

Home Environment of Higher Secondary School Students with Respect to Their Gender and Locality in Cooch Behar District

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ABSTRACT:

The present investigation aims to examine the level of home environment of higher secondary school students with respect to their gender and locality in the Cooch Behar district of West Bengal, India. A descriptive survey research design was adopted by the researcher for the purpose of data collection. The sample was selected using a combination of convenience sampling and simple random sampling techniques. Initially, six higher secondary schools were selected through convenience sampling, including three urban and three rural schools. Thereafter, 120 students were chosen through simple random sampling, consisting of 60 male and 60 female students. For data collection, the researcher employed a self-developed tool, namely the Home Environment Scale, developed by the researcher under the guidance of the research supervisor. The collected data were analyzed using statistical techniques such as Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and the 't'-test. Overall, the findings reveal that while the majority of students experience an average level of home environment, some variations exist across gender and locality. The study results show that there is no significant difference in home environment between male and female students. Furthermore, the findings indicate that there is no significant difference in home environment between urban and rural students.

Keywords: Home Environment, Higher Secondary School Students, Gender and Locality

Introduction:

Home is the first and most influential environment in a child's life. It is within the home that a child first learns language, values, habits, discipline, and patterns of behavior. The family serves as the primary socializing agency, shaping the emotional, social, moral and intellectual foundations of the individual. The nature of relationships among family members, the level of parental involvement, availability of learning resources, and the overall emotional climate at home significantly influence a child's development and educational progress.

The concept of home environment refers to the physical, emotional, social, and psychological conditions prevailing within the family that influence a child's learning and adjustment. It includes aspects such as parental involvement, socio-economic status, family relationships, study facilities, discipline patterns, encouragement, and communication. A healthy home environment provides security, affection, motivation, and academic support, which are essential during the higher secondary stage of education.

This stage is particularly crucial because students experience academic pressure, career-related concerns, and developmental changes that require guidance and emotional stability. Home Environment refers to a physical, social, cultural and psychological condition that exists among the members of a family. Parent's emotional warmth while interacting with their children, stimulating and learning experiences that are available in home and physical surroundings in home are the elements of Home Environment (**Leventhal and Gunn, 2001**). In a good Home Environment, students get cognitive encouragement, parental support, independence and freedom; get social values to adapt their surroundings outside the home. Continuity, privacy, self-expression, personal identity, social relationship, warmth, good physical structure are some of the qualities of a good Home Environment (**Smith, 1994**). Home Environment is a widely discussed topic in research field as Home Environment plays a very crucial role in one's developmental process (**Gottfried, 1984**). Home environment refers to all sorts of moral and ethical values, emotional, social and intellectual climate set by the family members for the child to contribute his/her wholesome development (**Anene, 2005**).

Cooch Behar district of West Bengal comprises both urban and rural regions with diverse socio-cultural characteristics. Understanding the home environment of higher secondary school students in this district will provide valuable insights into the conditions that influence their academic and personal development.

Hence, the present study aims to examine the home environment of higher secondary school students with respect to their gender and locality in Cooch Behar district. The findings of the study are expected to contribute to educational planning and to suggest measures for improving the quality of the home environment for students at the higher secondary level.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Lalchhanchhuahi & Fanai (2025) did a research work on home environment of higher school students in Aizwal district, Assam. The analysis shows that most students have a moderately favourable home environment, while only a few experience highly supportive conditions, indicating that truly favourable home settings are rare. However, a remarkable number of students face some level of an unfavorable home environment, which could affect their well-being and academic performance, highlighting the need for better home conditions and support systems.

Kumari (2024) conducted research with home environment among school students of Darbhanga town. The results revealed that the extent of home environment varied among total and different sample sub-groups.

Hajarika & Chaliha (2023) conducted a study on home environment of the higher secondary level students Nagaon district, Assam. This study found that there is a significant difference in home environment of the higher secondary level students of Nagaon district, Assam.

Sireesha & Indira (2023) examined the relationship between secondary school students' home environment and their academic progress. The study results show that significant difference in the home environment of the secondary school students in terms of gender and locality.

Selvakumar (2022) conducted a study home environment among higher secondary students. The study results indicated that there was significant difference in home environment of higher secondary students irrespective of their gender.

Rana & Padhiar (2021) conducted a study on home environments of adolescents studying in eight class in schools of Jammu district. Results show that adolescents from rural residential background have

perceived their home environment as better in comparison to adolescents from urban residential background. However, there were no significant gender and type of school differences in the perceived home environment of adolescents studying in eighth class.

