

Parental Socio-Economic Status on the Learning Achievement of the Primary School Students in Malaipatti Village, Madurai District

OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 11

Special Issue: 1

Month: January

Year: 2024

E-ISSN: 2581-9402

Received: 03.11.2023

Accepted: 15.12.2023

Published: 27.01.2024

Citation:

Uma, S., and S. Gomathi.
“Parental Socio-

Economic Status on the Learning Achievement of the Primary School Students in Malaipatti Village, Madurai District.” *Shanlax International Journal of Management*, vol. 11, no. S1, 2024, pp. 113–18.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/management.v11iS1-Jan.7151>

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Abstract

The foundational level of the educational system is primary school. It deserves the highest priority to strengthen the knowledge of the children. The objective of this research is to ascertain how the socioeconomic status of primary school parents in Malaipatti village, Madurai district, affects the academic progress of their children. To fulfil this objective, the study analysed the socio-economic status of their parents, which is expected to have an impact on their ward's academic performance, by assessing the skills of the students through various activities.

Introduction

Education is a primary need in this era of globalization. Reducing poverty and rebalancing the socioeconomic fabric of developing nations are major remedial roles that education plays. Specifically, education has been greatly impacted by the world's dynamic economic development. Many parents find themselves needing to work harder and make significant financial sacrifices to afford their children's education. The economic aspect is widely perceived by parents as a crucial factor in determining their children's educational success. Consequently, the varying economic status of parents directly contributes to differences in students' academic achievements. India's education system encompasses pre-primary, primary, secondary, and higher education stages. Primary education is crucial for development as it establishes a strong foundation for learning and academic growth. Like other developing nations, Initially, India faced challenges such as low enrolment and high dropout rates at the primary level and beyond. To address this, the Government of India implemented the policy of universalizing elementary education, ensuring free and compulsory education for children up to age 14. As a result, enrolment rates have increased, and dropout rates have decreased significantly, reaching a dropout rate of 4% in 2016–2017

(MHRD, Government of India, 2017). Like the rest of the states, the Government of Tamil Nadu has implemented various initiatives, such as the District Primary Education Programme, Operation Blackboard, and incentives for free textbooks, meals, and uniforms, resulting in an upward trend in Tamil Nadu's literacy rate of 80.09 percent with a gross enrolment ratio of 115.720% at the primary level, and the Tamil Nadu state government is close to its goal of 100% enrolment.

According to the 2011 Census, Chennai, Thoothukudi, and Kanyakumari have the highest literacy rates, while Dharmapuri and Thiruvannamalai have the lowest in Tamil Nadu. Among these, Madurai ranks 9th with a literacy rate of 82.14%, higher than the national average. Madurai district has approximately 655 primary schools, and the enrolment ratio is 95.88% for primary education, indicating high enrolment among children in the primary school-going age group.

Statement of the Problem

The parents are a child's closest living relatives. A child's learning achievement and academic performance are significantly impacted by their socioeconomic situation. This factor encompasses various aspects, including parental income, education level, occupation, and overall family resources. Research has consistently shown that children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds tend to face greater obstacles in their educational journey, which can impact their learning achievement. Limited access to educational resources, inadequate nutrition, and a lack of a conducive learning environment all contribute to these challenges. Moreover, financial constraints often restrict opportunities for additional educational support or enrichment activities.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the research is to determine how parents socioeconomic position affects their children's academic performance in Malaipatti Village, Madurai District.

Significance of the Study

Education has several attributes that are closely linked to the socio-economic characteristics of students. The learning achievement of a student provides a general background on how the student is progressing. Thus, researching the parental socioeconomic status-related influencing elements that may affect primary school youngsters' learning achievement might offer important insights into the educational process. This study is being carried out on primary school students in Malaipatti village in order to determine the impact of parents' socioeconomic status on their children's learning attainment as well as the support they received through government programmes and how that affected their academic performance. It aims at throwing light on various socio-economic factors like income, education, class, religion, and work participation rate that impact academic performance.

