

**OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATION OF THE HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS OF NAGALAND****Sangeeta Kumari<sup>1</sup> & Dr Pradipta Kumar Pattnaik<sup>2</sup>****DOI: <https://doi-ds.org/doi/10.2025-53122943/ADEDJ/V2/I2/SKPKP>****Review: 08/07/2025****Acceptance: 20/07/2025****Publication: 08/08/2025****Abstract**

In this era of globalisation, a competitive mindset is seen everywhere. To thrive in this competitive world, one must choose a profession that matches interests, cognitive abilities, aptitudes, and aspirations. Otherwise, an individual has to face the problem of adjustment in his /her career. Occupational aspirations are an ambition one has to aim to succeed in one's career or chosen occupation. These are preferences or desires of an individual for his/her future achievement in their occupation. The higher secondary level is regarded as the best period to follow a specific career direction, considering the students' occupational aspirations. This stage of education is very crucial as it covers adolescents. The study aims to investigate the differences in occupational aspirations between higher secondary students of both genders (female and male) and across institutional settings (government and private). The present study focused on the occupational aspirations of higher secondary students in the Dimapur district of Nagaland. The study is based on a sample of 52 students, 23 males and 29 females were selected randomly from government and private schools. For the collection and analysis of data descriptive survey method and the t-test were used as statistical techniques. The findings of the present study revealed that there is no significant difference between the occupational aspirations of gender (male and female) and the types of institutions (government and private school students) among higher secondary students.

**Keyword:** Occupational Aspiration**INTRODUCTION**

In this era of globalization, a competitive mindset is seen everywhere. To thrive in this competitive society, one must choose a profession that matches interests, cognitive abilities, aptitudes, and aspirations. Otherwise, an individual has to face the problem of adjustment in his /her career. The higher secondary stage is regarded as the best period to follow a specific career direction, considering the students' interest in choosing an occupation which aligns with their desires. Education at this stage is very crucial as it covers adolescents.

Occupational aspirations are simply the ambitions one sets out to achieve in one's profession or desired profession. These represent individual preferences or aspirations related to one's future success in their occupation. Occupational aspiration is a goal, dream and expectations that an individual has acquired about their future occupation. It can be defined as both realistic and idealistic; in realistic occupational aspiration, an individual selects a career by analyzing every possibility that may hinder with their choice, while in idealistic occupational aspiration, an individual chooses a profession in the absence of any restricting conditions (Saharia and Baishya, 2022).

Tylor and Wems (1994) defined occupational aspiration as "a variable that describes the occupation that an individual desires idealistically would like to have." Occupational aspirations are the ideal career an individual is likely to select. Occupational Aspirations are useful predictors of later educational and occupational choices (Momin and Chetry as cited in Patton and Creed, 2007). A study of occupational aspiration is essential as a wide range of courses are accessible and are available right from the higher secondary stage, and decisions about the career usually occur at this stage.

Occupational aspirations encompass the feelings, ambitions, and ideas that individuals hold regarding their careers. These aspirations play a significant role in shaping their motivation and influencing their decisions related to career choices and engagement in their chosen professions. Occupational aspirations are important for career planning, guiding, development, organising life options and choices, which help in contributing to individuals' preparation for adult life (Mary and Kharbiryumbai).

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Occupational aspiration is a driving force that directs an individual in choosing a desired occupation depending on their interests, needs, goals, and expectations of their parents and society. An adolescent who is studying in a higher secondary school has unrestrained choices and expectations related to their choice of education and occupational life.

