



An Assessment of Parents Level of Income: Implication on their Expectations on the Academic Achievement of their Children in Some Selected Public Secondary Schools in the Bamenda II Sub Division

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Abstract: This study was carried out to investigate the effects of parental level of Income and implications of their expectation of their children's academic achievement. The study made use of the descriptive survey design. The sample was made up of 100 randomly selected lower sixth students of GBHS Down Town and GBHS Ntamulung and 50 conveniently selected parents. The instruments used for data collection were questionnaire and interview guide. In data processing, a pre-designed EpiData Version 3.1 database which has in-built consistency and validation checks was used to enter the data. Further consistency, data range and validation checks were also performed in SPSS version 21.0 to identify invalid codes. The data were presented using frequency counts, graphs, percentages and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used to test hypotheses. The findings indicated a significant relationship between parental income and set expectations for children's academic achievement.

The implications of these findings are that parents should obtain a clearer understanding of their beliefs and expectations concerning their children. For example, while many parents may be setting very high academic expectations for their children, they should understand how those expectations play out in terms of student performance. Also parents should realize that parental expectations may be unrelated to students' prior performance, and they should be aware that parental expectations may not be linked to students' perception about their academic competence. Parents are discouraged from expectations based on their SES background, and encouraged to become sensitive to the children's abilities and interests.

Keywords: Assessment, Parents Level of Income, Implication, Expectations, Academic Achievement, Children.

INTRODUCTION

Parental academic and learning expectations are regarded as a key feature in their children's educational achievements (Alexander, Entwisle, Blyth, & McAdoo, 1988). Such expectations are significantly and positively correlated with youngsters' academic attainment at all levels (Bryant, & Skinner, 2002).

Parents play a pivotal role in the educational development of their children. Their involvement in the education of the children is of substantial benefit to the child, the school and the parents as well. Jones & Borte (2015) noted that children from parents that are more active in the process of imparting educational knowledge excel in their academic career and are often more productive in the society. With adequate care, tutelage and active participation of parents in the child's educational activities like monitoring of homework, participation in extracurricular activities, parent-teacher association, and other school related activities, the child is more likely to be courageous and as such do well at school. The extent and form of parental involvement are



strongly influenced by family social class, maternal level of education, material deprivation, maternal psycho-social health and single parent status and, to a lesser degree, by family ethnicity.

Parents who are more involved with their children's schooling become knowledgeable about school goals and procedures. In addition, they communicate the importance of education to children and help children learn strategies to enhance their perceptions of competence and control over achievement outcomes. Among the several parental factors that have been linked to their children academic achievements at school is the parent's level of income. According to Mayer, a casual observation is that the children of affluent parents are more likely to succeed in life than the children of poor parents probably because the rich parents spend more than poor parents on their children and these "investments" lead to better outcomes for their children. If the situation is correct, the author also suggested that government can improve the life chances of poor children by providing families with the means to make the investments or by providing the investments directly in the form of schooling, health care, and other human capital inputs. It is not out of place to imagine that parental socio-economic background can have possible effects on the academic achievement of children in school. When parents are financially capacitated, and also give moral support to the children by guiding their reading at home, the students perform better than their counterparts. Although it has been argued that the most accurate predictor of students' achievement is the extent to which the family is involved in the child's education, and not the family's level of income. It is not clear if the situation is the same across developed and developing economies in the world. Japan is one of the leading economies in the world with a population of 126.88 million inhabitants as at December 1, 2015 (<http://www.stat.go.jp/english/data/jinsui/tsuki/index.htm>). It is documented that prior to the 21st century, Japanese students established great academic achievements that were Research has indicated that socio economic status is correlated strongly with parents' educational ambition for their children. Khan, Khan and Zubairi (1999) stated that "interacting with and sharing the child's activities is affected by level of parents' education and income".

