

Patterns and Trends in Achievement: English Language 2016

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the patterns and trends in achievement of the students in the English language.

The patterns of achievement in 2016 will be presented in part I and the trends will be presented in part II.

Part I – Patterns in achievement in the English language

First, national level student achievement would be discussed in relation to student performance pertaining to English Language.

5.2 Patterns of achievement at national level

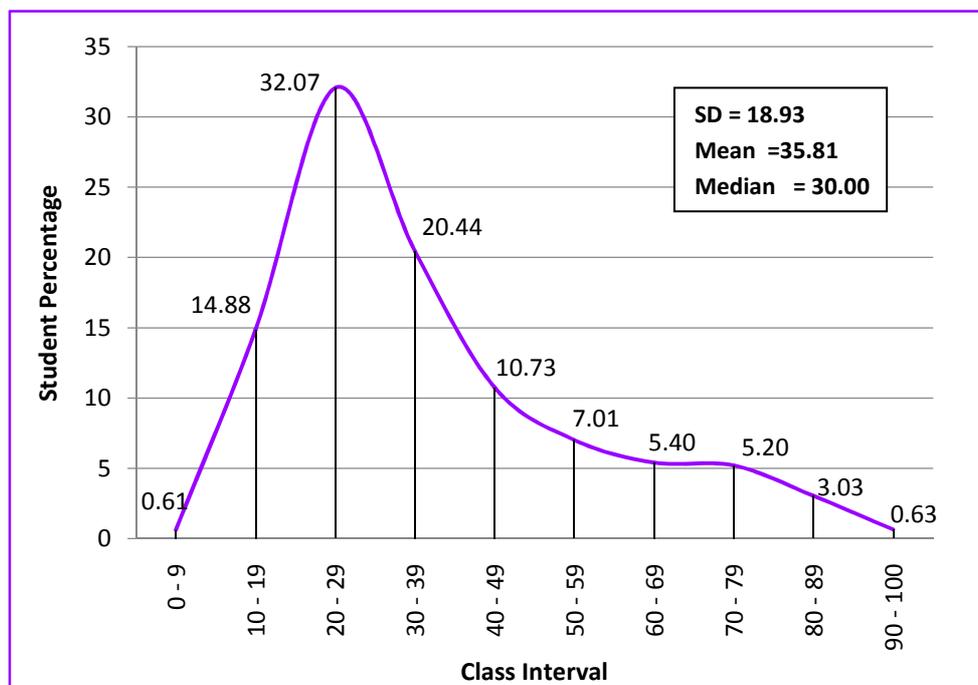


Fig. 5.1: All island achievement in English 2016 – dispersion of marks

The frequency polygon shown in Fig. 5.1 outlines the total picture of the distribution of marks of grade 8 students in English. According to this curve the average marks obtained by the students (Mean) is 35.81 and the median is 30. Therefore, the achievement in the English language cannot be considered as satisfactory.

Fig. 5.1 depicts a positively skewed distribution of marks displaying that majority of the students has scored low marks in English. The distribution of marks is further clarified in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: All island achievement in English 2016– cumulative percentages

Class Interval	Student %	Cumulative %
0 - 9	0.61	0.61
10 - 19	14.88	15.49
20 - 29	32.07	47.56
30 - 39	20.44	68.00
40 - 49	10.73	78.73
50 - 59	7.01	85.74
60 - 69	5.40	91.14
70 - 79	5.20	96.34
80 - 89	3.03	99.37
90 - 100	0.63	100.00
Total	100.00	

According to this table the highest percent of students (32%) has scored between 20-29 marks. Further, 68% of students has scored below 40 marks.

Fig. 5.2 illustrates student achievement patterns further.

As Fig. 5.2, the box plot displays average marks (mean) is 35.81. On the other hand the median of the achievement is 30. Therefore, more than 50% of the students has achieved values above the average marks.

While 25% of the students (25th percentile) has scored below 22 marks, another 25% of the students has scored above the 46 marks. However, there are also some outliers.

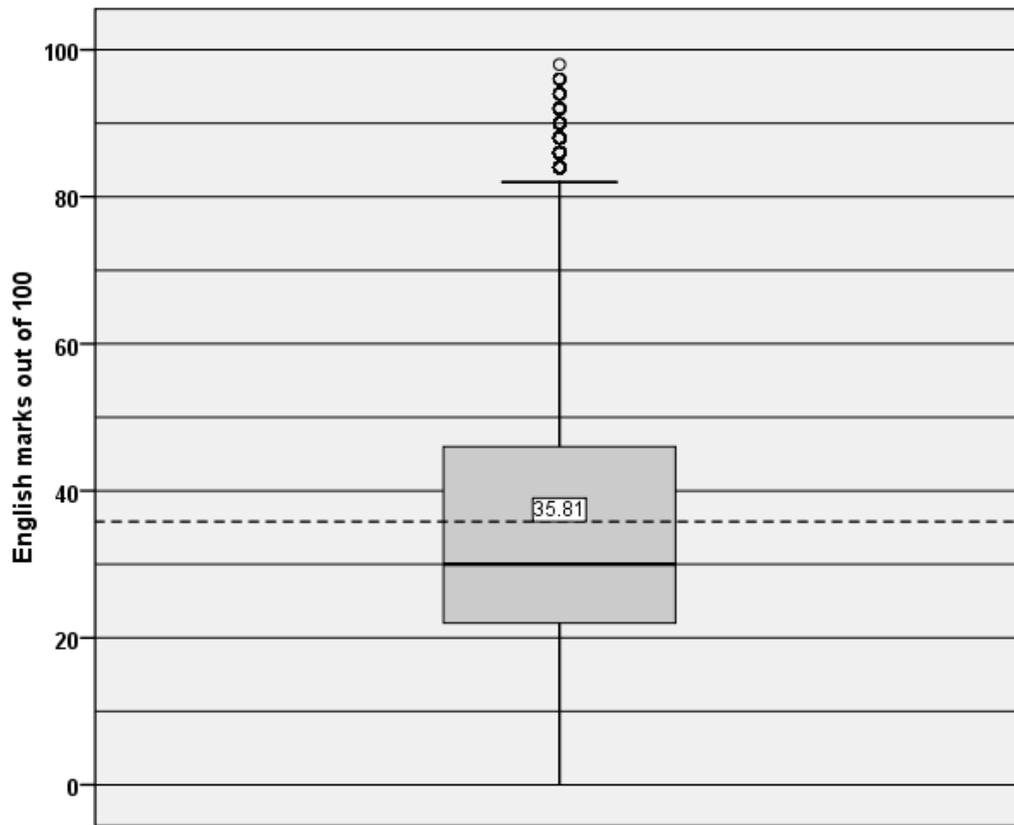


Fig. 5.2: Box plot and whisker chart representing all island English achievement

Summary of national level achievement

- National level mean is 35.81, while the median is 30.
- The highest number of students falls within the marks range of 20-29.
- 68% of students has scored below 40 marks.

Provincial wise student achievement will be discussed next.

5.3 Provincial wise student achievement

The nature of the distribution of scores provincial wise reveals certain patterns. These patterns are discussed based on Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Provincial achievement in English 2016 – Summary statistics

Province	Mean	Rank	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Percentile 25	Median	Percentile 75
Western	41.64	1	0.08	21.06	0.70	26.00	36.00	54.00
Southern	38.62	2	0.10	19.70	0.89	24.00	32.00	50.00
Sabaragamuwa	35.65	3	0.10	18.09	0.98	22.00	30.00	46.00
Central	35.45	4	0.09	18.72	1.04	22.00	30.00	44.00
North Western	34.33	5	0.09	17.27	1.02	22.00	30.00	44.00
North Central	33.95	6	0.12	17.58	1.23	22.00	28.00	42.00
Uva	31.44	7	0.10	15.78	1.45	20.00	28.00	36.00
Eastern	29.24	8	0.08	14.87	1.55	20.00	26.00	34.00
Northern	28.96	9	0.11	15.98	1.76	18.00	24.00	32.00
All Island	35.81		0.03	18.93	1.05	22.00	30.00	46.00

As Table 5.2 and Fig. 5.3 indicate based on provincial wise mean achievements Western Province ranks first. The Southern Province is ranked second.

Achievement wise the provinces fall into three categories. Western and Southern Provinces with mean scores above the national mean, fall into the higher category. All the other provinces are below the national mean. However, Sabaragamuwa and Central Provinces mean values are closer to the National mean. Between the Western and Northern Provinces there is almost thirteen point difference in mean values indicating the disparity in achievement among the provinces.

The mean and the median values for the different provinces are depicted in Fig. 5.3

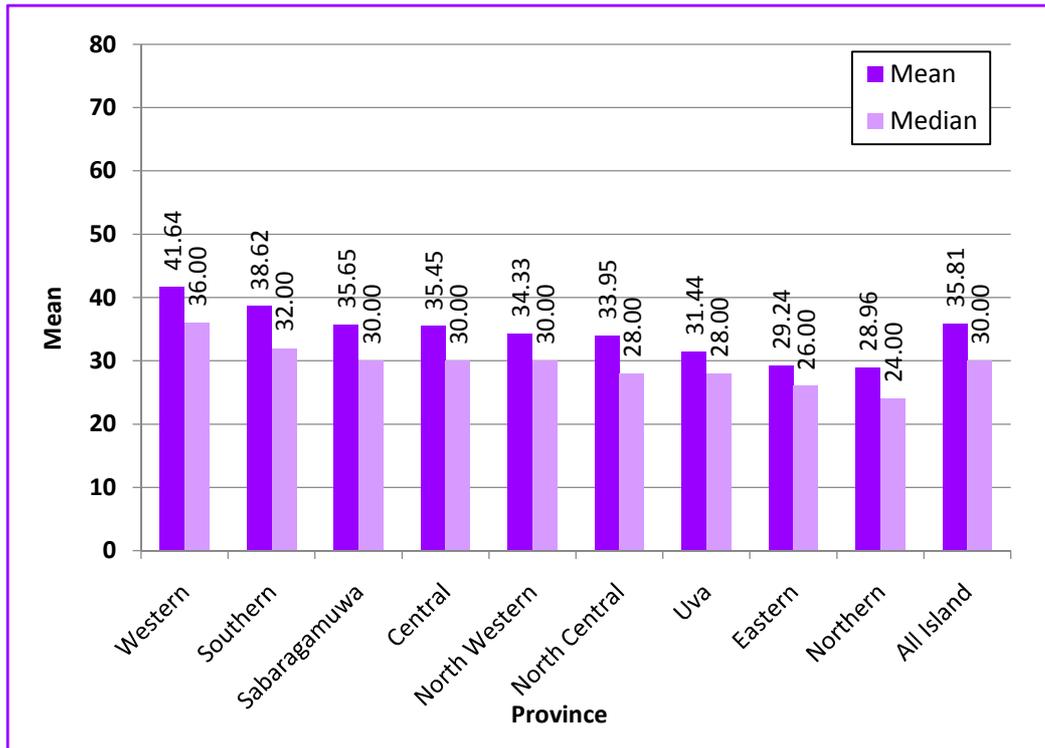


Fig. 5.3: Bar chart to represent mean and median among the provinces – English Language

As Fig. 5.3 displays the median values of all the provinces are below the mean value. Therefore, 50% of the students has scored above the average marks.

