factor in an individual's life, especially at the adolescent stage. It is what primarily motivates an individual to strive towards his/her educational goals. Educational aspirations refer to the goals, ambitions, and desires an individual has regarding their education and academic achievements. These aspirations reflect the level of education one hopes to attain, the specific fields or disciplines they want to study, and the overall personal and professional objectives they aim to achieve through their educational pursuits. Educational aspirations can vary greatly from person to person, as they are influenced by individual interests, passions, values, and circumstances. Aspirations help students improve their achievement and overall develop a more positive attitude towards a brighter future.

Educational aspirations are crucial at the adolescent stage. It is at this stage of life, during adolescence, that young people

start to shape their identities, explore their interests, and make decisions about their educational paths and work towards a career. The right kind of educational aspirations among the youth can serve as a driving force for their personal growth, career success, and help make meaningful contributions to society.

The aspiration level of an individual's is an important motivating factor in his/her career. Level of aspiration is usually influenced by two types of factors- environmental factors and personal factors. Environmental factors include determinants like parental ambitions, social expectations, peer pressure, social value, competition, group cohesiveness etc. On the other hand, personal factors play dominant role in determining his level of aspiration as the child grows older and become more aware of his abilities and interests. These personal factors include determinants wishes, personality, past experiences, values, interests, gender, cultural norms, access to resources and socio-economic background.

This investigation was carried out to study the educational aspirations among high school students. The researchers wanted to study the impact of various personal and environmental factors which influence an individual's educational aspirations. The findings of this study will help all the stakeholders, especially the parents and teachers, in providing guidance, mentorship, and resources to support their aspirations can play a crucial role in helping adolescents navigate their educational journeys and achieve their goals.

### Review of related literature

Rajesh and Chandrashekhara (2014) [3] carried out a study on the educational aspiration of 300 high school students from Chennai city in relation to the background variables

such as sex, residential locality, medium of instruction and school management. Level of Educational Aspiration Test developed by Dr. Yasmin Ghani Khan was administered to collect the data. Collected data were subjected to suitable statistical analysis and scores of the sample were computed. The results revealed that girls had higher aspiration than that of boys. The study further revealed that aspiration levels of English medium students are higher than that of Tamil medium students. Senthilselvam and Subramonian (2015) [4] investigate the level of aspirations among Higher Secondary School Students of Coimbatore District. In this article, descriptive survey method by which 150 higher secondary students were taken from various schools in Coimbatore district were chosen using simple random sampling technique.

The results showed that boys, students from urban area, joint family, Arts discipline NCC students and whose parents are having college level education have better level of aspiration. Overall, factors like gender, locality, type of family were found to not have significant impact on the educational aspirations of the higher secondary students. Chauhan (2017) [1] investigated the role of level of aspiration in predicting the academic achievement among secondary school students. A sample of 600 subjects were selected from the different public and private secondary schools. Level of Aspiration Scale by Sahiand Bhargava was used to assess the students' level of aspiration. Correlation and Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis were employed to see the significant relationship and best predictor of academic achievement. Findings of the study reported significant and positive relationship between level of aspiration and academic achievement. Joshi (2019) [2] attempted to assess the level of Educational Aspiration among secondary school students of Porbandar district. 400 students from private and government schools were drawn by employing simple random techniques. To assess the level of Educational Aspirations, Educational Aspiration Scale (Form P) developed by Dr V.P. Sharma and Dr Anuradha Gupta was used to know the educational aspiration level of the students. The obtained data were analysed by using mean, SD and F test. The finding of the study revealed that boys and girls differ significantly on overall educational aspiration similarly; Gujarati medium students have a greater level of educational aspiration. Sharath and Praveena (2022) [5] studied the level of educational aspirations among teacher trainees of Mysuru district with reference to gender, locality and type of college. Level of Educational Aspiration Test was Constructed and Standardized by Yasmin Ghani Khan was used. Data so collected was computed and analysed by employing mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics such as t- test, one way ANOVA, and Pearson's correlation coefficient. The researcher revealed that 17.8% teacher trainees of B.Ed. colleges in Mysuru district were found to posse's high level of Educational Aspiration and majority 82.2% were found to posse's low level Educational Aspiration. This study also revealed that urban and rural teacher trainees of B.Ed. colleges do not differ in their educational aspiration.