In families with low socioeconomic status, majority of the illiterate parents do not have understanding of the requirements of their children's education. Some poor parents make some arrangements for helping their children in studies and to do their home assignments, while others rely on school for the education of their children, as they do not have enough resources to spend extra money on home tuitions etc.

In a study by Pamela and Kean (2010), it is stated that those students whose parents had a tertiary level of education, performed significantly better in tests of science, reading and mathematical ability than do those whose parents had only basic schooling. Thus, across these three disciplines, the average grades achieved by students with well-educated parents ranged from 7% higher than those achieved by students with poorly educated parents in developing countries to 45% higher in most developed countries. This therefore, shows that parents' education has some influences on the students' beliefs and behaviors, leading to positive outcomes for children and youth.

Another predictor of parents' expectations is parental occupation. Good parental occupation has a positive effect on the academic achievement of students. A given occupation is a source of income to a family. Different occupations attract different levels of incomes. In the same connection, Rothstein (2004) cited in Ogunsola (2012) posited that parents of different occupational classes often have different styles of child rearing, and different ways of disciplining their children.

In developing countries like Cameroon, not much has been reported on the influence of socio-economic background on students' academic performance in secondary schools. Due to high level of illiteracy, some families view a secondary school student as an adult that can fend for him or



herself and who should demand less of financial support from his or her family. This is largely a consequent of parents' poor occupational backgrounds and low level of education.

Also, a student is generally expected in this harsh economic condition to partake in full or part in offsetting the socio-economic cost of secondary school training by finding alternative ways of taking care of his or her educational needs and still graduate with excellent performance.

Thus, the influence of parental occupation and level of education on students' academic performance is an issue that calls for concern among all stakeholders in academics largely because, today more than ever before, tremendous pressure is on students to earn good grades because academic achievement is assumed to possess predictive value and used to bar or open the gate between the university and successful careers in life (Rahaman, 2010).

Occupational status corresponds to the educational attainment of an individual through which he can obtain better jobs, explore and retain better positions and improves on his SES.

Occupational status consequently becomes an indicator for our social position or status in society. Parental employment is expected to have significant effects on the welfare of their children (Hassan, 2009). Bakken, (2003) as cited by Nadenge (2005), points out that as far as academic achievement is concerned, parental occupation might have both positive and negative impact. Firstly, the source of income is essential for meeting the child's educational needs as well as participating in social activities. On the other hand, possessing a job also reduces the time available for parents to spend with their children and to involve themselves with their life at school which could also negatively impact on the student's performance.

Further research by Elder and Caspi (1988), points out that parents of low occupation may not feel free with or capable of assisting their children with school work. This is because such parents may not become involved in their children's schooling in ways that enhance performance.

Parents' income level also predicts their expectations for their children academic achievement.

It is not inappropriate to visualize that parent's occupation and family income can have possible effects on children's performance. Parents of different occupational class often have different styles of child rearing, different ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children. These differences do not express themselves consistently as expected in the case of every family; rather they influence the average tendencies of families for different occupational classes (Rothestein, 2004). Socioeconomic status is one of the most important factors that affect the education of children. High socioeconomic status results to good and high quality education, whereas low socioeconomic status results to low quality education. Moreover if parents have less income they work many hours to accomplish the necessities of their children and cannot spend time with children and have no strong bond of relationship with children. It is proved from various studies that family income is directly related with the outcomes of children. Parent's economic status affects children in many ways.

Well off parents can provide good quality education and appoint tutors, while low income parents cannot provide such facilities to their children. Sometimes financial pressures on the parents can cause a child to leave school early to work (Anwar, 2014). Families with low income face greater hurdles in achieving effective parenting which in turn harm their children's development and educational achievement (Berk, 1997) as cited in Considine and Zappala (2002).