Disparity in achievement among provinces

According to Table 5.2 and Fig. 5.3, Western Province has the highest mean value but its SD is also the highest. Thus the variation of students' marks is the highest in this province. The SD value is lowest in the Eastern Province indicating that there is less student variation in achievement. However, its mean value is also very low.

All the provinces have obtained positive skewed values. This indicates that student performance is low. Only Southern and Western indicate low skewness values and their curves are slightly bimodal compared to other provinces. The two curves being bimodal suggests that there are both high achievers and low achievers in these provinces. However, the low achiever group is higher than the high achievers group.

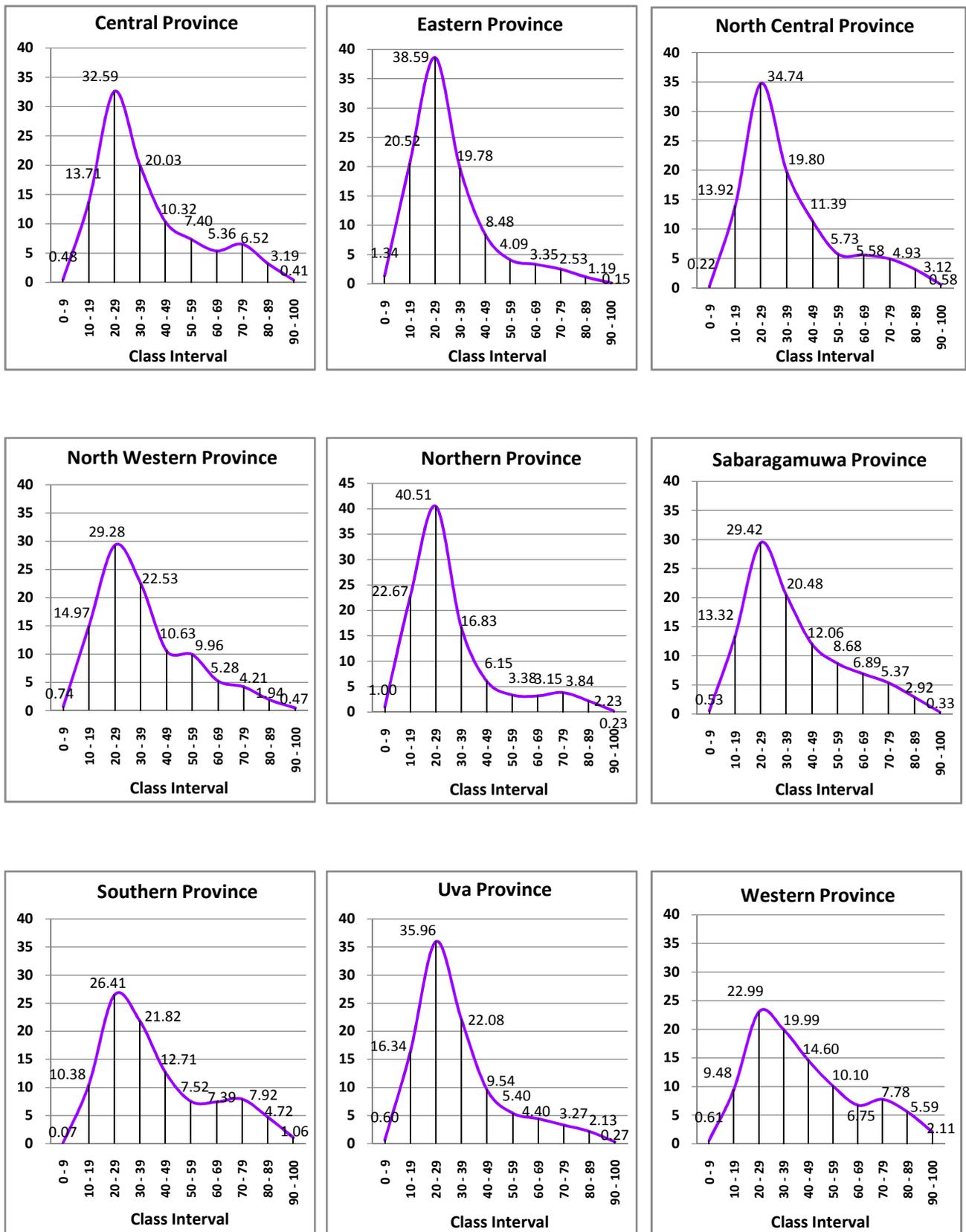


Fig. 5.4: Provincial wise distribution of marks –English Language

Patterns of achievement in the different provinces are further elaborated through the box plot chart.

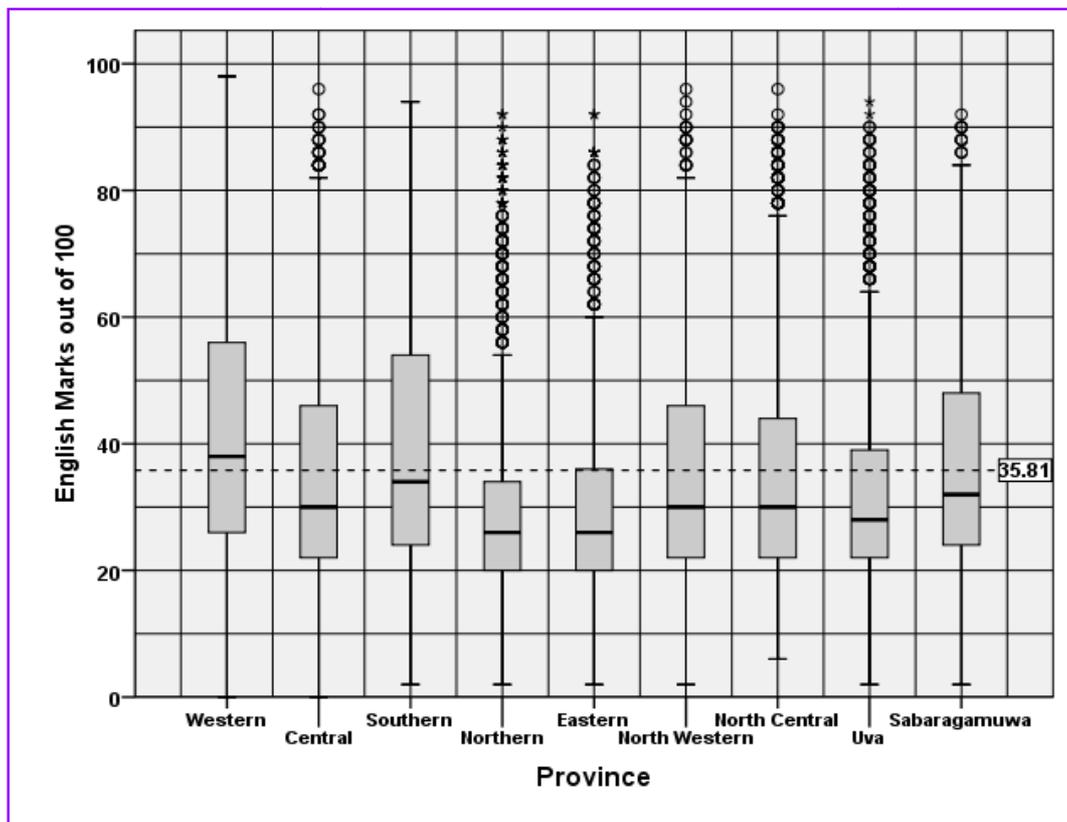


Fig. 5.5: Box plot and whisker chart representing provincial wise English achievement

This chart also confirms the achievement patterns discussed above. Western and Southern are the two provinces that have similar characteristics. Further, there are no outliers in these two provinces. On the other hand, in all other provinces there are outliers. Northern and the Eastern are the lowest performing districts and they have the highest number of outliers. The diverse nature of the box plots of different provinces indicate the heterogeneous student performance in the English language among the provinces.

Table 5.3: Percentage of student scoring 50 or above, and below 50 – English language

Province	Greater than or Equal to 50	Less than 50
Central	22.88	77.12
Eastern	11.30	88.70
North Central	19.94	80.06
North Western	21.86	78.14
Northern	12.84	87.16
Sabaragamuwa	24.19	75.81
Southern	28.61	71.39
Uva	15.48	84.52
Western	32.33	67.67
All Island	21.27	78.73

Summary of provincial level analysis

- Achievement wise the provinces fall into three categories.
 Category 1 – Southern and Western, with mean scores above the national mean (35.81)
 Category 2 – Sabaragamuwa and Central Provinces cluster in the middle.
 Category 3 – The other provinces with mean scores below the national mean.

5.4 Achievement levels by type of school

Table 5.4: English Language achievement according to school type

School Type	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Percentile 25	Median	Percentile 75	F	Sig.
1AB	42.72	0.05	21.02	0.60	26.00	38.00	58.00	26249.57	0.000
1C	29.62	0.04	13.74	1.31	20.00	26.00	36.00		
Type 2	27.55	0.05	12.57	1.48	20.00	24.00	32.00		
All Island	35.81	0.03	18.93	1.05	22.00	30.00	46.00		

As Table 5.4 and Fig. 5.6 indicate there is a considerable gap between the mean scores of different school types. However, 1AB schools' mean score is above that of the other types and also above the national mean. On the other hand, the mean scores of Type 2 and 1C schools, are below the national mean.

The difference in mean and median scores is graphically shown in Fig. 5.6

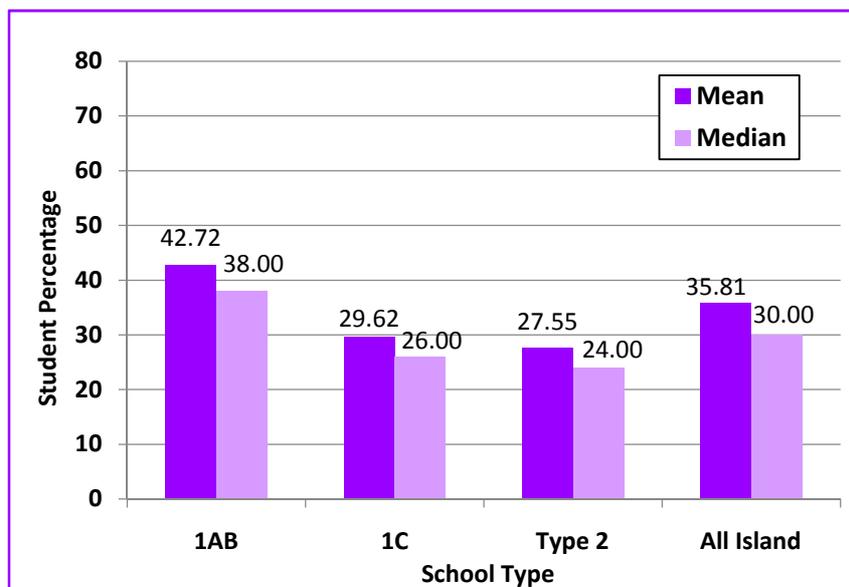


Fig. 5.6: Bar chart representing the mean and median among the school types - English Language

As Fig. 5.6 displays median values of all school types are below the mean values. This means that fifty percent of students in all school types have obtained scores above their mean values. However, 1AB schools mean and median are above the value of other two school types.

