



Global Advanced Research Journal of Educational Research and Review (ISSN: 2315-5132) Vol. 1(7) pp.137-142, August, 2012
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Full Length Research Paper

Relationship between parental socio-economic conditions and student's academic achievements: A case of district dir, Timergara, Pakistan

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Accepted 31 July, 2012

Parental socio-economic conditions exercise a deeper impact upon children's academic achievements. This study examines the relationship between socio-economic conditions of the parents and academic achievements of students at government schools for boys of District Dir, Timergara Pakistan. Data was collected by a structured questionnaire and was presented through tabulation and percentage analysis. The term academic achievement has been equated only with obtaining of marks in the annual examination. For the purpose of the sampling, 08 government secondary schools for boys of District Dir Timergara were selected. A random sample of 69 students was selected from all the 16 secondary schools for boys who had passed secondary examination from the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Malakand. The findings of the study showed a significant relationship between parental socio-economic conditions and academic achievements of the children in secondary examination. It is therefore concluded that the majority of children whose parents have better socio-economic conditions performed better in secondary examination as compared to those children whose parents had low socio-economic condition.

Keywords: academic achievement, socio-economic condition,

INTRODUCTION

Education is a tool of development. It broadens minds, helps to distinguish between right and wrong, makes us to discriminate well from bad and utilizes out environment to the best of our ability for the betterment of an individual as well as the community (Sabzwari, 2004). According to Plato, education means to turn eyes from dark to light. Dewey (1938) a famous educationist, writes that "Education is a process of living through continuous reconstruction of experiences. It is the development of all

those capacities in the individuals which enable him to control his environment and fulfill his belongings". This study examines the impact of socio economic condition of the parents on the academic achievements of their children in district Dir. Different data, collected through various studies and surveys, indicates that education has never been Pakistan's strong point due to some causative factors. These factors, as cited in Economic Survey of Pakistan (2002) through studies and probed by experts, include defective curricula, dual medium of instruction, lack of high qualified teachers, lack of library and laboratory, poor buildings, overcrowded classrooms, and above all poor parental socio economic status. The socio-economic status of the parents plays a vital role in

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the education of their children. Due to these reasons the researcher decided to find answers to the questions set in this study.

Statement of the problem

Parents with higher status often have more opportunities in preparing their young children for school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources in contrast to parents with lack of financial and social status. Parents with inadequate resources and limited access can negatively affect their young children's development in learning (Eamon, 2005). This justification motivated the researcher to investigate the socio-economic condition of the parents and its impact on their children's academic achievements in Tehsil Timergara (District Dir Lower Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan).

Significance of the study

In Pakistan curriculum is highly centralized. The government imposes pre-planned policies and curriculum upon students and teachers that adversely affect the process of education. They almost ignore the socio-economic condition of the parents and its impact on the academic achievements of their children. It needs more concentration for its improvement and development (Mirza, 2001). However, this study brings out hurdles in the path of education and draws attention toward its improvement. Specially, it highlights the relationship between socio-economic condition of the parents and their students' academic achievements.

Hypotheses of the study

In the academic achievements of the children parental socio-economic status plays an important role. For the betterment of the children's academic achievements, adequate socio-economic condition is necessary (Domina, 2005).

Hence the hypotheses for this study are that;

Children of parents who have sound socio-economic position show better academic achievements.

Children of parents who have poor socio-economic position show low academic achievements.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To examine the impact of socio-economic condition of parents and its relationship with academic achievements of children.

To review relevant literature for theoretical understating of the problem and its aspects.

To analyze the variables, results and findings based on the collected data.

To inform the concerned educational authorities, parents, teachers and the community regarding the relationship between student's academic achievements and parental socio-economic condition.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This is a descriptive research study. This study was carried out in Timergara, district dir. A total of eight government secondary schools for boys were selected for the purpose of the data collection. A total of students were selected who appeared in the annual examination 2011 in the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education, Malakand. Most of these schools are very far away from the centre of Timergara. During the sampling process it was found that the each school had different number of students enrolled. So the sampling was done on random sample basis to get equal representation during the process of data collection.

