



# Influence of Socio-Economic Status (SES) on Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students

SHEERAZ AHMAD RATHER  
Ph.D. Scholar,  
Department of Education  
Regional Institute of Education Mysore (NCERT)

## Abstract:

*This study was conducted on 544 secondary school students to find out the influence of Socio-economic status (SES) on Academic achievement and achievement in school subjects. The investigator hypothesized that there is no significant difference between different categories of SES (upper, middle and lower) and mean difference between the categories of SES in respect of Academic achievement and achievement in school subjects. In fact, the investigator found that there is a significant mean difference between different categories of SES (upper, middle and lower). It was found that there was much difference in academic achievement and achievement of different school subjects of secondary school students and achievement increases with the increase in SES.*

**Keywords:** *Academic achievement, Secondary school students, Socio-economic status*

## 1. Introduction

Widespread study and research in the educational sociology gives the substantiation of significant relationship between family socio-economic status and the academic achievement of students (Sirin, 2005; White, 1982). It is quite typical to define family SES as the relative position of individuals or families within a hierarchical social structure based on their way in to or control over prosperity, reputation and authority (Mueller and Parcel, 1981) although no accord exists on the conceptual meaning of SES (Bornstein and Bradly, 2003). A single SES variable is operationalised through dealings characterizing parental education, occupation and income (Gottfried, 1985; Hauser, 1994).

The connection between family SES and academic achievement is referred to in the literature as a socio-economic gradient because it is gradual and increases across the range of SES (Adler et al., 1994; Willms, 2002, 2003), or as a socio-economic gap because it implies a gap in academic achievement between the students of high and low SES families. Researches' have shown that a socio-economic gap in the early years has long-lasting consequences. Because of their poor skills they are lying face down to leave school early (Alexander, Entwisle, and Kabbani, 2001; Bathin, Pearson et al., 2001; Cairns and Neckerman, 1989; Janosz, LeBlame, Boulerice, and Tremblay, 1997; Rumberger, 2004; Schargel, 2004; Condron, 2007; Davies and Guppy, 2006; Krahn and Tylor, 2007; Maaz, Trautwein, Ludtke, and Baumert, 2008; Schnabel, Alfeld, Eccles, Koller, and Baumert, 2002). These students are less likely to follow post secondary education (Alexander, Entwisle, and Olson, 2007; Cabera and La Nasa, 2001; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and statistics Canada, 2000).

Educational opportunities are not equally disseminated among the individuals of varying SES which poses a serious worry and challenge in societies that value equal opportunity irrespective of socio-economic status. Therefore, a great effort has been initiated in explaining and understanding the processes that configure SES gradients. Researchers have examined the

underlying family processes that arbitrate the relationship between SES and educational achievement (Chao and Willms, 2002; Guo and Harris, 2000).

## 2. Review of Literature

**Selcuk, (2005)** meta-analytically reviewed the literature on socio-economic status and academic achievement in journal articles published between 1990 and 2000. The sample included 101157 students, 6871 schools and 128 school districts gathered from 74 independent samples. The results showed a medium to strong SES- Achievement relationship. Author also conducted replica of White's (1982) meta-analysis and showed a slight decrease in average correlation since White's initial review was published. **Caldas and Bankston, (1997)** studied the relationship between the SES of peers and individual academic achievement. Results showed peer family social status does have a significant and substantive independent effect on individual academic achievement, only slightly less than an individual's own family social status. **Loyd and Vonnice, (1998)** studied sociometric disadvantages and child development and showed that persistent poverty has more determinantal effects on IQ, school achievement than transitory poverty, with children experiencing both types of poverty generally doing less well than never poor children. **Daniel, (2009)** used four data points from Canada's National Longitudinal Study of children and youth (NLSCY) to examine how the academic achievement gap attributes to SES changes from childhood to adolescence and showed that SES gap remains stable from age of 7 to 11 years and widens at an increasing rate from 11 to 15 years.

## 3. Objective

To study the academic achievement of secondary school students in relation to their socio-economic status.