The Expectancy-Value (E-V) model of John William Atkinson (1960) is one of the primary psychological frameworks for understanding the interrelations among psychological characteristics leading to motivation and task success (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). Expectancy-



value theory is useful in explaining not only how parents' expectations influence adolescents' expectations and achievement, but also how parents' expectations are developed (Wigfield and Eccles 2002). Under this framework, the primary determinants of motivation to complete a task are the expectations that the task can be completed as well as the value of completing the task (Jacobs & Eccles, 2000, Zimmerman, Bandura, & Martinez-Ponz, 1992). In the realm of academic motivation, perceived academic competence and belief in the worth of school represent expectancies and values, respectively. Parents are thought to instill in their children perceptions about the value of schooling and about their children's ability to succeed in school based, in part, on the parents' own expectations regarding the level of credentials their children will obtain. In turn, parental expectations are thought to be sensitive to child development.

Parents of children that show promise academically may raise their expectations in response to this new information and provide academic stimulation in the form of increased involvement in the child's school life. In fact, several recent studies have suggested that the relationship between parents' expectations and adolescents' achievement is reciprocal in nature. For example, in an analysis involving longitudinal path models, Mistry et al. (2009) found that parents' expectations and teachers' expectations are dynamic and responsive to adolescents' achievement and performance across time. A similar study by Goldenberg et al. (2001) examined the reciprocal relationship between parental expectations and students' school performance in a sample of Latino families (Goldenberg et al. 2001). Findings from the study indicated that students' school performance influenced parents' expectations, but contrary to other studies (e.g., Benner and Mistry 2007; Goyette and Xie 1999), parental expectations did not influence students' performance. In sum, there is much empirical evidence to suggest that not only do parents' expectations influence students' expectations and achievement, but also that students' achievement can influence parents' expectations. Thus, the E-V model implies a highly complex, dynamic, and reciprocal relationship between parents and children.

Also, Jean Piaget's theory of Cognitive Development (1936) indicates how children symbolize and are motivated about the world (Tella, 2003). This is based on developmental stages in which he describes how parents play a role in the thinking pattern of their children (Hudson, Comer, & Kendall, 2008). Some parents do not interfere with their children's basic feelings or with their patterns of behavior. Firstly, parents start showing concerns about their child's life during the early years and the child perceives what his mother and father think and say. But some children knowing about parents' standards for them are confused or feel they will have more difficulty in what they are expected to do (Jenkin, 1996).

Another theory which explains achievement is the theory of Achievement Motivation of John Atkinson of 1950. Achievement Motivation Theory (AMT) explains the integral relationship between an individual's characteristics and his/her need to achieve something in life. In doing so, it also takes into account the kind of competitive drive a person has to achieve set goals. In this theory he explains the concepts behind success. According to this theory, an individual's motivation to achieve something in life or the dire need to achieve a specific goal is governed by various internal factors such as willingness, determination, punctuality, personal drive along with numerous external factors (also known as environmental factors) such as pressures, expectations, targets, etc., set by relevant organizations, members of the family or the society.

A person's need to achieve something and the reason behind his/her overall motivation to achieve a certain goal, according to the AMT, more often than not, comes from within and is strongly related to the individuals need for power and affiliation.



There is a strong need to create awareness among parents about their psychosocial factors which have a strong influence on child's future personality development and intellectual scholastic performance. Apart from parents, educational authorities, policy makers and all concerned should also be sensitized with the help of mass media and information network. So that they can effectively deal with specific situation like academic, social as well as emotional problems which they or their children face.

As earlier indicated, parents need to be oriented that in setting goals for children, they should find where their child's strengths lie and create an environment that encourages and nurtures his gifts. As earlier mentioned, having expectations in an area where your child is skilled sets him up for success and allows your expectations to be realistic. Life lessons such as responsibility and work ethics will often determine the child's success much more than her report card. Therefore, expectations placed on a child should include a balance between talents and life skills. Parents need empirically based guidance on how to best support their children in their educational pursuits, despite the challenges confronting them. It is very important that both educators and learners have a clear understanding of the idea and nature of self-knowledge and skills and how they enhance academic achievement (Williamson, 2007).