On the other hand, according to Table 5.3 the SD of the 1AB schools is quite high compared to the other two school types. Therefore, it could be concluded that there is greater variation among student achievement within 1AB schools.

Variation among students

Variation in student achievement in 1C and Type 2 schools is low. Those values are lower than the all island SD value as well. It reveals that higher number of student achievement lies closer to the mean value. The dispersion from the mean value is very low. Type 2 schools standard deviation value is the lowest among the school types. This indicates that student achievement deviation from the mean is very low.

Disparity in achievement

All school types have obtained positive skewed values. It reveals that in all school types higher number of students has achieved low marks while lower marks are obtained by a higher number of students. Highest skewed value has been obtained by Type 2 schools. Next higher value has been obtained by 1C schools. Both values are above the all island skewness value.

The variation in student performance in different types of schools is further highlighted through the frequency distribution graphs.

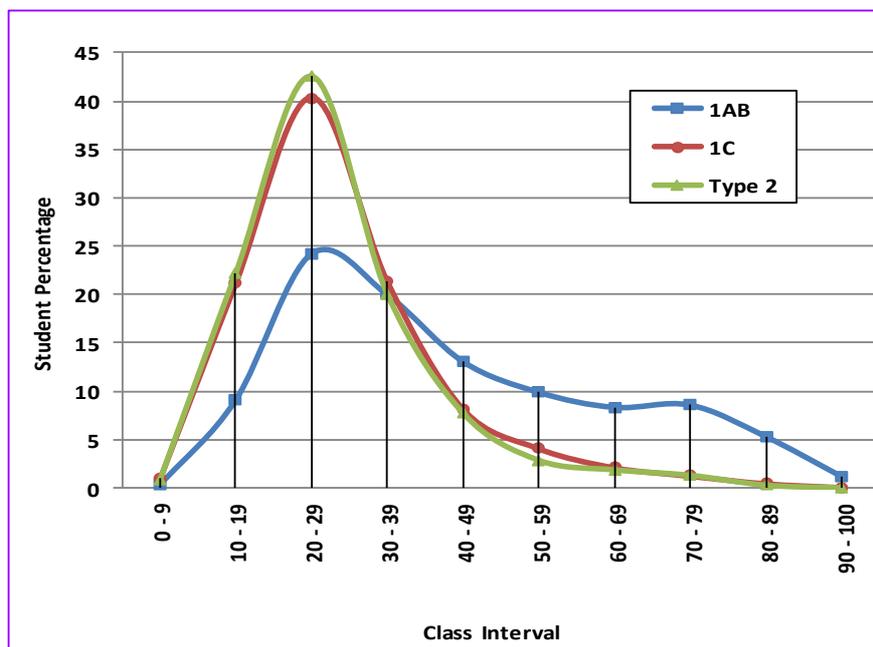


Fig. 5.7: Dispersion of marks by school type- English Language

Fig. 5.7 displays that 1C and Type 2 school curves peak at 20-29 class interval and the curves are quite similar. While in Type 1AB schools even though the peak is at 20-29 class interval the percentage of students scoring this mark range is less. Further, the marks spreads over three mark intervals indicating that there are also high achievers even though a lesser percentage.

The spread of marks at different mark intervals is further illustrated in the cumulative percentage Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Cumulative student percentages according to school type- English Language

Class Interval	1AB		1C		Type 2	
	Student %	Cumulative %	Student %	Cumulative %	Student %	Cumulative %
0 - 9	0.32	0.32	0.98	0.98	0.89	0.89
10 - 19	9.12	9.44	21.15	22.13	22.27	23.17
20 - 29	24.24	33.67	40.34	62.47	42.62	65.79
30 - 39	20.01	53.68	21.38	83.85	20.11	85.90
40 - 49	13.07	66.76	8.17	92.01	7.75	93.66
50 - 59	9.90	76.66	4.10	96.11	2.87	96.52
60 - 69	8.32	84.97	2.11	98.22	1.88	98.40
70 - 79	8.58	93.55	1.26	99.48	1.32	99.72
80 - 89	5.30	98.85	0.46	99.95	0.28	100.00
90 - 100	1.15	100.00	0.05	100.00	0.00	100.00
Total	100.00		100.00		100.00	

As Table 5.5 indicates in all school types the highest percentage of students has scored between 20-29. However, while in 1AB schools this percentage is 24.24 in 1C schools it is 40.34 and in Type 2 it is 42.62. On the other hand, in 1AB schools there are also 16% of students scoring above 70%. In the other two school types the percentage of students scoring above 70% is below 5%.

The analysis of data pertaining to the school types indicates disparity in achievement.

This is further illustrated through the box plot.

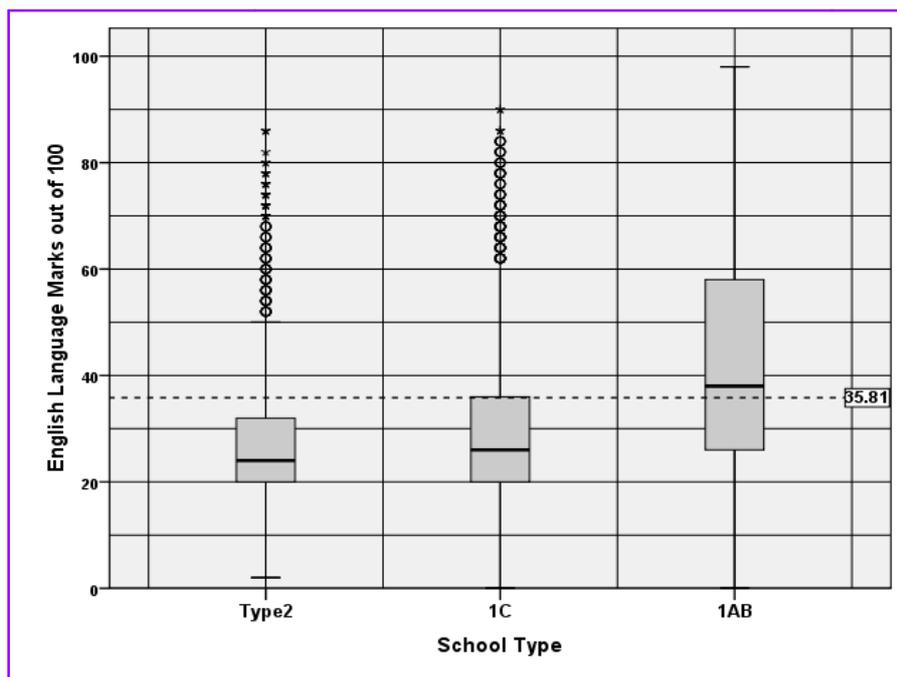


Fig. 5.8: English marks according to school types using box plot and whisker plot

The box plots of the 1C and Type 2 schools are similar. This indicates that their performances are similar. In both school types there are also outliers who's performance is higher than the other students. On the other hand, the 1AB schools performance is different. Their 25th as well as the 75th percentiles are higher than that of the Type 2 and 1C schools. It also indicates that their performance is high. Further, there are no outliers.

Summary

- The achievement in English in 1C and Type 2 schools are relatively similar.
- 1AB schools' performance is quite different and higher than the other two school types.
- The gap in achievement between school types continues.

5.5 Achievement levels by gender

Table 5.6: English Language achievement according to gender

Gender	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Percentile 25	Median	Percentile 75	F	Sig.
Male	33.57	0.05	18.76	1.28	20.00	28.00	40.00	4491.66	0.000
Female	37.92	0.05	18.85	0.88	24.00	32.00	48.00		
All Island	35.81	0.03	18.93	1.05	22.00	30.00	46.00		

There is a difference in the achievement of female students over male students. As Table 5.6 indicates, male performance is also lower than the all island mean score, while female performance is above the all island mean.

These differences could also be seen in Fig. 5.9.

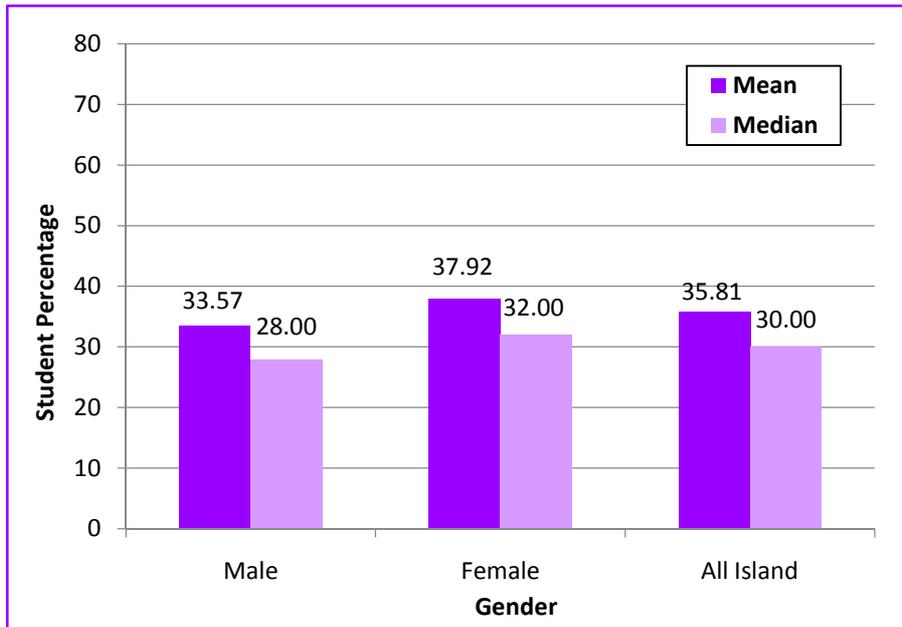


Fig. 5.9: Bar chart representing mean and median values according to gender –English

As Fig. 5.9 indicates when mean and median values are compared the median values of both males and females are below that of the mean values. Therefore 50% of the students has reached the mean values.

Variation among students

As indicated in Table 5.6, variation in achievement among male students is higher than that of the female students. This is indicated by the female students obtaining a higher SD value than the male students (Table 5.5). On the other hand, the male students SD is below the all island SD. Further, the male skewness value is higher than the all island as well as the female value.

Fig. 5.10 graphically illustrates the dispersion of marks according to gender.

