

IMPACT OF PARENTAL SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF BAHAWALPUR, PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The socioeconomic status of the parents plays a significant role in determining the academic performance of their offspring. The study is an effort to determine this impact empirically. Data is collected through a structured questionnaire from two hundred students of district Bahawalpur via interviews. We have tested the impact of some socio-economic factors such as family background, father education, mother education, number of children interested in education, facilities provided by the government for children's education and decision about a child's future on the academic record of students. The findings of the study suggest that the income of father and education of both father & mother have a positive impact on the academic performance of the students. Mother education, however, has a greater impact on the academic outcomes of the students as compared to father education. Moreover, the strong family background and education facilities provided by the government also enhanced the performance of the students in the studied sample.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Government policies, Paternal socio-economic status

INTRODUCTION

A recent wave of literature has established an important link between the socioeconomic status of a family and the learning environment available to children. It is widely believed that the social and economic status of parents can contribute significantly to student success at educational institutes. Families from the low socio-economic status group are less likely to have economic resources or time available to provide due academic support to their children. Existing literature in this field suggests that the children's initial reading capability is largely associated with the home literacy surroundings, the number of books owned and parent suffering (Barbarin & Aikens, 2015). However, parents from the low socioeconomic status groups may be powerless to meet the expense of resources such as books, computers, or tutors to produce this helpful literacy environment (Orr, 2003).

The economic status of parents, their education and reading habits are linked to each other. Moreover, parental education and reading habits have a significant influence on their kid's motivation towards learning. A study of American schoolchildren postulates that only 36% of parents from the lowest-income quintile read books daily, while the comparable figure from the highest-income quintile is 62% parents who read books every day (Cooley, 2013). Parents with higher socioeconomic status are in a better position to improve the academic activities of their children as compared to parents with low socioeconomic status (Cowen, 2011). However, some

times the educational performance of these students is more questionable and controversial because the children do not follow their parent's training and do not get a good career. In addition, children with high socioeconomic status are more at risk of depletion, grade and math problems than children from low-status families (Agboola & Tsai 2012). Studies also highlight the fact that enrollment rates in schools from low-income groups are significantly lower than the children coming from families with higher socioeconomic status (Pallardi, 2008). Moreover, the dropout rates are higher for students from low-income groups as compared to the high-income families in secondary education (Center National Education Statistics, 2008). This leads us to believe that the students from poor families are less likely to complete their primary and secondary education even if they get enrolled in the schools. The social and economic status of parents, therefore, is a key factor to determine the academic performance of the students.

The academic performance and learning outcomes also determine the career opportunities available to the students in the future. It is, therefore, crucial to identify the factors affecting a student's performance. Many personal and family characteristics along with the surrounding learning and institutional environment determine these academic outcomes of the students. The study is an attempt to determine the impact of the socioeconomic status of parents on the academic record of students. We have also tried to capture the additional impact of educational facilities provided by the government on the learning outcomes of the students. We hypothesize that the socio-economic status does play a role in determining the academic performance of the students. We have conducted a survey of 200 students from the district Bahawalpur for this study. Our findings suggest that parental education, father's income, strong family background and educational facilities provided by the government have a significant impact on the academic performance of the students.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: section two reviews relevant literature, data, and methodology are explained in section three. Findings are discussed in section four and finally study is concluded in section five of the paper.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on the relationship between academic performance and its determinants is evolving gradually. Singh & Singh (2014) analyzed the effects of parents' social status and family environment on students' learning habits and educational performance. Uwaifo (2008) analyzed the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on student performance in some Nigerian children and found that parents' financial status and education improved the ability of their children toward school performance. In addition, Farooq et al. (2011) analyzed the factors that affect students' quality of education. The purpose of this study was to analyze the impact of social status, parental status, and career on student achievement quality.

Ali et al. (2013) analyzed the impact of parents' education and socioeconomic status on college students' academic performance. Kainuwa & Yusuf (2013) explained the role of socioeconomic background in the self-concept and educational success of Nigerian youth and proved the impact of students' socio-economic background on the self-conceptual and educational performance of high school students in Anamba, Nigeria. In this study, economic and social background, students' self-concept and school performance were used as variables to evaluate the school performance of students.

Balami (2015) studied the relationship between socioeconomic background and academic performance of public middle school students through a pre-learning strategy. Memon et al. (2010) analyzed the influence of parents' socioeconomic status on the performance of Karachi

college students. The purpose of this study was to make recommendations based on the results of improving the educational environment. Livaditis et al. (2003) analyze students' status and academic performance and examined the impact of students' socio-economic background on school performance in Greece. Data were obtained from a sample of students enrolled in the University of Macedonia Economic and Social Studies for two consecutive academic years, 1998 and 1999.

Bolliger & Wasilik (2009) explored some factors that influence students' performance in higher education institutions. Kapinga (2014) analyzed the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on the performance of secondary education in Tanzania. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on the performance of high school students. Munoz et al. (1999) analyzed the impact of socioeconomic conditions on students' success in rural areas in the East.

