Effect of Socioeconomic Background on the Academic Performance of the Students:
A Study on Undergraduate Students of Bangladesh

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Abstract ▼

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of different socioeconomic indicators on the academic performance of the undergraduate students of Bangladesh. The relationship between different components of parental socio economic status with the academic performance of students of selected Private universities of Dhaka city in Bangladesh is investigated. Using semi structured questionnaire information from a sample of one hundred and seventy five (175) randomly selected students of seven private universities is used for the study. Diverse statistical tests were performed on the various data collected to establish statistical significance of the effects on student's academic performance. Mother's education has significance effect on the academic performance of the students. However, the parental educational qualification of the students was identified to have statistical significant effect on the academic performance of the students. The two variables that indicated significant influence do reflect nature of the student's home environment and played notable role in the academic achievement of the respondents.

Keywords: Socio-economic status, academic result, private university.

Introduction: ▼

Traditionally attainment in education is considered to be one of the important features to achieve self sufficiency here in Bangladesh. With increasing gap between different segments in a transitional society as like Bangladesh the need for educational attainment is apparent. For those with not up to the mark academic skills, the chances of being a competitive member of the society gets severely restricted. Without meaningful employment, self sufficiency is elusive. On the other side the while many influences contribute to the academic performance of students at risk, the role of the parental has consistently been shown to be a factor of great importance. Baumrind (1973) linked parenting styles to cognitive competence. The responsibility of training a child always lies in the hand of the parents. This is congruent with the common assertion made by the sociologist that education can be an instrument of cultural change which is being taught from home. It is not out of place to imagine that parental socio-economic background can have possible effects on the academic achievement of children in school. A student's educational outcome and academic success is greatly influenced by the type of school that they attend. School factors include school structure, school composition, and school climate. The school one attends is the institutional environment that sets the parameters of a student's learning experience. Depending on the environment of school can either open or close the doors that lead to academic achievement.

A study published in 2001 issue of Psychological Science found that children of parents with a high socioeconomic status tended to express more "disengagement" behaviors than their less fortunate peers. In this context, disengagement behaviors represent actions such as fidgeting with other objects and drawing pictures while being addressed. Other participants born into less favored circumstances tended to make more eye contact, nods as signs of happiness when put into an interactive social environment. The more fortuitous peers felt less inclined to gain rapport with their group because they saw no need for their assistance in the future.

A family's socioeconomic status is based on family income, parental education level, parental occupation, and social status in the community such as contacts within the community, group associations, and the community's academic performance of the family. Families with high socioeconomic status often have more success in preparing their young children for school because they typically have access to a wide range of resources to promote and support young children's development. They are able to provide their young children with high-quality child care, books, and toys to encourage children in various learning activities at home. Also they have easy access to information regarding their children's health, as well as social, emotional, and cognitive development. In addition, families with high socioeconomic status often seek out information to help them better prepare their young children for school.

The study aimed at finding out the contribution of socio-economic status of the family on the academic performance of the student in private universities in Bangladesh, A case study on undergraduate students.

Literature Review: ▼

Students are pioneers of every nation. To facilitate students with proper education has been a major problem for decades. The environment and personal characteristics of students play a significant role in their academic success. Factors and determinants of academic success or achievement of students has been subject of ongoing debate among researchers. Most of the researchers are focused on the input and output relationship of students. Yet, very little is proven about the various factors contributing to student's success. Additionally, in the discussion about the determinants of student's academic performances only little heed is paid to student's time allocation, parental involvement, teacher's behavior, university's education system (semester or annual system), mental and physical health.