A person's desired occupation is based on the awareness and understanding of the different occupational choices available in their area of interest. Interest in their choice of occupation is often sparked by the parents, teachers and the educational institutions that provide them career guidance and counselling at every stage. This support helps students select an appropriate career that contributes to the development of society. Occupational choices foster a positive outlook toward their future. Create job opportunities and enhance job satisfaction.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Mathur, G. & Sharma, P (2001)** conducted a study on Career Maturity among adolescents to analysis gender differences in career maturity. The findings indicate a notable disparity between boys and girls regarding their attitudes towards career selection. While boys exhibited a more positive attitude towards career choice compared to girls. **Behnke, Piercy, and Diversi (2004)** carried out a study on the educational and occupational aspirations of parents and youth of rural Latino families and factors affecting their aspirations. The study found that aspirations of some parent in Latino were transferred to their child. Although one half of the parents recognized their children's aspirations, the majority had not engaged in discussions about them with their youth. The articulation of children and their parents formed barriers to achieving higher educational and occupational aspirations. **Khan (2006)** carried out a comparative study on Occupational aspirations of male and female senior secondary school students of Delhi. The study revealed that occupational aspirations of both boys and girls in senior secondary schools were similar. A significant difference was observed in the occupational aspirations between boys attending government schools and girls enrolled in government-aided schools. The aspirations of boys of government aided schools and girls of government schools were significantly different. **Sarmah, N. (2009)** conducted a study on the Career Preference Level of the students of class XII of Higher Secondary Schools with special reference to Greater Guwahati. The study examines the career preferences and the factors that influence the selection of a career between female and male students of class XII. The study's findings indicate that students in the arts stream exhibit an average level of career preference for mass media and journalism, while students in the science stream demonstrate a below-average preference for these fields. **Andleeb and Mehnaz A. A. (2016)** conducted a Comparative Study on Occupational Aspiration and Career Maturity of Senior Secondary School Students in relation to Gender to investigate the levels of occupational aspiration and career maturity of secondary school. A sample of 100 students (50 male and 50 female) of class 12 was chosen from two government senior secondary schools of Delhi. The findings revealed that male students had stronger vocational aspirations, but female students had more career maturity. The study also demonstrates that there is a considerable difference in the professional maturity of male and female students, and that students' gender impacts their career maturity. **Sharma, and Singh (2017)** conducted a study on Career Aspirations of Government and Private School Students in relation to Peer Pressure. The sample consisting of 800 students (400 government and 400 private) of class 11 students from Ludhiana district of Punjab. The finding of the study showed that private school students possess higher career aspirations as compared to government school students. The also shows a significant interaction between academic stream and peer pressure regarding career aspirations. Students experiencing low peer pressure tend to have higher career aspirations than those facing higher peer pressure. **Momin and Chetry (2019)** conducted a study entitled "Occupational Aspiration of the undergraduates in Meghalaya" that attempted to study the gender differences of undergraduate students of Meghalaya concerning their occupational aspirations. The study found gender differences in the occupational aspirations of undergraduate students, with Males having higher occupational aspirations as compared with Females. **Saharia and Baishya (2022)** concluded that there were no differences in occupational aspirations among higher secondary students in Assam's Darrang district between male and female students or between urban and rural areas. **Shamshad (2022)** conducted a study on Career Maturity between Vocational Aspiration and Self-Concept among senior secondary school adolescents. The study reveals that vocational aspiration became an important indicator of career maturity among the students of senior secondary schools of the government and private institutions. Career Maturity was shown to have a significant correlation. No correlation was seen between vocational aspiration and self-concept for both the overall sample and the sub-samples. The study indicates that female students exhibited superior career maturity compared to their male counter parts, however, the reverse tendency was observed in vocational aspiration. Nevertheless, the self-concept of males and females was determined to be similar. Furthermore, female students have superior aptitude for making appropriate professional decisions, including the requisite understanding needed to select a job that corresponds with their talents, interests, values, and personality traits.

