

## **The Relation between the Socio-Economic Status and the Achievements of the Pupils in the High Schools in the Triangle Area of Israel**

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**Abstract:** This research aimed to examine the relationship between the socio-economic status (SES) and academic achievement. A quantitative research method was used. A simple random selection method was used where 242 male and female students aged between 15 – 18 years old selected and 110 parents. The study used questionnaires that were distributed to a large number of High school students of the Arab sector in the Triangle area in Israel. Many variables such as income, family status, house (property or rent), economic situation, parental education level, parental involvement alongside many other factors were analysed to assess the SES. The research was based on the Social Capital Theory and the Success Model that showed the relationship between variables.

The statistical analysis conducted was R programming language via R Studio. Further analysis using statistics such as t, F, Cramer v, Pearson correlation were used to measure the relationships between the different variables. Finally, a mediation analysis using the Sobel test was presented through several linear regression models with an aim to check the overall effect of each variable on achievement.

In this research, the results indicated that there is a positive relationship between the socio-economic status of Arab families and the student's academic achievement. The research also indicated that academic achievement is affected by and shows a reciprocal relationship with three variables: well-being, motivation, and socio-economic status. On the other hand, the results did not show that there is an effect of the gender (the gender of the student) on academic achievement. However the results show there is a positive impact of the main variables, income, family status, house (property or rent) and economic situation on the academic achievements.

**Keywords:** The Socio-Economic Status (SES), Motivation, Academic Achievement, Social Well-Being.

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### **Introduction**

Examination of the demographic factors that affect educational achievements began mainly in the 7th decade, after 1960. For example, Mann (1985) studied a group of variables including age, gender, demographic association, race, marital status, socioeconomic status (SES), the education level of the parents, parents' professions, language, level of income and the religious affiliation. Since this time there have been many theories and advancements in the understanding of this topic.

Socio-economic status (SES) is a criterion of a situation in terms of the material income of the family and the social status compared to others. When analyzing the socio-economic status of the family, the education of the mother, father, their profession and the family income (GOP, 2008) is taken into account.

Thiel, 2012 showed poverty and unemployment as one of the reasons for students' low achievement. The following study will use SES as a tool to measure the family social status. Emory, Caughy, Harris, (2008) consider that the students' behavior, social habits and the behavior of friends in the environment surrounding the student, affect their education and achievements. They have claimed that the negative behavior of certain individuals can affect the students' behavior and thus the level of their achievements.

This study investigates if the different factors that affect the students' academic achievement depend on the socio-economic situation in which the student lives. There are many economic and social indicators which may impact the students' academic achievement, many of these indicators have been researched and defined widely in the past. These different indicators will be considered and mentioned in order to appreciate how they could impact the students' achievements.

The following research focuses on Arab schools in Israel. Within the Arab community many students live in economically challenged environments which could impact their academic achievements and their future profession. In order to improve educational achievements and bring about a balanced society it is very important for those responsible for the Israeli education system to understand the contributing factors that may be causing the discrepancies in the academic achievements of the students in Israel.

Many studies have mentioned and researched a significant difference in the financial situation of the Jewish and Arab populations within Israel. The studies have quantified the differences in the financial situations and state many factors which maybe the cause of this difference.

Some research shows that in general, in 2014, the percentage of increase in the prevalence of poverty was less than in 2013 for families, people and children; the percentage of families living in poverty increased from 18.6% to 18.8%, and the percentage of people increased slightly from 21.8% to 22.0%, the proportion of children living in poor families increased from 30.8% to 31.0%. Thus, poverty rates in Arab families increased from 51.7% in 2013 to 52.6% in 2014. Although the rise was low the actual incidence of poverty within the Arab population is high (National Insurance Institute, 2016).

### **The Socio-economic Status**

Socio-economic status includes several components and variables which include: family income, number of individuals in the family, household expenditure of the family, the place of residence, relationships between the children, relationships between the children and parents, relationship between the parents themselves, geographic location, the neighbourhood where they live, customs, society, traditions and their environment. Those variables can affect pupils ethically, on a behaviour level as well as their achievements (Ali et al., 2009).

Socio-economic status is one of the most important factors affecting academic success. Poor income as well as lack of financial income and educational aids have implications on the child's upbringing. All studies confirm that the rate of school failure has a more meaningful connotation in the inappropriate socio-economic environment (Claes & Comeau, 2005).