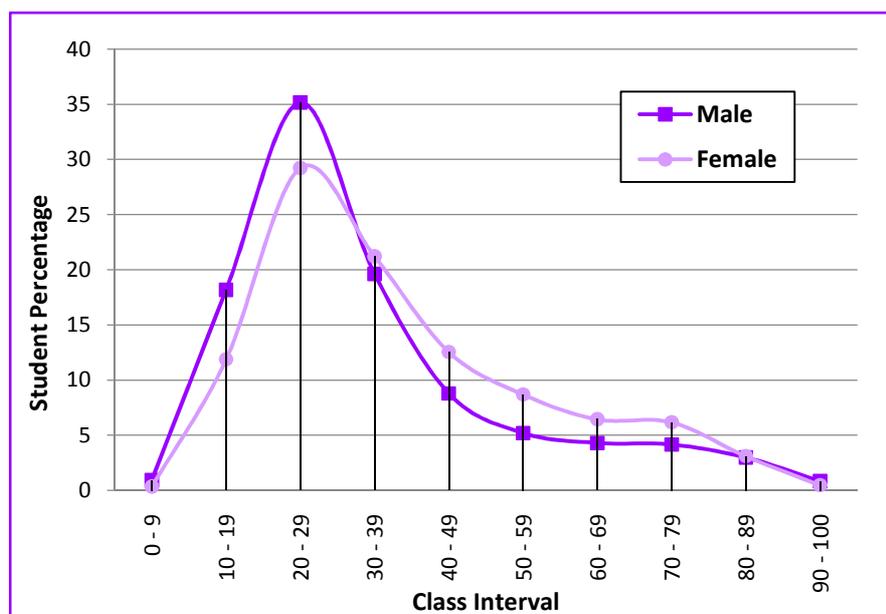


Fig. 5.10: Dispersion of marks by gender - English

Fig. 5.10 displays two curves which are both positively skewed. As can be seen there are more low achievers than high achievers among both males and females. However the pattern of the two curves are slightly different. At the beginning the curves are similar, but the male curve is higher. Then the curves become different and at the 30-39 class interval they cut across. But the female curve then rises above the male curve and finally, both curves become similar again.

The disparity in the male students' achievement can be elaborated better through the cumulative percentages.

Table 5.7: Cumulative student percentages according to gender -English Language

Class Interval	Male		Female	
	Student %	Cumulative %	Student %	Cumulative %
0 - 9	0.92	0.92	0.33	0.33
10 - 19	18.16	19.08	11.87	12.19
20 - 29	35.16	54.23	29.24	41.43
30 - 39	19.61	73.84	21.20	62.63
40 - 49	8.77	82.61	12.53	75.16
50 - 59	5.18	87.80	8.68	83.84
60 - 69	4.28	92.08	6.44	90.28
70 - 79	4.14	96.22	6.17	96.45
80 - 89	2.96	99.18	3.09	99.54
90 - 100	0.82	100.00	0.46	100.00
Total	100.00		100.00	

According to Table 5.7 and Fig. 510 it could be concluded that among both females and males, there are low performing students. The highest percentage (29.24%) of female students' marks fall into the class interval 20-29. The highest percentage of male students' marks, a higher percentage (35.16) falls into the same class interval. Considering 40% as the pass mark 62.63% of female students and 73.84% of male students have not reached the pass mark.

Box plot and whisker for gender wise English achievement shows similarities that has been discussed already.

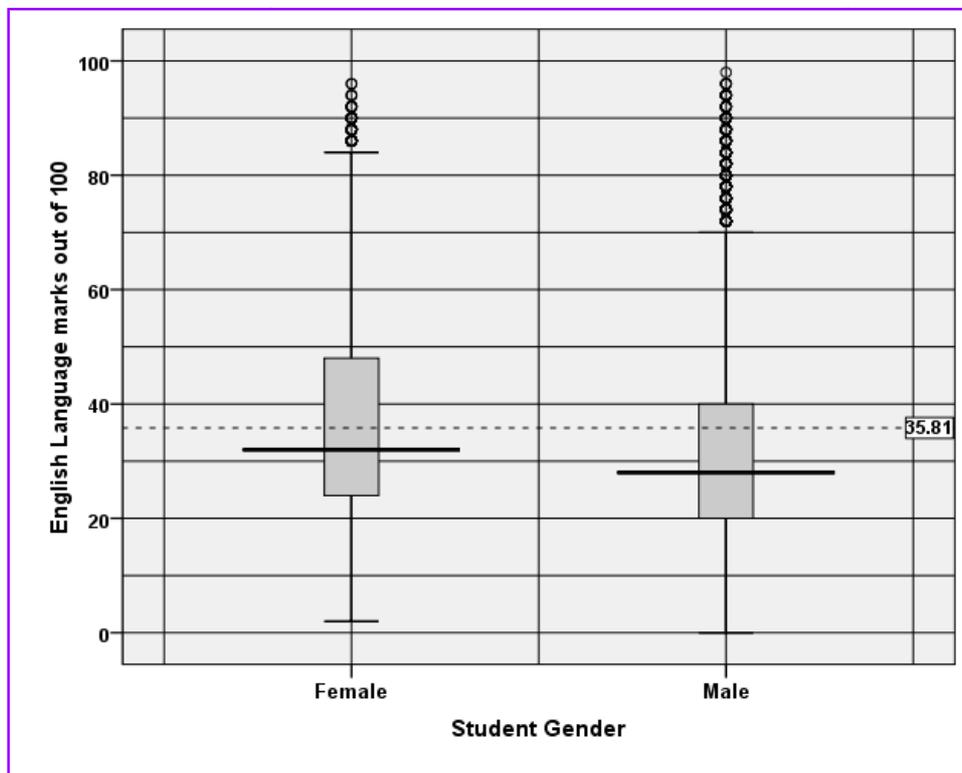


Fig. 5.11: Box plot and whisker plot representing gender wise English Language marks

Box plot and whisker chart show that male students' 25th and 50th percentile is lower than the female mark range as well as the all island range.

There are outliers among both males and females. However, the number of outliers among the males is greater.

Summary

- Female performance is better than all island and male performance.
- While 62.63% of female students has scored below 40, the male student percentage is 73.84%.

5.6 Achievement levels by medium of instruction

Table 5.8: English achievement according to medium of instruction

Medium of Instruction	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Percentile 25	Median	Percentile 75	F	Sig.
Sinhala	37.83	0.04	19.62	0.93	24.00	32.00	48.00	11230.93	0.000
Tamil	30.06	0.05	15.44	1.44	20.00	26.00	36.00		
All Island	35.81	0.03	18.93	1.05	22.00	30.00	46.00		

There is disparity between the students belonging to the different medium of instruction. While the Sinhala medium students' mean achievement is above the all island mean value, the Tamil medium students' mean achievement is below the national mean average.

These disparities are further highlighted through the bar chart given in Fig. 5.12.

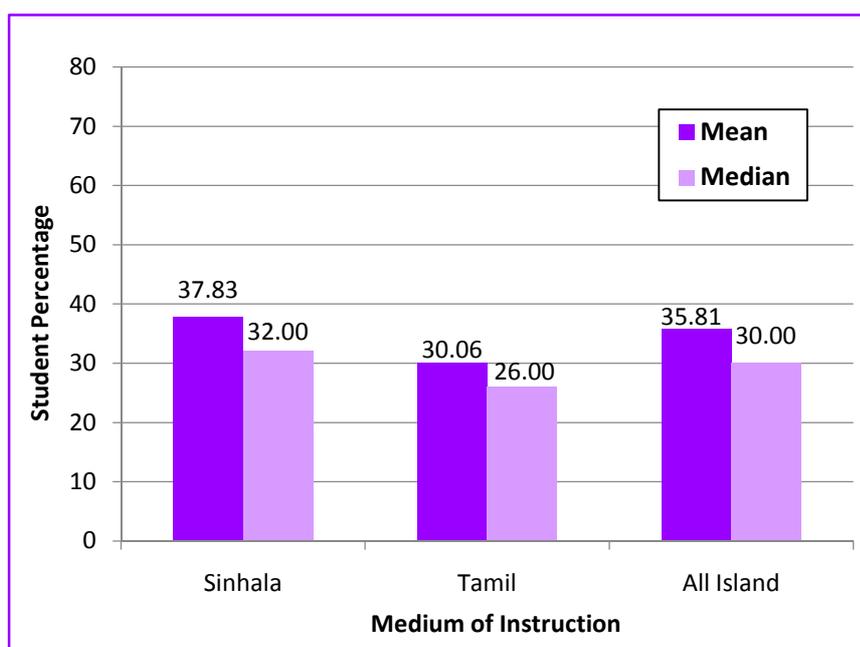


Fig. 5.12: Bar chart representing mean and median values according to medium of instruction - English

As Table 5.8 indicates Sinhala medium students SD is higher than the Tamil medium students and is higher than the national SD. Thus there is greater variation in their performance.

Both Sinhala medium as well as Tamil medium students' achievement curves show positive skewness value. This means that majority of the students has scored low marks.

The diversity in achievement scores among the students taught through the different medium of instruction, is further highlighted through the frequency distribution graphs.

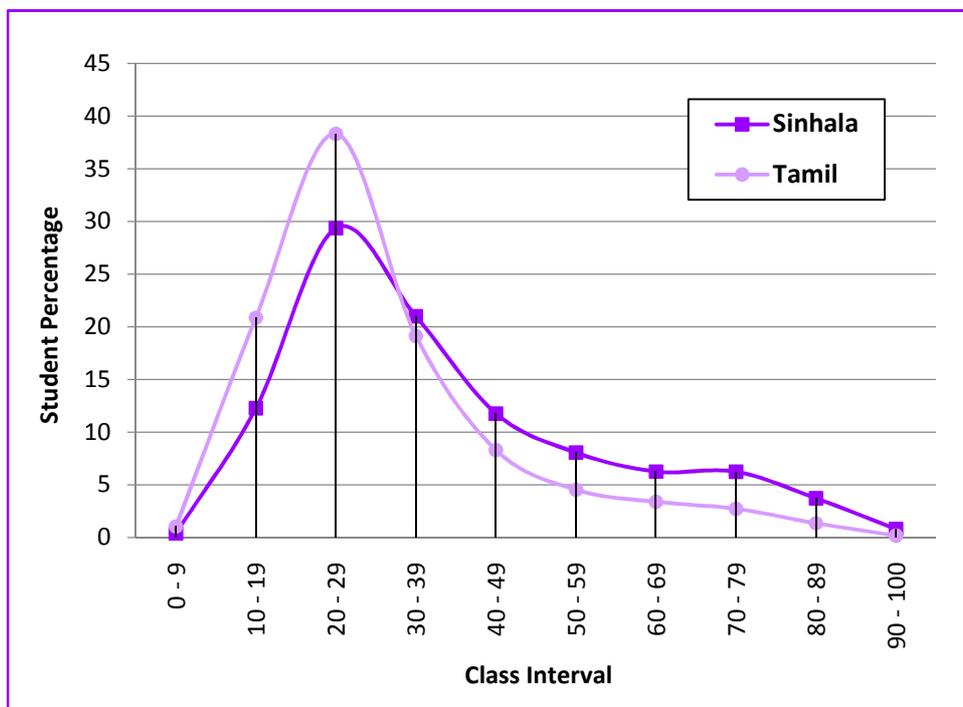


Fig. 5.13: Dispersion of marks by medium of instruction – English

The two curves on Fig. 5.13 has similarities as well as differences, While both curves peak at the class interval 20-29, the percentage of Tamil medium students scoring 20-29 is higher than the Sinhala medium percentage . On the other hand the percentage of students scoring high marks are higher among the Sinhala medium than among the Tamil medium. This pattern can be explained through Table 5.9.

