

## A Study of Low Enrolment in Relation to Students' Aspirations and the School Environment in Secondary Schools

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### Abstract:

*The study aimed to explore low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations and the school environment in rural and urban secondary schools, considering the type of school management. A survey design was employed, and data were collected using stratified random sampling. The sample consisted of 760 secondary school students' from Bangalore Rural District. In this study, the researcher constructed and standardized a School Environment Inventory and a Student Aspiration Scale. The collected data were analyzed using a One-Way ANOVA. The study found a significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to students' aspirations and the school environment among students' in government, aided, and private secondary schools in both rural and urban areas.*

**Keywords:** Secondary schools, School environment, Students' aspirations, Low Enrolment, Type of school management.

### Introduction

The educational environment in a school significantly determines the quality of education. A school that provides a high-quality environment enables students' to benefit more from their educational experience. Students' lifestyles are strongly influenced by their school environment, which encompasses social, academic, and physical contexts. It also includes the amenities offered by the school (Kaishyap, n.d.). Therefore, the

school environment plays a crucial role in student Enrolment for the following academic years. The ultimate goal of any educational institution is to facilitate a positive school environment. Rasool (2018) rightly pointed out that a conducive school environment attracts students' to pursue education. Students' attending a healthy school feel content, have a sense of belonging, believe they are treated fairly by teachers, and feel

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personally safe. In such an environment, students' aspirations are largely shaped by their surroundings.

Educational aspirations, in this context, refer to an individual's beliefs about their future educational plans. These aspirations are idealistic values that reflect the level of educational attainment one hopes and desires to achieve (Chen and Hesketh, 2021). As one of the primary institutions of socialization, the school significantly influences the development of a child's aspirations (Bora, 2016). It is important to note that both the school environment and students' aspirations have a direct impact on their Enrolment in educational institutions. In this context, the present research aimed to study low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations and the school environment in secondary schools.

#### **Literature Related to Students' Aspirations**

Rajesh and Chandrashekar (2014) conducted a study on the educational aspirations of high school students'. Their findings revealed significant differences in students' educational aspirations based on gender, class, medium of instruction, residential locality, type of family, and mother's occupation. Notably, group differences were observed between students' whose mothers were employed in government jobs, private sector jobs, and those whose mothers were homemakers.

Abdul Rhim and Azman (2010) explored educational aspirations among first-generation students' and the

influence of their parents on pursuing tertiary education. The study revealed that the educational aspirations of first-generation students' to attend higher education institutions were high. Furthermore, parental influence played a significant role in shaping these students' aspirations to pursue higher education.

#### **Literature Related to School Environment**

Kaur (2017) conducted a comparative study on how boys and girls perceive the school environment. The study showed a significant difference between the perceptions of boys and girls regarding their school environment.

Godson and Ngussa (2020) examined the effect of the school environment on students' commitment to learning in secondary schools in Monduli district, Tanzania. The findings indicated that students' generally held negative perceptions of the school environment, as reflected in their disagreement with the survey items. However, the study also found that despite these negative perceptions, students' remained committed to learning.

The review of related literature indicates that various variables related to the school environment and educational aspirations have been studied separately. However, there is a gap in research linking students' aspirations and the school environment to low Enrolment rates. Therefore, the present study aims to explore the relationship between students'

aspirations, the school environment, and low Enrolment in secondary schools.

### Statement of the Problem

The main objective of this research is to study low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations and the school environment in secondary schools, considering the type of school management (government, aided, and private).

### Objectives of the Study

- To study low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations in government, aided, and private secondary schools in rural areas.
- To study low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations in government, aided, and private secondary schools in urban areas.
- To study low Enrolment in relation to the school environment of students' in government, aided, and private secondary schools in rural areas.
- To study low Enrolment in relation to the school environment of students' in government, aided, and private secondary schools in urban areas.

### Hypothesis of the Study

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations among students' studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in rural areas.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations among students' studying in

government, aided, and private secondary schools located in urban areas.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to the school environment among students' studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in rural areas.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to the school environment among students' studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in urban areas.

### Research Design

This study employed a survey design. Data were collected using stratified random sampling, and the sample consisted of 760 secondary school students' from Bangalore Rural District.

