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The interplay dynamics of parents' socio-economic condition, educational aspirations and students' academic performance

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the impact of parents' socio-economic conditions on their educational aspirations for their children and examined how these aspirations influenced their children's academic performance. A review of related literature provided a deeper theoretical foundation for the research. Employing a descriptive assessment and correlational research design, the study focused on Grade XII students at the Divine Word College of Laoag. Data collection was conducted using validated questionnaires, and the analysis utilized the weighted mean and Pearson r correlation.

Findings revealed no significant correlation between parents' socio-economic conditions and their educational aspirations, nor between these aspirations and the academic performance of their children. The study acknowledged its limitations, particularly the restricted scope of population and variables. Consequently, it recommends further research that includes larger and more diverse populations as well as additional variables, to yield more comprehensive insights.

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Introduction

The dynamics between parents' economic conditions, educational aspirations for their children, and academic performance are pivotal in shaping a child's future. Education remains a universal priority for

parents, who view it as a pathway to success for their children (Bansal, 2020). However, economic circumstances often constrain school choices, with significant disparities observed between developing and developed nations (Burgess et al., 2015; Shiferaw & Kenea, 2024).

Research underscores the positive influence of parental aspirations and involvement on children's academic engagement and performance (Yamamoto & Holloway, 2010; Buchmann et al., 2021; Murayama et al., 2016). High parental expectations serve as a powerful motivator, driving children to excel academically and shaping their future economic prospects (Tamborini et al., 2015). Additionally, parental perceptions of their children's abilities, aspirations, and values are strongly correlated with academic motivation (Fredericks & Eccles, 2002).

Despite the global relevance of these dynamics, research focusing on the Philippine context remains limited. This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining how parents' economic conditions influence their aspirations and how these aspirations, in turn, affect children's academic performance. By investigating the interplay of socioeconomic factors, parental aspirations, and academic outcomes, the research aims to enrich understanding and discussions on this critical issue.

The study is organized into several sections. The introduction outlines the background and objectives of the research, while the literature review delves into parental aspirations, the influence of socioeconomic factors on school selection, and the relationship between socioeconomic status and academic performance.

Literature review

The meaning of education

Clarifying the concept of education is crucial for parents, teachers, and students alike. A comprehensive understanding allows parents to articulate their expectations for their children's schooling and what they anticipate schools should deliver. It also empowers educators and administrators to align educational practices with these expectations, fostering a more cohesive educational experience.

The primary goal of this research is not to propose new theories but to explore the essence and purpose of education, particularly through the lens of parental aspirations within the framework of education's fundamental principles. To achieve this, the study draws on the insights of education philosophers, whose diverse interpretations enrich our understanding of the concept.

Scheffler (1960) identifies three primary meanings of education. First, education is a formative process, shaping individuals (Miovskas-Spaseda, 2016) for their future roles. Unlike training, which focuses exclusively on skill acquisition (Fry, 1969), education encompasses the systematic development of knowledge, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities (The Performance Center, n.d.; Raj et al., 2022). Second, education carries a programmatic significance, defining stipulative definitions of education vary by context, allowing for flexible interpretations (Scheffler, 1974; Chazan, 2021).

Various philosophers offer distinct perspectives on education. Idealists like Kant and Hegel emphasize reasoning and spiritual formation (Louden, 2017; Tubbs, 2015), while social realists such as Rorty focus on acculturation and emancipation (Noaparast, 2014). Dewey highlights education's role in promoting societal continuity and practical life skills (Garrison et al., 2012). Locke stresses preparation for social participation and problem-solving (Goodyear, 2018), while Montaigne prioritizes holistic individual development (Ferrari, 2023). Aristotle emphasizes the cultivation of intellect, morality, and skills (Gotz, 2003).

Cremin's (1976) definition of education integrates these perspectives, describing it as the deliberate transmission of knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills. This definition encapsulates education's multifaceted nature and provides a valuable framework for assessing its outcomes. In conclusion, this study seeks to clarify the essence of education by synthesizing diverse philosophical perspectives. This clarity fosters a deeper understanding of contemporary educational practices and their outcomes, benefiting all stakeholders in the educational process.

