

Comparative Study of Academic Achievement of Students from Government and Block Grant High Schools

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Abstract

Education plays a fundamental role in the development of individuals and society. The quality of schooling significantly influences students' academic achievement, which is often used as an indicator of educational effectiveness. The present study examines the academic achievement of students studying in Government High Schools and Block Grant High Schools in Dunguripali Block of Sonepur District, Odisha. The study employed a descriptive survey method using the High School Certificate (HSC) examination scores of Class X students as the measure of academic achievement. A total of 435 students were included in the sample, consisting of 221 students from Government High Schools and 214 students from Block Grant High Schools. Statistical tools such as mean, standard deviation, and independent sample t-test were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that most students fall within the "fair" and "good" achievement categories. The study further revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in academic achievement between male and female students. Similarly, although Government High School students obtained slightly higher mean scores than Block Grant High School students, the difference was not statistically significant. The findings suggest that both types of schools produce similar academic outcomes. The study recommends improvement in infrastructure, teaching quality, and educational support systems to enhance student performance at the secondary level.

Keywords: Academic achievement, Government high schools, Block grant schools, Secondary education, Odisha.

1. Introduction

Education is one of the most powerful instruments for national development and individual growth. India possesses a long tradition of education, dating back to the ancient Gurukul system where knowledge was imparted through close teacher–student relationships. Over time, the educational system evolved significantly, especially during the colonial and post-independence periods.

Modern education in India was largely influenced by British educational policies such as Macaulay's Minute and Wood's Dispatch, which introduced Western educational models. After independence, various educational reforms were implemented to expand access to schooling and improve the quality of education.

In Odisha, secondary education has experienced gradual expansion. The government has implemented several programs including the **Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE)**, **Right to Education Act (2009)**, and **Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)** to improve educational access and quality.

Secondary schools in Odisha mainly include:

- Government High Schools
- Aided Schools
- Block Grant High Schools

Government High Schools are fully managed and funded by the government. In contrast, Block Grant High Schools are privately managed institutions that receive partial financial support from the government through a grant-in-aid system.

Academic achievement is a major indicator of educational success and reflects the extent to which students have acquired knowledge and skills through formal schooling. Therefore, comparing academic achievement across different types of schools helps evaluate the effectiveness of educational policies and institutional structures.

The present study investigates the academic achievement of students from Government and Block Grant High Schools in Dunguripali Block of Sonepur District.

Review of Related Literature

A significant body of research has explored the variables influencing academic achievement across different school types:

- **School Management Differences:** Studies frequently contrast government and private/aided institutions. Goyal and Pandey (2010) observed that while private school students often perform better than their government counterparts, absolute learning levels remain low across both sectors. Similarly, Imaman, Singh, and Tiwari (2016) found that private school boys significantly outperformed government school boys in academic achievement.
- **Gender and Achievement:** Narad and Abdullah (2016) reported no significant difference in the academic performance of senior secondary girls whether they studied in co-educational or girls-only schools. Conversely, Kumari and Chamundeswari (2015) noted noteworthy differences among student genders and school types related to academic performance.
- **Socio-Economic and Environmental Factors:** ASER analysis indicates that the learning gap between government and private schools shrinks significantly when controlling for the child's home environment, parental education, and household assets. Colemontel (1966) also demonstrated a stronger correlation between academic achievement and family background than between achievement and school quality.
- **State-Specific Secondary Outcomes:** In Assam, Barua (1989) identified inadequate teacher numbers, poor inspection, and high reliance on private tuition as major causes for failure in the

High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) examinations. In Arunachal Pradesh, Dutta and Chetia (2016) found significant mean differences in academic achievement between rural/urban and government/private school students.

Significance and Need of the Study

When viewing the educational process holistically, the emphasis should ideally be on the comprehensive development of a student. However, contemporary pressures have hyper-focused attention on obtaining the highest possible marks in examinations. Parents increasingly prefer private or alternative schooling, perceiving them as providers of superior education compared to government schools.

Despite the government providing extensive facilities, highly qualified teachers, and infrastructure rebuilding in its schools, these perceptions persist. Block Grant schools, meanwhile, operate with teachers appointed by private management committees under constrained financial grants. Therefore, there is an urgent need to empirically investigate the High School Certificate (HSC) examination marks of students from both Government and Block Grant high schools in the Dunguripali block. This comparison aims to identify if significant differences truly exist and what actionable steps can be taken to improve the academic landscape.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the academic achievement of high school students in Dunguripali Block.
2. To compare the academic achievement of students on the basis of gender.
3. To examine the difference in academic achievement between Government and Block Grant High Schools

Hypotheses

H01: There is no significant difference in the mean academic achievement of Government and Block Grant High School students.

H02: There is no significant difference in academic achievement between male and female students.

Methodology

Research Design: The study utilized a descriptive survey method to arrive at accurate solutions and valid objectives.

Population: The theoretical population comprised all secondary school students of Odisha, while the working population focused on secondary school students in the Sonepur district.

Sample: The sample was conveniently selected from the Dunguripali block of Sonepur district. It included HSC examination scores from students across 8 Block Grant High Schools and 6 Government High Schools that agreed to cooperate. The sample consisted of **435 Class X students** selected from: 221 Government High School students and 214 Block Grant High School students.

Tools for Data Collection: Data was systematically adopted directly from official school records. The achievement scores were exclusively from the High School Certificate (HSC) examination conducted by the Board of Secondary Education, Odisha. Subjects evaluated solely with grades were excluded.