### Tools Used in the Study

The researcher constructed and standardized two instruments for data collection: the Student Aspiration Scale and the School Environment Inventory. The Student Aspiration Scale comprised 48 items, while the School Environment Inventory included 95 statements.

### Statistical Technique Used

The collected data were analyzed using One-Way ANOVA to identify significant differences among the groups.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations among students' studying in

government, aided, and private secondary schools located in rural areas.

**Table 1: One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to Students' Aspirations in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools in Rural Areas**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	27008.252	2	13504.126	35.745	.000
Within Groups	149983.748	397	377.793		(p < .05)
Total	176992.000	399			

The One-Way ANOVA results presented in Table 1 reveal a substantial variance between these groups, with a Sum of Squares of 27,008.252 and a corresponding F-value of 35.745. The degrees of freedom for between groups is 2, resulting in a Mean Square of 13,504.126. Notably, the p-value is reported as .000, indicating a highly

significant difference, as it falls below the conventional alpha level of .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis accepted suggesting that there are significant differences in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to students' aspirations among government, aided, and private secondary schools in rural areas.

**Table 2: Comparison of Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to Students' Aspirations in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools in Rural Areas**

Type of School	N	Mean	SD	Type of School	
				Aided	Private
Government	90	111.3556	23.63216	.001 (p < .05)	.000 (p < .05)
Aided	70	125.4286	23.16205		.049 (p < .05)
Private	240	131.6583	16.26943		

Table 2 presents a comparison of the mean scores of low Enrolment related to students' aspirations among government, aided, and private secondary schools in rural areas. The analysis includes three types of secondary schools: government, aided, and private. Government schools (N=90) have a mean score of 111.36 with a standard deviation (SD) of 23.63, while aided schools (N=70) report a higher mean score of 125.43 and an SD of 23.16. Private schools, which have the largest

sample size (N=240), show the highest mean score of 131.66 with an SD of 16.27. Statistical significance is indicated by the p-values; the comparison between government and aided schools yields a p-value of .001, while the comparison between government and private schools is .000, both of which are less than the alpha level of .05, suggesting significant differences in students' aspirations. Additionally, the comparison between aided and private schools shows a p-value

of .049, also indicating a significant difference. Overall, these results highlight that students' aspirations vary significantly across the different types of secondary schools, with private schools exhibiting the highest levels of student aspirations. Compared to aided and government secondary school. It means low enrolment of students found in government

secondary schools compared to aided and private secondary schools.

**Hypothesis-2:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to students' aspirations among students' studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in urban areas.

**Table 3: One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to Students' Aspirations in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools Located in Urban Areas**

source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11978.501	2	5989.250	12.064	.000
Within Groups	177233.899	357	496.453		(p < .05)
Total	189212.400	359			

The One-Way ANOVA results presented in Table 3 indicate a significant variance among the groups. The Sum of Squares for between groups is 11,978.501, with 2 degrees of freedom, leading to a Mean Square of 5,989.250. The F-value calculated is 12.064, suggesting a notable difference in mean scores across the school types. Additionally, the p-value is reported as .000, which is significantly lower than the alpha level of .05.

This result strongly suggests that the null hypothesis should be rejected alternative hypothesis accepted. Indicating that there are indeed significant differences in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to students' aspirations among students' in government, aided, and private secondary schools in urban areas. Overall, the findings underscore the varying impacts of school type on students' aspirations in urban settings.

**Table 4: Comparison of Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to Students' Aspirations in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools Located in Urban Areas**

Type of School	N	Mean	SD	Type of School	
				Aided	Private
Government	70	107.8857	26.49503	.002 (p < .05)	.000 (p < .05)
Aided	60	121.1167	21.28506		.873 p > .05)
Private	230	122.7174	21.11175		

Table 4 presents a comparison of the mean scores of low Enrolment related to students' aspirations among government, aided, and private secondary schools located in urban areas. The analysis includes three types of schools: government, aided, and private. Government schools (N=70) have a mean score of 107.89 with a standard deviation (SD) of 26.50, while aided schools (N=60) report a mean score of 121.12 with an SD of 21.29. Private schools, which have the largest sample size (N=230), exhibit the highest mean score of 122.72 and an SD of 21.11. Statistical significance is indicated by the p-values; the comparison between government and aided schools yields a p-value of .002, and the comparison between government and private schools shows a p-value of .000, both of which are less than the alpha level of .05, suggesting significant differences in aspirations. In contrast, the comparison

between aided and private schools results in a p-value of .873, which exceeds the threshold of significance ( $p > .05$ ), indicating no significant difference in mean scores between these two types of schools. Overall, the findings highlight that students' aspirations related to low Enrolment differ significantly among government, aided, and private secondary schools in urban areas, with government schools demonstrating notably lower mean scores compared to aided and private secondary school. It means low enrolment of students found in government secondary schools compared to aided and private secondary schools.