Ethical considerations

The researcher sent consent letters to the students to participate in the study to get their consent. Permission of the principals of the each school was acquired to get data from the examination board. Prior to sending the questionnaire a letter was also attached to the questionnaire regarding the importance of the study from research point of view and its potential benefits for the area. The respondents were also brought home about keeping the anonymity of their views and identity.

The selected number of sample students from each schools is presented is as follows. For the purpose of anonymity of identity, pseudo names are given to the schools.

The researcher administered a self-developed questionnaire based on five point liker scale to collect data from the selected sample. The results were tabulated and the findings are presented in percentages.

Delimitations of the study

Due to constraints of time and resources this study is delimited to sixteen public secondary schools at Timergara of District lower Dir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many research studies have been conducted throughout the world to study the relationship of socio-economic

Table 1

| S.No | Name of school | Number of student |
|------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Government High school Kota | 10 |
| 2 | Government High school Danin | 08 |
| 3 | Government High school Koragh | 11 |
| 4 | Government High school Ayoon | 09 |
| 5 | Government High school Pardoosh | 06 |
| 6 | Government High school Kamo | 10 |
| 7 | Government High school Maidan | 08 |
| 8 | Government High school Badami | 07 |
| | Grand Total | 69 |

condition and academic achievements of the students. On this relationship, Bone (1981) studied and concluded that the students belong to the family of high socio-economic condition have effective academic achievements than students belong to poor family. Sirin (2005) conducted research on the same topic and the result showed medium to strong relationship between socio-economic condition and academic achievements. The socio-economic condition of a family is an important factor which affects the learning achievements.

According to Bon (1981) Socio-economic status can be measured in a number of different ways. Most commonly it is measured by parents' education, occupation and income and the responsible factor is father, but sometimes mother's education or occupation, family income resources or household possession are used, especially in combination. Whatever the measurement is the socio-economic status is positively correlated with both educational attainment and achievement. It can be hypothetically stated that the higher a student's parental socio-economic status, the greater his or her academic performance in secondary education is likely to be. In this hypothetical phrase, it has been observed that socio-economic condition is a cause, which correlates with academic achievement effect.

According to Jencks (1979), the family is the oldest human group and the basic one. While the particular from of family structure may and dose varies from society, but the central foci of the family activities are child bearing and the initial induction of the child into the culture of a given society-in short civilization.

Family factors of the children such as socio-economic condition, two-parent versus single-parent household, divorce, family size, income level, and education occupation of the parents play a crucial role in the academic achievements of the students (Majoribanks, 1996)

Studies have repeatedly found that socio-economic condition of a family affects the students' academic achievements at all levels (Eamon 2005). Students with low socio-economic condition have been found to score about ten percent lower on the National Assessment of Education Program than students with higher socio-

economic condition. Thus students' academic achievements defend on their parents' socio-economic condition because low socio-economic conditions prevent the access of the students to education resources and create additional stress and anxiety at home.

Researches in this area have shown that children from single-parent households do not perform as well in school as children from two-parent households. There are several different explanations for this achievement gap. Single-parent households have less income and can provide less support to the children in comparison to two-parent households. Single-parents often struggle with time-management issues due to balancing many different areas of life on their own (Zill, N., Collins, M., West, J. and Hausken, E.G.1995).

Majoribanks (1996) has also found that single-parents are less involved in the academic achievements of their children and therefore give less encouragement than two-parent households.

Factors affecting academic achievements of students

According to Sabzwari (2004) following factors play a vital role in the academic achievements of students.