Parent's socioeconomic status and children's education

Socioeconomic status (SES) plays a significant role in shaping individuals' aspirations and quality of life (Addae, 2020; Gao et al., 2018; Kaur, 2018; Yang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020). It encompasses a range of factors, including income, financial security, living conditions, education, occupation, and social prestige (American Psychological Association, 2017; ACS, n.d.; Baker, 2014). Research indicates that SES impacts not only physical and mental health but also educational outcomes (Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, & Maczuga, 2009).

Higher SES provides individuals with advantages such as broader social networks, access to resources, and economic opportunities, which collectively contribute to an improved quality of life (Muhammad et al., 2022; Uphoff et al., 2013). Conversely, lower SES is linked to a diminished quality of life (Wang & Geng, 2019).

SES also profoundly influences children's education. Poverty creates barriers to equal access to quality education, with millions of Filipinos living below the poverty line facing significant challenges in accessing schooling (Chalk & Bai, 2023). Economic disparity not only restricts access to education but also negatively affects academic performance (Chalk & Bai, 2023).

Parental SES, particularly educational attainment and occupation, plays a critical role in shaping children's academic achievement (Sagario et al., 2023; Caasi & Pentang, 2022; Idris et al., 2020; Assari, 2019). Research consistently shows that higher parental education levels are positively correlated with children's academic success (Sagario et al., 2023; Caasi & Pentang, 2022; Idris et al., 2020; Assari, 2019).

In conclusion, socioeconomic status is a pivotal factor influencing aspirations, access to education, and academic performance. A deeper understanding of its effects is essential to addressing disparities and

fostering educational equity.

Common parents' aspiration for the education of their children

Aspiration, defined as a fervent desire to achieve something, serves as a guiding force for individuals' future endeavors (Britannica Dictionary, n.d.; APA Dictionary of Psychology, n.d.; Cherry, 2021). In the context of parental educational aspirations, it refers to parents' ambitions, hopes, and dreams for their children's educational achievements (Gutman & Akerman, 2008; Holloway & Yamamoto, 2010; Spera et al., 2009; Trinidad, 2019).

Parental aspirations are shaped by a range of sociocultural and socioeconomic factors. Sociocultural influences, such as religious practices, cultural norms, and the home environment, significantly impact children's academic performance (Ternenge & Torkuma, 2021). Similarly, socioeconomic conditions, including household income, parental education, and children's academic achievements, play a critical role in determining the scope of parental aspirations (Spera et al., 2009; Oketch et al., 2012; Gorard et al., 2012).

The importance of parental aspirations in motivating children's academic performance is well-supported by research. Studies by Spera et al. (2009), Finlayson (1971), Schorner and Bittmann (2023), and Arockia and Prakash (2019) demonstrate the positive impact of parental aspirations on children's educational outcomes. Additionally, Dubow et al. (2009) emphasize that parental aspirations not only enhance academic success but also serve as predictors of future career achievement. However, Murayama et al. (2016) warn that excessive parental aspirations can lead to negative consequences, leaving children feeling overwhelmed and frustrated.

In conclusion, parental educational aspirations are pivotal in shaping children's academic motivation and performance. Nonetheless, it is essential to strike a balance to avoid placing undue pressure on children while fostering their growth and success.

Academic performance

Understanding academic performance among students requires a clear definition, which varies depending on the aspects being measured. For instance, Busalim et al. (2019) and Anthonysamy et al. (2020) define academic performance as students' ability to complete academic tasks and their achievement across various subjects, typically reflected in their grades. Similarly, Carroll and Garavalia (2004), Naser and Hamzah (2018), and Olivier et al. (2019) consider it as students' capacity to meet academic requirements, often assessed by their overall grade point average (GPA). While many students strive for high grades and academic recognition (Khan, 2014), Knesek (2022) cautions that an excessive focus on grades may hinder genuine learning.