#### Objectives of the Study

- To study the level of educational aspiration of high school students
- To compare the level of educational aspiration of male and female high school students
- To compare the level of educational aspiration of high school students from government and private schools

- To compare the level of educational aspiration of high school students from English and Hindi medium schools
- To compare the level of educational aspiration of high school students from urban and rural areas
- To compare the level of educational aspiration of high school students from nuclear and joint families

#### Hypotheses of the Study

For the present study, the researcher constructed the following null hypotheses:

- There is no significant difference between the level of educational aspiration of male and female high school students
- There is no significant difference in level of educational aspiration of high school students from government and private schools
- There is no significant difference in the level of educational aspiration of high school students from English and Hindi medium schools
- There is no significant difference in the level of educational aspiration of high school students from urban and rural areas
- There is no significant difference in the level of educational aspiration of high school students from nuclear and joint families

#### Delimitations of the Study

Due to constraints of time, manpower and resources, the present investigation was delimited to:

- only high school students studying in government and private schools of Bareilly district.
- only 150 high school students (74 male, 76 female) from government aided (72) and private (78) schools affiliated to C.B.S.E. and U.P. board
- only high school students from urban (83) as well as rural (67) areas of Bareilly district.

#### Methodology of the Study

The present study was based upon individual survey which is a part of the descriptive research method. For this investigation, the researchers opted for the quantitative research design. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to select a sample of 150 high school students from a population consisting of male and female high school students of Bareilly district studying in schools affiliated to C.B.S.E. and U.P. boards from urban as well as rural areas.

**Tool used:** The investigators employed a self-developed tool - E.A.S. (Educational Aspiration Scale) containing 45 items involving the perceived level of educational achievement, family background, perceived social support, student's ambitions, parental aspirations. The statements were based on a five-point Likert scale. The tool was easy to administer and could easily be filled by the sample subjects within 45 minutes. The tool was constructed in Hindi so it could be easily filled by all sample subjects.

#### Data Collection and Computation

The researchers personally visited the concerned secondary schools of Bareilly district to collect the required data. Once the data collection and scoring of the tool was done, the statistical measures of mean, standard deviation and t-test were employed to analyze the raw scores so obtained, test the hypotheses and draw inferences using MS-EXCEL.