The Client Centered Approach of Carl Rogers (1942) is the counselling theory which will be used in this study. In the client-centered approach, humans are seen as having positive goodness, realistic expectations, and trustworthiness. Humans have a desire to become fully functioning; thus able to live as effectively as possible. According to Rogers, if humans are positively regarded and allowed to develop freely, they will grow to be fully functioning individuals. He posits that fully functioning persons have the potentials to achieve self-actualization, which refers to using the maximum or highest potentials existing in oneself through striving, maintaining and enhancing one's life experiences. Rogers believed that in order for a healthy self to develop, a person needs unconditional positive regard, which means unconditional love, warmth, respect and acceptance. However, in real life, parents, teachers and peers often offer conditional regard. The person will be accepted, loved or cared for only if he or she is good, pretty or clever, to give some examples. Rogers also proposed that each person has a self, which is central to the being. The self encompasses all values, beliefs and perceptions one has about oneself, acquired through interactions with significant others as one goes through his or her life. As a person grows and develops, he or she becomes aware of the differences between the self and others. A person will develop a real self (what the person is) and an ideal self (what the person hopes to become).

Humans always try to maintain consistency between ideal self, true self, and self-image. Self-image is the total subjective perception of one's body and personality. If a person receives or perceives information from others that are inconsistent with his self-image, incongruences occur. The incongruent person becomes confused, vulnerable, dissatisfied or seriously maladaptive. A person tends to feel worthy only when he fulfills or conforms to others wishes or expectations that might not be congruent with the person's values, beliefs or perceptions. Incongruences between the real self and the ideal self makes a person become maladjusted, thus developing unhealthy self.

Incongruence occurs when there is a mismatch between any of these three components of the self: the ideal self (what you would like to be), the self-image (what you think you are), and the true self (what you actually are). Self-esteem is negative when there is incongruence between ideal self and self-image. Anxiety and defensiveness occur when there is incongruence between self-image and true self. Consistency between ideal self, true self, and self-image results in a positive self-image. Thus, a student who feels that he cannot live up to the expectations of the parents will



develop this feeling of incongruence within himself. He will therefore need appropriate counseling to put him on track.

Although a lot of literature exists on parental expectations and its influences on the academic achievement of their children, there exists a gap on the counselling implications of the effects of these expectations on both students and parents which this study seeks to address.

Statement of the Problem

From experience, parents have a lot of desires or wishes for their children's academic achievement. They expect that their children should score particular grades or to attend a particular level in education. Some parents even desire that their children must follow a particular course of education in order to enter into particular careers. All these expectations are done without actually considering the student's self-efficacy or ability to realize such parental expectations or desires. Despite all the expectations from parents the researcher observed that some students still have dropping grades, others drop out of school, and others have inconsistent attendance and work completion. Thus, most parents feel disappointed when they set certain expectations for their children and the outcome is negative. On the other hand, students also feel a lot of pressure when their parents set these expectations on them without considering their abilities. When they cannot meet these expectations from parents they tend to feel they are good for nothing.

Poor academic performance of students has been of great concern to educationists, and guidance counsellors in particular. Despite all guidance programs and counselling strategies mounted in schools to improve the students' academic performances, poor performances are still recorded yearly in our schools and it has become necessary to find out the cause of such poor performance.

This study sought to find out the effects of SES of parents (level of education, occupation and income) on set expectations for children's academic achievement. Also, very little has been done in view of counselling implications of such behaviors. It was therefore based on this

Research Objective

The study specifically sought to find out if parental income affects the parents' expectations for the academic achievement of their children.

Research question

Does the parental income affect their expectations for their children's academic achievement?

Research Hypothesis

Ha

There is a significant relationship between parental income and expectations for children's Academic achievement.

Ho

There is no significant relationship between parental income and expectations for children's Academic achievement.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the descriptive survey design This study which focused on the effects of parental level of income on set expectations on children's academic achievement was carried out in two selected secondary schools in Bamenda.