Statistical Techniques

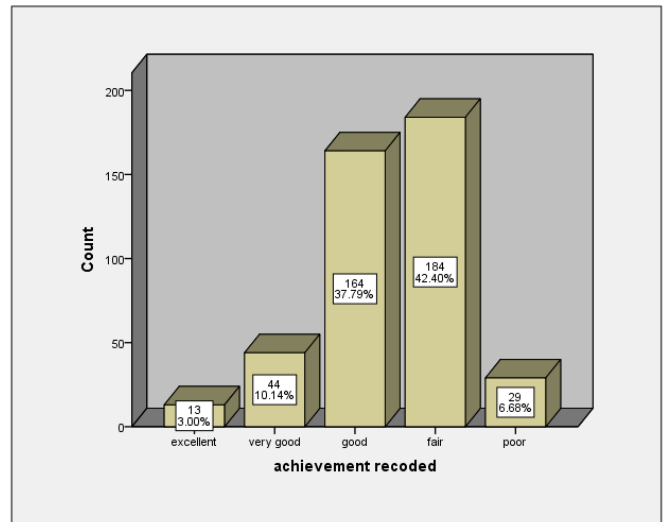
for this research Mean, Standard Deviation, Independent t-test, simple frequency and percentage

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Distribution of Academic Achievement

Students' scores were categorized into five achievement levels.

Score Range	Category
480–600	Excellent
360–479	Very Good
240–359	Good
120–239	Fair
0–119	Poor



Distribution of Academic Achievement Levels

Analysis revealed that:

- 3% students achieved **excellent** scores
- 10.14% achieved **very good** scores
- 37.79% achieved **good** scores
- 42.40% achieved **fair** scores
- 6.68% achieved **poor** scores

This indicates that most students fall within the **fair to good achievement range**.

7. Gender-wise Academic Achievement

Mean Academic Achievement by Gender

The t-test results indicated:

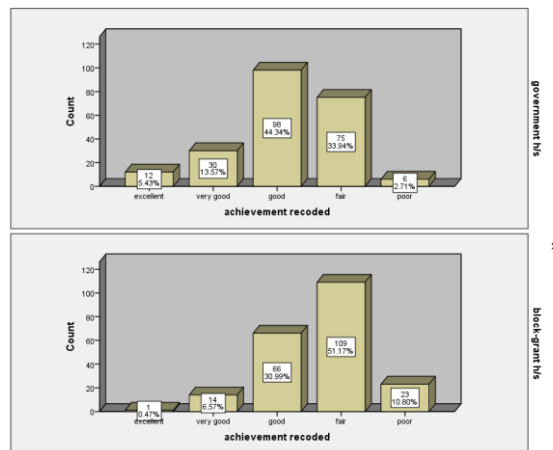
$t = 0.624$

$p = 0.533 (>0.05)$

The Levene’s test, produced a ‘F’ value of 0.012 with $p=0.911$ which is greater than $p=0.05$ significant level. So the null hypothesis of “no significance difference in the mean academic achievement of male and female students” is retained. This means the group are similar variance.

The ‘t’ value for the mean academic achievement of male and female students is 0.624, $df=433$ and $p=0.533$. So the null hypothesis of “no significance difference between the mean score of male and female students” is retained. This means there is no significance difference in the mean academic achievement in the mean academic scores of male and female students.

Comparison Between Government and Block Grant Schools



The independent sample t-test produced:

$t = 5.482$

$df = 433$

$p < 0.05$

The Levene’s test produced a ‘F’ value of 3.130 with $p=0.078$. So the null hypothesis of “no significance difference in the mean academic achievement of government and block grant high school students is retained. This means the high schools are similar variance.

The ‘t’ value of the mean academic achievement score of the high school students is 5.482, $df=433$. Thus the null hypothesis is retained. This means there is no significant difference in the mean academic achievement scores between block grant and government high school. Therefore it is concluded that the students of block grant and government school show similar academic achievement in HSC examination. Although Government High School students obtained slightly higher mean scores, the difference was not considered substantial in terms of practical educational outcomes.

Findings of the Study

The following are the important findings of the present study :

Objective-1: “To study the academic achievement of high school students of Dunguripali Block.”

Major Finding: About 3%, 10.14%, 37.79%, 42.40% and 6.68% out of a total of 435 high school students of Dunguripali Block are having excellent, very good, good, fair and poor academic achievement in HSC Examination respectively.

Objective-2: “To compare the academic achievement of high school students on the basis of gender”

Hypotheses: “There is no significance difference between in the mean achievement of male and female students”

Major Findings:

1. The male and female students of both kinds of high school have relatively similar level of academic achievement in HSC Examination.
2. There is no significance difference in the mean academic achievement in the mean academic scores of male and female students.

Hypotheses: “There is significance difference in the mean academic achievement of government and block grant high school students.”

Major Finding: There is no significance difference in the mean academic achievement scores between block grant and government high schools. Therefore the students of block grant and government school show similar academic achievement in HSC Examination.

Educational Implications

The findings of the study have several implications for educational planning and policy:

- Improvement of **school infrastructure** in both Government and Block Grant schools is necessary.
- Teachers should adopt **innovative teaching methods** to enhance student engagement.
- Regular **teacher training programs** should be organized to improve teaching effectiveness.
- Schools should provide **academic guidance and counselling** for students.
- Greater parental involvement in children’s education should be encouraged.

Conclusion

Secondary education plays a crucial role in shaping students’ future academic and professional opportunities. The present study attempted to compare the academic achievement of students from Government and Block Grant High Schools in Dunguripali Block of Odisha. The results suggest that both types of schools produce similar academic outcomes. Although Government High School students showed slightly higher mean scores, the difference was not statistically significant. Gender differences in academic

achievement were also found to be insignificant. The study highlights the need for strengthening the overall quality of secondary education in Odisha. Improving infrastructure, teacher quality, and learning resources can significantly enhance student achievement. Future research may include larger samples, additional variables such as socio-economic status and school environment, and comparative studies across different districts.

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