Data Collection and Methodology

In this study, we are focusing on the primary school students of Malaipatti village. The proposed research was conducted using a primary data collection method. The study was conducted during the period from November 2022 to April 2023. The respondents are primary school students of Malaipatti village, their parents, and the teaching faculty of the primary school in Malaipatti village. The total number of respondents to the study is 80, including 33 students, 45 parents, and 2 teachers. The data on socio-economic variables were collected from the parents of primary school students using a questionnaire by visiting their houses. Moreover, considering the young ages of the primary school students, it was found to be important to engage with them to analyse the learning achievement of primary school students. To fulfil this objective, the researchers conducted specific activities, as per the government norms, from grades 1 to 5. Frequency and percentage

analysis were the main methods used in the study to examine the parents' socioeconomic level and the academic achievement of the students.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The parents' economic status has a significant impact on how well their primary school children perform academically. It includes a range of elements that are anticipated to affect a student's educational results, including access to resources, education level, occupation, and income. The primary objective of the current study was to look at children's academic achievement, but the researchers also acknowledged that socioeconomic factors had a big impact on how well they did in school. As a result, this was taken into account by the study as a contextual factor while analysing the academic achievement of the Malaipatti village primary school children.

Socio Factors

Table 1 Age-wise classification of the respondents

Variables	Category	Fathers age (in %)	Mother age (in %)
Age of Respondents	20-30	6%	64%
	30-40	79%	30%
	40-50	15%	6%

Source: Primary Data

In Table 1, the respondents (parents) were classified into three age groups: 20–30, 30–40, and 40–50. Firstly, it is observed that 79 percent of fathers and 30 percent of mothers both fall within the age group of 30–40. On the other hand, mothers, who account for 64 percent of responses in the 20–30 age group, exceed fathers, who represent 6 percent of that age group. In contrast, both fathers and mothers in the 40–50 age group have lower percentages. The researcher noticed that young mothers between the ages of 20 and 30 were following their wards academic performance and spending quality time with their children comparatively than mothers falling under the age groups of 30 to 40 and 40 to 50. Additionally, fathers of all age groups have minimal participation in the education process of their children compared to mothers.

Table 2 Community of the Respondents

Variables	Category	Percentage
Community	BC	30%
	MBC	27%
	SC	43%

Source: Primary Data

The community classification of the parents of Malaipatti primary school students is presented in Table 2. The results show that 30 percent of the respondents belong to the BC (backward class) and 27 percent belong to the MBC (most backward class) community. Among the respondents, 43 percent of them belong to the SC (scheduled caste) community. Through interviews with parents, the researcher observed that primary school parents from the SC community appear to have less education than parents from other communities; additionally, there are no graduates from this community, and most mothers from this community are also more likely to have no formal education. In terms of their occupations, the majority of them are wage workers. These factors are likely to have an effect on their children's academic success.

Table 3 Educational qualifications of the Respondents

Variables	Category	Father's Qualification (in %)	Mother's Qualification (in %)
Education Qualification	Illiterate	0%	18%
	Primary	12%	3%
	Secondary	9%	27%
	High school	70%	40%
	Graduate	9%	12%

Source: Primary Data

It is observed that the majority of the fathers (70 percent) and mothers (40 percent) of primary school students in Malaipatti village have completed their high school education. While the primary education attained by both fathers and mothers is 12 percent and 3 percent, respectively, Further, it is to be noted that the illiterate level of fathers is nil, whereas in the case of mothers, it is 18 percent. The graduate fathers and mothers are 12 percent and 9 percent, respectively. The educational background of parents has a significant impact on how well their children are educated. It was observed that parents with greater educational backgrounds, particularly graduates, actively participate in their children's academic development and help them learn successfully. Rather than relying on "Illam Thedi Kalvi " (Education at Doorstep)," they manage their children's absences from school, assist their wards with their homework, and participate in educational activities at home.

