

## **EFFECT OF PARENTAL SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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### **Abstract**

*This study aimed at exploring the role of parental socioeconomic status on academic achievement of secondary school students. The objectives of the study were; to explore different levels of parental socioeconomic status of students, to find out the effect of different aspects of parental socioeconomic status viz. parental education, parental occupation, parental income, parental living, parental relation, and family system on academic achievement of secondary school students, and to compare the availability of facilities for male and female students in the target population. For this, 1438 students were randomly selected from 84 schools of Abbottabad, Haripur and Mansehra, of Hazara Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through stratified random sampling technique. The data was collected through a pre-framed questionnaire about the socio-economic status of the students validated by experts whereas marks obtained in Grade 9 were taken as Students' academic achievement. The collected data was analyzed by using percentage, Multiple Regression Model and student T- test. The Results indicated that parental profession, parental education, parental income, alive of both mothers and fathers, as well as availability of facilities significantly contributed towards improving the academic achievement of their children at secondary level. Additionally, boys are more facilitated and compared to girls.*

**Keywords:** Academic Achievement, Parental Education, Parental income, Socio-economic status

### **1. Introduction**

Quality education is one of the important factors and predictors of children's all-round development. This is why Governments and affluent

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parents invest huge amounts of money for providing quality education by providing conducive learning environment (Schein, 2010). Learning environment is affected by a host of factors including family background, school, gender, race, and community (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Edler, 2004; Ghazi et al, 2013). The family background constitutes two parents versus single parent family; divorced parents and size of family (Majorbanks, 1996) and family's socioeconomic status includes social and economic standing (Ghazi et al, 2013). In other words "Socioeconomic status indicates a person's overall social position ...to which attainments in both the social and economic domain contribute" (Ainley et al., 1995: ix). This standing of the family is determined by the economic, educational and occupational characteristics (Jeynes, 2002) of the child. Economic characteristics constitute salaries, profits, wages, rent, interests, royalties, trusts and other support (Ghazi et al., 2013). These characteristics affect the level of parental involvement in the academic matters of their children (Kirkpatrick, Elder, & Stern, 2005) and predict the provision of factors which have educational advantage or disadvantage (Centre for the Study of Higher Education, 2008). Experts have used different methods to predict the association of different factors of socioeconomic status with academic achievement (Mukherjee, 2007). For example many research findings confirmed the significant impact of parental level of education on academic achievement of their children (Smith, Brooks- Gunn, & Klebanov, 1997) where, highly educated parents, due to their financial resources, enhance the academic success of their children (James, 2002). Thus parents train their children by demonstrating good behavior, expressing their educational aspirations to motivate them to continue their education (James, 2002). From the above findings, it can be deduced that educated parents manage to arrange more financial benefits which ultimately help in higher academic achievement (Smith et al. 1997).

In addition to international studies, researches have also been conducted in subcontinent and Pakistan for exploring the different aspects of the issue. For instance, Ahmar and Anwar (2013) explored that higher social and economic status of parents leads to better academic achievement of secondary school students in Luknow, India. Similarly, Shaheen and Gul (2014) explored a significant relationship of academic achievement with socioeconomic status of students. Azhar et al (2013) found that students belonging to higher socioeconomic status perform better in their academics as compared to students having low level of socioeconomic status.

Keeping in view the importance of the issue, this research endeavor aimed to explore the effect of Parental Socioeconomic Status on academic achievement of students at secondary level in Hazara Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study objectives were to;

- 1) document the various level of socioeconomic status of the students.
- 2) predict the role of parental socioeconomic status in improving the academic achievement of their 10<sup>th</sup> grade children.
- 3) compare the availability of facilities for male and female students.

### **Hypotheses of the study**

This research study investigated the subsequent claims.

- 1) Majority of the students at secondary level come from average level of socioeconomic status.
- 2) Parental educational level, their profession, income level, and availability of facilities have significant effects on academic achievement of students at secondary level.
- 3) Male receive more facilities as compared to female students.

### **Research Methodology**

This descriptive research study was conducted through an open-ended questionnaire for collecting information about the socioeconomic status of students. Additionally, academic achievement scores were collected from the 9<sup>th</sup> grade Gazette book of Board of intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE), Abbottabad, HAZARA Division, KPK.

The collected data was analyzed through multiple Regression model, t- test, and Percentage, reach the objectives.

### **Population**

All students of Hazara Division promoted to 10<sup>th</sup> grade constituted the population of the study.

### **Sample**

A sample of 1438 students of Grade 10 was randomly selected from three Districts viz. Abbottabad, Haripur, and Mansehra of Hazara Division through stratified random sampling technique from 84 secondary

schools. After formal permission from the respective school principals/ heads, data was collected from 20 randomly selected students.

The survey consisted of 50.4% students from public sector whereas 49.6% private sector students participated in the study. Female students consisted of 50.4% of the sample whereas male students were 49.6% of the sample. Further, science group represented 74% of the students while 26% were from Arts group.

### **Research instrument**

To collect detailed information about the socioeconomic status of the students, an open-ended questionnaire was developed. This questionnaire comprised of two parts. Part first consisted of parental educational and monthly income while the second part focused on availability of facilities such electronic appliances, books, internet, telephone, personal vehicle and location (Rural vs. Urban).

### **Description of socioeconomic status**

Significant aspects of socioeconomic status are described in the following table.