Bamenda is the head-quarter of Mezam Division of the North West Region of Cameroon.

The area is characterized by a multitude of secondary schools from public, lay private and mission backgrounds. Government Bilingual High School Ntamulung Bamenda (GBHS Ntamulung) and Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Down Town Bamenda which were the selected schools for this study are situated at the heart of Bamenda town. As their names imply, these educational establishments have both the English and French sub systems of education. Thus they host students of both English and French expressions.

The population of this study consisted of all students and their parents of Government Bilingual High School Ntamulung and Down Town respectively. These are bilingual secondary high schools located in Bamenda II subdivision of the Mezam Division. GBHS Ntamulung had a student population of 1700 students while GBHS Down Town had a student population of 1600 students for the 2018/2019 academic year thus, making a study population of 3300 students.

The target population for this study consisted of all lower sixth students of both institutions.

However, the researcher worked with lower sixth students of English sub-system of both institutions for the sake of convenience. GBHS Ntamulung had a student population of 316 in lower sixth while GBHS down Town had a population of 250 students in lower sixth. Thus, the target population was 566 students of the English sub systems of both schools. The study also focused on parents.

This subgroup was carefully selected to be representative of the whole population with the relevant characteristics. Each member or case in the sample is referred to as subject, respondent or interviewees.

The researcher selected a number of individuals for the study in such a way that the individuals selected represented the large group from which they were selected. Probability and non-probability sampling procedures were used to arrive at the sample of students, and parents. This study adopted stratified random sampling to select a sample of 100 students. The study made use of 50 parents and the sample of parents was selected through convenient sampling.

The research instruments that were used in this study include, questionnaire for students and interview schedule was used to collect data from the parents.

The collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches.

The data analysis started by editing of the information obtained from the participants. The responses in the questionnaires were assigned numerical values. The data obtained from the questionnaires for quantitative analysis were combined into themes and then summarized into frequency tables and percentages. For statistical analysis, Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze data collected. Data was put in tabular forms for analysis by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics consists of tabulation of frequencies and percentage distribution, measures of central tendency and standard deviations. The qualitative analysis on the other hand was used in this study to analyze the data obtained from the interview guide. The data was categorized in themes in accordance with research objectives and reported in narrative form along with quantitative presentation.

The qualitative data was used to reinforce the quantitative data.

Distribution of Respondents by Monthly Income of Parents/Guardians

From figure 1 below, 21 of respondents representing 42% of the study has a monthly income of more than 250,000frs, 18 of the respondents have a monthly income between 100,000 to



250,000frs and this represents 36% of the respondents in the study and 11 of the respondents representing 22% of the respondents of the study has a monthly income of less than 100,000 FRS.

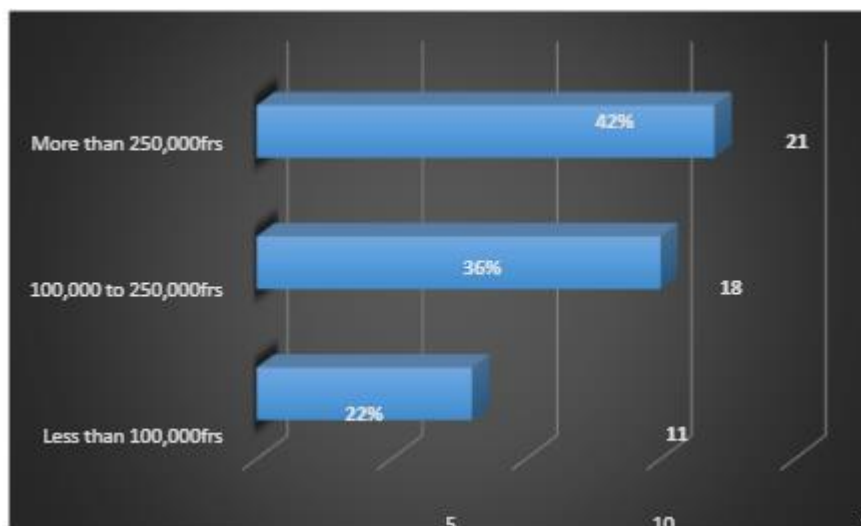


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by income level of parents/guardians