Moreover, students' academic performance is closely tied to their level of motivation. Abdulrahman et al. (2023), Gbollie and Keamu (2017), and Steinmayr et al. (2019) emphasize that motivation significantly impacts academic achievement. Parental motivation also plays a critical role in encouraging students to excel academically (Moneva et al., 2020). However, not all forms of

motivation yield the same outcomes. Ali et al. (2010) differentiate between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, with intrinsic motivation arising from personal enjoyment or a genuine interest in learning. Research indicates that students who are intrinsically motivated tend to perform better academically than those driven by external factors such as parental expectations or social pressures (Ali et al., 2010). Furthermore, students with high achievement motivation are less likely to drop out of school (Singh, 2015; Emmanuel et al., 2014).

In summary, academic performance encompasses students' ability to meet academic requirements and achieve desired grades, while their motivation—whether intrinsic or extrinsic—plays a pivotal role in determining their academic success.

Research questions

The study intends to examine the effect of socioeconomic conditions on the parent's educational aspirations and academic performance of their children. It specifically answered the following questions:

- 1. What are the socioeconomic conditions of parents?**
- 2. What are the parents' educational aspirations for their children?**
- 3. What is the academic performance of their children in terms of grade general average?**
- 4. Is there a relationship between parents' socioeconomic condition and parents' educational aspirations?**
- 5. Is there a relationship between parent's educational aspirations and academic performance?**

Hypothesis

Building on the findings of Munir et al. (2023), who confirmed a correlation between parents' socioeconomic conditions and their children's academic performance, and Buchmann et al. (2021), who established a link between parental aspirations and children's academic self-concept, the current study hypothesizes that economic conditions influence parents' aspirations for their children, which in turn predict their children's academic performance.

Research methodology

The study adopts a quantitative approach, employing a descriptive assessment and correlational research design. Conducted at Divine Word Colleges in Northern Luzon, it focuses on the parents of senior high school students as the study population. Data is gathered through questionnaires and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics, specifically weighted mean and Pearson's r .

Prior to data collection, the researcher secured approval from the College President for the distribution of questionnaires. The process was facilitated through designated employee representatives to ensure efficient dissemination and retrieval. Ethical considerations were carefully addressed, and given the absence of sensitive human issues, an ethical review was deemed unnecessary and subsequently waived.

The following ranges of values with their descriptive interpretation were used:

<i>Statistical Range</i>	<i>Descriptive Interpretation</i>
4.21-5.00	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
3.41-4.20	<i>Agree/High</i>
2.61-3.40	<i>Somewhat Agree/Moderate</i>
1.81-2.60	<i>Disagree/Low</i>
1.00-1.80	<i>Strongly Disagree/Very Low</i>

Data presentation and analysis

The study intends to examine the effect of socioeconomic conditions on the parent’s educational aspirations and academic performance of their children. It seeks specifically to answer the following questions:

Problem 1: What are the socioeconomic conditions of parents? (n=100)

Table 1: Socio-economic conditions

Indicator	frequency	percentage
Average monthly income		
10,000-15,000	25	25
16,000-20,000	14	14
21,000-25,000	9	9
26,000-30,000	15	15
31,000-35,000	10	10
36,000-40,000	9	9
41,000-45,000	3	3
46,000 and above	15	15
Educational attainment		
High School	13	13
College	70	70
Graduate School	17	17
Occupations		
business owner	38	38
government employee	27	27
medical practitioner	1	1
public school teacher	6	6
an employee of a private business	19	19
sales agent	1	1
OFW	8	8

Source: SPSS

The data in the table reveals the socio-economic conditions of parents, including their average monthly income. A small majority, or 25%, of parents have an average monthly income ranging from P 10,000 to P 15,000. The next largest group, comprising 15%, earn between P 26,000 and P 30,000, while another 15% fall within the P 46,000 and above income bracket. Additionally, 14% of parents have an average monthly income of P 16,000 to P 20,000, and 10% earn between P 31,000 and P 35,000. The remaining parents have monthly incomes in the following ranges: P 21,000 to P 25,000 (9%), P 36,000 to P 40,000 (9%), and P 41,000 to P 45,000 (3%).

