

Family's Role in Children's Academic Achievement- An Overview of Extant Studies

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Abstract:

Ever-evolving science, globalisation and improving access to better standards of living have brought sweeping social changes. However, family remains the fundamental building block on which societies are based and where the individual receives his first nurturing and grooming. The close relationship between family and education is well established by numerous sociological studies. The physical and cognitive maturation, and adaptation to them, do not occur in a vacuum. Psychological and social maturity of an individual requires mastery of a number of other critically important and interrelated developmental tasks (Aldous, 1967; Conger, 1971).

This paper aims to present an overview of the existing studies on the subject of family's effect on academic achievement of children, with a view to establishing the strong relationship between family and academic achievement of children.

Keywords: Family, Family capital, Academic, Achievement, Studies

Comenius, one of the first “moderns” in education, looked upon education as serving universal needs. According to him, education was the “workshop of humanity”, which was the force that created peace and progress. Educated people contribute positively and pro actively towards creating “good life in a

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community” (Gertrude, 1948).

Academic achievement refers to a student’s learning, but learning and achievement have distinct connotations and are not mutually synonymous. Achievement is assessed by behaviour- oral, written, performance. It is assumed that achievement reflects underlying learning, but students may not achieve all that they have learned for various reasons such as illness, low motivation etc (Schunk, 2010). Students with similar abilities do not achieve at similar levels (Zimmerman, 2000). Dweck’s (2006) research in fields such as education, business and parenting shows that achievement depends on people believing that their abilities can be improved through effort and persistence.

Studies Related to Family and Academic Achievement

Many studies have studied the linkage between the academic and social performance of adolescents and related variables such as family, social environment, financial factors etc. There has been a sizeable body of work undertaken both in the global context and also in India. Studies based in India provide better pointers and indicators in terms of the research questions and hypothesis of the current study in the context of South East Asia. However, gaining a global perspective is highly pertinent to build a sound understanding.

International studies:

Gooding, Yasan (2001) in her study tried to analyze the relationship between parental educational level and students’ academic achievement. The researcher also examined the effect of parents’ income levels, socio-economic status, marital status/family structure, home environment and parent-child

interaction on the academic achievement of the freshman students. The sample consisted of 1784 freshman students who enrolled for the 1998-1999 academic session at Iowa State University. The study indicated that parental marital status and parental educational level strongly affects the academic achievement of the students in the household.

Zhang, Chi (2011) in his research examined the effects of parental educational level, family income and peer on academic achievement of the adolescents. The sample consisted of 300 students studying in primary and high schools in China. It was hypothesized by the researcher that the parental educational background, family income and peers will be significantly correlated with academic achievement of the children. It was found by the researcher that significant relation existed between peer effects and children’s academic outcomes.

Muthoni, Kamau Lydia (2013) in his study examined the influences of family financial status, parental educational level, parents’ marital status and family size on the academic achievement by interviewing 338 secondary school students selected for the sample. Questionnaires were given to parents also in order to analyze various variables associated with dependent variable. The study concluded that students who live with both of their parents do better than from single parent homes. It was also found that as most of the students belonged to big size families, the size of the family has no relationship with the academic achievement of the adolescent students.

Adzido, Reindolf, YaaNani et al. (2016) conducted a research and tried to analyze the relationship of family income and academic achievement of tertiary students. The sample size consisted of 480 students studying in 12 different departments of the Ho Polytechnic, Ghana. It was found during the course of the research that family income affects the academic achievement of the students to some extent. For serious and responsible students, low income may not be the reason for lower academic achievement.

Machebe, Chioma Henrietta et al. (2017), in their study included 300 senior high school students studying in Japan. The researchers examined the effect of financial status of parents on children's academic achievement. They also studied how parent-child relationship played a pivotal role in increasing their academic outcomes. It was found in the study that students who belong to high financial status families were likely to attain greater academic achievement.

Indian Studies

Gupta, Arun K. and Sharma, Suresh K. (1987) examined the relationship between adolescents' scholastic achievement and patterns of parental preferences. It was found that achievement of the adolescents was found to be independent of level of desirability of parental preferences in the educational field. It was found that sex differences do exist in academic achievement and adolescent girls were found to achieve higher as compared to adolescent boys.

Rajendran, S. et al. (2007) conducted a study to investigate the influence of parents'

education on the various forms of study habits of high school students in Tamil Nadu. The various dimensions of study habits included home environment and planning, reading and note taking, planning of subject, habits of concentration, general habits and attitude and preparation for examination and school environment. The study concluded that parents' education had no significant influence.

Mohanty, Prasamita (2009) did a comparative study of high and low achieving rural scheduled caste primary school girls in four districts of Haryana. The study examined the relationship of socio-economic status, home environment and school environment with academic achievement of high and low achieving rural caste scheduled caste girls. It was concluded that there was significant relationship between home environment and academic achievement of low achieving girls.

Khan, Rana Muhammad Asad (2015) conducted this research in order to analyze the impact of parents' educational level on their children studying at secondary level of education. The sample concluded 200 students studying in 10th class in secondary schools of District Rajanpur situated in south of state of Punjab in Pakistan. The study concluded that parents who have higher parental educational level have more influence on their children to achieve academically high at secondary level. This was in comparison to children whose parents have low parental educational level.

Shoba V. (2017), in her study studied social and psychological correlates in relation to academic achievement of the higher secondary school students. The sample consisted of 800

students studying in eight different higher secondary schools in districts of Chennai and Kanchipuram. The social correlates were type of schooling, medium, locality, family factors and the psychological correlates were behavior deviance, aggression and depression. Multiple regression analysis was used in order to find out the effect of social and psychological correlates of academic achievement among the higher secondary school students.

In conclusion, one can say that several studies have established that families have a great effect on the learning behaviour and eventual academic success of children. As families are the earliest and primary environments in a child's life, they become the most significant environments that shape and build the child's personality and behaviour patterns.

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