Osorio et al. (2013) analyzed the impact of the social and educational background of Nigerian parents on the education of their children and provided parents with advice on how to overcome personal and financial challenges and how to support their children's education. Variables related to socioeconomic status, education level, and children's education were used in this study. Chandra et al. (2013) studied the impact of Lucknow's socioeconomic status on the educational outcomes of high school students and found how the different types of students' social and economic conditions affect the children's educational outcomes.

Harnish, et al. (1995) studied the development of the scale of socioeconomic background and developed a tool to assess the social and economic environment that is in line with the current situation in India. Soharwardi & Khan analyzed parental behavior in educational investment decisions and found a strong relationship between parental investment decisions and their children's education. Taras & Potts-Datema (2005) analyze the impact of socioeconomic conditions on student performance and explored the various factors that influence the outcome based on the social and economic conditions of the society.

In previous literature, the performance of students at the level of schools has been evaluated in the context of different economic, social and environmental factors. This study contributes to the existing literature in two important dimensions; (i) we have evaluated the learning outcomes of the graduation level students (ii) more emphasis has been given to the factors relating to the parents of the students.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

A random sample of 200 students from the Islamia University of Bahawalpur was selected to conduct this study. The selected students were enrolled in different BS classes at the university. A structured questionnaire was developed to record the response of the selected sample. Various multiple-choice and open-ended questions were asked from the respondents. We have covered different socio-economic factors related to the students i.e. their family background, parent's education, family income, public education facilities and student's academic record in our survey. Different qualitative and quantitative methods have been employed for the analysis of this data using different tools of descriptive statistics and regression analysis.

The Table 1 below explains the major variables used in this analysis along with the unit of measurement and codes assigned to them. The academic record of the students is used as a proxy for the academic performance of the university level students.

Table 1	
DESCRIPTION OF VARIABLES	
Variable	Measurement and Coding
Academic Record of Students(Scores)	CGPA of Students(used as dependent variable)
Social and Economic Factors for Measuring Socio-Economic Status	
Family background	0=Poor 1=Middle 2=Rich
Father Education	Years of schooling
Mother Education	Years of schooling
Father Income	Measured in rupees
Parent's Perception of their Child's Career in Future	1=Labor 2=Farmer 3=Teacher 4=Doctor 5=Officer
Whether the student has Personal Interest in Education	Yes=1 No=0
Whether the student is satisfied with the university environment	Yes=1 No=0
Number of children	Measured in Number
Why parents want their child to obtain the education	1=For better job 2=For getting better spouses for them 3=For making them able to move in higher society
Availability of any Government education facility for the students	Yes=1 No=0

Source: Structured Questionnaire Developed by Authors

Model Specification

We have used the academic record of the students as the dependent variable measured in the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) obtained in recent examinations attended by the students. The socio-economic factors include father education, mother education, father income, family background, number of children in a family, student's satisfaction with the university environment, the parental decision about a child's future and public education facilities. Relationship between the academic performance and socio-economic status of the parents has been examined using the following linear model:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Academic Record}_i = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Family Background}_i + \beta_2 \text{Father Education}_i + \beta_3 \text{Mother Education}_i \\
 & + \beta_4 \text{Father Income}_i + \beta_5 \text{Perception about Child's Career}_i + \beta_6 \text{Number of Children}_i + \beta_7 \\
 & \text{Satisfaction with University}_i + \beta_9 \text{Government Facility}_i + \mu_i
 \end{aligned}$$

Where μ_i is the disturbance term and academic record_i is the CGPA of the students obtained in the recently attempted exams. We have used the ordinary least square method for the estimation of the specified model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2 below presents the basic descriptive statistics of the variables used for empirical analysis. The table shows that 82% of the students belong to the middle class. Quite consistent with the geographic and economic conditions of district Bahawalpur where the majority of the

population belongs to the middle-income group. 74.5% of the studied population reported that they are satisfied with the facilities provided by the university and the overall environment of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

On the other hand, the students who showed dissatisfaction with the university environment were 25.5% of the population studied. The basic reason for this satisfaction was the coeducation system of the university. Since Bahawalpur district is situated in the south Punjab region of Pakistan where people at large have a conservative mindset, this dissatisfaction with the co-education system is quite consistent with the prevailing mindset in the region. Almost 64 % of families have five or more children. A higher number of children in a family may create a burden on the parents for availing better education and health facilities for their offspring. In our sample, 75% of mothers had at least primary or higher education while only 35% were illiterate.