**Hypothesis-3:** There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to the school environment among students' studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in rural areas.

**Table 5: One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to School Environment of Students' Studying in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools Located in Rural Areas**

source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	384709.090	2	192354.545	151.030	.000 ( $p < .05$ )
Within Groups	505626.660	397	1273.619		
Total	890335.750	399			

The One-Way ANOVA results presented in Table 5 demonstrate a highly significant variance among the groups. The Sum of Squares for between groups is 384,709.090, with 2 degrees of freedom,

resulting in a Mean Square of 192,354.545. The F-value is calculated at 151.030, indicating a substantial difference in mean scores across the various school types. The p-value is reported as .000, which is significantly

lower than the alpha level of .05, providing strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis accepted. This suggests that there are indeed significant differences in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to the school environment among

students' in government, aided, and private secondary schools in rural areas. Overall, these findings emphasize the influence of school environment on students' Enrolment in different types of rural secondary schools.

**Table 6: Comparison of Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to School Environment of Students' Studying in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools Located in Rural Areas**

Type of School	N	Mean	SD	Type of School	
				Aided	Private
Government	90	214.7111	50.27503	.000 (p < .05)	.000 (p < .05)
Aided	70	245.3429	20.29699		.000 (p < .05)
Private	240	288.3000	32.48729		

Table 6 presents a comparison of mean scores of low Enrolment related to the school environment among government, aided, and private secondary schools located in rural areas. The analysis reveals that government schools (N=90) have a mean score of 214.71 with a standard deviation (SD) of 50.28. Aided schools (N=70) exhibit a higher mean score of 245.34 and an SD of 20.30. Private schools (N=240) show the highest mean score of 288.30 with an SD of 32.49. Statistical significance is indicated by the p-values; the comparison between government and aided schools yields a p-value of .000, while the comparison between government and private schools also shows a p-value of .000, both of which are significantly lower than the alpha level of .05. This indicates significant differences in mean scores of

low Enrolment related to the school environment across these types of secondary schools. Overall, these findings highlight that students' perceptions of the school environment, which is crucial for their low Enrolment, differ significantly among government, aided, and private secondary schools in rural areas, with private schools demonstrating notably higher mean scores compared to aided and government secondary school. It means low enrolment of students found in government secondary schools compared to aided and private secondary schools.

#### **Hypothesis-4:**

There is no significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment in relation to the school environment among students' studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in urban areas.

**Table 7: One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to School Environment of Students' Studying in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools Located in Urban Areas**

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	174122.855	2	87061.427	52.588	.000
Within Groups	591031.267	357	1655.550		(p < .05)
Total	765154.122	359			

The One-Way ANOVA results displayed in Table 7 reveal a substantial variance among the groups. The Sum of Squares for between groups is reported as 174,122.855, with 2 degrees of freedom, resulting in a Mean Square of 87,061.427. The F-value calculated is 52.588, indicating a highly significant difference in mean scores across the various school types. Additionally, the p-value is recorded as .000, which is significantly lower than the alpha level of .05, providing strong evidence to reject the

null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis accepted. This suggests that significant differences exist in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to the school environment among students' in government, aided, and private secondary schools in urban areas. Overall, these findings highlight the varying impacts of school environment on students' low Enrolment in different types of urban secondary schools, emphasizing the importance of school type in influencing students' perceptions and experiences.

