



Link between Socio-Economic Status and Students' Performance in Nine and Twelve Years Basic Education in Rwanda: Groupe Scholaire Saint Leon Nyarusange and Groupe Scholaire Nsinda

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Abstract

With an emphasis on Groupe Scholaire Saint Leon Nyarusange and Groupe Scholaire Nsinda, Muhazi, this study investigated the relationship between socio-economic status and students' performance in Rwanda's nine-year and twelve-year basic education programs. A sample of 91 respondents was selected from the 921 students who made up the targeted group. The necessary data was gathered via interviews and questionnaires. The findings showed that although 9.4% of respondents disagreed and 5.8% strongly disagreed with the statement, 47% of respondents strongly agreed and 37.6% agreed that having a high socioeconomic position aids students in performing well in school.

Subject Areas

Education

Keywords

Socio-Economic, Students' Performance, Basic Education, Teacher, Student, Rwanda

1. Introduction

Worldwide studies reveal that the socio-economic factors that negatively affect student's performance include poverty, educational background, occupational

categories, income level of parents, indiscipline, pregnancy, school type and harmful cultural practices [1]. In the United Arab Emirates, low socio-economic status (SES) students have been found to achieve grades about 10% lower on national assessment programs than higher SES learners [2] [3]. Parents with different occupations often have different styles of caring for their children [4]. Considine & Zappalà [5] showed that children from low socio-economic backgrounds do not perform well as they potentially could perform at school compared to children from high socio-economic backgrounds.

In America, socio-economic background is often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation [6]. It is commonly conceptualized as the social status or class of an individual or group. Low socio-economic status and its correlates, such as lower education, poverty and poor health, ultimately affect our societies as a whole. Research indicates that children from low socio-economic status households and communities develop academic skills more slowly compared to children from higher socio-economic status groups [3]. In Korea, according to [7], parental involvement is considered a dedication in which parents provide their children with all the resources they need and help them revise the lessons after class. Poyraz [8] conceptualized parental involvement in this country as a multi-dimensional structure, consisting of parental educational desires, plans and decisions for their children, and indeed, parental participation at school [9]. In Turkey, the parents support the idea that they could create a significant difference in their children's education when they get involved in the process [10] [11].

As far as Africa is concerned, when the colonial administration came to rule, parents were a bit reluctant to send their children to the new schools not trusting the kind of education being delivered by the foreigners. Historically, these first schools were managed mainly by missionaries, children were provided with all learning materials and involving parents and community in educational activities was not considered an issue. According to a study by Henderson & Berla [12] the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status, but the extent to which that student's family is able to create a home environment that encourages learning. In Kenya, the low income of parents is a major impediment to academic success and development on the part of the students. Student's academic performance can be predicted by a chain of social-economic factors resident in parents, family and network [13]. An observation is made in Kenya where high-income parents take their children to boarding schools while low-income parents take their children to public primary schools, and private primary schools seem to perform better academically than most public primary schools in Kenya [14] [15].

In Somalia, high levels of illiteracy, poverty and low socio-economic status coupled with high rate of paternal and maternal deprivation of student academic needs, has thrown many farmers and old rural dwellers into untold financial problems such as poverty, lack of money to purchase necessary textbooks and working materials for their kids. Also many rural and sub-urban dwellers can no

longer pay the school fees [16]. In Tanzania, the socio-economic factors in education have been well recognized. Parents are expected to improve student performance or behavior [17].

Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs theory has made a major contribution to teaching and classroom management in schools rather than reducing behavior to a response in the environment. Maslow (1970) adopts a holistic approach to education and learning. Applications of Maslow's hierarchy theory to the work of the classroom teacher are obvious. Student's cognitive needs can be met first fulfill their basic physiological needs [18]. Abdinoor [19] established that schools whose parents and students are in higher socio-economic levels tend to have more opportunities to spend greater time on learning task.

Secker [20] stated that, when groups of pupils with similar backgrounds are compared, the pupils from a high socio-economic status outperform those from a low socioeconomic status (SES) on academic achievement with much contradiction in literature where for example [21]-[23], [12] among others indicated that pupils from high-income families academically perform better than those from low-income families. The number of pupils from low-income families achievement are higher when they attend schools and classrooms where the majority of the population is economically advantaged [24]. The role of parents and their educational level is highly crucial to affect positively children's academic achievement [25]-[27]. Bond [28] claimed that poverty contributes toward educational failure, not simply because poor children are "culturally disadvantaged", but because their health and nutritional status are inadequate to allow for the maximum mental development and for the realization of their educational potential. Ragma & Molina [29], Danziger & Ratner [30], Chavkin & Williams [31] highlighted that lack of parental financial support hinders some students from working while in school and become a burden to teachers whom parents expect to produce good results [32]. Some parents are uneducated, hence are unable to read and write where they can only communicate in their mother tongue, which makes it difficult for them to assist their children with their homework [33] [35] [37]. Wimer & Wolf [36] defined characteristics of the poor family, while [34] explained disability that hinders poor families from living a miserable life.