Looking explicitly at student's time allocation, little evidence is available. Barabaras S. Grave (2010) came up with the findings that time spent on courses is positively correlated with student's success. He further opinioned that devoting time to self study is positively associated with grades and after attending lectures in universities, students should do self study in homes for improvement of grades. The need of time is proper time table and time management for studies. Above and beyond the other factors, the significance of parental involvement and financial status regarding student's success is still prevalent. Prof Charles Desforges (2003) reported regarding parental involvement as one of major factors was that, higher the class the more the involvement, the more mother is educated greater the extent

of involvement. G.R. Memons et al. (2010) analysis and interpretation of data enabled him to conclude that students whose parents are well educated perform better than those students whose parents are less educated. Further he started that higher the income of family better would be student's availability of resources and consequently better would be academic achievements.

Shafqat Ali Shah's (2009) study revealed that teacher's behavior towards their students directly affects their academic success. Higher the positive teacher's behavior towards students, higher the student's academic achievements. Important qualities in teacher's behavior are punctuality, honesty, hardworking, competency and confidence. He described that teacher's frankness with students, strict moody aggressive attitude, non punctuality, lesser of will power are factors contributing directly to the performances of the students.

Hassan DanialAslam et al. (2012) conducted study to find out which system of education provides quality learning and academic excellence for university students. He explained that due to flexibility in environment of semester system, students learn more as compared to annual system. In semester system burden of studies is less as compared to annual system and students have more opportunities of scoring better grades in semester than annual system.

Woessmann (2004) concludes in his study that family background has strong and similar effects on both Europe and the USA. He also estimates the model using QR approach where he concludes that there is weak evidence of variation in the family background influence. Pedrosa, Dachs, Maia, Andrade and Carvalho presented a paper at an international conference in 2006 on a similar issue. The main result found by them was that students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, in both educational and socioeconomic aspects, have a higher relative performance than their complementary group. This can be considered as a phenomenon which the authors named "educational resilience".

Haverman and Wolf (1995) found that children attainment depends on the social investment in children; the parental investment in children and the choices that children make given the investments in and opportunities available to them. But in Bangladesh this kind of choice is limited to a section of urban students. However, Haverman and Wolf in their paper reviews

different researches since 1970s and find some common determinants of children performance, the most commons are those related to human capital of parents. The human capital of the mother is usually more closely related to the attainment of the child than is of the father. The income level of the family is positively associated with the education attainment of the child. Growing up in a family in which the mother chooses to work appears to have a modest adverse effect on education attainment due to loss of childcare time, though have some other positive effects.

The children of a one-parent family or experiencing divorce are negatively related to the level of schooling attained. The number of siblings, religiousness, schooling and the presence of books at home are found to have large and significant effect on children performance. According to Acemoglu and Pischke (2001) family income explains difference in the enrollment rates of children in a four-year college. These effects are different between rich and poor family.

In Nigeria, Oni (2007) and Omoegun (2007) had averred that there is significant difference between the rates of deviant behavior among students from high and low socio-economic statuses. Gachathi, P (1976) indicates that occupational prestige as one component of socio-economic status encompasses both income and educational attainment. Occupational status reflects the educational attainment required to obtain the job and income levels that vary with different jobs and within ranks of occupations. Additionally, it shows achievement in skills required for the job. Occupational status measures social position by describing job characteristics, decision making ability and control, and psychological demands on the job (Erick, Nyakundietal, 2012).

Impact of Socioeconomic Status on Education: ▼

A person's socioeconomic status is their social classification based on the amount of wealth they have. It can be determined by looking at a family's income and assets. Thus socioeconomic status (SES) is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education and occupation. When analyzing a family's SES, the household income, earner's education, and occupation are examined as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when

their own attributes are assessed.

Low SES and its correlates such as lower education, poverty and poor health ultimately affect our society as a whole. Inequities in wealth distribution, resource distribution and quality of life are increasing in the United States and globally. Society benefits from an increased focus on the foundations of socioeconomic inequities and efforts to reduce the deep gaps in socioeconomic status in the United States and abroad. Behavioral and other social science professionals possess the tools necessary to study and identify strategies that could alleviate these disparities at both individual and social levels.