Table 4 Occupation of the Respondents

Variables	Category	Father's Occupation (in %)	Mother's Occupation (in %)
Occupation	Casual labour	58%	12%
	Salaried employment	18%	0%
	MGNREGA	6%	3%
	Business	18%	9%
	Agriculture	0%	6%
	Unemployed	0%	70%

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 suggests that in Malaipatti village, where primary school pupils are taught, seventy percent of the moms are unemployed. It is discovered that every father works. The majority of the men and women work as temporary employees. Most of the women and men are engaged as casual laborers. It is seen that salaried women employees are nil in the region. The purpose of the study was to determine whether or not the occupations of parents affected their children's academic success. The information about their parents' various employment was gathered through parent interviews. Nurses, carpenters, electricians, masons, drivers, painters, MGNREGA wage workers, businesspeople, and peasants were among the professions represented. Depending on the parents' employment, the children received varying levels of education support. The results of the parent and teacher interviews showed that parents in formal jobs were in a better position to support their children at home than parents in informal jobs.

Table 5 Family type of the Respondents

Variables	Category	Percentage
Type of Family	Nuclear Family	42%
	Joint Family	58%

Source: Primary Data Data

Table 5 shows that 42% of the families of the primary school students in Malaipatti are classified as nuclear families, while 58% are categorised as joint families. It was noticed that joint families, particularly for working parents, operate as a strong support system for primary school students in many households. Grandparents are spending more time than working parents and following up on their grandchildren’s academic as well as extracurricular activities.

Table 6 Annual Income

Income	Percentage
Below 50000	6%
50001-75000	37%
75001-100000	9%
100001-125000	24%
125001-150000	3%
175001-200000	21%

Source: Primary Data

Table 6 depicts the annual income of the parents of primary school students in Malaipatti village. The majority of the population (37 percent) falls within the income range of “50001-75000,” followed by 100,001 to 125,000 (24 percent), and 175,001 to 200,000 (21 percent). Meanwhile, the percentages are relatively lower for the other income groups. It suggests that a considerable proportion of primary school students’ parents in Malaipatti village belong to the low-income category. The researchers identified a significant proportion of parents in Malaipatti village who belong to the low-income category. However, the parents’ financial circumstances do not profoundly impact their children’s academic achievements, as the government provides educational aids including school uniforms, bags, notebooks, mid-day meals, and other aids that are received by all categories and positively support the academic performance of the students.

Learning Achievement

Table 7 Overall Academic performance of 1st - 5th grade students

Tasks completion level	Communication Skills		Reading Comprehension		Writing Skills		EVS	Numerical Ability	Science	Social
	Tamil	English	Tamil	English	Tamil	English				
Full Completion of the task	35	25	30	22	23	16	6	16	11	12
Partial competition of task	10	12	11	14	13	18	1	18	10	10
Incomplete	-	8	4	9	9	11	3	11	5	4

Source: Primary Data

The academic performance of students in Malaipatti village varied across different grade levels. In the first grade, students demonstrated proficiency in Tamil but faced challenges in English, particularly in writing skills. The second-grade students excelled in communication and reading skills but struggled with writing and numeracy. The third-grade students showed proficiency in communication and reading but faced difficulties in writing, numeracy, science, and social studies. In the fourth grade, students had challenges with reading comprehension in English and writing in both languages, while science and social studies performed relatively well. Lastly, in the fifth grade, students displayed competence in communication skills in Tamil but needed improvement in reading comprehension, numerical ability, writing skills, science, and social studies. Overall, addressing writing difficulties, enhancing numeracy skills, and providing support in specific subject areas can contribute to improving the academic performance of students in Malaipatti village.

Conclusion

The academic performance of elementary school pupils is impacted by the parents' differing ages and educational backgrounds. The financial situation of a student's parents did not significantly impact their academic achievement. Students' learning achievement is impacted by parental education, family size, and occupation in both positive and negative ways. The parental community affects the academic performance of students. Drawing conclusions from the data, the study proposed that parental participation is essential to children's academic success. Raising parental participation in school and extracurricular activities should be a top priority for schools. It is important to execute a door visitation programme, frequent teacher-parent contact, school-parent communication, parental involvement in school events, and parental awareness and education. Teachers ought to foster a parent-friendly atmosphere because parents are reluctant to engage with them because they lack education.

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