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The Impact of Parents' Occupation on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Kuala Terengganu

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Abstract

This study aims at examining how parents' occupation does impact students' academic performance. The main objective of the study is to analyse how formal and informal parental occupation significantly influence secondary school students' academic performance in Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia. Descriptive Survey Research design was used in which data from 377 respondents was collected using self-administered questionnaire from 4 selected secondary schools within Kuala Terengganu. Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample the respondents. The data was analysed using regression analysis. The result is explained in three forms, demographic information, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. The result of the study indicated that students from a parent with formal occupation perform well than those from parents with informal occupation. Finally, recommendations are given to parents, teachers, policymakers and educational administrators.

Keywords: Parental Occupation, Academic Performance.

Introduction

From the beginning parents are the primary persons involved in raising children in every society that is why the family is recognised as an important agent of socialization. Therefore, the importance of parent/family cannot be overemphasized. Adekey (2002) stated that it was mainly through their efforts and abilities that children are socialized to become a productive citizen. Whenever parents possess the resources and skills apply them efficiently and joyfully for upbringing of their children. The entire society would benefit, and this brings joy and benefit to the nation and encourages development and peaceful co-existence. The children themselves feel good and bring happiness to their parents and the whole community. Vellymalay (2012) stated that a child's capability to succeed in school depends on how successfully the child is managed by his/her parent in the environment. It is an environment where the child learns skills, attitude

and behaviour that could mould them into productive and successful students. It is important to note that not every child comes from a home that could provide them with the requisite educational resource necessary for their academic success. In agreement with that, apparent socioeconomic status plays a significant role in providing these educational resources and appears to impose the greater impact on the child's educational outcomes.

Socioeconomic status (SES) is a grouping of people with similar occupational, educational and economic characteristics. The socio-economic status implies certain inequalities. Members of society have an occupation that varies in prestige. And some individual have more access than others to higher-status-occupation, different level of educational attainment. And some individual have more access than others to better education, various economic recourses and different level of power to influence a communities` institutions. Therefore, differences in the ability to control recourses and participate in society's` rewards produce equal opportunities, (Robert, 1986). One significant student difference is a social class. Even in small rural towns, where almost all peoples are the same in ethnicity and religion. The children of the town bankers, doctors, and teachers probably may have a different upbringing from those children of most farmland or domestic workers. However, social class indicates more than the level of income and education. The social class goes a pervasive set of behaviours, expectations and attitudes that intersect with and affected by other cultural factors. Students' social class origins are likely to have a profound effect on attitudes and behaviours in school. Students from working class or lower class backgrounds are less advantage than middle-class students whose enter school with the knowledge of how to count, to name letters, to cut with scissors, or to name colours. They are less to perform well in school than other children from middle-class home (Byrnes & Miller, 2007; Natriello, 2003; Sackelt et al., 2007; Sirin, 2005).

However, Ajila (2000) pointed out that the home has a significant influence on the psychological, emotional, social and economic state of the students. The state of the home affects the individual since the parents are the first socialisation agent in a person's life. It is because the family background and context of a child's family do the effect in his reaction to life situation and his level of performance. Although, the school is responsible for the knowledge that make up the individual during the school period, yet Parents and the person experiences at home play a tremendous role in building the personality and making him what he is. One significant student difference is a social class. Even in small rural towns, where almost all peoples are the same in ethnicity and religion. The children of the town bankers, doctors, and teachers probably may have a different upbringing from those children of most farmland or domestic workers.

Literature Review

According to Marnot, (2004) Occupations are ranked into most prestigious occupation and lower ranking occupation. The most prestigious occupations are physicians, surgeons, lawyers, chemical & biomedical engineers, and communication analysts. While lower ranking occupation are food preparation workers, counter attendants, bartenders and helpers, dishwashers, janitors, maids and housekeepers, vehicle cleaners, and parking lot attendants. The job consider as high status in classification provides more challenging works, ability and greater control over working conditions. While those considered less valued in classification paid significantly less and more laborious, very hazardous and provided less autonomy. Gachathi (1976) indicated that occupational prestige is a component of socioeconomic status encompasses both income and

educational attainment. To him, occupational status reflects the educational attainment required to obtain a job and income levels. When parents have a better occupation, they make adequate provision for their children education. They provide economic, social, psychological and emotional support to their children, and this would make it possible for the children to perform well in their educational attainment.

Memo, et al. (2010) in their research on the impact of socioeconomic status on students' educational achievement at secondary schools districts of Malir, Karachi, in Indian. They found that there was significance relationship between parents' occupation and students' academic performance in matriculation examination. Students whose fathers have better occupation performed well in matriculation examination than those students whose fathers have a less prestigious occupation. Fathers with the high occupation are in a better condition to assist and encourage their children toward educational attainment. They can provide whatever is needed to support and encourage their children morally, intellectually, spiritually and psychologically. But parents with less prestigious occupation due to instability and financial problems cannot provide adequate modern facilities to enhance their children education. Mother's occupation also influences students' academic performance. It was observed that students with a mother who have better occupation performed well in matriculation examination than their peers from mothers with less prestigious occupation.