Reasons Behind Selection of Study Area: ▼

Among the 62 running private universities, North South University, American International University Bangladesh, South East University, Northern University Bangladesh, Independent University of Bangladesh, Presidency University and Daffodil International University had been chosen as study area because these all are different types of universities in terms of costing, curriculum, internal environment, quality of students etc. so that we can get the most significant result.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To explore socioeconomic factors affecting university student's academic performance.
2. To investigate the effects of parental economic status on academic achievements.
3. To investigate the influence of study environment of a student on his/her academic result.

Research Questions:

1. What are the effects of parent's SES on student's academic achievements?
2. How parental education affects student's scores?
3. How parental socio-economic status and education effect performance of both the sexes?

Research Hypothesis:

1. Parental economic status does not have significant effect on the academic achievements of students.
2. Student's SSC GPA does not have significant

effect on the academic achievements of students.
3. Student's HSC GPA does not have significant effect on the academic achievements of students.
4. Father's education does not have significant effect on the academic achievements of students.
5. Mother's education does not have significant effect on the academic achievements of students.
6. Accommodation of the students does not have significant effect on the academic achievements of students.
7. Father's income does not have significant effect on the academic achievements of students.

Methodology: ▼

This survey study is quantitative in nature. In order to collect different types of experiences and challenges about the academic result in undergraduate level, seven well-known private universities in Bangladesh had been chosen as study area of the study named North South University, American International University Bangladesh, South East University, Northern University Bangladesh, Independent University of Bangladesh, Presidency University and Daffodil International University. 25 students from each university age range 19-25were interviewed randomly. That means the total number of respondents were (25×7) = 175. A semi structured questionnaire was prepared and researcher himself collected the primary data.

Variables: ▼

Dependent variable: CGPA in the university exam. *Independent variables:* Student's SSC GPA, Student's HSC GPA, Father's income, Father's education, Mother's education, economic status, accommodation of student.

The Model: ▼

Our general assumptions are as following. A student, whose family income is higher, could go to better school/colleges, afford tutors, buy different kinds of books and receive other facilities. Thereby family income should have positive effects on their academic performances. Number of parent's dependents may affect a student; more the dependents, lower will be per head income and houses will be crowded deteriorating environment

for study of individual children. Students from school and colleges located in small town/rural areas may not perform better than that from urban areas.

Education level of parents of the students should be positively related to better academic performances. Female students face many constraints while male student may have to supplement income for the family. It is difficult to have a priori knowledge of gender performances. Academic performance also depends on religious background because of many socio-cultural factors. Age has been considered by many as a factor, some believe that matured students can better perform while some other contents that younger the student better the performance. Obviously, a student with better past academic achievements can do better at the university level.

Since the country's main economic goal is to alleviate poverty and ensure growth, education is considered as a vehicle to our goal and engine of development. It is true that education helps alleviation of poverty, but it is also true that because of the abject poverty in Bangladesh children are unable to get standard education. We need to clearly understand the inter-relationship between education and poverty. Thereby this study seeks to consider socio-economic background of the students with a view to assessing individual educational performances. Since we are unable to establish this relation in the country at a large, we attempted establishment of the relation for some students who are enrolled at different private university in Bangladesh. In this paper we are particularly interested in estimating the relationship between family background variables and students' achievement in their university exam scores.

$$Y_i = \alpha + \sum \beta_i \, x_i + \varepsilon \quad \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots (1)$$

Where Yi is the average grade point of a student from their university exam and Xi are family and academic background variables, and ? is an error term.