**Table 1: Number of families and their level of education and income**

<b>Parental education</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Parental income (Rs)</b>	<b>Number of families</b>
Uneducated	149	0-10000	292
1-5	147	10001-20000	453
6-8	130	20001-30000	364
9-10	376	30001-40000	141
11-12	114	40001-50000	92
12-14	241	50001-60000	47
Masters	113	60001-70000	45
M. Phil	10	70001 and above	04
Ph.D.	11		
Professional degree (MBBS etc.)	34		

  

<b>Parents Alive</b>		<b>Parental Relationship</b>		<b>Family System</b>	
yes	1409	combined	1414	joint	640
No	29	separate	18	Nuclear	798
		divorced	06		

## Results and Discussion

The collected data was analyzed using percentage, and Multiple Regression model.

**Table 2: Levels of Socioeconomic Status**

	<b>Number of Families</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Above average	355	24.7
Average	822	57.2
Below average	261	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1438</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2 highlights the categories of different levels of socioeconomic status. 18.2 % (261) of the students came from low socioeconomic status families, 57.2% (822) of the students belonged to average level of socioeconomic status and 24.7% (355) of the students have high socioeconomic status. This status confirms the report of World Bank produced under the title of “World Development Indicators (WDI), 2015” where it found that 12.75 of Pakistani population lives below the poverty line while more than fifty percent (57.2%) of the population have average level of socioeconomic status.

**Table 3: Effect of parental socioeconomic status on Academic Achievement of students**

	<b>β</b>	<b>T value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Parents alive	42.22	1.96	0.050
Parental relation	-6.60	-0.37	0.712
Profession of fathers	-0.80	-0.62	0.537
Education level of Father	11.67	7.01	0.000
Income level of Father	11.75	5.11	0.000
Education level of Mother	8.18	4.10	0.000
Profession of Mother	-4.83	-1.03	0.304
Income level of Mothers	1.87	0.34	0.734
Availability of Facilities	9.31	2.10	0.037
Family system	0.89	0.160	0.873
<b>R<sup>2</sup>=38.5</b>	<b>Adj. R<sup>2</sup>=14.8</b>	<b>F =27.53</b>	<b>α=0.000</b>

Table 3 indicates that academic achievement of students has significant correlation ( $R^2=38.5$ ) with socioeconomic status of their parents. Table 3 further highlights that 14.5 percent of the variation in educational performance is explained by the subject matter. Similarly, the model is good ( $F= 27.53, \alpha=0.000$ ). This table reflects that the presence of both father and mother has a significant effect ( $\beta = 11.67, \alpha=0.05$ ) on academic achievement of students. This result implies that if both mother and father are alive, they are more supportive of the studies of their children as compared to those children whose parents (either father or mother or both) are not alive. Table 3 reflects that parental education and parental income except mother's education significantly predict the academic achievement ( $\beta = 11.67, \beta= 11.75, \text{ and } \beta=8.18; \alpha= 0.000$ ). The table further shows that fathers' education and fathers' level of income has the strongest of effects ( $\beta= 11.67, \beta= 11.75$ ) on academic achievement of students. Studies have been conducted to find answers to the question of what part and how far parental socioeconomic status actually influence the academic achievement. It has been observed that parental level of education is a significant predictor of academic achievement of students. Anderson, Case, and Lam, (2001) argued that the strongest effect of parental level of education on academic achievement may be due to the fact that educated parents have awareness to send their children to better school with high quality education, and can guide their children in school work. Similar results were reported by Western (1998) who found from his study that parental higher level of education help in the participation of students in study and ultimately better academic achievement. Table 3 also shows that fathers' income has a significant positive effect on academic achievement of students ( $\beta= 11.75$ ). These results are consistent with findings of Bradley & Corwyn, (2002) and Battin- Pearson et al., (2000) who found that social and economic factor could either lead students to perform better or drop out of school. This significant positive effect may be due to the fact that highly educated parents are assumed to have better pays which allow them to send their children not only to better and quality schools but they also provide better nutrition which facilitates overall development including academic achievement of their children. Table 3 also indicates that mother's profession has an insignificant but negative effect on academic achievement of their children. The most probable reason for the negative effect of mothers' education on academic achievement might be that in our society there is no provision of day care centers at job places due to which children remain deprived of full

attention required for overall development including academic achievement in life. This deficiency may continue even at secondary level as well. Even working women cannot spare most their time for their children to discuss the academic progress. The last part of Table 3 shows a positive significant effect of availability of facilities on academic achievement of students at secondary level.

**Table 4: Comparison of availability of facilities to male and female students**

	<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S. D</b>	<b>t value</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>
Facilities	Male	713	3.05	0.432	5.32	0.000
Provision	Female	725	2.92	0.48		

Table 4 highlights the comparison facilities available to male and female students in the target population. The results highlight that male receive significantly high facilities ( $t= 5.32$ ,  $\alpha= 0.000$ ) at home as compared to female students. In this regard, Shaheen and Gul (2014) also found that the gloomy side of the societies in developing countries is that there is gender wise discrimination in the availability of resources where boys have access to more facilities as compared to girls.

## **2. Conclusions**

Both fathers' and mothers' presence facilitates the academic achievement of students. Parents with higher education, better profession, and high income help them in better academic achievement of their children. Socially and economically privileged parents remain highly involved with their children and provide support, properly monitor and make effective communication with them.

Fathers' income and availability of different facilities at home significantly facilitate the academic achievement of their children as well. It implies that parental preference of sending their children to better schools, arrangement of educational facilities, meeting the nutritional requirements their children is highly facilitated by their level of income. Parental emphasis remains high in facilitating their male children as compared to female children.

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