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1: Parental monthly income and children’s academic achievement

STATEMENTS	SD	D	A	SA	Total
I am often sent home for school fee and text books which affects my performance	41 (41%)	35 (35%)	15 (15%)	9 (9%)	100 (100%)
I seek external support to meet my educational needs and this causes me psychological stress	41 (41%)	27 (27%)	17 (17%)	15 (15%)	100 (100%)
My parents pay for my fee in time	11 (11%)	19 (19%)	38 (38%)	32 (32%)	100 (100%)
Constant absenteeism due to lack of school needs negatively affect my performance	46 (46%)	28 (28%)	18 (18%)	8 (8%)	100 (100%)
TOTAL	139 (34.75%)	109 (27.25%)	88 (22%)	64 (16%)	400 (100%)

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 above shows the analysis of the statement relating to parental monthly income and children’s academic achievement from a total of 100 respondents. 41 respondents representing 41% strongly disagreed, 35 respondents representing 35% disagreed, while 15 respondents representing 15% agreed and the was 9 respondents representing 41% who strongly agreed to the fact that they are often sent home for school fee and text books which affects their academic achievement. In addition to that, 41 respondents representing 41% strongly disagreed to the fact that they seek for external support to meet their educational needs which causes them psychological stress. 27 respondents representing 27% disagreed, while 17 respondents representing 17% agreed and 15 respondents representing 15% strongly agreed. Although 11 respondents representing 11% strongly disagreed to the fact that their parents pay their school fees in time and 19 respondents representing 19% disagreed, 38 respondents representing 38% agreed and 32 respondents representing 32% strongly agreed to the fact that their parents pay their school



fees in time. Finally, for that which concern constant absenteeism due to lack of school needs which negatively affects children academic achievement, 46 respondents representing 46% strongly disagreed while 28 respondents representing 28% disagreed and 11 respondents representing 11% agreed, 18 respondents representing 18% strongly agreed.

From the findings above, the researcher realized that parental monthly income has a positive effect on children's academic achievement.

Table 2: Correlation between parental monthly income level and set expectations for Children's academic achievement

		Children's academic achievement	
		Extent to which parent monthly income level affects children academic achievement	My parents pay for my fees in time
Extent to which parent monthly income level affects children academic achievement	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.253
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.011
	N	100	100
My parents pay for my fees in time	Pearson Correlation	-0.253	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.011	
	N	100	100

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Pearson's Correlation was computed to inter-match the correlation indices of the predictor and criterion variables. The results revealed significant relationships between the extent to which parent monthly income level affects children academic achievement and when the parents pay for their children's school fees. These results indicated a negative value of 0.253 which is significant at 5% level of significance; we reject the null hypothesis and retain the alternative hypothesis.

DISCUSSION

From the analysis revealed a significant relationship between parents' monthly income level and children's academic achievement. These results indicated a negative value of 0.253 which is significant at 5% level of significance; we reject the null hypothesis and retain the alternative hypothesis which states that there is a significant relationship between parental monthly income and set expectations for their children's academic achievement. From the analysis 42% of respondents said their parents earned monthly salaries of 250000 FRS and above. This is very evident from the respondents' responses where majority (41%) refuted the fact that they are often sent home for fee and text books which affected their performance. This means that most parents in the study earn salaries which enable them to provide basic school needs for their kids therefore creating a conducive environment for them to learn and succeed. 41% of the respondents also negated to the fact that they seek external support to buy school needs and that

Counselling and set expectations for children's academic achievement.