## Research gap

The literature reviewed by the researcher indicates that several studies on occupational aspiration have been undertaken by various researchers. Researchers have utilized various research designs and sample selection methods in their studies. Literature and research reviews indicate that different variables have been adopted by researchers that influence students' occupational aspirations. However, there have been few studies conducted in this area, particularly in the state of Nagaland. As a result, the researcher has chosen this area of study to investigate the occupational aspirations of higher secondary students

### **NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Occupational aspiration plays a crucial role in the career decision-making process, guiding individuals toward their career-related objectives. Adolescents in the higher secondary stage of education face a wide range of expectations and opportunities regarding their educational and career paths. Students' occupational aspirations are shaped by various factors, with regard to gender and the type of school also plays significant roles in their career choices. The varied needs, expectations, and interests of the students at the higher secondary level lead to differences in their career aspirations. Additionally, the type of institution influences students' occupational aspirations in unique ways. The present study seeks to identify the extent to which occupational aspirations of higher secondary students varies with regard to gender and the type of institutions

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the occupational aspirations of higher secondary school students in relation to gender.
2. To find out the occupational aspiration of higher secondary school students of Dimapur in relation to the type of institution.

### **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

1. There exists no significant difference in occupational aspiration of higher secondary students in relation to their gender.
2. There exists no significant difference in the dimension of occupational aspiration of higher secondary students in relation to their gender.
3. There is no significant difference in occupational aspiration of higher secondary students in relation to the type of institution.
4. There is no significant difference in the dimensions of occupational aspiration of higher secondary students in relation to the type of institution.

### **LIMITATIONS**

1. The study has been delimited to the Dimapur district of Nagaland.
2. The study has been delimited to two schools in Dimapur district.

### **METHODOLOGY**

**Method:** A descriptive survey method was used for the present study.

**Population:** The population consisted of higher secondary students of Dimapur district of Nagaland.

**Sample:** The study sample comprises of 52 students from government and private higher secondary schools of Dimapur, randomly selected by lottery method. The samples were classified as 23 male and 29 female students from different schools. The sample was chosen using a random sampling technique.

**Tool Used:** To obtain relevant data, the investigator used self-made tools.

**Data Analysis and Interpretation:**

**Objectives-wise Analysis of the data**

1. To study the occupational aspirations of higher secondary school students in relation to gender.

**Table 1: Differences in Occupational Aspirations between Male and Female Higher Secondary School Students**

**Table 1.1**

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Occupational Aspiration	Male	23	104.48	7.22	1.58*
	Female	29	107.83	7.85	