Variables	Coding	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Family Background	Poor	13	6.5	6.5
	Middle	150	75.0	81.9
	Rich	36	18.0	100.0
Students Satisfied with University Environment	No	51	25.5	25.5
	Yes	149	74.5	100.0
Number of Children in a Family	2	15	7.5	8.5
	3	31	15.5	24.0
	4	41	20.5	44.5
	5	47	23.5	68.0
	6	24	12.0	80.0
	7	23	11.5	91.5
	8	13	6.5	98.0
	9	4	2.0	100.0
Mother Education	0	71	35.5	35.5
	5	12	6.0	41.5
	8	12	6.0	47.5
	10	38	19.0	66.5
	11	2	1.0	67.5
	12	21	10.5	78.0
	14	27	13.5	91.5
	16	17	8.5	100.0
Perception of Parents about the Future Career of their Kid	labor	8	4.0	4.0
	farmer	23	11.5	15.5
	teacher	4	2.0	17.5
	doctor	62	31.0	48.5
	officer	103	51.5	100.0
Personal Interest of Students in Education	No	51	25.5	25.5
	Yes	149	74.5	100.0
Father Education	0	19	9.5	9.5
	5	3	1.5	11.0
	8	14	7.0	18.0
	10	41	20.5	38.5
	12	34	17.0	55.5
	14	41	20.5	76.0
	16	48	24.0	100.0

Father Income(in thousand rupees)	10-32	98	55	55
	34-49	48	24	24.0
	50-70	34	10	10.0
	75-100	19	8.5	8.5
	120-150	3	2.5	2.5
Availability of Government Facilities for Education	No	17	8.5	8.5
	Yes	183	91.5	100.0
Academic Record of Students	Poor	59	23.7	23.0
	Average	97	45	45.0
	Best	44	31.3	31.3

Source: Author's calculation from survey data.

On the other hand, the comparable figure for illiterate fathers was only 9.5% in our sample. 41% of the fathers in our sample had a bachelor's degree. As far as the perception of parents about the future career of their kids is concerned, 51% of the parents wanted their kids to become officers in the future. 31% of parents wished their children to become a doctor in future while only 4% perceived that their children will become laborers in the future. Moreover, 91.5% of parents agreed that they would send their children for higher education if the government provides different incentives and facilities for higher education. 55% of the population in our sample belongs to the income group of 10 to 32 thousand rupees per month. 79% of the studied population has income less than 50,000 rupees per month. The academic record of the students in our sample shows that 45% of students have an average percentage of marks. 31.3% of students have a good average and 23.7% of students have a poor record of percentage in marks.

Next, we present the results obtained from the regression analysis. Table 3 below presents the results from the ordinary least square analysis.

Table 3			
IMPACT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS			
Variables	Standardized coefficient beta	T-Stat	P-Value
Constant	1.244	9.811	0.000
Family Background	0.065	0.776	0.439
Students Satisfied with University Environment	0.046	0.666	0.506
No of Children in Family	0.093	1.3300	0.085*
Mother Education	0.346	4.307	0.000*
Perception of Parents about the Future Career of Kids	0.037	0.489	0.626
Father Education	0.146	1.745	0.083***
Father income	0.019	0.219	0.087***
Availability of Government Facilities for Education	0.084	1.108	0.069*
Personal Interest of Students in Education	0.127	1.378	0.706
R-Square		0.382	
Total Observations		200	

Note: ***Significant at 1%, **Significant at 5%, *Significant at 10%.

The results of our estimation show that father and mother education has a positive and significant impact on the academic performance of the students at the university level. One year

increase in father year of schooling is associated with a 14% increase in the GPA of the students. While on the other hand, a year increase in mother education leads to a 34% increase in student's average performance. The finding shows that mother education has a stronger influence on the performance of students than the education of father.

Father income has also a positive and significant impact on the academic performance of the students. Fathers with higher incomes are found to have a higher GPA of their children. Moreover, the perception and desire of parents about their kid's future have also a positive impact on their child's performance. The finding suggests that if parents keep higher aims for their child's career, the child is expected to put more effort into his studies and bring better grades. Similarly, the child's personal interest in education has also affected his performance positively. In addition, if the student is more concerned about his future, he is expected to bring better results. His own future career perception has a positive impact on his academic performance. Strong family background (rich family) also has a positive impact on the academic performance of the students but the coefficient is not significant in our case. According to our model results, family background has positively affected the dependent variable.

T-value is used to check the significance of the β 's. The β 's are significant when the value is greater than 2. The R-squared is the measure of fit of the regression equation. It gives a proportion of the variation in the dependent variable explained by the explanatory variable. Its value shows that a 33% variation in the dependent variable (academic record of the student) is due to independent variables the value of adjusted R square is .100. F statistic is used to check the overall significance of the model.

Concluding Remarks

The study is an attempt to determine the impact of the socio-economic status of parents on the academic performance of the students. Data for the analysis was collected through a structured questionnaire from 200 students. The students were selected randomly from the Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. Various socio-economic factors such as family background, parental education, father income, perception of parents about their child's future, availability of public education facilities, etc. were accounted for the analysis. The data collected shows that the majority of the sample population belonged to the middle-income group. Regression analysis conducted in the study suggests that the parent's education affects their student's performance significantly. However, mother education is more vital for children's performance in academics. Moreover, strong family background and a father's income also impacts student performance significantly. We have also found that the parent's and students' personal perception about their bright future leads to better academic performance by the students. Public education facilities also lead to higher achievement rates of the students.

We suggest that the parents should re-examine their economic and social support to students since such support is viewed as the main contributor towards the student academic performance. The government should make public policies and plans to improve education facilities. Public policy should be oriented more towards providing cheaper, more widespread, and better educational opportunities which will lead to reduced constraints on parents' choices about sending their children to school.

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