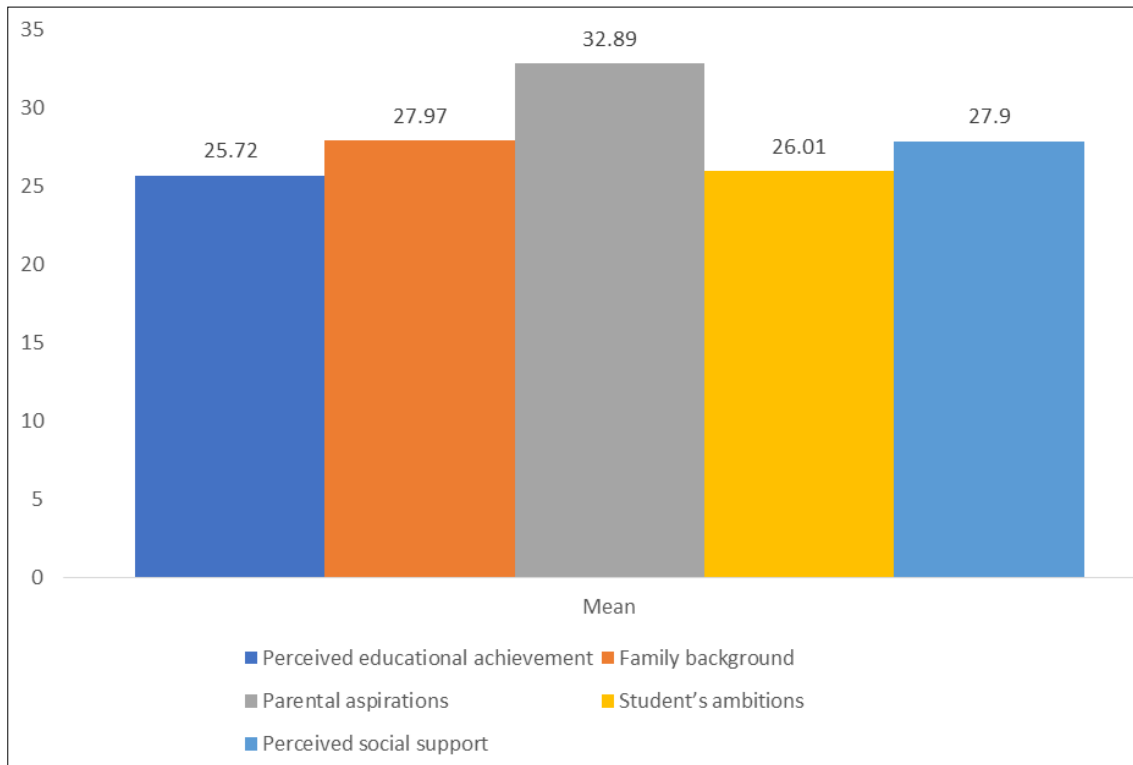
**Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Once the data was collated and analysed, the null hypotheses were tested using t -test. The findings of the study have been expressed in tabular and graphical form, as below:

**Table 1:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students

Areas of E.A.S.	Mean	S.D.
Perceived educational achievement	25.72	3.13
Family background	27.97	2.21
Parental aspirations	32.89	3.43
Student’s ambitions	26.01	4.52
Perceived social support	27.90	3.09
Overall	140.49	14.79

A study of the contents of Table 1 reveals that the level of educational aspiration of the high school students is above average (above the neutral point). The high school students’ scores on the E.A.S. (Educational Aspiration Scale) indicate that the greatest contributor to their educational aspirations are their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their social support and motivation and family background aspect. The data presented also indicates that the students’ own perception about their academic achievement affects their educational aspirations the least. Graphically the data presented in Table 1 may be depicted as:



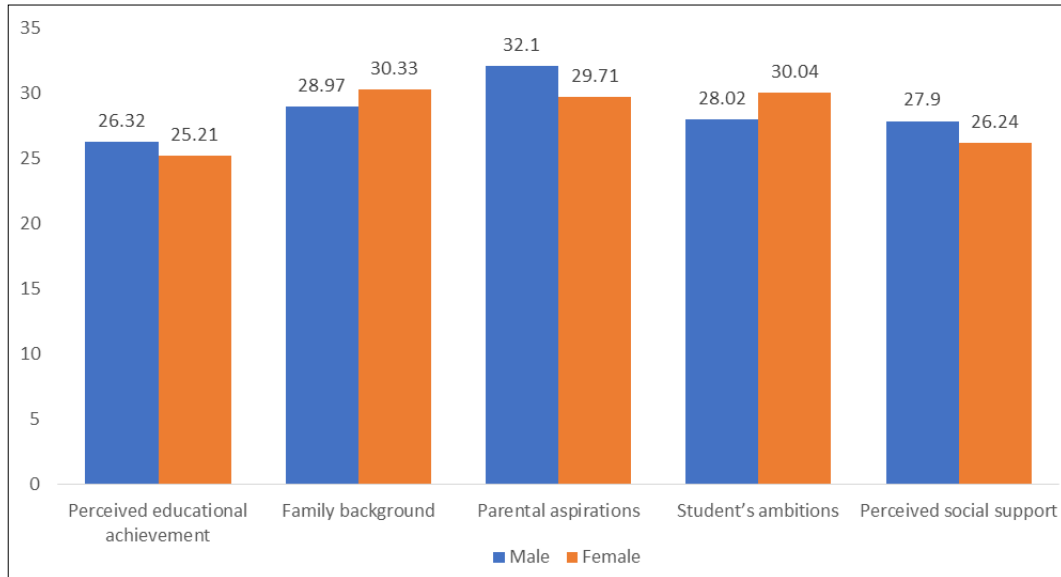
**Fig 1:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students