The conceptual framework

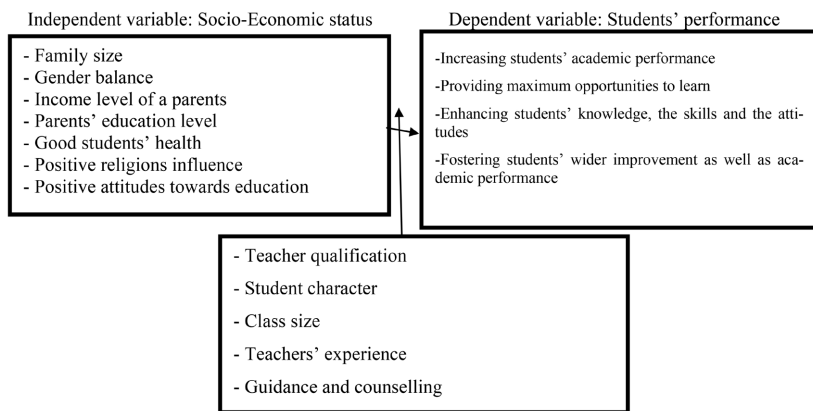
The conceptual framework that presents the interrelationship of the study variables is shown in **Figure 1**

2. Materials and Methodology

2.1. Research Design

According to Cohen, Manion, & Morrison (2007), Research design is a framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher. The study focuses on the research case study where the survey research design is used as the data collection from the samples of pre-determined.

The conceptual framework that presents the interrelationship of the study variables is shown in Figure 1



Source: Primary data (2022)

Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

2.2. Target Population

Regarding the words of Hussey (1997), the population is defined as any collection of items under consideration for research purposes. The research includes the population of the 2 Headteachers, 46 teachers and 873 students in both schools. The total number of population is 921 people.

2.3. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

2.3.1. Simple Size

Lawrence (1990) defines a sample as a collection of observations representing only a portion of the population. The entire population of this study was the total number of G.S St Leon Nyarusange and G.S Nsinda equivalent to 921 persons. To determine the sample size, we use Slovin's formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + (N * e^2))}$$

where, n = sample size, N = Total population and e = sampling error. The sampling error, e , can be given based on the fact that the investigator considers 10% as a marginal error calculated by just dividing by 100. Therefore, 10% is equivalent to 1, hence $n = \frac{921}{1 + 921(0.10)^2} = 90$ respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of sample size.

Category	Population	Sample size
Teachers	46	$n = \frac{N_i * n}{N} = \frac{46 * 90}{921} = 4$
Students	873	$n = \frac{N_i * n}{N} = \frac{873 * 90}{921} = 85$
Head Teachers	2	2
Total	921	91

For the success of this study sampling techniques and methods were used for picking a good number of respondents, who meet the purpose of the study. (See **Table 1**)

2.3.2. Data Collection

In this study, we collected and gathered primary data using a questionnaire as other researcher information mentioned in [34] and an interview guide given to the sample-sized population, while the secondary data was collected from the archive or other materials published before where we read authors' ideas and other documentaries.

3. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

3.1. Respondent Profile

Table 2. Distribution of students' respondents based on gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	46	54.1
Female	39	45.8
Total	85	100

Source: Primary data (2023).

The sample comprised of both male and female students. Their responses revealed that out of the eighty-five, forty-six were males representing 54.1% while thirty-nine were females representing 45.8% as mentioned in **Table 2**. The inclusion of both genders in the study helped to avoid bias that would have emerged if only one gender was used.

3.2. Presentation of Findings

Table 3. Socio-economic status boosts learners to perform well at school.

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	40	47
Agree	32	37.6
Disagree	8	9.4
Strongly disagree	5	5.8
Total	85	100

Source: Primary data (2023).

A questionnaire was distributed among the students sampled of the aforementioned school. Their answers were given in **Table 3** where 47% of the respondents strongly agree and 37.6% agree that high socio-economic status helps learners to perform well at school. But 9.4% disagree and 5.8% strongly

disagree with the statement, meaning that some children from high socio-economic status perform poorly due to different reasons like sickness, bad conduct, poor teaching methodologies among others. However, by comparing 72 respondents who agree and 13 respondents who disagree, we can confirm that high socio-economic status contributes a lot to better performance of the students.

Table 4. Families provide all needed materials and help their kids in all school activities.

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	42	49.4
Agree	35	41.2
Disagree	6	7
Strongly disagree	2	2.3
Total	85	100

Source: Primary data (2023).