The findings indicate that counselling is a great tool in solving students' academic as well as emotional problems. When students pass through stress caused by parental pressures, it affects the student's performance. Through appropriate counseling depending on the nature of problem which the student is facing, the student is psychologically adjusted. Emotional adjustment leads to



improvement in performance. This is because the school counsellor follows up the student's difficulties by assisting him to draw private study schedules and even proposing subjects which the student can do according to his abilities, interests and aspirations. The counsellor exposes the student to different study opportunities which the student can choose from. buying school needs were not a source of stress to their academics. To further support the hypothesis that parental income has a significant relationship with students' academic achievement, 32% of the respondents agreed to the fact that their parents paid their fees on time and this actually made them to study without stress. In line with this, 46% of the respondents said they do not absent from school due to lack of school needs. When asked to what extent their parents' income affected their performance, a majority of the respondents (47%) answered to a greater extent. This could be due to the fact that students from high income earning parents did not face stress as far as school needs were concerned but on the other hand, those of low income parents will face problems or go through stress since their academic needs cannot be catered for.

The researcher found out that parents of students living in a household with income above the poverty line were more likely to be involved in school activities than parents of students living a household at or below poverty line. Lower income families have inadequate or limited access to community resources that promote and support students' academic achievement. Families that can provide for their children are likely to impact positively on children's academic performance. Social problems in the family lead to drop out and low grades in academic performance. It is not inappropriate to visualize that parent's occupation and family income can have possible effects on children's performance. Parents of different occupational class often have different styles of child rearing, different ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children. These differences do not express themselves consistently as expected in the case of every family; rather they influence the average tendencies of families for different occupational classes. Socioeconomic status is one of the most important factors that affect the education of children. High socioeconomic status results to good and high quality education, whereas low socioeconomic status results to low quality education. Moreover if parents have less income they work many hours to accomplish the necessities of their children and cannot spend time with children and have no strong bond of relationship with children. It is proved from various studies that family income is directly related with the outcomes of children. Parent's economic status affects children in many ways.

This is supported by the findings of Anwar in 2014 where he found out that well off parents can provide good quality education and appoint tutors, while low income parents cannot provide such facilities to their children. Sometimes financial pressures on the parents can cause a child to leave school early to work.

Also, Drummond and Stipek in 2004, while discussing the low-income parents' believes about their role in children's academic learning mentioned that a few of these parents indicated that their responsibilities were limited to meeting children's basic and social/emotional needs, such as providing clothing, emotional support, and socializing manners. So these parents' shortsightedness towards their responsibilities in the educational processes of their children and scarcity of funds to intensify such processes could be a challenge to their children's success

It is believed that low SES negatively affects academic achievement because low SES prevents access to vital resources and creates additional stress at home (Eamon 2005, Majoribanks 1996, Jeynes 2002). The economic hardships that are created by low SES lead to disruptions in parenting, an increasing amount of family conflicts and an increased likelihood of depression in parents and single –parent households (Eamon 2005).



Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, (1997) have a different view about the income level of parents affecting the academic achievement of their children. Their finding indicates that the economic difficulties do not necessarily constrain academic development. They argue that it is possible that parents as “coteachers” in the home may find a better psychological balance of stimulation and demand for their children when they themselves were successful in academics. Although poverty certainly is a major threat for child development, a closer look at the underlying mechanisms may help explain why so many poor children perform well in school despite restricted material resources. If parents are successful in providing an emotionally stable and stimulating environment, the negative effects of financial restrictions can be minimized. To Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, (1997), the influence of family income declines as children age.

Although poverty has an important relation to developmental outcomes in the early years of development, it may have less influence on outcomes during middle childhood and adolescence. During these years, parents’ education may help parents be more efficient teachers at home because they are more likely to know something about what the children are being taught and thus able to help with homework and to provide appropriate cognitive stimulation when children are not in school (Alexander et al., 1994).