Table 5.9: Cumulative student percentages according to medium of instruction - English Language

Class Interval	Sinhala		Tamil	
	Student %	Cumulative %	Student %	Cumulative %
0 - 9	0.41	0.41	1.07	1.07
10 - 19	12.28	12.69	20.87	21.94
20 - 29	29.36	42.05	38.30	60.24
30 - 39	21.00	63.05	19.14	79.38
40 - 49	11.78	74.83	8.32	87.71
50 - 59	8.07	82.90	4.56	92.26
60 - 69	6.27	89.17	3.41	95.67
70 - 79	6.26	95.43	2.75	98.42
80 - 89	3.75	99.18	1.37	99.80
90 - 100	0.82	100.00	0.20	100.00
Total	100.00		100.00	

As Table 5.9 indicates the highest percentage of the Sinhala medium students' marks is in the range of 20-29. The highest percentage of Tamil medium students marks is also in the range of 20-29.

Considering the pass mark as 40, only 63.05% of Sinhala medium students has scored below the pass mark. On the other hand 79.38% of Tamil medium students has scored below the pass mark.

Box plot for medium wise achievement graphically shows the differences that have been discussed already.

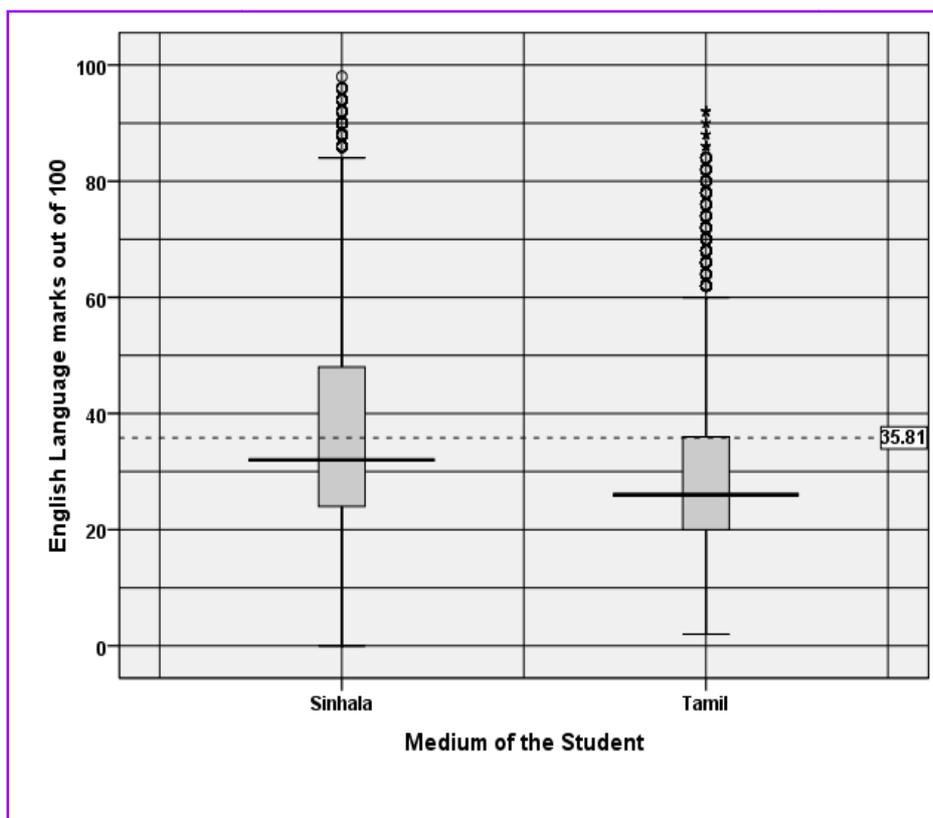


Fig. 514: English marks according to medium of instruction using box plot and whisker plot

Box plot and whisker plot chart shows differences among both media. However, Sinhala medium dispersion of marks in the box plot is less than the Tamil medium students' dispersion of marks. On the other hand, among both groups there are outliers.

Sinhala medium students' 25th, 50th and 75th percentile values are higher than that of the Tamil medium students. Therefore, this confirms that there is disparity between the performance of Tamil and Sinhala medium students in English.

Summary

- There is wide disparity among students belonging to different medium of instruction.
- The Sinhala medium students' mean score is above the national mean while the Tamil medium students' mean is lower.

Students' achievement in relation to the location of the school would be discussed next.

5.7 Achievement levels by location

Table 5.10: English achievement according to location

Location	Mean	Std. Error of Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Percentile 25	Median	Percentile 75	F	Sig.
Rural	32.50	0.03	16.56	1.27	20.00	28.00	40.00	29600.51	0.000
Urban	44.58	0.07	21.80	0.48	26.00	40.00	62.00		
All Island	35.81	0.03	18.93	1.05	22.00	30.00	46.00		

As Table 5.10 indicates, there is variation in achievement among the schools in the different localities. The urban area schools have performed better than the rural area schools. Rural area schools have performed below the national mean while the urban schools have performed above the national mean.

According to Table 5.10 the SD also differs in the two localities even though not to a great extent. However, while the SD of the rural schools is closer to the all island SD, the urban schools SD is higher than the all island SD denoting more variation among the student achievement.

The difference in mean and median values is graphically shown in Fig. 5.15. As Fig. 5.15 indicates the median value in the rural area schools is lower than the mean value.

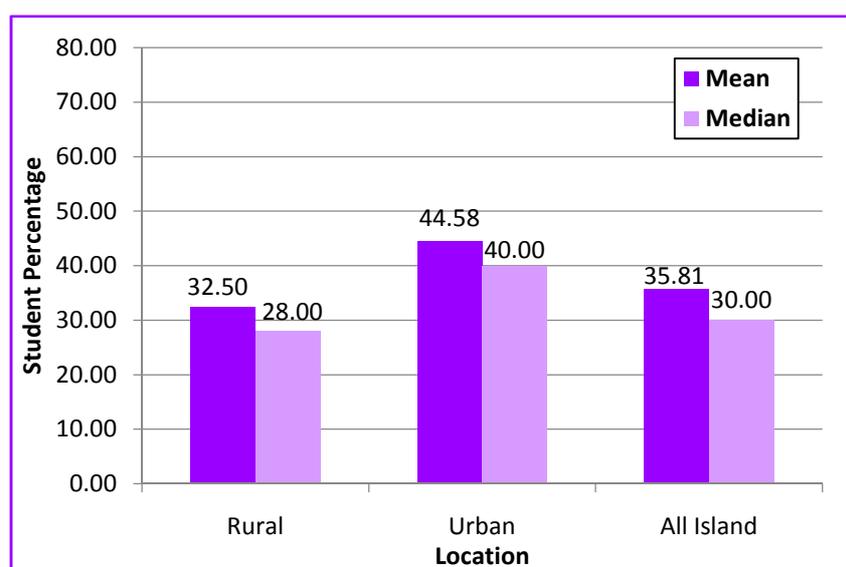


Fig. 5.15: Bar chart representing mean and median values according to location-English

As Fig. 5.15 indicates in both urban and rural areas the median value is lower than the mean value. Therefore, 50% of the students has reached the mean value in both localities.

Students' achievement is further elaborated through the frequency distribution graphs in Fig. 5.16.

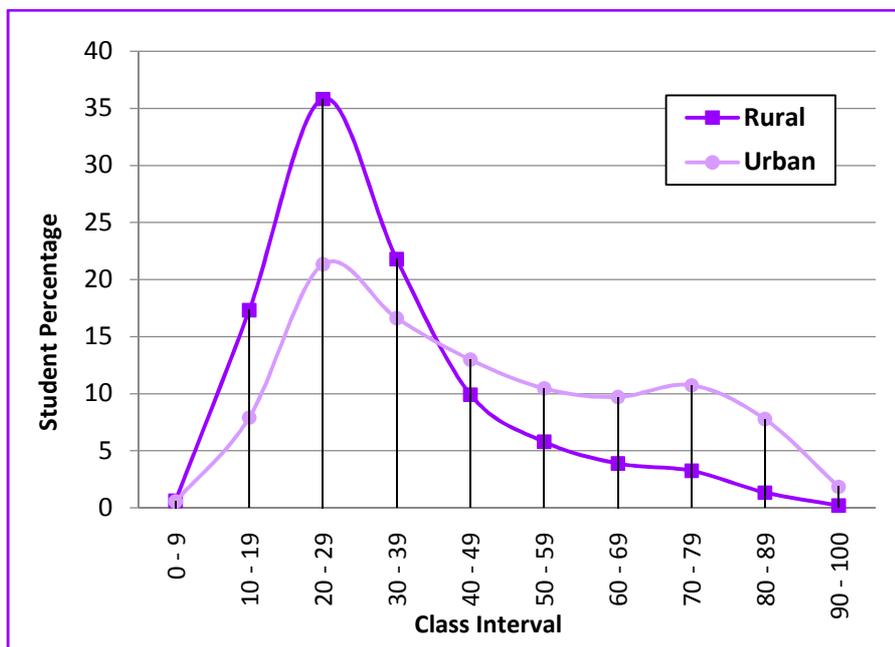


Fig. 5.16: Dispersion of marks by location - English

Fig. 5.16 displays two differently skewed graphs. While the curve representing the rural areas is positive, the shape of the curve representing the performance of urban schools is bimodal. While the rural area curve peaks at the class interval 20-29 the urban area curve peaks at both class intervals 20-29 and 70-79. This difference can be explained using the cumulative percentage Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: Cumulative student percentages according to location - English Language

Class Interval	Rural		Urban	
	Student %	Cumulative %	Student %	Cumulative %
0 - 9	0.62	0.62	0.56	0.56
10 - 19	17.31	17.93	7.934	8.50
20 - 29	35.84	53.77	21.33	29.83
30 - 39	21.78	75.55	16.60	46.43
40 - 49	9.95	85.50	12.99	59.42
50 - 59	5.80	91.30	10.46	69.88
60 - 69	3.89	95.19	9.71	79.59
70 - 79	3.25	98.44	10.75	90.34
80 - 89	1.36	99.80	7.79	98.13
90 - 100	0.20	100.00	1.87	100.00
Total	100.00		100.00	

According to Table 5.11 the highest percentage of students in both urban area schools and rural schools fall into the class interval 20-29. However, in the urban area schools the percentage is 21.33 and in the rural area schools the percentage is 35.84. In addition, in the urban area schools 10.7% of students has also scored between 70-79 marks which has caused the curve to be bi model.

The spread of marks is further illustrated through the box plot graph.