**Table 8: Comparison of Mean Scores of Low Enrolment Related to School Environment of Students' Studying in Government, Aided, and Private Secondary Schools Located in Urban Areas**

Type of School	N	Mean	SD	Type of School	
				Aided	Private
Government	70	225.1714	56.61335	.000 (p < .05)	.000 (p < .05)
Aided	60	266.2333	38.73393		.021 (p < .05)
Private	230	282.0783	35.05221		

Table 8 provides a comparison of mean scores of low Enrolment related to the school environment among government, aided, and private secondary schools located in urban areas. The data indicates

that government schools (N=70) have a mean score of 225.17 with a standard deviation (SD) of 56.61. Aided schools (N=60) exhibit a higher mean score of 266.23 and an SD of 38.73. Private



schools (N=230) show the highest mean score of 282.08 with an SD of 35.05. The p-values for the comparisons are significant, with the comparison between government and aided secondary schools yielding a p-value of .000, and between government and private secondary schools also reporting a p-value of .000 both of which are considerably lower than the alpha level of .05. This indicates significant differences in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to the school environment across these types of urban schools. Moreover, the comparison between aided and private secondary schools shows a p-value of .021, which is also significant, overall these findings highlight that low enrolment related to school environment is low in government schools compared to aided and private secondary school. further supporting the conclusion that students' perceptions of their school environments significantly differ based on the type of school they attend. These findings underscore the critical role that school environment plays in influencing low Enrolment decisions among students' in urban secondary schools.

### Major Findings of the study

There is a significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to students' aspirations among those studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in both rural [ $F=35.745, p=.000$ ] and urban [ $F=12.064, p=.000$ ] areas. The Tukey post-hoc test further indicates that, in both

rural and urban areas, the mean scores for low Enrolment related to students' aspirations are higher in aided secondary schools compared to government secondary schools, and in private secondary schools compared to government secondary schools. In rural areas, the mean scores for students' aspirations in private secondary schools are higher than those in aided secondary schools; however, the aspirations of students' in private and aided secondary schools appear to be similar in urban areas.

There is also a significant difference in the mean scores of low Enrolment related to the school environment among students' studying in government, aided, and private secondary schools located in both rural [ $F=151.030, p=.000$ ] and urban [ $F=52.588, p=.000$ ] areas. The Tukey post-hoc test indicates that, in both rural and urban areas, the mean scores for low Enrolment related to the school environment are higher for students' studying in aided secondary schools compared to those in government secondary schools, and higher for students' in private secondary schools compared to those in government secondary schools. Additionally, private secondary schools have higher mean scores than aided secondary schools.

### Discussion

The present study explored the relationship between low Enrolment, students' aspirations, and the school

environment across government, aided, and private secondary schools in both rural and urban contexts. The findings indicate that students' aspirations and their perceptions of the school environment significantly differ based on the type of school they attend. The results revealed a significant difference in the mean scores of students' aspirations among the three types of schools in both rural and urban areas. Aided and private secondary schools showed higher aspiration levels compared to government secondary schools. The aspirations of students' in rural areas attending private schools exceeded those of their peers in aided schools, suggesting that private schools may offer more enriching experiences that foster ambition. In contrast, students' in urban areas demonstrated similar aspirations in aided and private schools, indicating a potential leveling effect due to the urban educational landscape.

The analysis of the school environment similarly highlighted significant differences among the types of schools. Students' in aided and private secondary schools reported a more positive school environment than their counterparts in government secondary schools. A conducive school environment can enhance students' commitment to learning, thereby influencing their aspirations and Enrolment rates.

The disparities in aspirations and perceptions of the school environment among students' suggest that government schools may struggle with low Enrolment

due to less favorable conditions compared to aided and private institutions. The findings underscore the importance of enhancing the school environment and fostering aspirations among students' in government schools to improve enrolment rates, and reduce the low enrolment rates.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the study provides compelling evidence that low Enrolment in secondary schools is intricately linked to students' aspirations and perceptions of the school environment. The significant differences identified between government, aided, and private schools highlight the need for targeted interventions to address the challenges faced by government schools. To boost enrolment to control the low enrolment rates, educational policymakers must focus on improving the quality of the school environment and enhancing students' aspirations through tailored programs and resources. This includes investing in infrastructure, teacher training, and extracurricular activities that engage students' and foster a sense of belonging. By addressing these critical areas, stakeholders can work towards creating a more equitable educational landscape that promotes higher Enrolment rates and better educational outcomes for all students', regardless of the type of school they attend.

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