Here we took different categories of a variable such as for variable father's education we took three responses as primary, secondary and university. For another variable economic status we took four categories as lower middle class, mid-middle class, upper middle class and rich. Again for another variable accommodation of students we took three responses as family, mess and friends/relatives. After recoding dummy variables we got the following model:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 x_{1i} + \beta_2 x_{2i} + \beta_3 x_{3i} + \beta_4 x_{4i} + \beta_5 x_{5i} + \beta_6 x_{6i} + \beta_7 x_{7i} + \beta_8 x_{8i} +$$

$$\beta_9 x_{9i} + \beta_{10} x_{10i} + \beta_{11} x_{11i} + \beta_{12} x_{12i} + \varepsilon_i \ldots \ldots \ldots \text{(ii)}$$

Where i = 1, 2, 3, 4 ….n

More specifically,
X_1 = Student's SSC GPA, X_2 = Student's HSC GPA,
X_3 = Father's income of student, X_4 = Father's education Secondary,
X_5 = Father's education University, X_6 = Mother's education Secondary,
X_7 = Mother's education University, X_8 = Economic status Lower middle class,
X_9 = Economic status mid- middle class, X_{10} = Economic status upper- middle class,
X_{11} = Accommodation with friends/relatives, X_{12} = Accommodation in mess.

Dummy Variables: ▼

Here, we use dummy variables for data analysis such as in the variable Father's education we had three results like primary, secondary, university. We made three dummy variables for this variable father's education and we used father's education primary as the reference variable. Similarly for the variable Mother's education we got mother's education primary as the reference variable. In another variable economic status we had four results lower middle class, mid-middle class, upper-middle class, rich and we used economic status rich as the reference variable. For another variable accommodation we got three results like family, mess, friends/relatives and we used accommodation family as the reference variable.
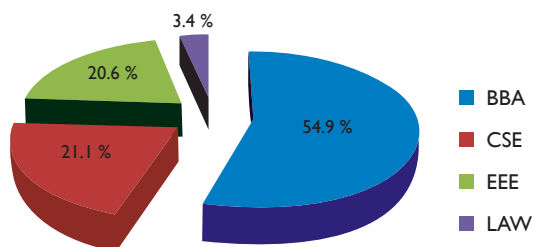
Results and Discussion:

Universities	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	Respondents
North South University (NSU)	20	5	25
American International University Bangladesh (AIUB)	18	7	25
South East University (SEU)	15	10	25
Northern University Bangladesh (NUB)	19	6	25
Independent University Bangladesh (IUB)	13	12	25
Presidency University (PU)	14	11	25
Daffodil International University (DIU)	17	8	25
Total	116	59	175

Table-1: Summary Profile of the respondents

The study was carried out on seven different private universities in Bangladesh North South University (NSU), American International University Bangladesh (AIUB), South East University (SEU), Northern University Bangladesh (NUB), Independent University Bangladesh (IUB), Presidency University (PU), and

Daffodil International University (DIU). 25 students from each university was collected randomly among them 18 male and 7 female from NSU, 16 male and 9 female from AIUB, 13 male and 12 female from SEU, 17 male and 8 female from NUB, 11 male and 14 female from IUB, 12 male and 13 female from PU, 15 male and 10 female from DIU.

Respondents' departments:

Dept.	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
BBA	96	54.9	54.9	54.9
CSE	37	21.1	21.1	76.0
EEE	36	20.6	20.6	96.6
LAW	6	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Table-2: Department wise distribution of the respondents

The table shows that 54.9% of the respondents from BBA department, 21.1% from CSE, 20.6 from EEE, 3.4% from LAW department.

Respondents' Corresponding CGPA:

CGPA Range	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2.00-2.25	21	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%
2.25-2.50	14	8.00%	8.00%	20.00%
2.50-2.75	5	2.86%	2.86%	22.86%
2.75-3.00	1	0.57%	0.57%	23.43%
3.00-3.25	11	6.29%	6.29%	29.71%
3.25-3.50	9	5.14%	5.14%	34.86%
3.50-3.75	13	7.43%	7.43%	42.29%
3.75- 4.00	101	57.71%	57.71%	100.00%

