

Socioeconomic Influences on Academic Achievement and Mental Health: Addressing Educational and Emotional Challenges among Students

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Abstract

This study looks into the multidimensional relationship between socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and mental health in pupils. The study seeks to investigate the complex interplay between socioeconomic status (SES), educational obstacles, and emotional distress, as well as their impact on students' overall well-being. The study was quantitative in nature, and a descriptive approach was chosen. District Bhakkar and district Layyah public institutes were population of the research study. A sample of two district schools were selected. With the help of five likert scale questionnaire data were collected and SPSS used for statistical analysis. This study a complete review of review of literature and analyzes the number of elements analyzed of how much differences of socioeconomic (SES) appear in learning backgrounds and how academic performance of students affected and as well as their intellectual well-being. More than a few such factors effect educational achievement and psychological health which related to their income & level of education of their parents and also family structure and resource access. Moreover this research study gazed different ways that (SES) dynamics influence anxiety and depression of learners and as well as their intellectual health.

Keywords: *Social Status & economic status, Academic performance, learner intellectual well-being, Emotive grief of student*

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Introduction

Socio-economic SES factors and other learner educational performance & other as well as characteristics regarding to well-being of cognition has been widely investigated in learning domain of psychology. Factors of SES incorporates economic and social variables extensive ranges which counting education and income level of family with their occupation and also other resources which support learner networks and impact of education. SES circumstances influences educational achievement and mental health of learner has garnered a lot of attention in current years, specifically as the gap of learning execution and psychological well-being has become wider. In the same way, it was seen that the children who belonged to strong and good family in terms of education and social aspect of their parents, their educational quality and their academic performance were better than other children, the main reason was their peace of mind and satisfaction and such Children who belonged to low-status families had a different standard of understanding and knowledge than children who belonged to high-educated families. The quality of work of parents, their education plays an important role on the development of children, whose parents' education quality was very high, their children were found to be mentally fit and satisfied, and those children found their manners of life easier. And similarly, the children who belong to a family that is not getting the necessities of life properly, their work and therefore the quality of education adversely affects the development of the children and their minds. And adversely affects their future plans. A research study found that children of parents who had a high economic and social standard of living were less likely to have anxiety disorders and mental illness, compared to parents who lived in poverty and had low social status. The standard was simply that their children were found to be at a very low level of intelligence and that the influence of their parents adversely affected their brains to the detriment of them. According to Mendoza, (2020) learning backgrounds with limited support and limited resources can lead to many factors such as anxiety and depression. In addition humiliation attached to mental well-being concerns habitually obstructs learners from seeking help and educational encounters.

Literature Review

According to Sirin (2021). Children who have a strong home background are more likely to achieve their life goals more easily, while maintaining a strong relationship between economic status and social academic achievement. Children whose home background is very poverty-stricken and in the lowest condition are considered weak socially and economically, so they lag behind their peers and can't get it.

According to Reardon (2021) this research study using cross-national data and statistics, clearly revealed the differences in children's success and failure with respect to their parents' political background, which reflected their educational attainment. Their future grades and access to resources; parents' educational quality; cultural

capital; and parental involvement; how much this affects children's academic achievement. Influenced considerably and greatly influenced their future plans and thinking.

According to Reardon, Crosnoe & Cooper, 2021, Driessen et al., (2023) these social and racial differences of children and their gender combine with all their demographic variables to increase educational equality and influence them in some places for good and in others for bad. Educational inequality operates across generations and genders, causing children's feelings of stress, depression and anxiety to adversely affect their mental health. Children continue to face failure in life because of their weak feelings. These elements of educational inequality influence children's perceptions of their parents' home background in such a way that those children present themselves as academically disadvantaged and, on the other hand, children whose home background If the educational background is good and the elements of educational inequality are not present in them, they find themselves successful.

Intellectual Well-being SES Dynamics

According to McLeod and Shanahan (2023) the factors that significantly affect the emotional and mental health of students, including economic factors and socio-social factors, also significantly affect the academic performance of children. status and from poorer families if they identify themselves as children from richer families with a higher household background will always experience more mental health problems and are more likely to Compared to these children, their mental stress and thus depression will be more. When children face mental problems and depression, they fall behind in their life goals and keep cursing themselves.