Also Saifullahi, (2011) pointed out that parents' occupation significantly influence students' achievement. He used the data from three different colleges in Gujarat district. The result indicated that children of government employees secured more marks (60.02%) than the private job holders, because of the certainty and reliability of the government jobs. Parents with government jobs are more secured, and their family are at peace relatively compared to those who work in the private organisation. They are always in frustration and lack of confidence at been permanent. Likewise, occupation of the mother has an influence on students' scores. The result of this study indicated that the maximum percentage of marks that is 64.5% is of students who mothers were government workers. So this seems that both fathers and mothers profession have a significant influence on students' academic achievement.

The influence of parental occupation continues to attract the attention of many researchers. In line with this assertion Qaiser, Hassan, Ishtiaq, Muhammad, Farid & Zaibun (2012) conducted a study on effect of parental socioeconomic status on the academic achievement of secondary school students in Karak district, Pakistan. One thousand five hundred students were selected from 60 government boy's high school in Karak district as a sample of the study. They classified parents into four classes based on their occupation; class 1, class 2, class 3, and class 4. The result indicated that those students who their parents belong to class 1 scores high grade than the other classes in comparison. Likewise, the students belong to class 2, are better than those from Class 3, and then followed by class 3, to class 4 respectively. Therefore, it is important to note that parents' occupation plays a significant role on students' academic performance. The study indicated that parents with prestigious occupation provide necessary facilities needed for the enhancement of their children education. They also give them support and encouragement toward the attainment of educational achievement.

On the other hand, students from less prestigious occupations lack so many advantages as

compared to those from the parents with high prestigious occupation. They face a lot of challenges both at home and school which hinder them from participating fully in classroom activities, and result in poor academic performance. Parents with lower or less prestigious occupation are always battling with how to satisfy their basic needs in the life as such they pay little attention to their children education. Therefore, the influence of parents' occupation cannot be overemphasized, even though; other socioeconomic status variables such as income, education do affect students' academic performance.

According to Charles (2013) occupational status measures social position by describing job characteristics, decision making, ability & control and psychological demand on the job. Ahmad et al. (2013) suggested that a series of questions were asked to parents and guardians about the financial circumstances surrounding children school enrolment in Tanzania. Their answer was no more than economic problem militating against their children to school. Wang (2010) also mentioned poverty as a contributing factor of children drop out in rural areas of China. Parents with less prestigious occupation fail to make adequate provisions to support their children in their educational attainment, and result in poor academic performance or even dropout. Farkhada (2013) in his analysis of gender and socioeconomic status on the academic achievement of secondary high school students of Lucknow a city in India, found out that male and female students perform academically well than their peers from low socioeconomic status. High socioeconomic status parents provide necessary facilities regarding their children education, health and understand their problems related to the adolescent period that affects their academic achievement. Ibrahim (2014) in his research conducts to find out the influence of parental socioeconomic status on their involvement in their children's education in Jordan. He revealed that the relationship between parental occupation and parental involvement at home was moderate in some strategies. It shows that parent with the prestigious occupations is more likely to identify their children's problem to give a possible solution. They also help them to do their homework by providing facilities necessary for learning development. It is possible as a prestigious occupation is connected with income level. Prestigious occupation parents have better income stability that would make it easier for them to make adequate provisions to their children's learning development.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyse the influence of parent occupation on academic performance
2. To examine how formal and informal occupation influence students' performance.

Research Hypotheses

1. Parental occupation does not influence students' academic performance
2. Formal and informal occupation has no any influence on students' academic performance

Method and Materials

Research Design

Descriptive survey research design is used in which quantitative method of data collection is applied. Danial (2004) defined the Quantitative method of data collection as the explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based method (a statistical method).

Population

The population of this study consists of 26,569 secondary school students from 32 secondary schools within Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia.

Sample

The sample is taking a portion of the population out of many to represent and generalise the whole. Therefore, 377 respondents were selected from 4 different secondary schools within Kuala Terengganu. It means that 100 respondents were approximately taken from each secondary school to form the sample size.

Instrument

The instrument used for this study is a questionnaire that contained two parts. Part 1 and 2, the part one contains question related to demographic information while part 2 contains questions related to parental occupation.

Procedure for Data Analysis

The data collected was analysed using statistical package for social science (SPSS), version 20. It is analysed using regression analysis. Therefore, the data is explained in three forms, demographic information, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis.