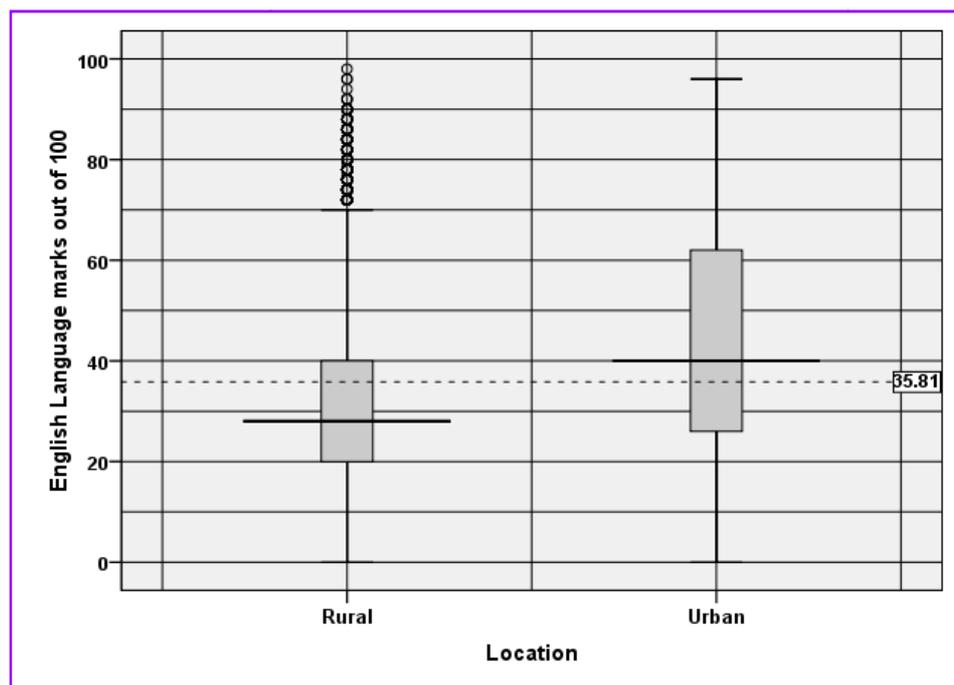


Fig. 5.17: Box plot and whisker plot representing location wise English marks

According to the box plot the urban area schools' performance differs from the rural area schools at the 25th, 50th and 75th percentile. Further their performance is above the all island performance. There are also outliers in the rural areas. The box plot confirms the variation that exists between the performance of the two localities.

Summary

- The performance of the students in the urban areas is better than in the rural areas.
- The deviation of marks is less in the rural area schools.

Achievement patterns observed in relation to the achievement in English, revealed that there were variations among provinces, school type, gender and medium wise.

Students' achievement in relation to subject content will be discussed next.

5.8 Analysis of achievement by sub skills

In constructing the achievement tests, the test items were designed in relation to the competencies and competency levels identified for grade eight. As discussed in chapter 2, the construct assessed in these studies were the competency levels. Based on the competencies and competency levels table of specification was prepared. In preparing the Table of specification, competencies related to oral skills were excluded as they could not be measured through a written paper.

The English language paper was based on four competencies. That is vocabulary, reading, grammar and writing.

Table 5.12 analyses the achievement of competency levels.

Table 5.12: Achievement of competency levels – English language

Competency	Competency Level	Percentage
Vocabulary	4.4 Uses English words in the proper contexts	56.72
	4.5 Uses the dictionary effectively	42.72
	4.6 Uses visual clues and contextual clues to derive the meaning of words	47.82
Reading	5.4 Transfers information into other forms	36.45
	5.5 Extracts the general idea of a text	49.22
Grammar	6.2 Analyze the grammatical relations within a sentence	44.07
	6.6 Construct complex sentences through the process of subordination	48.86
Mechanics of Writing	2.4 Uses commas with understanding	34.07

The achievement of competency levels is graphically depicted in Fig. 5.18.

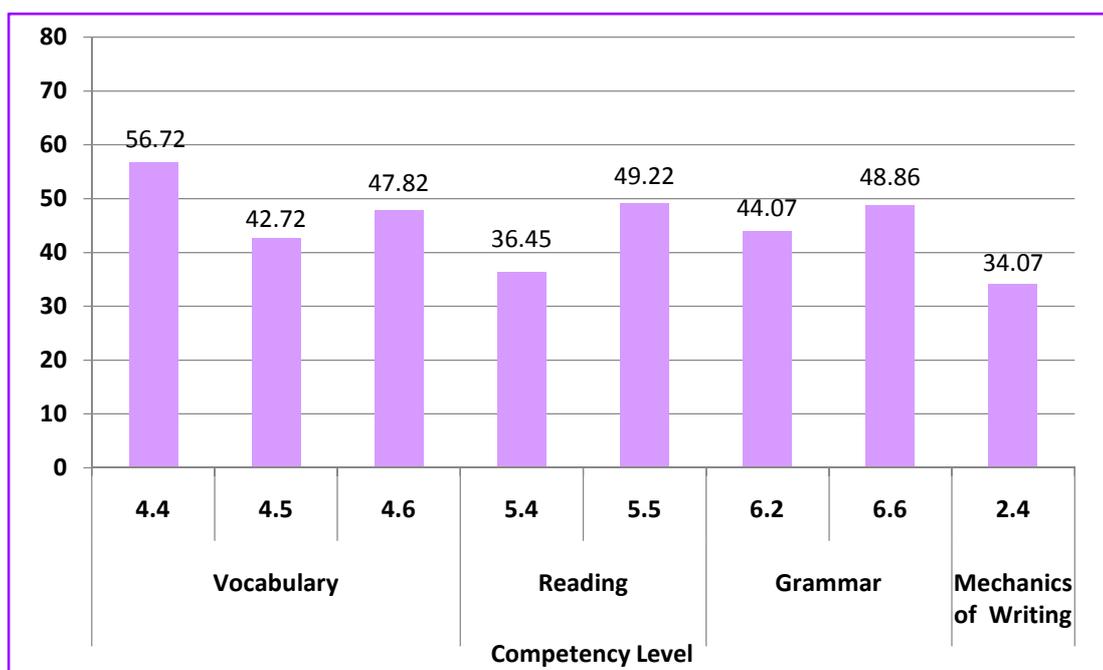


Fig. 5.18: Achievement of competency levels – English language

The writing task would be analysed separately in Table 5.13 and 5.14.

In relation to the achievement of competencies vocabulary is the highest. Uses English words in the proper context is the competency level achieved by the highest percentage of students.

Achievement in grammar is better than reading. However, achievement of these two competency levels is less than 50%. In reading the weakest competency level is transferring information into other forms.

The poorest achievement is shown in the skill ‘writing’.

The two competency levels related to writing to be achieved in grade 8 are as follows;

- 7.5 writes short stories
- 7.6 writes brief notes

One of the tasks was writing a brief note and it was evaluated according to the following criteria.

Salutation	1 mark
Thanking	1mark
Express regret	1 mark
Reason	1 mark
Ending	1 mark
Total	5 marks

Most of the students have not attempted to answer the given questions related to writing task. Table 5.13 shows the performance indicated by the marks obtained for writing a brief note.

Table 5.13: Performance in writing a brief note

	Not Attempted	Attempted Marks Obtained						
Marks		0	1	2	3	4	5	Total
%	34.15	34.51	3.49	4.93	6.87	6.61	10.84	100

According to Table 5.13, only a very small percentage of students have been able to achieve the expected level in writing a brief note. Only 10.84% of the students have been able to score the highest mark for this writing task. There had been 34.15% of students who have not even attempted this task.

Writing a guided short story was another question to assess the competencies that relate to the skill, writing. Performance achieved in this regard is given in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14: Performance in writing a guided short story

	Not Attempted	Attempted Marks Obtained											
Marks		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
%	43.04	40.16	1.60	2.24	2.61	3.16	3.07	1.82	0.99	0.67	0.37	0.29	100

In this task too, majority of the students has not attempted to answer the question. According to Table 5.14 achievement level in this task is not satisfactory. Only 0.29 percent of the students has been able to score the total marks for this question. There had been 43.04% of students who had not attempted this task. Further, of those attempted 40.16% has not scored a single mark. These answers were either “irrelevant” or “question copied”. In general, therefore it could be claimed that achievement of competency levels with regard to writing is not satisfactory.

Part II - Comparison of achievement level of students in 2014 with that of 2016

Trends in achievement over the period 2014-2016 will first be discussed at national level.

5.9 Trends in achievement at national level

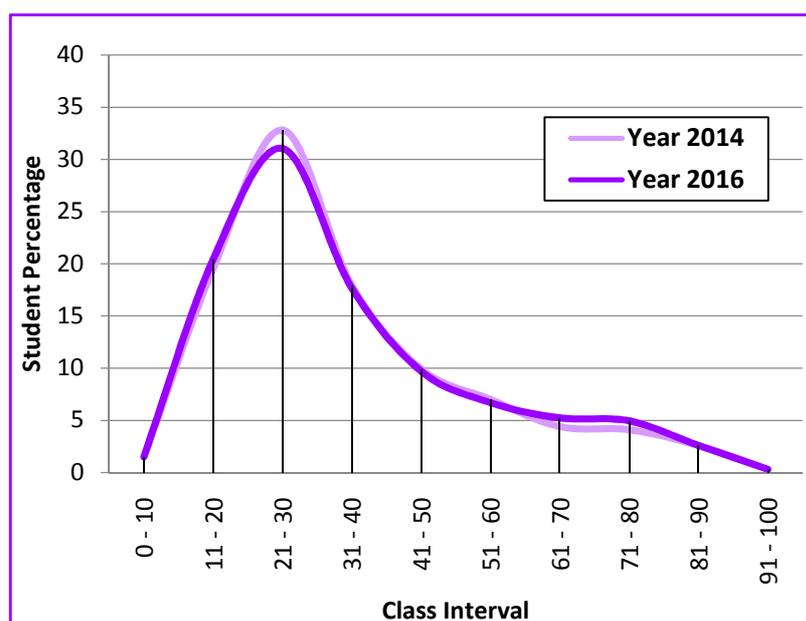


Fig. 5.19: All island achievement in English comparison 2014 -2016- dispersion of marks

As Fig 5.19 indicates there is a slight improvement in students' achievement in the year 2016. The line curve for 2016 shows that the percentage of low achievers has decreased and the percentage of high achievers has increased slightly. This has resulted in an increase in the mean value from 35.23 to 35.81.

This change is further elaborated through the cumulative percentage table.

Table 5.15: Comparison of all island achievement in English - cumulative percentages

Class Interval	Year 2014		Year 2016	
	Student %	Cumulative %	Student %	Cumulative %
0-10	1.50	1.50	1.47	1.47
11-20	19.50	21.00	20.39	21.86
21 - 30	32.80	53.80	31.05	52.91
31 - 40	17.90	71.70	17.68	70.59
41 - 50	9.90	81.60	9.68	80.27
51 - 60	7.00	88.60	6.68	86.95
61 - 70	4.40	93.00	5.22	92.17
71 - 80	4.10	97.10	4.93	97.10
81 - 90	2.60	99.70	2.59	99.69
91-100	0.30	100.00	0.31	100.00
Total	100		100	

The percentage of low achievers, those who have scored below 40% has decreased from 71.70% to 70.59%. On the other hand the percentage of students who has scored between 50-100 has risen from 18.40 to 19.73.