Regarding the educational attainment of parents, the data shows that the majority, about 70%, have completed a college degree. Seventeen percent have finished graduate studies, while 13% are high school graduates. In terms of occupation, 38% of parents are business owners, followed by 27% who are government employees, and 19% who work in private businesses. The remaining parents include 8% who are overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), 6% who are public school teachers, and 1% each who are medical practitioners or sales agents.

Problem 2. What are the parents’ educational aspirations for their children? Table 2: Educational Aspirations

Indicator	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Possessing skills for future work	4.53	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
Learned new knowledge, skills, new values, attitudes, and new behavior	4.60	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
Improved reasoning ability and moral character	4.60	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
Increased intellectual capacity and critical thinking to solve their own problem in the future	4.60	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
Become a good Filipino citizen and a good Christian	4.66	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
Overall Mean	4.60	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>

Source: Abun, (2024).

Legend:

<i>Statistical Range</i>	<i>Descriptive Interpretation</i>
<i>4.21-5.00</i>	<i>Strongly Agree/Very High</i>
<i>3.41-4.20</i>	<i>Agree/High</i>
<i>2.61-3.40</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree/Moderate</i>
<i>1.81-2.60</i>	<i>Disagree/Low</i>
<i>1.00-1.80</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree/Very Low</i>

The data presented in the table reveals that parents' educational aspirations have an overall mean rating of 4.60, which corresponds to a "strongly agree" or "very high" level. This indicates that parents' educational aspirations, along with the five indicators assessed, are not simply low, moderate, or high, but are indeed very high. When looking at each indicator individually, all five are rated at the same high level. Parents strongly agree on the importance of their children becoming good Filipino citizens and Christians (4.66), intellectually capable and critical thinkers for future problem-solving (4.60), demonstrating improved reasoning abilities and moral character (4.60), acquiring new knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and behaviors (4.60), and developing skills necessary for future work (4.53).

The mean ratings of each indicator suggest that parents place the highest value on their children being good Filipinos and Christians (4.66), highlighting the importance of culturally oriented education. This finding suggests that parents view education primarily through a cultural lens, with a secondary focus on intellectual, moral, and practical competencies. This aligns with the perspectives of Meyer (2022) and Hviid and Martsin (2019), who emphasize that education should reflect a cultural model in a secularized modern world, rather than solely focusing on economic interests. It also supports Reimers' (2020) view that education must foster students' competencies to meet the demands of contemporary society.

Problem 3. What is the academic performance of their children in terms of grade general average?

Table 3: Academic performance

General Average Grade	frequency	percentage
75-79 (very low)	0	0
80-85 (low)	0	0
86-90 (somewhat high)	21	21
91-95 (high)	72	71
96-100 (very high)	7	7

Source: SPSS

The data shows that the majority of students in the study, approximately 71%, achieved a general average grade of 91-95, which is considered high. The second largest group, 21%, had an average grade of 86-90, categorized as somewhat high. The third group, comprising 7% of students, earned a general average grade of 96-100, considered very high. Notably, none of the students (0%) scored within the ranges of 80-85 or 75-79.

Problem 4. Is there a relationship between parents' socioeconomic condition and parents' educational aspirations?

Table 4: Correlation between socioeconomic and educational aspirations

		Parents' educational aspirations
Average Monthly Income	Pearson correlation	0.132
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.190
Educational Attainment	Pearson correlation	0.041
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.683
Occupations	Pearson correlation	0.118
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.241

Source: SPSS

The table presents the correlation analysis examining the relationship between parents' socioeconomic conditions and their educational aspirations for their children. The results show weak and statistically insignificant correlations between parents' socioeconomic conditions and their educational aspirations, specifically for average monthly income ($r = 0.132$, $p = 0.190$), educational attainment ($r = 0.041$, $p =$

0.683), and occupation ($r = 0.118$, $p = 0.241$). These findings suggest that socioeconomic factors do not significantly influence parents' educational aspirations for their children.

This implies that parents, regardless of their socioeconomic background, tend to have similar aspirations for their children's educational success. Consequently, policymakers and educators might consider promoting educational support programs that are more inclusive. Rather than focusing on socioeconomic disparities, initiatives aimed at raising educational aspirations could benefit from emphasizing access to social resources and guidance, enabling parents to better support their children's educational goals (Schwerter et al., 2020).