According to Shanahan et al., (2021) family dynamics in increasing the chances of mental health disorders in underprivileged children, limited access to mental health treatment, parents' socio-economic background, neighborhood problems and socio-economic difficulties for these children, these mental problems and mental health. According to them, if mental health outcomes are to be good, good economic status is essential if parents' socio-economic status and background are from very poor and complex families. If so, they may face two-way problems. In order to prevent children from increasing their chances of mental and mental health, they have to reduce their socio-economic disadvantage. Similarly mental health problems reduce their academic success. By reducing the performance of children, they can increase their scope by limiting the number of opportunities for future growth that they have. In order to reduce their educational problems, as many as there are economic difficulties, the home background, if it is in a weak condition, it is important to improve it, because the home background is directly related to the mental health and economic status of children. Because those children can better themselves (Bradley & Corwyn, 2022; Evans & Reiss, Kim, 2023).

Recent Developments and Future Directions

Duncan & Murnane, 2021; Leventhal & Brooks-Gunn, 2024) explored that with the help of an example in a research study that the role of various government activities to reduce or eliminate the effects of economic disadvantage on children is increasingly taken up and the more the role of government activities. The better and better, the less their social problems will be and the higher their educational quality will be. Worse, he emphasized the importance of children's academic success and how social problems affect the mental health of the mind. If there is, the role of the government is necessary to reduce them all improved.

According to him, there are different types of relationships among children, economically, socially, and socially, including inequality, gender, and intergenerational family background. Therefore, the importance of these targeted interventions and initiatives is needed. The future can be further embellished (Duncan & Magnuson, 2021).

Emotions and Academic Performance

According to Fredrick's ,Pekrun et al., (2022) the significant factors affecting educational progress and development, including self-efficacy and students' emotional experiences and motivation, play a very important role. It turns out that students who show positive emotions experience greater enjoyment of life and have higher levels of achievement than students who show a higher level of academic achievement and achievement. If there is disappointment and negative emotions, their educational progress remains backward and these factors become a big obstacle in the way of success. Students who are characterized by negative emotions regarding their emotions face a lot of problems in life

Socioeconomic Factors and Emotional Well-being

Evans & Kim, Reiss (2023) explored that students who belong to socio-social and a family background which is lower class have economic insecurity and they often face bad situation in life and it makes them to their Those who have negative emotions may contribute to high levels of anxiety. Moreover, their negative emotions may increase their access to disparity in satisfaction and feelings of frustration, which may significantly impair their emotional well-being. There may be a disadvantage, and compared to them, such students who have less intensity structure, less emotional experiences and their home background are very high, do not have such level of anxiety and depression and their Economic insecurity is also less, due to which they often experience good living conditions and enjoy their lives.

Intersectionality of Socioeconomic Status and Emotions

According to Mistry and colleagues (2023) & Jones et al., (2023). In a research, while starting to look at the emotional experiences of students and the interrelationship between them, it shed light on the social characteristics and economic characteristics of students and the various difficult processes of emotions and said that the increasing emotional level of students in their youth. Reactions and emotions were the regulation that was associated with it. Further, they argued that the relationship between economic status and students' emotional functioning is clarified in adolescence and observed that students even in their growing age, their emotional connection is important.

Implications for Educational Practice and Policy

Rimm-Kaufman & Hamre, 2021) explored that by recognizing the emotional needs of children separately and implementing measures to expand their learning environment, which includes developing their interests and their teaching methods, so that children culturally able to better understand their learning methods and implement these measures based on their experiences and feelings. Policy and policy is an important implication, so all school administrators, including teachers and clerks, should recognize the emotional needs of children individually, taking into account their home background and their needs. Steps should be taken to promote an educational environment that is sensitive to emotional needs

Furthermore, governments have a critical role in talking the systemic inequities that subsidize to socioeconomic gaps in learning and emotional well-being. Even worse, support policies that provide funding and access to information for children to achieve academic success and justice for children, both in terms of education and their emotional well-being and development. Play an important role in redressing the disequilibrium that exists within them and may also lead

to greater educational success that promotes economic opportunity.