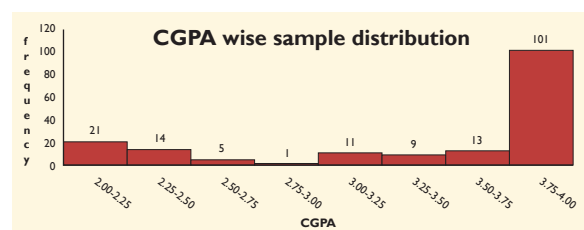**Table-3: CGPA wise distribution of the respondents**

Figure-1: CGPA wise distribution of the respondents

Respondents' gender:

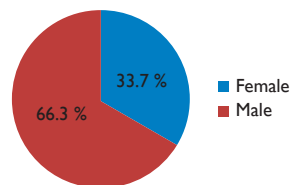| Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	59	33.7	33.7	33.7
Male	116	66.3	66.3	100.0
Total	175	100.0	100.0	

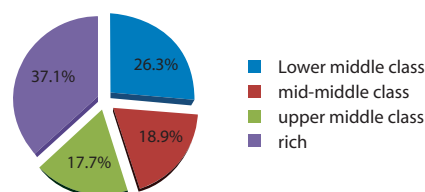**Table-4: Gender wise distribution of the respondents**

Here we see that 33.7% students of the respondents are female and the rest 66.3% are male.

Respondents' economic status:

Economic Status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Lower Middle Class	46	26.3	26.3	26.3
Mid-Middle Class	33	18.9	18.9	45.1
Upper Middle Class	31	17.7	17.7	62.9
Rich	65	37.1	37.1	100.0
Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Table-5: Income class wise distribution of the respondents

The study shows that there is no student from poor family and most of the students come from rich family. 26.3% respondents from lower middle class, 18.9% respondents from mid-middle class, 17.7% from upper middle class, 37.1% from rich.

Respondents' Fathers' Income Distribution:

Income Range	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-50000	43	25%	25%	25%
50000-100000	66	38%	38%	62%
100000-150000	9	5%	5%	67%
150000-200000	3	2%	2%	69%
200000-250000	15	9%	9%	78%
250000-300000	4	2%	2%	80%
300000-350000	16	9%	9%	89%
350000-400000	1	1%	1%	90%
400000-450000	4	2%	2%	92%
450000-500000	2	1%	1%	93%
500000-550000	7	4%	4%	97%
550000-600000	5	3%	3%	100%

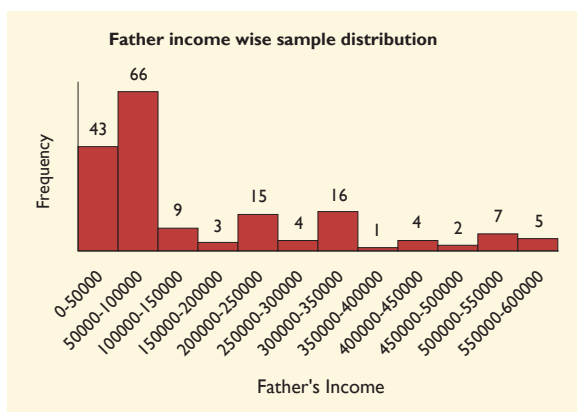## Table-6: Fathers' income wise distribution of the respondents

Figure-2: Father's Income wise distribution of the respondents

Accommodation of the respondent's:

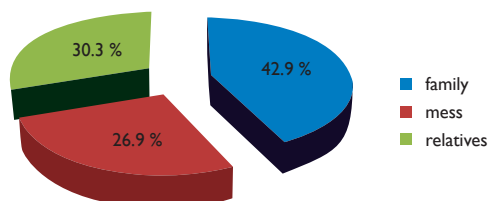| Accom.	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Family	75	42.9	42.9	42.9
Mess	47	26.9	26.9	69.7
relatives	53	30.3	30.3	100.0
Total	175	100.0	100.0	

Table-7: Accommodation wise distribution of the respondents

Here result shows that 57% students have accommodation problem and they live in mess or friend's or relative's house.