\* Not significant at 0.05 level of significance

**Fig: 1.1 Differences in Occupational Aspirations between Male and Female Higher Secondary School Students**

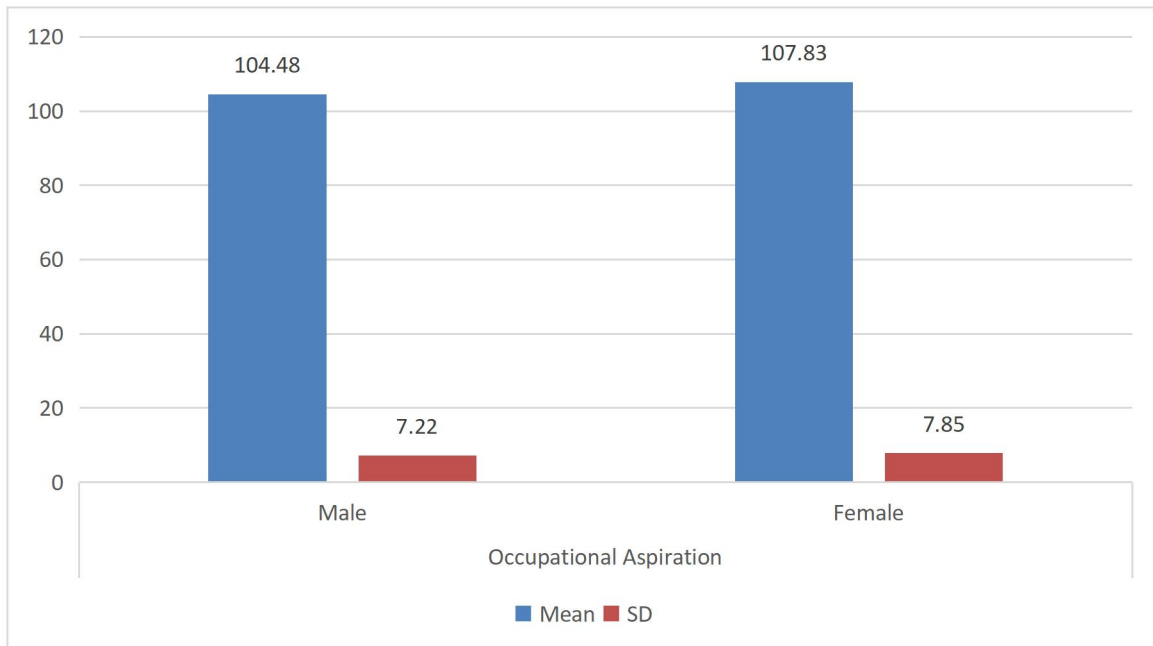


Table no. 1.1. shows that the mean scores of male and female students are 104.48 and 107.83, respectively. It indicated that the female students obtained a higher mean score in their occupational aspirations than the male students, and the t-value between the two groups is 1.58, which is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. This depicts that the male and female students did not differ significantly. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference in the occupational aspirations of higher secondary school students in relation to gender”, was retained. Therefore, it may be concluded that gender has no significant influence on the occupational aspirations of Secondary School Students.

**Table 1.2:** Gender differentials in various dimensions of Occupational Aspiration.

Dimension of Occupational Aspiration	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Awareness	Male	23	28.61	4.10	1.29*
	Female	29	30.00	3.64	
Interest	Male	23	24.22	2.23	2.40*
	Female	29	25.79	2.42	
Contribution towards Society	Male	23	26.26	2.86	0.54*
	Female	29	25.79	3.24	
Future Perspective	Male	23	25.39	2.44	1.85*
	Female	29	26.52	1.94	