Figure 01. *Socio-economic factor impact*

Above mentioned figure illustrates how factors of SES socioeconomic impact various aspects of children's lives, as well as their academic achievement, psychological well-being, learning encounters, and as well as their emotional grief.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in two major theories: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) and Bourdieu's Social Reproduction Theory (1986), both of which offer comprehensive perspectives on how socioeconomic factors shape educational and psychological outcomes among students.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Bronfenbrenner emphasized that individual development occurs within a set of nested environmental systems microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem—that interact to influence growth. Within the context of this study, socioeconomic status (SES) operates across these systems. At the microsystem level, parental involvement, family stress, and peer interactions influence students' immediate experiences of learning and emotional well-being. At the mesosystem level, the interactions between school and home (e.g., parental-teacher communication) affect both academic performance

and mental health. At the exosystem level, factors such as parental employment, access to healthcare, and community resources indirectly influence students' experiences. Finally, the macrosystem reflects broader socioeconomic policies, cultural norms, and inequalities that shape educational opportunities and emotional resilience.

Bourdieu's Social Reproduction Theory

Bourdieu provides another lens to explain how inequalities are perpetuated across generations through cultural, social, and economic capital. Families with higher SES are able to transfer cultural capital (educational resources, values, language proficiency), social capital (networks, institutional connections), and economic capital (financial stability, quality schooling, learning materials) to their children, giving them significant advantages in academic performance and emotional stability. Conversely, lower SES families often lack these forms of capital, leading to limited opportunities, increased stress, and poorer academic and psychological outcomes.

Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms

The relationship between SES and student outcomes is not linear; it is shaped by mediating and moderating factors. Mediators include parental involvement, availability of school resources, and peer influences, which explain how SES exerts its influence on achievement and mental health. Moderators, such as resilience, coping strategies, and institutional support systems (e.g., counseling services, scholarships), determine the strength or weakness of these effects. For example, students from low-SES backgrounds with strong resilience or access to supportive school programs may experience less negative impact compared to those without such supports.

Objective of Research

- To investigate the impact of socioeconomic status on students' academic achievement.
- To examine how socioeconomic conditions influence students' mental health, including anxiety and depression.
- To identify key educational and emotional challenges faced by students from varying socioeconomic backgrounds.

Research Questions

- Is to investigate the impact of socioeconomic status on students' academic achievement?
- Is to examine how socioeconomic conditions influence students' mental health, including anxiety and depression?

- Is to identify key educational and emotional challenges faced by students from varying socioeconomic backgrounds?

Methodology

Nature of Study

Nature of this research study was quantitative approach that focuses on collecting and analyzing numerical data to answer research questions or test hypotheses. This research study was quantitative in nature descriptive approach and also survey research design were selected.

Population of Study

Population of this research study work was comprise students admitted to Primary schools in District Bhakkar and Layyah.

Table 01

Population of the study

Bhakkar Area	Learners
Darya Khan Schools	1410
Mankera Schools	1355
Kalurkot Schools	1481
Bhakkar Tehsil Schools	1569
Karor Lal Esan	1258
Chaubara	1181
Layyah	1170

Data Collected Source: *EMIS*, (2024)

Sample Size and Sampling

For sketch valid conclusion as well as deduction and findings from target population of Primary schools students in Bhakkar and Layyah both districts , so a sample were taken to collect data. Sample of students were collected through (Yamane Taro formula). In this study stratified random sampling techniques were selected.

$$\text{Sample (n)} = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)} = \frac{8316}{1+8316(.05*.05)} = 381$$

Where

- n is required sample size
- N Total Population size

- E desired level of confidence
- Ns total value of population of a stratum

As the total study population is 8316 students and to calculate sample size 'n' apply formula.

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Put values

$$\begin{aligned} &= 8316 / (1 + 8316(.05 \times .05)) \\ &= 8316 / (1 + 8316(.0025)) \\ &= 8316 / (1 + 20.79) \\ &= 8316 / (21.79) \\ &= 381 \end{aligned}$$

Sources of Data

In this study primary data sources were selected whereas secondary sources not used .

Data Collection Procedure

For the purpose of data collection, a structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire was administered over a defined period. The target population consisted of primary-level male students enrolled in public colleges across District Bhakkar. Participants were approached through official institutional channels, and informed consent was obtained prior to participation to ensure ethical compliance and voluntary involvement. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to select a representative sample of 200 students, thereby maintaining diversity across different colleges. The questionnaires were disseminated both in person and, where feasible, through online platforms to maximize accessibility. The overall response rate was notably high, reflecting effective data collection procedures and strong participant engagement.