Divorce

Divorce negatively affects the academic achievements of the children. Possible explanation for this relationship is that divorce decreases or lowers the socio-economic condition of a family. Majoribanks (1996) further argues that divorce creates other anxiety and pressure that are harmful and puts a lot of hurdle in the academic achievements of the children

Family Size

Family size is another factor that negatively affects the children's academic achievements. Children with fewer siblings are likely to receive more parental attention,

Table 2

| S. No | Marks obtained by students in the annual examination | | | |
|-------|--|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| | Socio-economic condition level | 40-60% (Average) | 61-80% (Good) | 81-100% (Excellent) |
| 1 | High parental education | 12 | 35 | 22 |
| 2 | Low parental education | 39 | 23 | 07 |
| 3 | Parental high social status | 17 | 37 | 15 |
| 4 | Parental low social status | 45 | 20 | 04 |
| 5 | Posh residence of parents | 26 | 25 | 18 |
| 6 | Poor residence of parents | 40 | 17 | 12 |
| 7 | High parental monthly income | 10 | 20 | 39 |
| 8 | Low parental monthly income | 44 | 18 | 07 |
| 9 | More learning facilities at home | 08 | 29 | 32 |
| 10 | Less learning facilities at home | 48 | 15 | 07 |
| 11 | More help from parents in home work | 04 | 19 | 46 |
| 12 | Less help from parents in home work | 47 | 16 | 06 |
| 13 | More parent teacher interaction | 02 | 18 | 49 |
| 14 | Less parent teacher interaction | 38 | 24 | 07 |
| 15 | Internet facility at home | 18 | 26 | 25 |
| 16 | No internet facility at home | 29 | 22 | 18 |

cooperation and care and can have more access to resources than children from large families. These addition attention and support lead to better school performance and achievements. According to Eamon (2005) children from large families cannot have easy access to information regarding their educational activities

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement in school has linked to both positive and negative influences on academic achievements. Study by Domina (2005) concludes that explanation for this discrepancy is not conclusive. However it is thought that the type of involvement may make difference and that in some cases parents become involvement may not help academic scores, it does help to prevent behavioral problems.

Parents' Education level

Parents' education and especially the education level play a vital role in the academic performance of their children. Because educated parents can easily understand the hurdle in the way of their children's education and they know how to motivate and create their children interest in the academic activities. According to Mirza (2001) educated parents only easily manage their timetable and spare a suitable period of

time to check and balance the academic activities of their children but also involve themselves in it.

Income Level

Parents' income level is another factor that affects the academic achievements and performance of their children. In the words of Crosnoe, et al (2004) if the parents' income level is good and satisfactory than there would be fewer worries for the parents to provide learning resources and material to their children. In contrast, parents with low income often cannot provide easily their children such learning resources and materials which becomes hurdle in the academic performance of their children.

School Environment/ Factors

A student educational outcomes and academic achievements are greatly influenced by the environment of school they attend. School environmental factors include school structure, classrooms designing and size, school composition and school climate.

Crosnoe, Johnson, and Elder (2004) further suggest that school sector (public or private) and class size are the two important structural components of the schools. Mostly, private schools have no such kind of problems and they tend to have both better funding and smaller class size than public. Smaller class size creates more

intimate setting and therefore can increase teacher-student bonding which has also been shown to have positive effect on students' academic successes. As for as the condition of the secondary schools of Pakistan is concern, especially schools in rural areas have poor buildings and crowded classrooms and it is almost impossible for the teachers to give attention to each and every student. So this problem needs the attention of Govt. and education policy maker (Mirza, 2001).

Presentation of data

Analysis of data / findings

In the study, significant relationship was found between father's level of education and academic achievements of the children in secondary examination. For example, majority of children whose parents were well-educated have performed better in secondary examination as compared to those children whose parents were less educated or illiterate. It was found that there is a significant relationship between parental social status and academic achievements of the children.

A significant relationship was found between parental income and academic performance of students in secondary examination. It is, therefore, concluded that the student whose parental income was higher performed well in secondary examination as compared to those student who belonged to low income.