**Table 2:** Level of educational aspiration of male and female high school students

Areas of E.A.S.	Male (N=74 )		Female (N=76)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Perceived educational achievement	26.32	3.23	25.21	3.15	0.56	NS
Family background	28.97	2.21	30.33	2.44	0.67	NS
Parental aspirations	32.10	3.43	29.71	3.76	1.78	NS
Student’s ambitions	28.02	4.52	30.04	3.11	1.84	NS
Perceived social support	27.90	3.09	26.24	3.21	1.01	NS
Overall	141.31	15.59	140.53	15.38	0.31	NS

A study of the data represented in Table 2 reveals that the level of educational aspiration of the male high school students is slightly above those of the female students. The male high school students’ scores on the E.A.S. (Educational Aspiration Scale) indicate that the greatest contributor to their educational aspirations are their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their social support and motivation and family background aspect. The data presented above also indicates that the students’ own perception about their academic achievement affects their

educational aspirations the least. In the case of female high school students, the data reveals that the students’ own personal ambitions act as the greatest contributor followed by their influence of family background. On comparing the levels of educational aspirations of male and female high school students, it is found that overall, there is no significant difference in the levels of educational aspirations of male and female high school students and hence the first null hypothesis is accepted. Graphically the data presented in Table 2 may be depicted as:



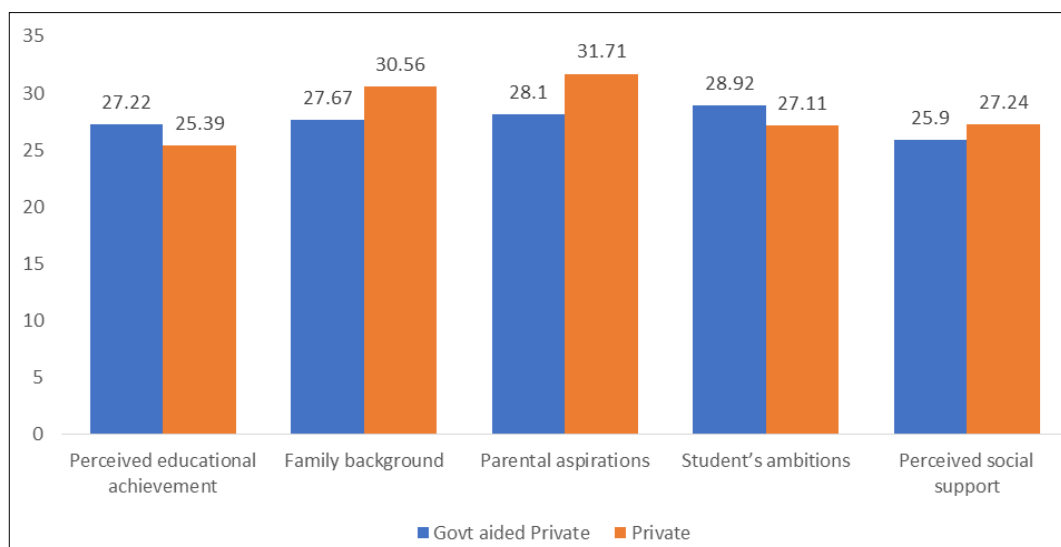
**Fig 2:** Level of educational aspiration of male and female high school students

**Table 3:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students from government-aided and private schools

Areas of E.A.S.	Govt. aided (N=72)		Private (N=78)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Perceived educational achievement	27.22	3.03	25.39	2.95	1.81	NS
Family background	27.67	2.54	30.56	2.01	2.87	0.01
Parental aspirations	28.10	3.43	31.71	3.76	2.03	0.05
Student's ambitions	28.92	3.52	27.11	2.81	0.98	NS
Perceived social support	25.90	2.09	27.24	2.21	2.01	0.05
Overall	137.81	13.59	142.01	14.31	2.07	0.05