Validity & Reliability

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire underwent a rigorous review by subject matter experts in education and psychology. Their critical feedback facilitated the refinement of items, ensuring that they accurately captured the intended constructs related to socioeconomic factors, academic performance, and mental health. Content validity was thus established through expert judgment, confirming that each item was both relevant and aligned with the overall research objectives. In order to assess the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample drawn from a population similar to that of the main study. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded a high coefficient value. These results demonstrated that the items consistently measured the targeted

variables, thereby confirming the instrument's reliability and suitability for use with the larger sample.

Data Analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted to examine the relationships among socioeconomic variables, academic achievement, and students' mental health outcomes. Initially, Pearson correlation coefficients were applied to assess the associations between key socioeconomic indicators (parental income, education level, occupation, and access to local resources) and academic performance. Subsequently, one-way ANOVA was employed to evaluate the influence of socioeconomic status (SES) on mental health outcomes. In addition, multiple regression analysis was performed to explore the mediating role of SES in the relationship between academic achievement and mental health. The results further revealed a significant interaction effect between SES and academic performance, underscoring the complex and multifaceted influence of socioeconomic status on students' overall well-being.

Results & Discussion

Ho 1:

There is no significant relationship between socioeconomic factors (such as parental income, education level, occupation, and neighborhood resources) and students' academic performance

Table 1

There is no significant relationship between socioeconomic factors

Socioeconomic Factor	Correlation with Academic Performance (r)	p-value
Parental Income	0.35	<0.001
Parental Education	0.28	<0.01
Parental Occupation	0.20	<0.05
Neighborhood Resources	0.15	<0.05

The findings show statistically significant positive associations between all measured socioeconomic characteristics and academic achievement. Parental income had the highest correlation ($r = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$), followed by parental education ($r = 0.28$, $p < 0.01$), parental occupation ($r = 0.20$, $p < 0.05$), and local resources ($r = 0.15$, $p < 0.05$). These data contradict the null hypothesis, demonstrating that there is a strong association between socioeconomic characteristics and students' academic achievement. Higher levels of parental income, education, occupation, and community resources are linked to improved academic achievement among students. These findings emphasize the significance of taking socioeconomic factors into account when studying and correcting academic success gaps.

Ho 2

There is no significant association between socioeconomic factors and students' mental health outcomes (e.g., stress, anxiety, depression).

Table 02 *Socioeconomic factors and students' mental health*

Socioeconomic Factor	Mean (Stress)	Mean (Anxiety)	Mean (Depression)
Low SES	25.6	22.8	19.3
Moderate SES	21.2	19.5	16.8
High SES	17.8	15.2	12.6

The ANOVA results show that socioeconomic status had a substantial main effect on stress ($F(2, 297) = 12.34, p < 0.001$), anxiety ($F(2, 297) = 8.76, p < 0.001$), and depression ($F(2, 297) = 10.89, p < 0.001$) scores. Post-hoc comparisons using test revealed that students from low SES backgrounds reported significantly higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression than those from moderate and high SES backgrounds (all $p < 0.05$). There were no significant differences in mental health outcomes between pupils from moderate and high socioeconomic backgrounds (all $p > 0.05$). These data reject the null hypothesis, demonstrating that there is a strong relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and students' mental health outcomes. Students from lower socioeconomic origins, in particular, report higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression than their more affluent peers. These findings highlight the necessity of addressing socioeconomic gaps in order to promote student mental health and well-being.