It was found that the posh residential area is significantly related to academic performance of students in secondary examination. It was found for example that the student who lived in posh areas performed better in secondary examination in comparison to those students who lived in underdeveloped areas.

It was found that more learning facilities to student at home were significantly related to academic achievements of the students in secondary examination. It is, therefore, concluded that the students whose parents provided more learning facilities to their children at home performed better than those students who did not have such facilities available to them at home..

It was found that the availability of parental help to students in terms of doing home work was significantly related to academic performance of students in secondary examination. It is, therefore, concluded that the students who enjoyed more support regarding doing of home work at home performed well in secondary examination than those who did not.

There was a student who had access to internet facilities at home performed extremely well in secondary examination. It is, therefore, concluded that the students who had more electronic facilities at home perform better in secondary examination than those students who had fewer electronic facilities at home.

It was found that parental interaction with teacher was significantly related to academic performance of students in secondary examination. It is therefore, concluded that the students whose parents were interacting with teachers performed well in secondary examination than those students whose parents did not have any interaction with the teachers. This proves the importance of parental involvement in education of the child.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the relationship between socio-economic conditions of the parent's student's academic achievements. It is concluded from the analysis and interpretation of data that the majority of the students whose parents were well educated, who have high social status in society, who have internet and other facilities at home perform well in secondary examination as compared to those students who did not have these facilities.

The study also revealed that more parental interactions with teachers, their help with students regarding homework tasks. This could be that continuous meeting of parents with teachers enables them to be aware of the progress of the child at school. In this way they are more in a stable position to guide the child and provide support which provides the child more opportunity to study and direction to succeed. It was also found that parents with high income had a significant impact upon their children's academic results. There is no denying the fact that quality education needs high investment. Therefore, those students who come from families having more income can afford reading materials, books, computer and other essential necessities on the basis of which they excel as compare to others.

Child of today is living in an information age. The world has become a global village. It has been observed that students who have access to internet and other latest means of knowledge perform better as compare to those who do not have these facilities. This study also showed that students who had access to internet performed better in the examination. The reasons could be many. But one important reason is that students through internet can have a broader access to latest information in the internet which broadens their mental horizons and develops their faculties more comprehensively as compare to those students who have only printed books at their disposal. In this way families with limited resources cannot provide access to their children as compared to the families that possess more facilities because they can easily promote and support children's' development and school readiness. Finally it can be safely said that parental socio-economic condition has great impact on the educational achievements of their children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the study, the researcher would like to give the following recommendations:

For the improvement and better result, the Government should remove the gap between public and Government schools system.

The policymakers, planners, service providers of the Government should take it as a serious matter to make the overall physical and socio-economic conditions of the government school better to attract the attention of the public to admit their children in these schools rather than in private schools, and people with low income will avail themselves.

Mass media should play its role to draw attention of the policymakers toward the education system and especially to the impact of the socio-economic condition of the parents on the academic achievement of their children.

The government should provide financial support and should give scholarship, especially, to those students who cannot afford the expenses of education.

In order to raise the standard of the secondary schools, the government should take the following steps seriously:

The physical condition of the schools should be improved,

Adequate facilities should be provided to teachers and students in teaching-learning process such as audio-visual material, spacious rooms, labs and hall for seminars. Health and hygienic condition should be improved.

To maintain discipline, teacher should also be involved in games and other sports activities with the students.

In order to improve the academic achievements of the students at secondary level, the government should develop an effective and strict monitoring and evaluation system to check and balance the education system.

Lastly, it is suggested strongly that mass media, both electronic and print, has to play a practical and effective role to bring out social awareness among people regarding the poor literacy condition in Pakistan on account of socio-economic problems.

Future research

On the basis of this study it is, therefore, suggested for researchers to conduct more researches on other aspects of this topic. One important area that comes out of this study is parent-teacher relationship and its impact upon student's educational achievements.

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