\*Not significant at 0.05 level of significance

**Fig. 1.2** Gender differentials in various dimensions of Occupational Aspiration.



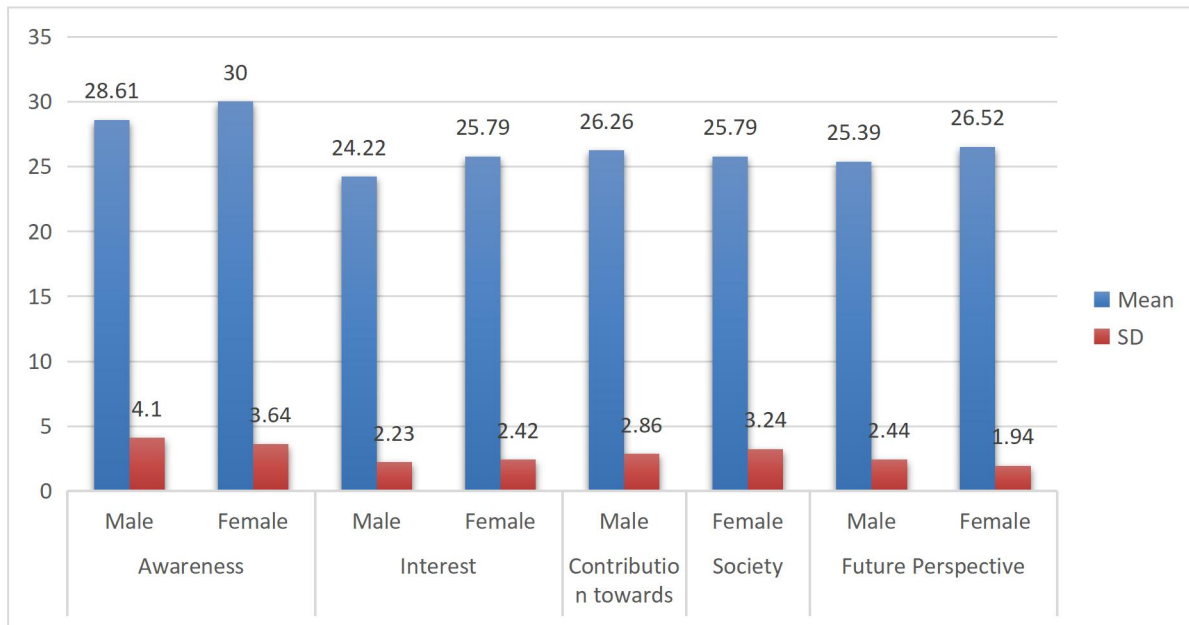


Table No. 1.2. reveals the dimensions of occupational aspiration of secondary school students in relation to gender. The mean scores for awareness for male and female students were 28.61 and 30.00, and the SD were 4.10 and 3.64, respectively. This suggests that female students tend to have a slightly higher awareness of their occupational aspirations than that of male students. The t-value between the two groups was 1.29, which was not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This depicted that the male and female students did not differ significantly in their awareness of occupational aspiration. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the awareness of occupational aspiration with respect to gender(female and male)” was accepted.

The table reveals that the mean scores for interest for male and female students were 24.22 and 25.79, and the SD were 2.23 and 2.42, respectively. This suggests that the female students tend to have a slightly higher interest in their occupational aspirations than that of male students. The t-value between the two groups was 1.40, which was not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This depicted that the male and female students did not differ significantly in their interest related to occupational aspiration. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the interest of occupational aspiration with respect to gender(female and male)” was accepted.

The table further reveals that the mean scores for contribution towards society for male and female students were 26.26 and 25.79, and the SD were 2.86 and 3.24, respectively. This suggests that the male students had higher mean scores related to their contribution towards society than female students. The t-value between the two groups was 0.54, which was not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This depicted that the male and female students did not differ significantly in their contribution towards society of occupational aspiration. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the contribution towards society of occupational aspiration with respect to gender(female and male)” was accepted.

Further, the table reveals that the mean scores for future perspective for male and female students were 25.39 and 26.52, and the SD were 2.44 and 1.94, respectively. This suggests that female students have a more positive outlook regarding their future than male students. The t-value between the two groups was 1.85, which was not significant at 0.05 level of significance. This depicted that the male and female students did not differ significantly in their future perspective towards occupational aspiration. Hence, the formulated null hypothesis that “there is no significant difference in the future perspective of occupational aspiration with respect to gender(female and male)” was accepted.

Thus, it indicates that occupational aspirations among secondary school students indicate distinct gender disparities. Where female students show greater awareness and interest in their occupational aspirations than that of male students. On the other hand, male students show higher levels of contribution towards society, while female students demonstrate a more positive outlook regarding their futures.

2. To study the occupational aspirations of higher secondary school students in relation to their types of institutions.

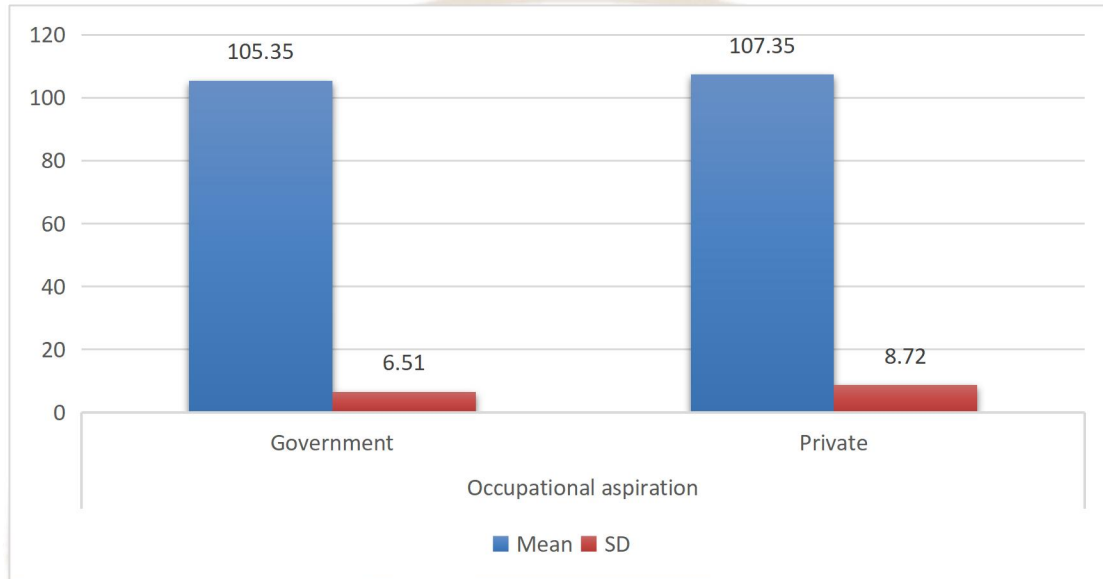
**Table 2: Differential of Occupational aspiration between Government and private Higher Secondary School Students.**