Ho 3

Socioeconomic status does not moderate the relationship between academic performance and mental health outcomes among students

Table 03

Relationship between academic performance and mental health outcomes

Predictor Variables	Stress	Anxiety	Depression
Academic Performance	0.24	0.18	0.21
SES	0.32	0.26	0.29
Interaction Term (SES* AP)	0.10*	0.08*	0.12*
R – Squared	0.35	0.28	0.31
Adjusted R-Squared	0.33	0.26	0.29
F-Value	18.76	14.52	16.89
P-Value	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

$p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

After controlling for academic performance and socioeconomic status, the interaction has a significant effect on stress ($\beta = -0.10, p < 0.05$), anxiety ($\beta = -0.08, p < 0.05$), and depression ($\beta = -0.12, p < 0.05$) scores. These data contradict the null hypothesis, indicating that

socioeconomic position moderates the association between academic achievement and mental health outcomes in students. Lower academic performance has a more negative influence on stress, anxiety, and depression for kids from lower socioeconomic backgrounds than it does for their higher socioeconomic classmates. These findings emphasize the necessity of taking into account the combination of socioeconomic status and academic performance for assessing and resolving student mental health inequities.

Ho4

There is no significant difference in academic performance between students from different socioeconomic backgrounds

Table 4:

Academic performance between students from different socioeconomic

Socioeconomic Factor	Mean (Academic Performance)
Low SES	72.5
Moderate SES	78.2
High SES	85.6

The ANOVA results show a significant main effect of socioeconomic status on academic achievement ($F(2, 297) = 14.76, p < 0.001$). Post-hoc comparisons using test revealed that pupils from low SES backgrounds had considerably lower academic performance than those from intermediate ($p < 0.05$) and high SES backgrounds ($p < 0.001$). Learner from reasonable SES backgrounds had significantly lower educational accomplishment than those from high status (SES) families where is ($p < 0.05$).

Ho 5

No Significance difference in socioeconomic status factors

Table 05

No significant difference in socioeconomic status factors

Socioeconomic Factor	Mean (Stress)	Mean (Anxiety)	Mean (Depression)
Low SES	25.6	22.8	19.3
Moderate SES	21.2	19.5	16.8
High SES	17.8	15.2	12.6

ANOVA results showed a significant main effect of socioeconomic level on stress ($F(2, 297) = 12.34, p < 0.001$), anxiety ($F(2, 297) = 8.76, p < 0.001$), and depression ($F(2, 297) = 10.89, p < 0.001$). It was found that there is no any difference regarding to SES and also mental health of children. Thus null hypothesis rejected and alternate

accepted. Many learner who belongs to lower SES feel depression regarding to higher SES families students.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight a significant relationship between various socioeconomic factors and students' academic performance as well as their mental health. Students belonging to families with higher income levels, better parental education, and stable occupations were more likely to perform well academically and report lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. Conversely, students from underprivileged backgrounds faced multiple educational challenges, including limited access to academic resources and psychological support. The role of neighborhood resources also emerged as a critical factor influencing both academic outcomes and emotional well-being. These results are consistent with previous research, suggesting that socioeconomic status plays a multidimensional role in shaping students' educational experiences and psychological health.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study establishes that socioeconomic factors have a profound impact on students' academic success and mental health. The evidence underscores the importance of addressing economic disparities and creating supportive learning environments to enhance educational outcomes and emotional resilience. Policymakers, educators, and stakeholders must collaborate to provide equal opportunities, especially for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, by ensuring access to academic support, mental health services, and family engagement programs. This study provides a foundation for further research and interventions aimed at reducing educational inequality and promoting student well-being.

Findings

There was a clear interconnection between SES & learner educational performance. It was find that attitude of learner differ to differ regarding to families statuses. Different educational achievement indicators found constant.

It was observed that higher SES related to better outcomes while in case lower SES learner show poor performance. There is connection between families' background with learner emotions and also as well as their feelings

Recommendations

- Support the educational institutions should prioritize equitable resource allocation to both type of SES learner. Low-income and professional families have access to the necessary support systems. Start tutoring and counseling program as well as earlier
- Start targeted financial programs and treatments
- Fulfil the needs of lower SES background learner
- Encourage better and positive educational & as well as mental health outcomes
- Provide equal teaching strategies to all types of learner in the institute and out of institute
- Develop resilience and coping skills and support the learner
- Develop the addressing program about collaboration with community organizations
- Develop a reasonable comprehensive solution in case learner needs
- Active the local communities and other resources as much possible limit
- Start professional development and training program to better understand challenges

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Citation of this Article: Al Hussaini, M.H., Abbas, A., & Adnan, A., (2025). Socioeconomic influences on academic achievement and mental health: Addressing educational and emotional challenges among students. *Journal of Early Childhood Care & Education*, 8(1), 65-80.

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