Problem 5. Is there a relationship between parent's educational aspirations and academic performance?

Table 5: Correlation between parents' educational aspiration and academic performance

		Academic performance
Parents' educational aspirations	Pearson correlation	-0.045
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.657

Source: SPSS

The table presents the correlation between parents' educational aspirations and their children's academic performance. The results show a nearly negligible negative correlation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of -0.045, which is statistically non-significant ($p = 0.657$). This suggests that parents' aspirations, in isolation, do not directly influence their children's academic performance.

This weak correlation implies that aspirations alone, without supportive actions, may not have a meaningful impact on student achievement. Therefore, programs aimed at supporting academic success could benefit from focusing on practical engagement strategies, such as fostering a learning-supportive home environment, staying involved with academic progress, and having open discussions about educational goals (Aldridge & Fraser, 2023; Walberg, 1986; Rusticus et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022). Emphasizing these types of practical involvement in parental engagement programs could have a more substantial effect on students' performance, highlighting the importance of comprehensive support beyond simply encouraging aspirations.

Discussions

The study aimed to explore the impact of parents' socio-economic conditions on their academic aspirations for their children, as well as the influence of these aspirations on the academic performance of the students. The Pearson r correlation analysis revealed no significant correlation between the socio-economic conditions of parents and their academic aspirations for their children, nor between parents' academic aspirations and students' academic performance. These findings prompt important discussions regarding their implications.

First, in terms of the absence of a significant correlation between socio-economic conditions and

academic aspirations, this suggests several key points. One implication is the meritocratic values reflected in the results, which suggest that parents' aspirations may be driven more by their children's abilities rather than their economic status (Schörner & Bittmann, 2023). Another implication is equal opportunity; the finding indicates that parents from various socio-economic backgrounds hold similar educational aspirations for their children, promoting equal opportunities. This calls for improvements in government education policies to ensure equal access to education for all families, regardless of socio-economic background, so that parents' educational aspirations for their children can be realized (Kumar & Pandey, 2020; Maclean, 2003; Bhalla, 1992; Steinmann & Olsen, 2022; Neimann et al., 2021). Lastly, the absence of correlation highlights resilience, suggesting that children from lower socio-economic backgrounds may still receive strong academic support from their parents.

Regarding the lack of a statistically significant correlation between parents' academic aspirations and students' academic performance, the findings have both positive and negative implications. Positively, it suggests that students' academic performance may be driven more by intrinsic motivation than by parental pressure (Wild & Neef, 2023; Grassinger et al., 2024). Furthermore, factors within the school and teacher environments might play a more significant role in shaping students' academic performance (Allen et al., 2021; Closs et al., 2021). Therefore, students from families with lower educational aspirations could still experience academic success. On the negative side, the results imply that parents' educational aspirations may not significantly affect students' performance if the students are intrinsically motivated to learn.

The findings of this study challenge the social cognitive theory (Williams & Cervone, 1998; Bandura, 1989; Bozack, 2011), which posits that parental expectations directly influence students' motivation and performance, while supporting the self-determination theory of Ryan and Deci (2000).

The study recognizes its limitations, particularly its narrow scope regarding the population and the variables measured. Future research should expand to include other factors that may contribute to academic performance, such as parental involvement, student motivation, self-efficacy, and learning strategies.

Conclusion

The study sought to explore the impact of parents' socio-economic conditions on their educational aspirations for their children and how these aspirations, in turn, affect academic performance. The findings revealed that parents' socio-economic status does not significantly correlate with their educational aspirations for their children. Similarly, parents' educational aspirations were found to have no direct influence on their children's academic performance. Consequently, the hypothesis of the study—that socio-economic conditions and educational aspirations would affect academic outcomes—was not supported. These results suggest that other factors, beyond socio-economic background and parental expectations, may play a more pivotal role in shaping students' academic achievement. This highlights the need for further research to identify and understand the key drivers of academic success.

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