**Table 1.3**

Variables	Types of Institutions	N	Mean	SD	t-value
Occupational aspiration	Government	26	105.35	6.51	0.94*
	Private	26	107.35	8.72	

\*Not significant at 0.05 level of significance

**Fig 1.3. Differential of Occupational aspiration between Government and private Higher Secondary School Students**



From Table No.1.3,it was found that the mean scores of government and private school students are 105.35 and 107.35, respectively. It indicated that the private school students obtained a higher mean score in their occupational aspirations than the government school students. the t-value between the two groups is 0.94, which is not significant at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicated that the government and private school students did not differ significantly. Thus, the formulated null hypothesis, “there is no significant difference in the occupational aspirations of higher secondary school students in relation to types of institutions”, was accepted. Therefore, it may be concluded that the types of institutions have no significant influence on the occupational aspirations of Secondary School Students.

**Table 1.4**

**Institutional differentials in various dimensions of Occupational Aspiration.**

Occupational aspiration	Types of institutions	N	Mean	SD	t-test
Awareness	Govt.	26	29.35	3.21	0.07*
	Private	26	29.42	4.51	
Interest	Govt.	26	24.81	2.09	0.84*
	Private	26	25.38	2.77	
Contribution towards Society	Govt.	26	25.54	3.45	1.09*
	Private	26	26.46	2.59	
Future Perspective	Govt.	26	25.96	1.75	0.18*
	Private	26	26.08	2.65	