Research conducted by Mcleod (2011) during the summer holidays shows that the level of achievement of pupils from middle class families was higher than the level of pupils coming from families with a lower socio-economic level.

The family's economic background and the family's good socio-economic level contribute in providing the material needs of the children, which give them more time to study. While the low economic situation of the family leads it to prioritising the provision of money, motivates the members to work even the children, and this makes children leave school early sometimes. In addition the lack of an appropriate environment to study, can also contribute to low academic achievements (Mehmood, 2014).

### **Motivation**

Motivation in the human theory includes internal and external motivation, where, the internal motivation attracts the need for self-realization, and the external motivation attracts the need for self-esteem. So, it usually requires greater interest in self-realization, for those who have missed satisfying all their psychological needs and give them a lot of a sense of human comfort, compared to those who have had a satisfying need for self-esteem, and of course Maslow's proposed pyramid of psychological needs theory. The needs for security, affection, love and self-realization are arranged in a progressive, dynamic chronological order. So, if the most basic needs are satisfied with a certain degree, then the higher needs appear. In the learning process, the internal motivation is formed because we pay to learn, and the internal motivation is adapted to this pattern, while the external motivation is formed by competition and rewards (Zayed, 2003).

As stated above it is likely the self esteem and self confidence is affected by the students upbringing so it cannot be wholly attributed to internal motivations which pre-exist as these motivations are shaped by different attitudes. Hence the educational level, values, beliefs of parents as well as the students environment will impact the student's motivation level.

### **Academic Achievements and the Relationship between them and the Socio-economic Situation in Israel**

An individual's education is linked to his/her level of income and well-being, so it is important to be aware and knowledgeable of what benefits or hinders an individuals educational attainment in the future (Battle and Lewis, 2002).

Achievements are the knowledge that was obtained by the pupil or the skills that are developed according to the teaching process. The achievements are expressed through the grades that pupils get, and they reflect the environmental and socio-economic conditions in which the pupils live, affect directly their achievements (Coleman & Cross, 2006). The main variables that can affect achievements directly are: home environment, socio-economic status, parental involvement in school (Hattie, 2009). Socio-economic background actually sets

the road map of achievements. Therefore, it is the determining factor for academic achievement, and we experience it in our daily lives.

There are many topics and factors that relate to academic achievement, including the students family, the school's environment, relationships with colleagues and relationships with the teaching staff. Therefore, the performance of the student's role (SRP) is a term that expresses the student's skill and performance at school. Gender roles, race, and schools efforts, co-curricular activities and deviance are all important influences on SRP and have been shown to effect achievements. These all come under the umbrella of socio-economic conditions.

Hence, in most cases the achievements may reflect the socio-economic status in which the pupil lives. Studies indicated that the achievements of pupils and their school performance are associated with their socio-economic status, and there was a relation between these measures (McKay et al, 2011).

Doing well academically will result in students doing well economically later in life (Altschul, 2012). Nevertheless, poverty affected many students' chances of achieving academic success (Altschul, 2012).

Schreier (2013) stated that the family's structural building, family's income, and parents' profession have an impact on the academic achievement of students. Hence, the socio-economic status of the parents has a strong and positive impact on student achievements.

Students from higher socio-economic status experienced greater parent involvement in their education (Vellymalay, 2012), which enabled those students to receive the necessary skills, knowledge, behavior and values that were needed by their children for academic success. Children, whose parents were better educated, made more money, had higher-status jobs, and lived in two parent families tended to attain higher levels of education than do other minorities.

The researchers (Bainbridge & Lasley, 2004) argued that the academic achievement levels and socio-economic status of student's families were more relevant than race to predict their academic achievement (consistent with Schmid, 2001). Findings from a National Educational Longitudinal Study indicated that parents' abilities to invest economic, social, and human capital in their children's education led to higher academic achievement (Altschul, 2012). In sociology, linguistic and cultural studies (intercultural communication) are integrated into various notions such as well-being, happiness, personal realization, social capital, professional and sports achievement (Sokolova, 2018).