Prajapati (2020) carried out a study on home environment among high school students. The finding indicated there is significant difference in the interactive effect of the mean scores of home environment with regards to the gender and type of residence. Additionally the boy high school students of rural area group is having good home environment than girl high school students of urban area group.

Manickavasagan (2019) conducted a study on higher secondary students adjustment in relation to their home environment. This study results uncover that the adjustment and home environment of higher secondary students are satisfactory. Further no significant difference is found out between the Boys and Girls in their adjustment and home environment of higher secondary students.

Malsawmthuanga & Fanai (2018) conducted a study on level of home environment among secondary level students of Champhai town Mizoram with reference to gender and type of school. Result revealed that secondary students of Champhai town have average level home environment.

Krishnamoorthi (2017) researched looked at relationship between home environment and academic achievement of high school students. The study disclosed that there is significant relationship between home environment and academic achievement with respect to Gender, locality and type of school managements.

Significance of the Study:

The home environment plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic, emotional, and social development. This study is significant as it investigates variations in home environment with respect to gender and locality (urban and rural). Identifying such differences may help in understanding whether boys and girls experience differing levels of support, supervision, encouragement, or autonomy within their homes. Similarly, exploring locality-based differences can reveal disparities in parental involvement, educational resources, and socio-cultural influences between urban and rural settings.

The findings of this study may be beneficial for teachers, school administrators, parents, and educational planners. By understanding how home environment differs across gender and locality, educators can design targeted interventions and support systems to enhance students' well-being and academic performance. The study may also assist policymakers in formulating context-specific educational strategies for rural and urban schools in Cooch Behar district.

Delimitations:

1. The present investigation was confined to Cooch Behar district of West Bengal only.
2. The study was restricted to students of Class XI.
3. The sample size of the study was limited to 120 students.
4. The study was delimited to government-aided Bengali-medium co-educational higher secondary schools.
5. The scope of the study was confined to the variables of home environment, gender, and locality.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To measure the home environment level of higher secondary school students in terms of gender and
2. locality
3. To find out the difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of gender

4. To find out the difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of locality

Hypotheses of the Study:

- **H₀₁:** There is no significant difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of gender
- **H₀₂:** There is no significant difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of locality

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Method: The descriptive survey method was used to execute the present study.

Population: The population of the present study comprised all Class XI students studying in higher secondary schools of Cooch Behar district under the West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education (WBCHSE).

Sample: A combination of convenience and simple random sampling techniques was employed to select the sample for the study. Initially, six schools three urban and three rural were chosen through convenience sampling. Subsequently, 120 higher secondary students (60 males and 80 females) from Cooch Behar district of West Bengal were selected using the simple random sampling technique. The distribution of the sample is presented in the following table.

Table-1

Distribution of Urban Sample

The sample was drawn from government-aided higher secondary schools located in the urban areas of Cooch Behar district, West Bengal.

Sl. No.	The Name of the Urban Schools	Type of Schools	No. of Students Taken from Urban Schools	
			Male	Female
1	Haldibari High School (H.S).	Govt. Aided	10	10
2	Kalabagan High School (H.S).	Govt. Aided	10	10
3	Seva Bhaban Sikshayatan High School (H.S).	Govt. Aided	10	10

Table-2

Distribution of Rural Sample

The sample was drawn from government-aided higher secondary schools located in the rural areas of Cooch Behar district, West Bengal.

Sl. No.	The Name of the Rural Schools	Type of Schools	No. of Students Taken from Rural Schools	
			Male	Female
1	Upon Chowki High School (H.S).	Govt. Aided	10	10
2	Fulkadabri Nabin Chandra High School	Govt. Aided	10	10

	(H.S).			
3	Chowrangee High School (H.S).	Govt. Aided	10	10

Tool of the Study:

In the present study, the researcher used a self-developed Home Environment Scale for data collection. The scale was designed to assess the home environmental conditions of higher secondary level students. It consists of 46 items covering various dimensions of home environment, such as study environment, academic assistance, involvement in household work, parents’ educational background, financial condition, and students’ health condition and nutritional support etc. The reliability of the scale was established through the test–retest method.