Results and Data Analysis

The result of this study as explained above is presented in three forms: demographic characteristic, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. Therefore, the result and analysis are as follows;

Demographic Information

The demographic information of the respondents, as presented in Table 1 below, reveals the distribution of the respondents based on demographic characteristics. By gender 185(49.1%) are boys, and 192(50.9%) are girls. Based on the age of the respondents 286(75.9%) are between the age of 12-16 while 91(24.1%) are between the age of 17-19. Concerning the location of the respondents 193(51.2%) are from the rural area while 184(48.8%) are from the urban area. Based on tribe 372(98.7%) are Malay and 5(1.3%) are Chinese.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents

	Sex		Age		Location		Tribe	
	Boys	Girls	12-16	17-19	Rural	Urban	Malay	Chinese
Freq.	185	192	286	91	193	184	372	5
%	49.1%	50.9%	75.9%	24.1%	51.2%	48.8%	98.7%	1.3%

Description of the Study Variables

The main variables examined in this study are parental occupation (independent variables), and academic performance (dependent variable). Descriptive finding for all the variables is presented in Table 2 below

Table 2: description of the variable

Variables	Mean	St. D	No.
Performance (Y)	54.34	21.199	377
Parental occupation(X)	2.38	0.933	377

Based on the data collected from three hundred and seventy-seven (377) respondents in the table above, the mean academic performance (dependent variable) of the respondents is 54.34 with a standard deviation of 21.199. It means that the performance is generally above average. While parental occupation has the mean score of 2.38 with standard deviation of 0.933

Result

To test this hypothesis and assess whether parental occupation has a significant influence on students' academic performance. The data of parental occupation and students' academic performance collected from the 377 respondents and their respected schools were analysed using the regression analysis. And the hypothesis is tested at 0.05 level of significance as presented below (Table 3 and 4)

Table 3: Summary of Regression Analysis Results

Regression Model	Dependant Variable (Students Performance)
R	.250
R Squared	0.63
Adjusted R Squared	0.60
Observation	377

Table 3 above summarises regression results. The regression analysis result indicates a correlation between the parental occupation and academic performance. In the regression statistics, $r=.250$, and R-squared is equal to 0.63. It means that the independent variable (occupation) explained 63% variations from the expected and actual results of the dependent variable (academic performance). These indicate a good fit of the regression equation. Thus, this is a real reflection that, academic performance is influenced by parental income.

Table 4: Test of Significance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardize d Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% C.I	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	67.894	2.909		23.341	.000	62.174	63.613
Occupation	5.683	1.136	.250	-5.002	.000	-7.917	3.449

The test of significance results, as presented in Table 4 above, shows that $t=-5.002$, with $DF=375$ and p -values ($0.00 < 0.05$). Since the significance level is less than 0.05, it shows that at 0.05 level of significance, there is enough evidence that the regression equation was well specified that a

significant relationship between parental occupation and academic performance exist. Based on the findings we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that parental occupation has a great influence on students' academic performance. We are 95% confident that the slope of the actual regression line is somewhere between -7.917 and 3.449. In other words, we are 95% confident that for every increase in parental occupation, the academic performance increases somewhere between -7.917 and 3.449.

Discussion

A statistical regression analysis result vividly indicated that parental occupation has an influence on academic performance. The f. Test for parental occupation was significant, $f=0.00$, $r=.250$, $r^2=0.63$. Therefore, from the regression result the effect of parental occupation as measured by partial r^2 is (0.63) that is parental occupation accounted for 63% variance in academic performance.

Based on the analysis, the respondents whose parents have better occupation score high marks than those respondents whose parents have list occupation. It is revealed that parents from formal occupation had better position and assurance of helping students at home than those from informal occupation. Parents with formal occupation had monthly salaries that are used to buy books and stationery for their children. They have stable and constant income that enable them to spend much on their children education. But, on the other hand, parents with the informal occupation, who are mainly self-employed people, with an occupation that has no guarantee of turnover cannot afford to spend much on their children. Therefore, parents with informal occupation mostly fail to provide enough for the education of their children. But parents with formal occupation make sufficient provision for the education of their children.

It is pertinent to note that the finding of this study indicated that students from parents with formal education perform well than the students from parents with informal education. Several researchers are supported this research. Some of these researchers included that of Faisal (2014); Udaida et al. (2012) whose revealed that parental occupation is the main predictive variable influencing students' academic performance. Also Saifullah (2011) and Memo et al. (2010) stipulated that due to the stability and reliability of government workers, their children are performing better than their peers from parents with informal occupation. In the same vein, Gathetha (1976); Qaiser et al (2012); Farkhada (2013); Chalesla (2013) hold the same assertion that parental occupation has significant influence on students' academic performance.

Conclusion

It is paramount to note that parental occupation in this research appears to have a significant influence on students' performance. Therefore, based on the result we conclude that students from a parent with prestigious occupation perform better than those students from less prestigious occupation.

Recommendation

A parent should support their children in the passing of their education by making necessary provisions needed to enhance learning.

Teachers should understand and appreciate the diverse domestic environment of their students.

Future researchers should try to conduct more researchers on the factors affecting academic performance at other levels of education such as primary level and tertiary level.

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