## 4. Hypothesis

**Ho<sub>1</sub>** There is no significant mean difference between different categories of SES in respect of Academic achievement in school subjects.

## 5. Methodology

The study was descriptive in nature and the secondary school students of District Anantnag of Jammu and Kashmir formed the population of the study. Sample was selected through simple stratified random sampling technique and 10% of the schools were selected which was 23 schools. 544 students were selected for sample through random table method.

## 6. Tool

Socio-economic scale, a sub scale of Mental Health Battery by A.K. Sing and Alpana Sengupta (2000) was used to collect the data. The scores earned were added together to yield final score of SES as judged under;

15-17= Upper SES

09- 14= Middle SES

08- Below= Low SES

## 7. Data collection

Data was collected from the 10<sup>th</sup> class students. The investigator personally visited the schools and administered the tool. Clear instructions were given to the students. Academic achievement scores were taken from the JK board of school education Gazette and its website [www.jkbose.nic.in](http://www.jkbose.nic.in).

## 8. Results and Discussion

**Table No. 1: Frequency of sample in SES**

SES	f	Percentage
High	9	1.7
Middle	248	45.6
Low	287	52.8
Total	544	100 %

Total sample selected were 544 students, among them 9 were having high SES, 248 were having middle SES and 287 were in low SES which comprises 1.7%, 45.6% and 52.8% respectively and in aggregate represents the 100% of the sample.

**Table No. 2: Values of 'F' between different categories of SES in respect of Academic Achievement in school subjects**

Subjects	F
English	21.58*
Mathematics	18.39*
Urdu	17.47*
Science	15.69*
S. Studies	19.47*
Academic achievement	23.03*

\*P<0.01

The values of 'F' are found to be significant at 0.01 levels and hence the hypothesis is rejected. This shows that there is a significant difference between categories of socio-economic status in respect of Academic achievement. Secondary school students who belong to different categories of SES, namely High, Middle and Low do differ themselves in respect of their Academic achievement. SES does influence Academic achievement of secondary school students.

**Table No. 3: Significance of Mean Difference between different categories of SES in respect of Academic Achievement and achievement in school subjects**

Subjects	Means			Mean differences		
	Upper SES	Middle SES	Low SES	Upper Middle	Upper Lower	Middle Lower
English	9.44	5.75	4.72	3.69*	4.72*	1.02*
Math	9.78	5.68	4.32	4.09*	5.46*	1.36*
Urdu	9.22	6.25	5.36	2.97*	3.86*	0.88*
Science	9.11	5.36	4.32	3.74*	4.79*	1.04*
S. Studies	9.44	5.97	4.91	3.47*	4.53*	1.06*
Academic achievement	9.40	5.80	4.71	3.60*	4.68*	1.08*

\*P<0.05

The mean values are significant at .05 levels and hence the hypothesis is rejected. Thus it is concluded that there is a significant mean difference between the different categories of socio-economic status in respect of Academic achievement and achievement in different subjects. It indicates that Academic achievement increases with the increase in SES.

## 9. Conclusion

Socio-economic status of parents is a significant predictor of academic achievement. With an increase in SES through Low, Middle and High the academic achievement also increases. With low SES, there is always dropouts and stagnation. To overcome these problems government has implemented mid-day meal which has improved the enrolment in the schools. Mid day meals should continue and also industrialists should also come forward to set up educational institutions in rural areas where SES level is low compared to urban areas. Library books should be given to poor students to attract their interest in their study. Government schools should also enhance their infrastructure like that of private schools, where mostly poor students are studying. They should also make it sure that there is no lack of human and physical resources in government schools.