Statistical Techniques:

For the analysis and interpretation of the collected data, the investigator employed Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD), and the t-test. The t-test was applied to determine the significance of differences in the home environment of higher secondary school students with respect to gender and locality.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Analysis and Interpretation of data related to the First Objective:

- To measure the Home Environment Level of Higher Secondary School Students in terms of Gender and locality

Table-1 Home Environment level of Higher Secondary School Students in terms of Gender and locality

Level of Home Environment	Range of Z scores	Gender				Locality			
		Male		Female		Urban		Rural	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Extremely Favourable	2.01 & above	3	5%	2	3.33%	2	3.33%	3	5%
Highly Favourable	1.26 to 2.00	5	8.33%	4	6.67%	6	10%	3	5%
Above Average Favourable	0.51 to 1.25	10	16.67%	10	16.67%	7	11.67%	13	21.67%
Average Favourable	0.50 to - 0.50	27	45%	25	41.67%	28	46.67%	24	40%
Below Average Unfavourable	-0.51 to - 1.25	9	15%	12	20%	12	20%	9	15%
Highly Unfavourable	-1.26 to - 2.00	4	6.67%	4	6.67%	4	6.67%	4	6.67%
Extremely Unfavourable	-2.01 & below	2	3.33%	3	5%	1	1.67%	4	6.67%

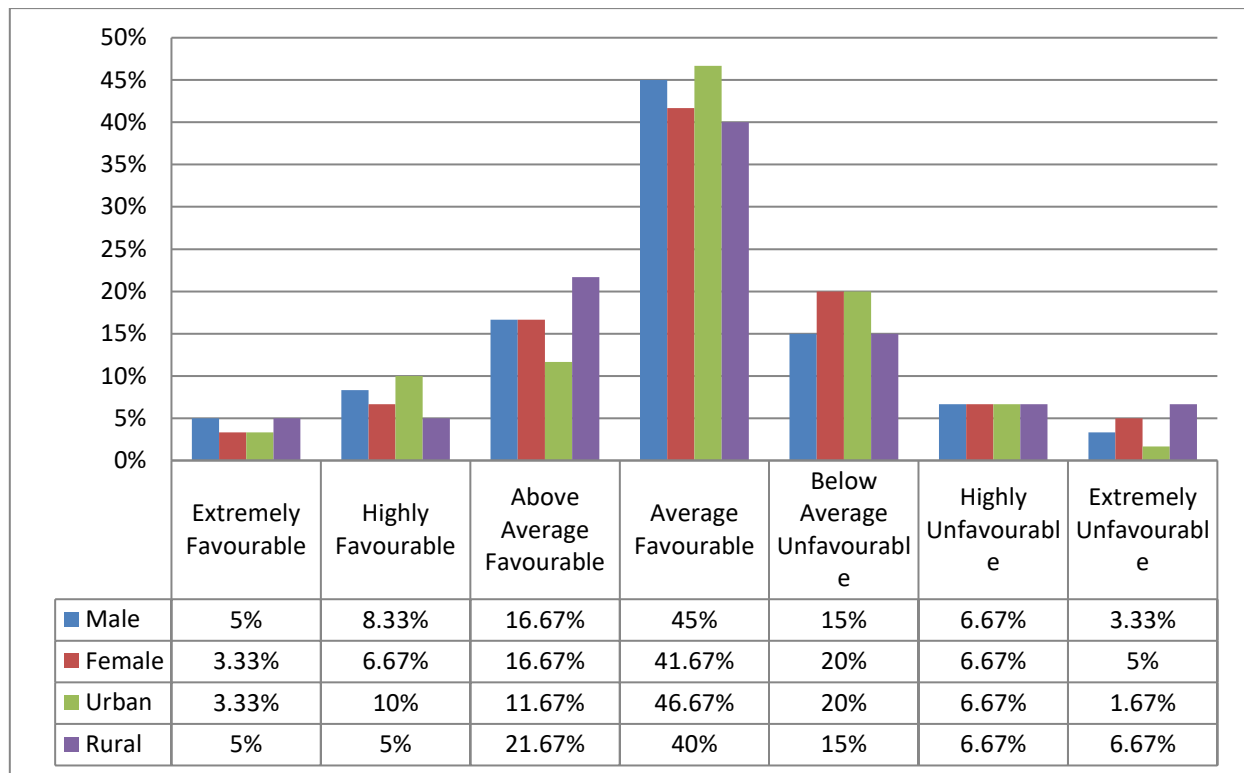


Figure-Graphical Presentation of the Home Environment Level of Higher Secondary School Students in terms of Gender and locality