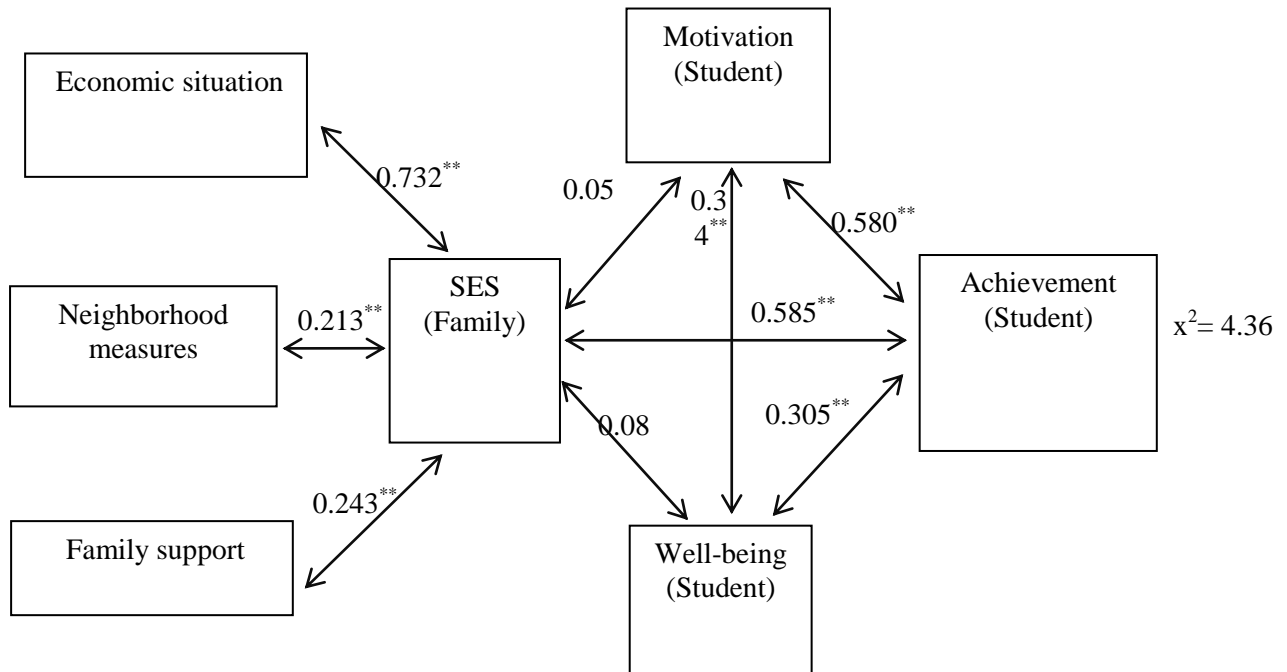
After the study and analysis of the PISA tests, there is a preparation of the work plan for increasing the pupils achievements, and this is done by setting up conferences and forums for educators and employees in this field (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2013). In Israel there are some integrating programs in schools in order to improve pupil's achievements: the following are some examples of the programs, "Welfare of the Individual Program", SHAHAR - Society and Welfare Services Department, OMETZ - Faith in Myself, Ready for Efforts, Expect for Achievements Program EYAL – I Can Succeed program... these programs are implemented in elementary schools, middle schools and high schools and approved by the Ministry of Education (Heller, 2012).

### **Social Well-being**

Keyes described social well-being as "the appraisal of one's circumstance and functioning in society" (Keyes, 1998) and identified five dimensions that are seen to cover this construct: social acceptance, social contribution, social actualization, social coherence and social integration (Radzyk, 2014).

The use of statistical data and indicators to study the well-being of children in particular is not new. Pioneering reports on the "State of the Child" were published as early as 1940s (Ben-Arieh 2008; Ben-Arieh et al. 2001). Many family and environmental factors affect the child's living conditions and development. The child's economic, health and safety conditions determine to a large extent the quality of his/her life in the present and future. Over the last decade, there was a continuous increase in the percentage of poor children in Israel, and today there is seen that every third child in Israel lives under conditions of economic distress. The poverty rate is one indication of many other changes that occurred over the years: decline in the average number of children in family, increase in the number of single parent families, increase in the number of pupils in the education system, all these and others are part of changing situation in everything related to the world and the living conditions of children in Israel, and their implications are both positive and negative.