Provincial level performance has contributed to the national level achievement. The trends in provincial level achievement will be discussed next.

5.10 Provincial wise comparison of student achievement

As Fig 5.20 displays while some provinces have contributed positively to the increase in all island mean value some have contributed negatively.

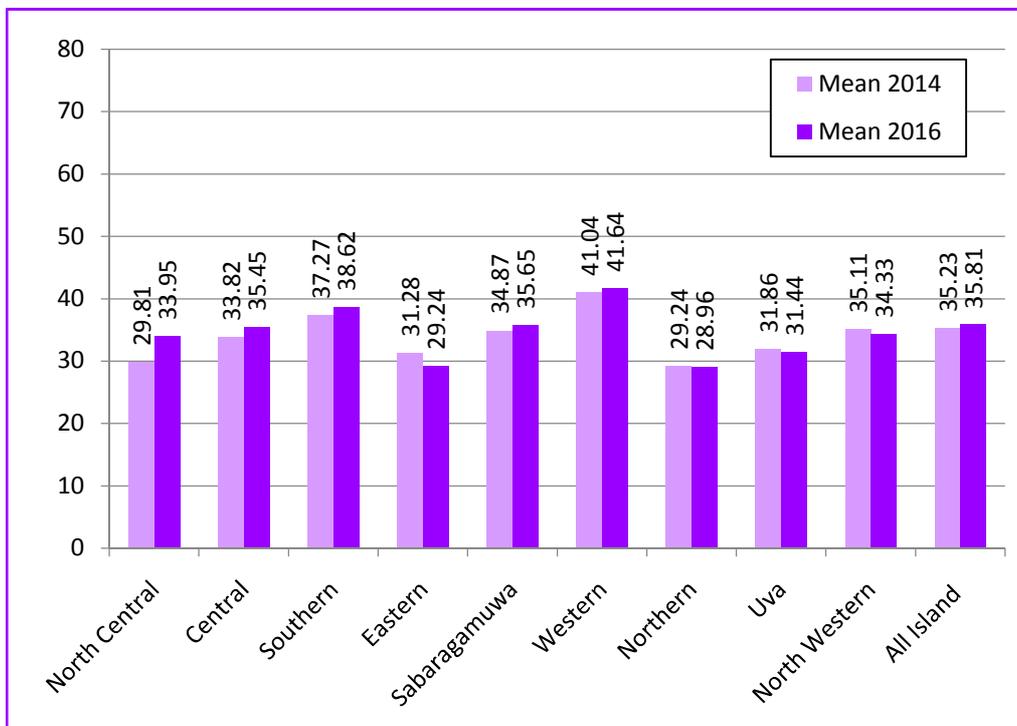


Fig. 5.20: Provincial wise comparison of student achievement – 2014 & 2016

Table 5.16: Provincial wise comparison of student achievement – 2014 & 2016

Province	Year 2014		Year 2016		Z
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
North Central	29.81	13.32	33.95	17.58	7.55**
Central	33.82	17.82	35.45	18.72	2.61**
Southern	37.27	19.75	38.62	19.70	2.05*
Eastern	31.28	14.27	29.24	14.87	-3.85**
Sabaragamuwa	34.87	16.60	35.65	18.09	1.34
Western	41.04	20.86	41.64	21.06	0.87
Northern	29.24	15.87	28.96	15.98	-0.46
Uva	31.86	15.79	31.44	15.78	-0.76
North Western	35.11	17.76	34.33	17.27	-1.29
All Island	35.23	18.32	35.81	18.93	2.69**

* Values are significant at 95%

** Values are significant at 99%

According to Table 5.16 mean values of North Central, Central and Southern have increased in 2016 and these increases are significant. On the other hand, the mean values of Eastern Province has decreased significantly. Even though, the mean value in the Western Province has increased it is not significant. At the same time, Northern, Uva and North Western records declines in mean values. Yet, they are also not significant. The contributions of these provincial changes in the mean values has contributed significantly to increase the all island mean value even though slightly.

Fig: 5.21 depicts the line curves denoting the performance of each province.

As the line curve for the North Central Province illustrates the percentage of high achievers in the range of 50-100 has increased while the low achievers in the range of 21-30 has decreased. This has resulted in a significant increase in the mean value of the province. A similar pattern is observed in the curves of Central and Southern provinces.

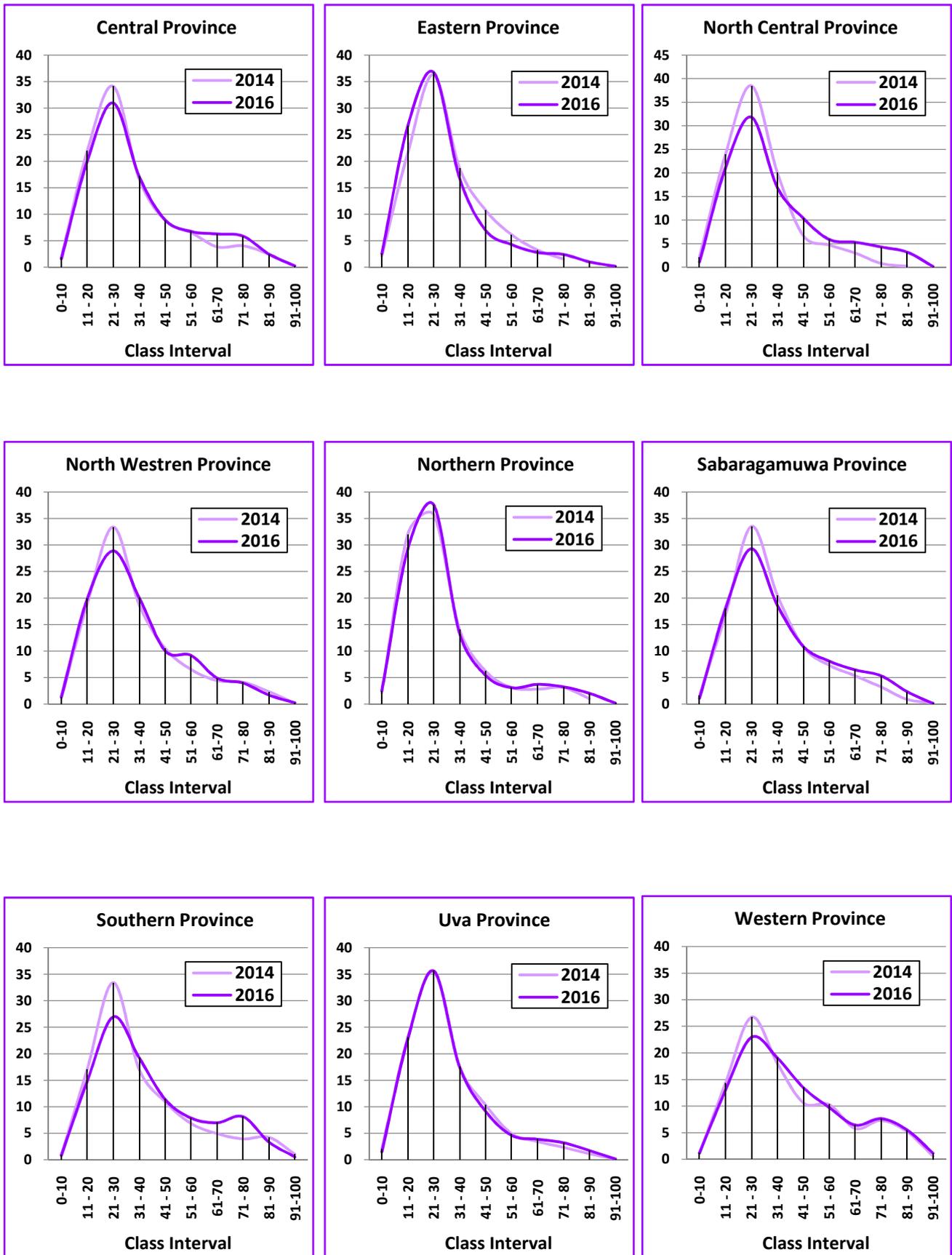


Fig. 5.21: Comparison of provincial wise distribution of marks – English Language

5.11 Comparison of marks according to school types

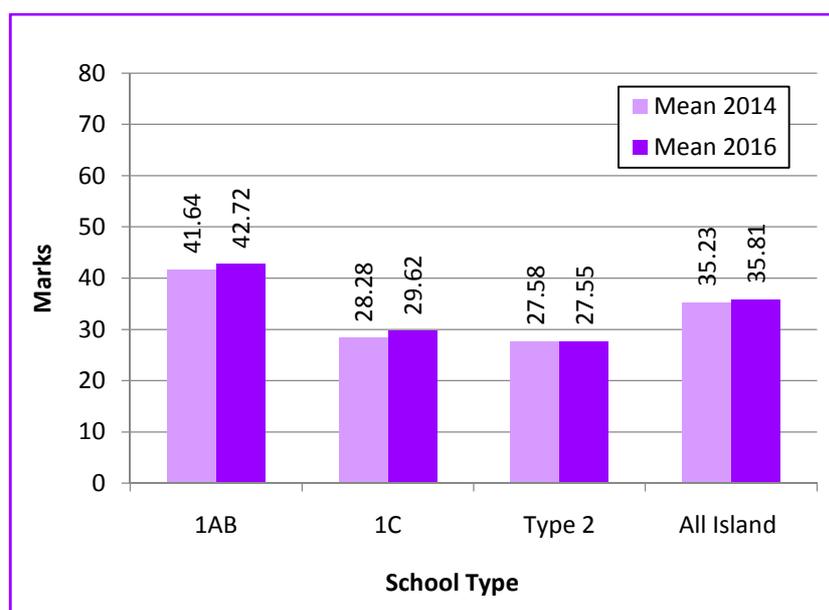


Fig. 5.22: All island comparison of mean values according to school type

As the bar graph indicates there is a slight increase in achievement in 1AB and 1C type schools while there is a slight decrease in Type 2 schools. This increase in 1C schools is a positive sign.

According to Table 5.17 the increase in the 1AB and 1C schools mean values is significant. At the same time the decrease in Type 2 schools is insignificant. The changes in the mean values in the 1AB and 1C schools has positively contributed to the increase in the all island mean value.

Table 5.17: Comparison of English Language achievement according to school type

School Type	Year 2014		Year 2016		Z
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
1AB	41.64	20.28	42.72	21.02	3.32**
1C	28.28	11.90	29.62	13.74	4.90**
Type 2	27.58	12.94	27.55	12.57	-0.08
All Island	35.23	18.32	35.81	18.93	2.69**

* Values are significant at 95%

** Values are significant at 99%

The trend in achievement gender wise will be discussed next.