Conclusion

The researcher from the findings of this study has established a relationship between the socio-economic status of parents and set expectations for children’s academic achievement in secondary schools. This also gave an insight into the implications of this in relation to counseling. Various references were drawn from the data that was collected and analyzed in order to give a realistic conclusion(s) from the study. The researcher concludes that SES of parents do interplay in the type of expectations they set for children and this in turn touched either positively or negatively on students’ academic achievement. In all of these dynamics it brings in counseling as a mediating force to strike a balance between the two variables.

The researcher concludes that the educational level of a parent as observed in this study is a vital aspect that affects students’ academic achievement to a greater extent. Parents who lack education may not see its importance in their children and hence they may not be that supportive as compared to those parents who have some level of education and know the importance of education in their children’s life. Highly educated parents are more likely to set high expectations for their children and the more the kids will perform well in academics.

Also, the researcher concluded that parents who had well paid off occupations had high expectations for children and this pushed them to perform well academically. It was also concluded that the level of income of parents made them to set high expectations for children who in turn were motivated to perform well in academics. Students who come from families not economically stable tend to be chased out of school for school needs. This affects their performance to a greater extent. Moreover, poor economic backgrounds limit parents from sending their children to schools that have adequate facilities or of high standards simply because they are unable to meet the educational cost required.

From the indicators, it was however realized that a lot of counseling needs to be carried out both on the part of parents regarding the type of expectations they set for children on the one side and on the other side, students also need a more comprehensive guidance and counseling program to bring them back to balance when faced with parental pressures.

In all, though parental socio economic status and expectations is a widely researched topic, the researcher still found it worthwhile to carry out this study. This is because parental characteristics



impact a lot on children academic output. It was however realized that not only the SES of parents affect their children's academic output but there are other dynamics such as the family structure, the family size and area of residence just to name these few that equally affected students' academic achievement.

Recommendations

In view of the findings discussed in this study, the following recommendations were made: The researcher recommended that for children to attain academic achievement the family should have stable income from whatever source.

The school administration in public secondary schools needs to come up with strategies which are geared towards identifying the various backgrounds of different students in their schools. This may enable the administration to understand clearly the nature of each student and thus being able to handle them with ease and appropriateness so as not to hamper with their educational progress.

Also, the school administration should organize meetings and ensure that parents attend.

During such meetings the administration may address parents on some of the roles that they can play and those to avoid so as to enhance the academic performance of their children.

Moreover, they may also highlight on some of the parental characteristics which hamper the educational progress of the students.

Parents should limit the way their SES interferes with the academic development of their children. Though certain parental variables play a big role in children's educational achievement, the children's own aspirations should be considered when making choices for them. Parents should avoid forcing their dreams which they never achieved on their children.

Also, parents should be encouraged participate in school matters of their children so as to actually be aware of their children's academic trend. They can do this by attending meetings called in school, visiting the school to monitor the progress of the child, and reporting any shortcomings noticed in the child's academic performance or attitude to the school administration for appropriate follow up. Though parents can have high expectations for their children, more social supports should also be provided towards adolescents at the same time.

The researcher recommends that parents should endeavour to be also academically sound if they have to influence their children's academic performance. Parents should also do an upgrade of their literacy level in order to meet with the academic challenges of their children.

There is also a need for policy formation and implementation that encourage parents who have never attained formal education to get the opportunity. These trainings will increase the knowledge as well as develop a positive attitude towards learning of those parents who have not received any educational training.

Parental literacy can be improved through training, seminars, adult education and encouraging parents to start and complete formal education.

Teacher-parent relationship should also be improved through regular communication between parents and teachers. This can be done by parents visiting the school regularly whether invited or not.

There is also a need for effective guidance and counselling in secondary schools whereby counsellors will encourage and motivate students to see beyond their limitations and put more focus on the future through persistence and determination in their education. Parents should also be



sensitized and encouraged during school meetings to seek the counsellor's advice on issues pertaining to their children's education and general welfare.

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