Findings in **Table 4** indicates that 49.4% of respondents strongly agreed and 41.2% agreed while 7% disagreed the same as 2.3% strongly disagreed on families that are able to provide enough learning materials to help their kids perform well at school. The 7% who disagreed, explained that there are some rich parents who don't offer learning materials to their children because of not valuing their education.

Table 5. Parents' level of education promotes students' ethical academic conduct.

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	22	25.8
Agree	37	43.5
Disagree	15	17.6
Strongly disagree	11	12.9
Total	85	100

Source: Primary data (2023).

Findings in **Table 5** show that 25.8% of respondents strongly agreed and 43.5% agreed while 17.6% disagreed 12.9% strongly disagreed to the statement that parent's level of education promotes students' ethical academic conduct. These results affirmed that Educated parents help a child to do homework, encourage a child to study hard, teach a child at home and follow up on their child's education. It generally shows that parent involvement in education improves academic outcomes. On the other hand, 30.5% who disagreed cannot be neglected since it shows that some parents whose children in 9 & 12YBE don't help their kids in the learning process even if they are educated. This is because

they are always busy in different activities like trading and agriculture, etc. Therefore, enhances lack time to encourage and support their kids in academic work. Interviewees also noted that students whose parents are not educated meet the challenge of being helped while doing homework and some parents discourage their children from learning saying that there is no importance of learning because there are many job seekers in an area and this leads to low concentration in revising subjects. However, students from educated parents are encouraged to learn and get better marks.

Table 6. Paying school fees helps students to concentrate on learning and perform well in examinations.

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	31	36.4
Agree	37	43.5
Disagree	10	11.7
Strongly disagree	7	8.2
Total	85	100

Source: Primary data (2023).

Findings in **Table 6** indicate that 43.5% of respondents agreed and 36.4% strongly agreed while 11.7% disagreed and 8.2% strongly disagreed that paying school fees helps students to concentrate on learning and perform well in examinations. The 11.7% respondents who disagreed cannot be neglected as parents pay fees on time but children do not perform well in school due to peer pressure and poor learning environment. Interviewees opined that in cases where some resources such as textbooks are not adequately available, it is the responsibility of parents to avail such resources to their children, to facilitate meaningful learning. This implies that interviewees recognize the role of parents in their children's education and this helps the school to achieve its goals.

Table 7. Parents are able to spend part of their income to buy children's learning resources.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	53	62.3
No	32	37.6
Total	85	100

Source: Primary data (2023).

From **Table 7** above, 37.6% of students showed that their parents are not able to spend part of their income to buy children's learning resources which affect their academic performance negatively. However, **Table 8** shows some reasons that accelerate the poor performance of students.

Table 8. Reasons why some parents don't give learning materials to their children.

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Low income	48	56.4
Child does not ask for it	12	14.1
Negative attitude towards education	25	29.4
Total	85	100

Source: Primary data (2023).

As indicated in **Table 8** above, the majority of students (56.4%) were asserted that low income can be a challenge to the parents to provide required learning material due to poverty. Besides, 29.4% of the parents had a negative attitude towards education and resulted in students obtaining poor grades in lessons and 14.1% of the children do not ask their parents to buy learning materials as their parents are poor and some students dislike learning and resulted in lowering their scores in examinations. Some parents provide learning materials as required while other refuse and this affects the academic performance of students and some drop out of school. Indeed, some students who are given money to buy learning materials but spend it in other ways because of peer pressure like buying alcohol, and clothes among others.

Table 9. Economic challenges faced by parents when helping to learn effectively.

Economic challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of job	44	51.7
Low family income	67	78.8
Poverty	78	91.7
Lack of feeding fees	73	85.8
Lack of money to buy learning materials	80	94.1

Source: Primary data (2023).

As indicated in **Table 9** above, 85.8% were strongly asserted that lack of feeding fees as economic barrier parents face when helping children to learn effectively because students miss out on lessons due to financial problems and obtain few marks in subjects. Besides, 94.1% of the total respondents indicated that parents lack money to buy learning materials due to poverty, 78.8% earn low income and are unable to pay school requirements for their children, 91.7% face the problem of poverty, 51.7% don't have jobs for them to obtain money to provide all necessary requirements that the children need to learn in an effective manner. This hinders students' and teachers' expectations in the educational domain. Students who don't feed accordingly and receive all necessary learning materials, perform poorly in any examination.

Table 10 shows that 64.7% of the parents lack time to help their kids do home work because they are always busy with business, 81.2% face the challenge of dif-

difficult questions provided by teachers to children, and parents are not able to answer due to limited knowledge and skills, 52.9% did not attend school, thus unable to assist children in doing homework. Besides, 70.6% mentioned fatigue as barrier in assisting children to do homework because they usually perform hardworking jobs for survival, then they fail to support kids and eventually children yield poor scores in assignments and examinations as well.