Interpretation: The table and graph presents the distribution of students across different levels of Home Environment in terms of Gender (Male and Female) and Locality (Urban and Rural), with a total sample size of 60 in each category. The data indicate that the majority of students fall under the Average Favourable level of home environment. Among males, 27 students (45%) and among females, 25 students (41.67%) belong to this category. Similarly, 28 urban students (46.67%) and 24 rural students (40%) are placed in the same level. This suggests that most students, irrespective of gender and locality, experience a moderately favourable home environment. At the higher levels of home environment, namely Extremely Favourable and Highly Favourable, the proportion of students is comparatively smaller. In the Extremely Favourable category, 5% of males and 3.33% of females are represented, while rural students (5%) slightly outnumber urban students (3.33%). In the Highly Favourable category, males (8.33%) are somewhat higher than females (6.67%), and urban students (10%) show greater representation compared to rural students (5%). This indicates that urban students have a relatively stronger presence in the highly favourable home environment category. In the Above Average Favourable category, male and female students show equal representation (16.67% each). However, rural students (21.67%) are considerably higher than urban students (11.67%), suggesting that a greater proportion of rural students experience above-average favourable home conditions. With regard to the lower levels of home environment, females (20%) are more represented than males (15%) in the Below Average Unfavourable category. A similar trend is observed in locality, where urban students (20%) are higher than rural students (15%). At the Highly Unfavourable level, the distribution is equal across gender and locality (6.67%). In the Extremely Unfavourable category, females (5%) slightly exceed males (3.33%), and rural students (6.67%) are significantly higher than urban students (1.67%). Overall, the findings reveal that while the majority of students experience an average level of home environment, some variations exist across gender and locality. Rural students demonstrate greater variability, with

higher representation in both above-average and extremely unfavourable levels, whereas female students show slightly higher proportions in the lower categories of home environment. However, the differences are moderate and not highly pronounced.

Analysis and Interpretation of data related to H₀₁

There is no significant difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of gender

Table-2 Difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of gender

Gender	N	M	SD	DF	Observed 't' value	Critical 't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Male	60	85.45	24.594	118	1.28	1.98	Not Significant
Female	60	79.8	23.624				

Interpretation: Table2 shows the difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of gender. The mean (M) for males is 85.45, while for females it is 79.8, with standard deviations (SD) of 24.594 and 23.624, respectively. A 't'- test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the two groups. At the 0.05 significance level, the analysis shows that the critical t - value (1.98) is greater than the observed t- value (1.12), indicating that there was no significant difference in home environment between male and female students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Analysis and Interpretation of data related to H₀₂

There is no significant difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of locality

Table-3 difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of locality

Locality	N	M	SD	DF	Observed 't' value	Critical 't' value	Remarks at 5% level
Urban	60	80.4	24.827	118	1.009	1.98	Not significant
Rural	60	84.35	23.396				

Interpretation: Table-3 shows the difference in home environment of higher secondary school students in terms of locality. The mean (M) for urban students is 80.4, while for rural students it is 84.35, with standard deviations (SD) of 24.827 and 23.396, respectively. A 't' - test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the two groups. At the 0.05 significance level, the analysis shows that the critical t - value (1.98) is greater than the observed t - value (1.009), indicating that there was no significant difference in home environment between urban and rural students. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Major Findings:

1. The majority of higher secondary school students in Cooch Behar district were found to belong to the Average Favourable level of home environment. This trend was consistent across both gender and locality groups, indicating that most students experience a moderately supportive and stable home setting.
2. Only a small proportion of students were found in the Extremely Favourable and Extremely Unfavourable categories. This suggests that very high or very poor home environmental conditions are comparatively rare among the sampled students.

3. No significant difference was found in home environment with respect to gender (t-value < critical value at 0.05 level).
4. No significant difference was found in home environment with respect to locality (urban–rural).

CONCLUSION:

The study concludes that the majority of higher secondary school students in Cooch Behar district experience an Average Favourable home environment, irrespective of gender and locality. Only a small proportion of students fall into the extremely favourable or extremely unfavourable categories. Although minor percentage variations were observed between male and female students and between urban and rural students, the t-test results revealed no statistically significant differences in home environment with respect to gender or locality. Hence, both null hypotheses were accepted. Overall, the findings indicate that home environment conditions are largely similar across groups, though supportive measures may still be beneficial for students experiencing less favourable home situations.

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