**Findings**



**Figure 1**, The relation between the family socio-economic status and student achievements.

\*\*p<0.01

**Table 1:** Correlations of the Study Variables

	Grade average	Economic situation	Motivation	Well-being	Social Support
Grade average					
Economic situation	0.19*				
Motivation	0.58**	0.01			
students' Well-being	0.30**	0.60**	0.34**		
Social Support	0.24**	0.35**	0.61**	0.57**	

\*\*p<0.01, \*p<0.05

**Table 2.** means, slandered deviation and differences between student gender in grade average, social support, economic situation, motivation, and students' Well-being:

	Male		female		difference t
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	
grade average	2.957	1.218	3.2531	1.0186	-1.985*
Social Support	3.7438	0.64	3.7784	0.666	-0.383
economic situation	3.1635	0.645	3.55274	0.9456	-3.309**
motivation	3.439	0.8374	3.745	0.8712	-2.593*
students' Well-being	3.5496	0.767	3.6658	0.7279	-1.1429

Note: \*P<0.05, \*\*P<0.01, \*\*\*P<0.001.

### **Discussion**

The current study deals with the socio-economic background of students and their relationship with their academic achievement, whereby the results that we obtained after analyzing the forms that were distributed to students as well as to the parents are discussed in this chapter.

According to (Yang, 2010) the level of the local community and the family in which the individual lives have a direct impact on the student's educational achievements, as students' affiliation with a particular socio-economic situation affects their performance in school achievement and behavior, in addition to the relationship with their peers. The prevailing social and economic conditions in society have an important role in influencing academic achievement and school success among children (Radia, 2016). Parents' participation in the school and their cooperation with the administration and teachers help to build a good relationship between the two parties, thus enhancing the student's supportive environment whether at home or at school, which would positively impact his performance at school as well as his academic achievement (Grenfell & James, 1998).

The main aim of the research was to examine the relationship between the student's socio-economic status and its impact on his/her academic achievements.

The results of this research are consistent with the theory that states the family is the first factor that affects the individual and helps to develop the characteristics and values s/he has. These characteristics, which are transmitted from one generation to another, help one's success and distinction, including in the field of study (Lareau, 2002; Swartz, 2008).

The results of the current study indicated that there is a positive relationship between the student's socio-economic status and academic achievement ( $r_s = 0.65$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), as the student's relationship with the parents positively affects his/her academic achievement from the parents' point of view. Also, the students indicated the positive impact of good relationship between the student's parents and the surrounding environment of the student ( $r_s = 0.23$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), among neighbors and friends, on the student's academic performance and academic achievement ( $r_s = 0.4$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). Although this was a low value indicating a weak positive relationship it nevertheless shows there is a link present.

A study of Kapikiran (2012) among high school students in Turkey found a clear positive relationship between emotion, motivation, and academic achievement. It was found that motivated students have the ability to maintain a positive attitude in dealing with learning problems and it exhibits higher levels of intrinsic motivation. Because motivation is positively related to school love, class attendance, homework preparation, self-ability, perseverance, orientation toward expertise, and negatively to exam anxiety and to avoid failure.

The findings of the current study indicate clearly a correlation between motivation and student achievement ( $r_s = 0.6$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), as students experience school as a pleasant and safe environment, they achieve better academic achievements and their sense of success increases.

Bernard & Walton (2011) presented in their research a plan for a supportive environment to the child's well-being since childhood, compared to other normal environment, and they concluded that the child's social environment has a great role in influencing his/her well-being and psychological health (having positive feelings more than negative feelings). Thus, these results support that the social environment in support of the student since childhood is the basis for well-being and good academic performance.

These studies support the results obtained in this study as there is a positive relationship between the socio-economic situation and the student's well-being ( $r_s = 0.4$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), as the student's standard of living and the student's social relationships at home and school affect his/her psyche and well-being ( $r_s = 0.68$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). When the socio-economic situation is good, the student's psyche and well-being are good, so the researcher has to take care of the student's environment from the base to get a stable student psychologically and socially.

### **Conclusion**

The socio-economic status of the country and the level of well-being and services affect the socio-economic status of the population.

The ruling authority plays a major role in influencing the standard of living and poverty in the country.

The socio-economic situation greatly affects the student not only in achievement, but it also affects his/her well-being, standard of living and his/her motivation to learn.

There is a correlation between student well-being and motivation, and there is a two-way effect.

Student performance and achievement affects his/her motivation to learn and his/her arrival to school.

Most of the families are in the first level in terms of socio-economic status (low).

The student's social relationships with his/her colleagues and friends in school or in the neighborhood affect his/her achievement.

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