An examination of the data represented in Table 3 reveals that the level of educational aspiration of the high school students from government aided schools is much lower than those of the high school students from private schools. The private school high school students' scores on the E.A.S. (Educational Aspiration Scale) indicate that the greatest contributor to their educational aspirations are their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their social support and motivation and family background aspect. The data presented above also indicates that the students' own perception about their academic achievement affects their educational aspirations the least. In the case of government

aided school high school students, the data reveals that the students' own personal ambitions act as the greatest contributor followed by their influence of parental aspirations. On comparing the levels of educational aspirations of high school students from government-aided and private schools, it is found that overall, there is a significant difference in the levels of educational aspirations of high school students from government-aided and private schools and hence the second null hypothesis is rejected. Graphically the data presented in Table 3 may be depicted as:



**Fig 3:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students from government-aided and private schools  
**Table 4:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students from English and Hindi medium schools

Areas of E.A.S.	English (N=74)		Hindi (N=76)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Perceived educational achievement	26.12	3.23	25.21	3.15	0.56	NS
Family background	28.77	2.21	30.33	2.44	0.67	NS
Parental aspirations	33.10	3.43	28.71	3.76	2.78	0.01
Student's ambitions	25.02	4.52	30.04	3.11	2.84	0.01
Perceived social support	28.90	3.09	25.24	3.21	1.01	NS
Overall	143.31	15.59	139.53	15.38	2.31	0.05

A study of the data represented in Table 4 reveals that the level of educational aspiration of the high school students from English medium schools is much higher than those of the high school students from Hindi medium schools. The English medium school students' scores on the E.A.S. (Educational Aspiration Scale) indicate that the greatest contributor to their educational aspirations are their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their social support and motivation and family background aspect. The data presented above also indicates that the students' own perception about their academic achievement affects their

educational aspirations the least. In the case of Hindi medium school's students, the data reveals that the students' own personal ambitions act as the greatest contributor followed by their influence of parental aspirations. On comparing the levels of educational aspirations of high school students from English medium and Hindi medium, it is found that overall, there is a significant difference in the levels of educational aspirations of English medium and Hindi medium high school students and hence the third null hypothesis is rejected. Graphically the data presented in Table 4 may be depicted as:

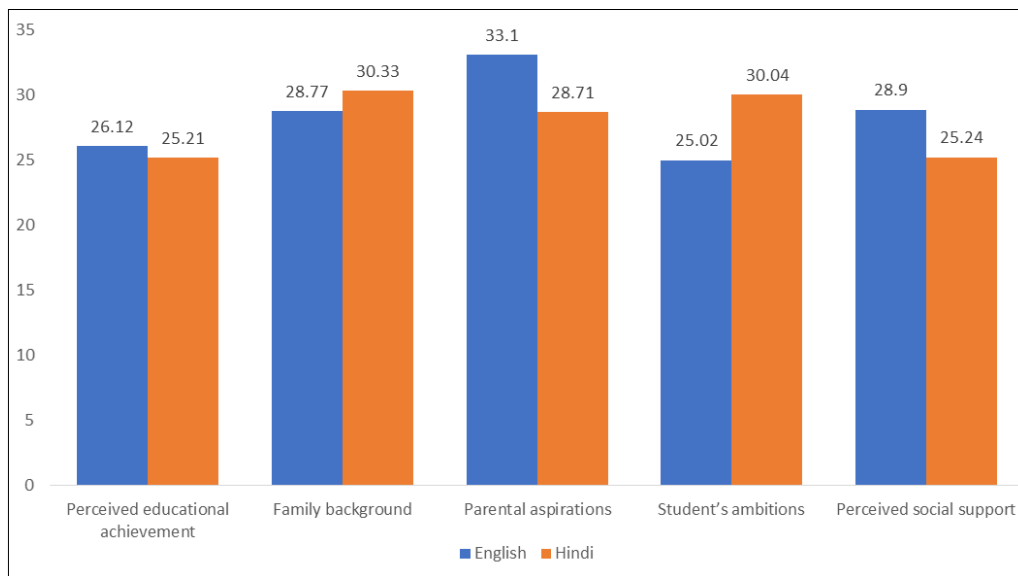


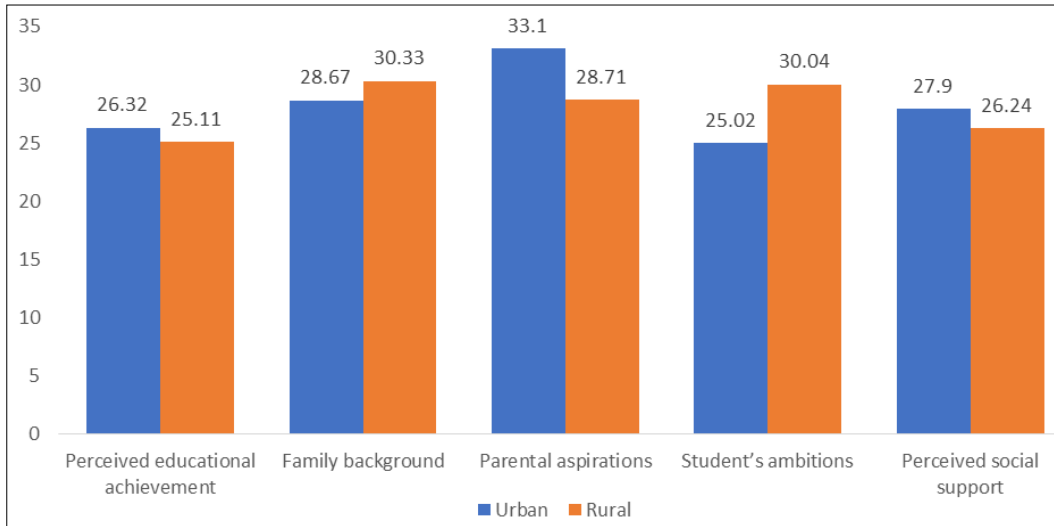
Fig 4: Level of educational aspiration of high school students from English medium and Hindi medium schools

Table 5: Level of educational aspiration of high school students from urban and rural areas

Areas of E.A.S.	Urban (N=83 )		Rural (N=67)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Perceived educational achievement	26.32	3.23	25.11	3.15	0.56	NS
Family background	28.67	2.21	30.33	2.44	0.67	NS
Parental aspirations	33.10	3.43	28.71	3.76	2.38	0.05
Student's ambitions	25.02	4.52	30.04	3.11	2.24	0.05
Perceived social support	27.90	3.09	26.24	3.21	1.01	NS
Overall	142.65	13.18	138.76	13.38	1.54	NS

A study of the data represented in Table 5 reveals that the level of educational aspiration of the high school students from urban areas is slightly above those of the students from rural areas. The urban area high school students' scores on the E.A.S. (Educational Aspiration Scale) indicate that the greatest contributor to their educational aspirations are their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their family background and social support and motivation aspect. The data presented above also indicates that the students' own perception about their academic achievement affects their educational aspirations the least. In the case of

rural background high school students, the data reveals that the students' own personal ambitions act as the greatest contributor followed by their influence of family background. On comparing the levels of educational aspirations of urban and rural background high school students, it is found that overall, there is no significant difference in the levels of educational aspirations of urban and rural background high school students and hence the fourth null hypothesis is accepted. Graphically data presented in Table 5 may be depicted as:



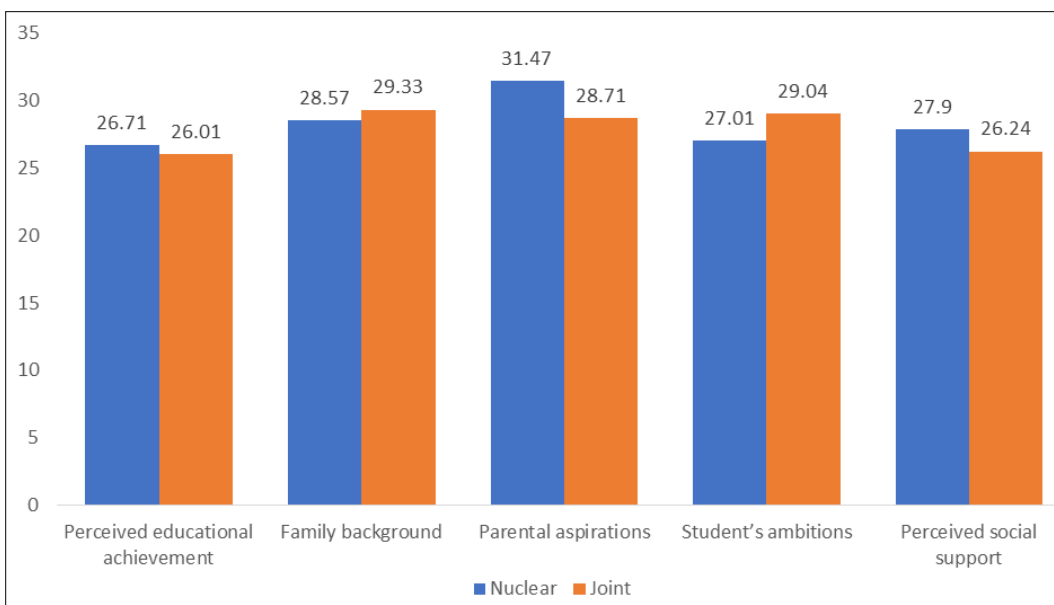
**Fig 5:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students from urban and rural areas

**Table 6:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students from nuclear and joint families

Areas of E.A.S.	Nuclear family (N=117)		Joint family (N=33)		t-value	Level of significance
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		
Perceived educational achievement	26.71	3.20	26.01	3.13	0.26	NS
Family background	28.57	2.23	29.33	2.41	0.57	NS
Parental aspirations	31.47	3.33	28.71	3.76	2.08	0.05
Student's ambitions	27.01	4.41	29.04	3.01	1.84	NS
Perceived social support	27.90	3.07	26.24	3.21	0.98	NS
Overall	141.88	13.59	137.51	12.38	0.31	NS

An observation of the data represented in Table 6 reveals that the level of educational aspiration of the high school students from nuclear family background is slightly above those of the students from joint family background. The nuclear family background high school students' scores on the E.A.S. (Educational Aspiration Scale) indicate that the greatest contributor to their educational aspirations are their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their family background and social support and motivation aspect. The data presented above also indicates that the students' own perception about their academic achievement affects their educational aspirations the least. In the case of

joint family background high school students, the data reveals that the students' family background and own personal ambitions act as the greatest contributor followed by their influence of social support. On comparing the levels of educational aspirations of high students based on their family background, i.e., nuclear and joint family, it is found that overall, there is no significant difference in the levels of educational aspirations of nuclear and joint family background high school students and hence the fifth null hypothesis is accepted. Graphically the data presented in Table 6 may be depicted as:



**Fig 6:** Level of educational aspiration of high school students from nuclear and joint families

## Conclusion

The findings of the study indicate that the majority of high school students have above average levels of educational aspirations. The greatest contributor to their educational aspirations is their parental expectations and aspiration, closely followed by their social support and motivation and family background aspect. The students' own perception about their academic achievement affects their educational aspirations the least. While gender, locality and type of family do not significantly influence the educational aspirations of high school students, factors like type of school and medium of instruction do have a significant impact upon the educational aspirations of high school students. Students from private schools and English medium schools do have comparatively higher educational aspirations as compared to their counterparts from government aided schools and Hindi medium schools.

This highlights the mentality of students from private schools and English medium schools who aspire to achieve more, perhaps due to access to better resources, motivation of parents and teachers, effect of peer group or simply a result of the still existing class divide, as reflected in differences in SES backgrounds of the students surveyed.

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