\*Not significant at 0.05 level of significance

**Fig.1.4. Institutional differentials in various dimensions of Occupational Aspiration.**

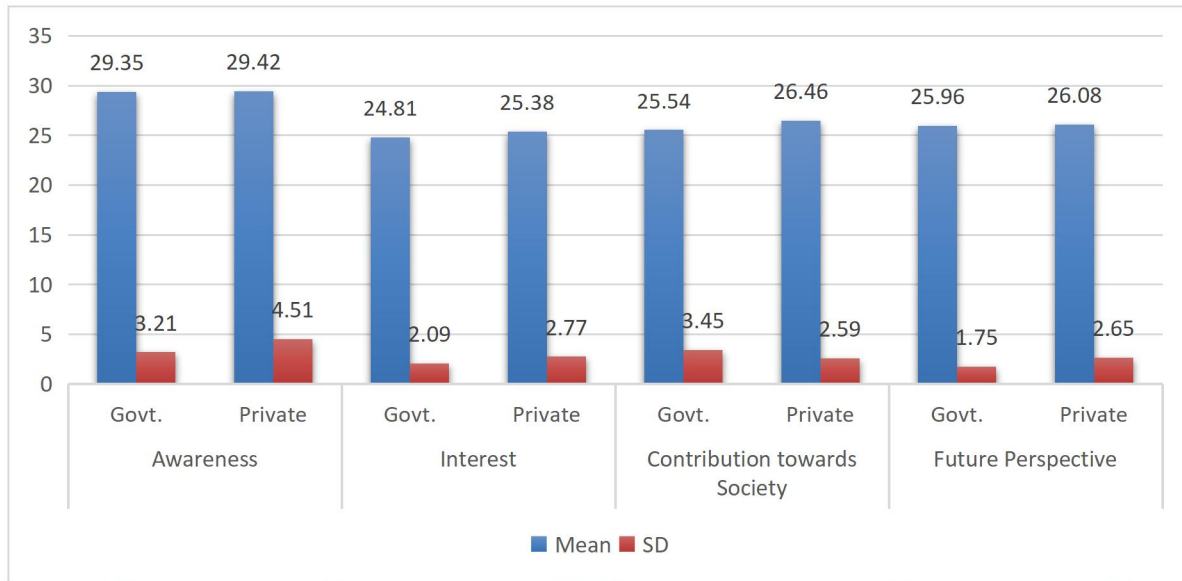


Table No. 1.4 reveals the dimensions of occupational aspiration of secondary school students in relation to the type of institutions. The mean scores for awareness among government and private school students were 29.35 and 29.42, respectively, with standard deviations of 3.21 and 4.51. The calculated t-value of 0.07 suggests that this difference is not significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests that private school students have similar mean scores regarding awareness of their occupational aspirations to those of male students. Thus, both groups demonstrate a comparable level of awareness, with some differences in variability.

The table reveals that the mean scores for interest for government and private school students were 24.81 and 25.83, and the SD were 2.09 and 2.77, respectively. The t-value of 0.84 indicates that there is no significant difference between the two groups at the 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that private school students tend to have a somewhat greater interest in their occupational aspirations than government school students.

Further, the table reveals that the mean scores for contribution towards society for government and private school students were 25.54 and 26.46, and the SD were 3.47 and 2.59, respectively. The obtained t-value of 1.09 indicates that there is no significant difference at the 0.05 level of significance. The government and private school students have slightly higher mean scores regarding their contributions to society, with private school students scoring slightly higher than that of government school students regarding their contributions towards society.

The table further reveals that the mean scores for future perspective for government and private school students were 25.96 and 26.08, and the SD were 1.75 and 2.65, respectively. The t-value of 0.18 suggests that there is no significant difference at the 0.5 significance level. This suggests that private school students have a more positive outlook regarding their future than government school students.

Thus, it can be concluded that the differences in occupational aspirations among secondary school students are based on the type of institution. Government school students exhibit slightly similar awareness of their occupational aspirations, while private school students show greater interest, contribution to society, and a more positive outlook for their future. Therefore, the findings suggest that private school students tend to have a stronger positive outlook toward their aspirations than government school students.

Overall, findings suggest that each gender indicates a comparable level of Occupational aspiration across these dimensions of Occupational aspiration. The study also showed that private school students possess higher career aspirations as compared to government school students (Sharma and Singh, 2017).

### Discussion

The findings indicate that there were no significant differences in occupational aspirations between male and female higher secondary students. Where female students show greater awareness, and interest in their occupational aspirations than that of male students. On the contrary, male students show higher levels of contribution towards society, while female students demonstrate a more positive outlook regarding their futures.

This study further indicated that the types of institutions (government and private) do not influence the occupational aspirations of Secondary School Students. The Government school students exhibit slightly similar awareness of their occupational aspirations, on

the other hand of private school students show greater interest, contribution to society, and a more positive outlook for their future. Therefore, the findings suggest that private school students tend to have a stronger positive outlook toward their aspirations than government school students.

### **Educational Implication**

1. The study presents insight into the differences in professional goals between male and female students, allowing educators to design career guidance programs for each individual based on their interests, needs, capabilities and abilities.
2. The study's findings also reveal that the government and private schools should examine their vocational training and career advice programs to ensure that they are properly meeting the needs of their students.
3. The study's findings may assist curriculum design by incorporating career-related information that represents the interests of both male and female students, encouraging participation and applicability in education
4. The study shows that it is important for parents to engage in conversations about professional goals with their children, since this significantly influences the development of students' career aspirations.

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