Table 10. Obstacles parents encounter when assisting their kids with their homework.

Barriers	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of time	55	64.7
Difficult questions	69	81.2
Illiteracy	45	52.9
Fatigue	60	70.6

Source: Primary data (2023).

Findings in **Table 11** indicated that 95.3% of respondents agreed that giving enough time to help children to revise learnt lessons by themselves and sometimes helped by some of the family members can improve students' academic performance. The success in many subjects can motivate students to learn effectively and enhance their discipline at school. Moreover, 98.8% suggested the provision of all learning materials, which helps learners be psychologically stable and concentrated in the classroom. Also 90.6% proposed to coaching students at home, for those who are able, this can help learners deepen their knowledge about the subjects to learn. 76.4% mentioned that the Government should support poor students by giving them learning materials, free food at school, and paying other expenses related to schooling. Parents are suggested to avoid requesting the students to perform household activities after school and even in morning hours, to allow them to arrive at school before or on time. Even though some of the parents are poor, they can sacrifice the amount of money to their kids learning in order to enable them to complete their studies and continue further studies.

Table 11. Possible solutions to the challenges associated to students' socio-economic status that affect their performance.

Possible solutions	Frequency	Percentage
Giving enough time in helping children to revise learnt lessons by themselves	81	95.3
Provision of all learning materials	84	98.8
Coaching students at home	77	90.6
Government support poor students	65	76.4

Source: Primary data (2023).

The findings of this research in general are in the same line as the finding of

[5] [8] who confirmed that students from high socio-economic status perform better than those from low social-economic backgrounds. The results affirmed that educated parents help a child to do homework, encourage a child to study hard, teach a child at home and follow up their child's education. The majority of parents whose children in 9 & 12 Years Basic Education have the capacity of paying school fees which motivates students to attend the school and perform well. This implies that students recognize role of parents in their children's education and this help the school to achieve its goals. According to Garcia and Thornton, we see that the involvement of family in learning helps to improve student performance, and reduce absenteeism and restore parents' confidence in their children's education. Learners with parents or caregivers who are involved in learners' education, earn higher grades and test scores, have better social skills and show improved behavior. Besides, 94.1% of the total respondents indicated that parents lack money to buy learning materials due to poverty, while 78.8% earn low income and unable to pay school requirements for their children, and 51.7% don't have jobs in order to obtain money to provide all necessary requirements that the children need to learn in effective manner.

In addition, 64.7% of the parents lack time to help their kids to do home work because they are always busy in business, 81.2% faced the challenge of under-rated education hence are not able to assist their children during homework activities, 52.9% did not attend school, thus unable to assist children in doing homework. Besides, 70.6% mentioned fatigue as barrier in assisting children to do homework because they usually perform hardworking jobs for survival.

Finally, findings indicated that 95.3% of respondents agreed that giving enough time to help children to revise learnt lessons which can improve students' academic performance. This will motivate students to learn effectively and enhance their discipline and academic achievements as well. 98.8% suggested providing all learning materials, 90.6% proposed to coaching students at home while 76.4% mentioned that Government should support poor students by giving them learning materials, free food at school, and exempting from paying other school fees like coaching fees. Albert, (1996) opined that it is not important to get a one sided view about the role parents can play in shaping the classroom efforts. Moreover, [10] [32] added that the idea of valuing cooperation between schools, families and the communities as having a great impact on the students' education.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Students perform better when parents support their children's schooling. This outcome confirmed that parental involvement in their children's education promotes effective and efficient learning. Research generally demonstrates that parental involvement in schooling enhances student performance. The findings also identified certain obstacles, such as parents who either refuse or supply insufficient educational resources. Pupils who do not receive enough food or learning resources perform poorly in class and even in their homework.

Finally, findings indicated that giving the students enough time to revise, accelerate and improve students' academic performance. This will motivate students to learn effectively and enhance their discipline and academic achievements as well. In addition, the assistance from either government or NGOs to poor families may enhance attendance and concentration which in turn improve students' academic performance. Some Recommendations: The government should sensitize its people to join saving cooperatives which are different from Ejo Heza in order to enable them to pay school fees on time and enhance their saving plan for their family's future use; the community can be encouraged to stop engaging students in heavy economic activities such as bricks making for construction, carrying heavy luggage and selling different goods and services which enable students to concentrate at school; school leaders should ensure that school feeding program is effective and efficient and mobilize parents to contribute towards their children better education; the teachers need to be warm, supportive and nurturing towards learners who are psychologically unstable; parents have to provide enough learning materials to their children; the students are recommended to avoid peer pressure and take their studies seriously.

For further study, one may investigate Link between Socio-Economic Status and Students' Performance in the whole country or more than ten schools in order to get general image about student's performance.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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