5.12 Comparison of marks according to gender

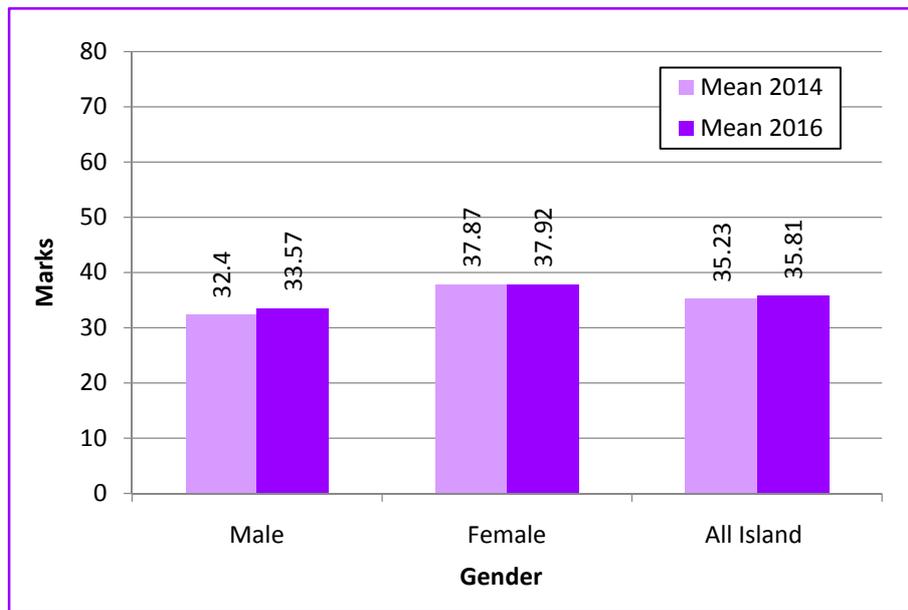


Fig. 5.23: All island comparison of mean values according to gender

As Fig. 5.23 indicates there are slight increases in both male and female performances. However, the increase in male performance is higher than the change in the female performance. Further, as Table 5.18 indicates while the increase in the mean value of males is significant the change in the female performance is not significant. The increase in male performance is a positive sign.

Table 5.18: Comparison of English Language achievement according to gender

Student Gender	Year 2014		Year 2016		Z
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Male	32.40	16.89	33.57	18.76	4.00**
Female	37.87	19.18	37.92	18.85	0.16
All Island	35.23	18.32	35.81	18.93	2.69**

5.13 Comparison of marks according to medium of instruction

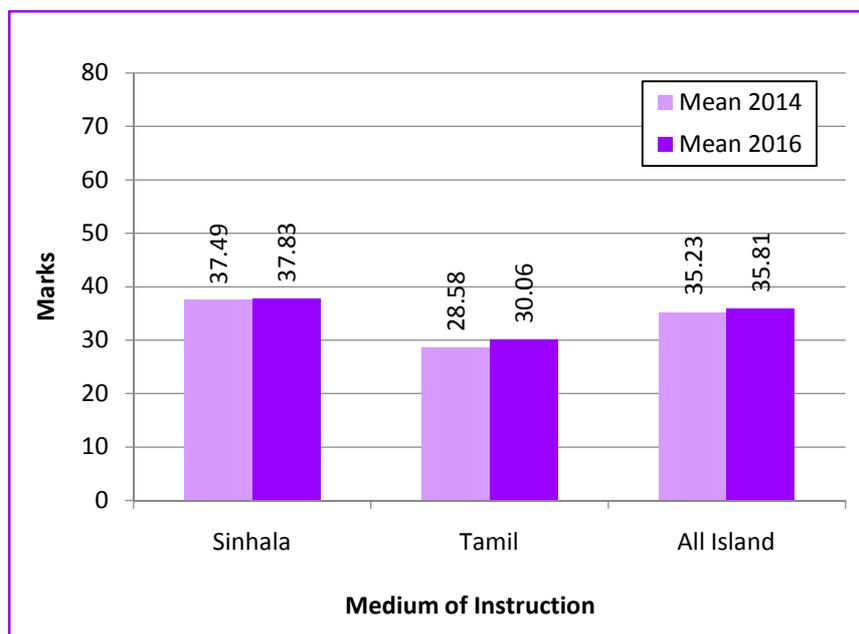


Fig. 5.24: All island comparison of mean values according medium of instruction

There is a very slight improvement in the performance of both Sinhala medium as well as Tamil medium students' performance (Fig. 5.24). However, as Table 5.19 indicates these changes are significant.

Table 5.19: Comparison of English Language achievement according to medium of instruction

Medium of Instruction	Year 2014		Year 2016		Z
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Sinhala	37.49	19.26	37.83	19.62	1.28
Tamil	28.58	13.08	30.06	15.44	4.80**
All Island	35.23	18.32	35.81	18.93	2.69**

5.14 Comparison of marks according to location

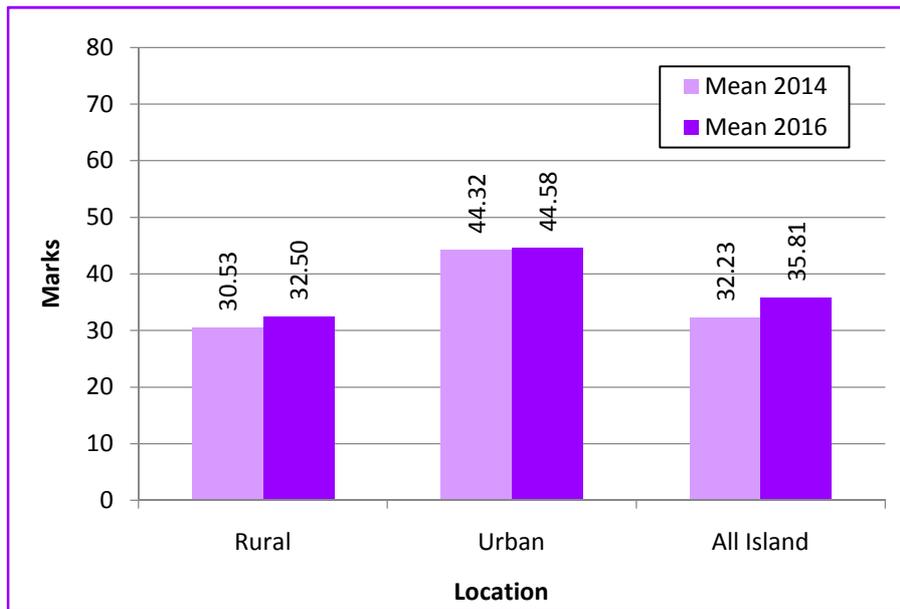


Fig 5.25: All island comparison of mean values according to location

In both urban and rural settings students' achievement has increased. However, compared to the rural performance the increase in urban performance is very slight and according to Table 5.20 this change is insignificant. On the other hand, the change in the rural performance is significant.

Table 5.20: Comparison of English Language achievement according to location

Location	Year 2014		Year 2016		Z
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
Rural	30.53	14.26	32.5	16.56	9.47**
Urban	44.32	21.57	44.58	21.80	0.53
All Island	35.23	18.32	35.81	18.93	2.69**

Increase in rural students' performance is a positive feature even though the urban rural gap in achievement continues.

Trends in performance according to the sub skills in English will be discussed next.

5.15 Comparison of students' achievement in relation to ELCs

Table 5.21: Comparison of competency levels related to the English Language

Competency	Competency Level	2014 Percentage	2016 Percentage	Change
Vocabulary	4.4 Uses English words in the proper contexts	49.60	56.72	7.12
	4.5 Uses the dictionary effectively	40.40	42.72	2.32
	4.6 Uses visual clues and contextual clues to derive the meaning of words	54.30	47.82	-6.48
Reading	5.4 Transfers information into other forms	35.70	36.45	0.75
	5.5 Extracts the general idea of a text	46.50	49.22	2.72
Grammar	6.2 Analyze the grammatical relations within a sentence	45.40	44.07	-1.33
	6.6 Construct complex sentences through the process of subordination	44.40	48.86	4.46
Mechanics of Writing	2.4 Uses commas with understanding	47.30	34.07	-13.23

Considering the Table 5.21 there is not much change in the achievement of skills between 2014 -2016. In 2014 only one competency has been achieved by more than 50% of students. However, there is a reduction in the achievement of competency 4.6 which was achieved by more than 50% students in 2014. There are also decreases in the achievement of competencies 2.4 and 6.2. On the other hand, in 2016 there are increases in achievement in all other competency levels with more than 50% of students achieving competency level 4.4 that is “Uses English words in the proper contexts”.

The poorest achievement is shown in the skill ‘writing’. Most of the students have not attempted to answer the given questions related to writing task. Table 5.22 shows the performance indicated by the marks obtained for writing a brief note.

Table 5.22: Comparison of performance in writing a brief note

Year	Marks	Not Attempted	Attempted Marks Obtained						Total
			0	1	2	3	4	5	
2014	%	60.00	7.70	3.90	5.30	6.90	6.40	10.50	100
2016		34.15	34.51	3.49	4.93	6.87	6.61	10.84	100

According to Table 5.22 compared to 2014 there is a very slight improvement in the performance of this task. In 2014, 60% of the students had not even attempted this task. In 2016 the percentage of not attempted students had reduced to 34.15. However, of the number attempted another 34.51% has obtained zero marks. It was noted that most of these students had either copied the question or what was written was irrelevant.

Writing a guided short story was the question to assess the competency level 7.5.

Table 5.23 shows the performance indicated by the marks obtained for this question.

Table 5.23: Comparison of performance in writing a guided short story

Year	Marks	Not Attempted	Attempted											
			0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
2014	%	75.00	10.00	2.20	2.50	1.70	2.10	2.60	2.00	1.80	1.80	1.40	0.70	100
2016		43.04	40.16	1.60	2.24	2.61	3.16	3.07	1.82	0.99	0.67	0.37	0.29	

Compared to 2014 when 75% of the students did not attempt this task. In 2016 only 43.04% of students had not attempted this task. Further, of those attempted 40.16% has not scored a single mark. These answers were either “irrelevant” or “question copied”. In general, therefore it could be claimed that achievement of competency levels with regard to writing is not satisfactory, especially as the percentage of students who scored 10 marks had declined.

5.16 Summary

Part I of this chapter described student performance in relation to the achievement of learning outcomes in the English language. The discussion pertained to both national and provincial level. Further, achievement was analyzed according to school type, gender, medium of instruction and location.

Test items used to assess students' performance were analyzed to assess how far they have been successful in achieving sub skills of the language expected to be achieved by grade 8 pupils.

Part II described the trends in achievement between 2014-2016.

It could be concluded that overall the achievement of learning outcomes in English is not satisfactory. There is still disparity in achievement provincial wise as well as location and gender wise. However, the performance of male students and those in rural area schools has improved. The achievement of competency levels remains not satisfactory and writing skills achievement appears to be declining.