## References

1. Adler, N. E., Boyce, T., Chesney, M. A., Cohen, S., Folkman, S., Kahn, R. L., & Syme, S. L. (1994). Socioeconomic status and health: The challenge of the gradient. *American Psychologist*, 49(1), 15-24.
2. Alexander, K. L., Entwisle, D. R., & Kabbani, N. S. (2001). The dropout process in life course perspective: Early risk factors at home and school. *Teachers College Record*, 103(5), 760-822.
3. Alexander, K. L., Entwisle, D. R., & Olson, L. S. (2001). Schools, achievement and inequality: A seasonal perspective. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 23(2), 171-191.
4. Cabrera, A. F., & La Nasa, S. M. (2001). On the path to college: Three critical tasks facing America's disadvantaged. *Research in Higher Education*, 42(2), 119-149.
5. Cairns, R., B, Cairns, & Neckerman, H. (1989). Early school dropout: Configurations and determinants. *Child Development* 60(6), 1437-1452.
6. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. Retrieved February 12, 2014, from <http://education.ucsb.edu/rumberger/internet%20pages/Papers/>
7. Canada (2000). Literacy in the Information Age. Paris, France: OECD, and Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry, Canada. Retrieved February 11, 2014, from <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/48/4/4152>
8. Chao, R. K., & Willms, J. D. (2002). The effects of parenting practices on children's outcomes. In J. D. Willms (Ed.), *Vulnerable children: Findings from Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth* (pp. 149-166). Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press.
9. Condron, J. (2007). Stratification and educational sorting: Explaining ascriptive inequalities in early childhood reading group placement. *Social Problems*, 54(1), 139-160.
10. Davies, S., & Guppy, N. (2006). *The schooled society: An introduction to the sociology of education*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.
11. Gottfried, A. (1985). Measures of socioeconomic status in child development research: Data and recommendations. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 31(1), 85-92.
12. Guo, G., & Harris, K. (2000). The mechanisms mediating the effects of poverty on children's intellectual development. *Demography*, 37(4), 431-447.
13. Hauser, R. M. (1994). Measuring socioeconomic status in studies of child development. *Child Development*, 65(6), 1541-1545

14. Janosz, M., LeBlanc, M., Boulerice, B., & Tremblay, R. E. (1997). Disentangling the weight of school dropout predictors: A test on two longitudinal samples. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 26(6), 733-762.
15. Krahn, H., & Taylor, A. (2007). "Streaming" in the 10th grade in four Canadian provinces in 2000. (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 81-004-XIE). *Education Matters*, 4(2), 16-26. Retrieved February 12, 2014, from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2007002/9994-eng.htm>
16. Maaz, K., Trautwein, U., Ludtke, O., & Baumert, J. (2008). Educational transitions and differential learning environments: How explicit between-school tracking contributes to social inequality in educational outcomes. *Child Development Perspectives*, 2(2), 99–106.
17. Mueller, C. W., & Parcel, T. L. (1981). Measures of socioeconomic status: Alternatives and recommendations. *Child Development*, 52(1), 13-30.
18. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) & Statistics
19. Ottawa, ON: Human Resources Development Canada & Statistics Canada.
20. Retrieved February 11, 2014, from <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/demography/v037/37.4guo.pdf>
21. Rumberger, R. W. (2004). Why students drop out of school. In G. Orfield (Ed.), *Dropouts in America: Confronting the graduation rate crisis* (pp. 131-155).
22. Rumberger-Why%20Students%20Drop%20Out%20of%20School%20(2004).pdf9765.pdf
23. Schargel, F. P. (2004). Who drops out and why. In J. Smink & F. P. Schargel (Eds.), *Helping students graduate: A strategic approach to dropout prevention*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education
24. Schnabel, K., Alfeld, C., Eccles, J., Koller, O., & Baumert, J. (2002). Parental influence on students' educational choices in the United States and Germany: Different ramifications-same effect? *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 60(2), 178–198.
25. Sirin, S. R. (2005). Socioeconomic status and academic achievement: A metaanalytic review of research. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(3), 417– 453.
26. White, K. R. (1982). The relation between socioeconomic status and academic achievement. *Psychological Bulletin*, 91(3), 461-481
27. Willms, J. D. (1996). Indicators of mathematics achievement in Canadian elementary schools. In *Growing up in Canada: National Longitudinal Study of Children and Youth* (pp. 69-82). (Catalogue no. 89-550-MPE, no. 1).
28. Willms, J. D. (Ed.). (2002). *Vulnerable children: Findings from Canada's National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth*. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press.