Reason for choosing University:

Choosing Factor	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Tuition fee	33	18.9	18.9	18.9
Faculty	17	9.7	9.7	28.6
located in safe zone	17	9.7	9.7	38.3
distance from your house	30	17.1	17.1	55.4
Recommendation	76	43.4	43.4	98.9
scholarship program	2	1.1	1.1	100.0
Tota	175	100.0	100.0	

Table-8: Choosing factor wise distribution of the respondents
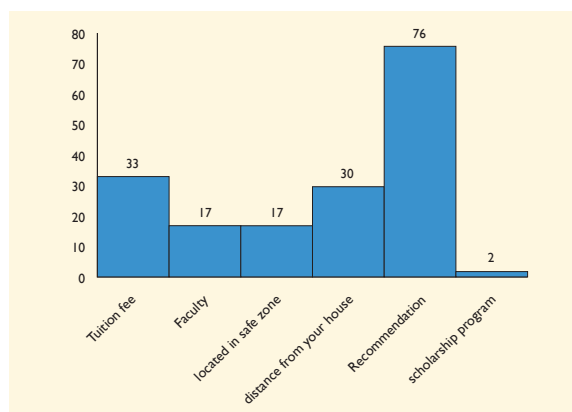

Figure-3: Choosing factor wise distribution of the respondents

Study shows that 18.9% student admitted themselves in these universities due to their tuition fee structure and 9.7% due to faculty, 9.7% due to located in safe zone, 17.1% due to the distance of university from their house, 43.4% due to recommendation of knowledgeable persons and 1.1% due to scholarship program of the university.

Multiple Regression Analysis:

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.953a	.908	.901	.21956

a. Predictors: (Constant), accm_mess, medu_sc, eco_upper, eco_mid, fatherincome, fedu_uv, accm_fm, hscgpa, eco_lmid, sscgpa, medu_uv, fedu_sc

Table-9: Model Summary

After multiple regression analysis we see that R^2 = 0.908 i.e. about 91% variation of dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables. So we can say that the 91% total variation of CGPA of an undergraduate student can be explained by the variables (sscgpa, hscgpa, father's income, father's education secondary, father's education university, mother's education secondary, mother's education university, economic status lower middle class, economic status mid-middle class, economic status upper middle class, accommodation family, accommodation mess).

Model		Sum of Squares	d.f	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	76.680	12	6.390	132.551	.000a
	Residual	7.810	162	.048		
	Total	84.489	174			

a. Predictors: (Constant), accm_mess, medu_sc, eco_upper, eco_mid, fatherincome, fedu_uv, accm_fm, hscgpa, eco_lmid, sscgpa, medu_uv, fedu_sc

b. Dependent Variable: CGPA

Table-10: ANOVA

From the ANOVA analysis we can say that the F-test is significant i.e. null hypothesis (all β_i's are zero) is rejected. So all the coefficients of independent variables are not zero. Now from the individual t-test we can find how many coefficients is zero.

Model		Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
I	(Constant)	2.346	.303		7.737	.000
	sscgpa	.069	.102	.092	.676	.500
	hscgpa	-.052	.080	-.078	-.652	.516
	fatherincome	3.213E-7	.000	.066	1.752	.082
	fedu_sc	-.063	.252	-.039	-.252	.802
	fedu_uv	-.061	.245	-.038	-.248	.805
	medu_sc	1.432	.186	.901	7.705	.000
	medu_uv	1.480	.191	1.065	7.746	.000
	eco_lmid	-.091	.134	-.058	-.681	.497
	eco_mid	-.401	.077	-.226	-5.225	.000
	eco_upper	-.151	.065	-.083	-2.321	.022
	accm_mess	-.113	.075	-.061	-1.504	.134
	accm_fr	.156	.067	.086	2.323	.021

a. Dependent Variable: CGPA

After estimating all the parameters we get our model as:

Table-11: Coefficients
$$Y_i = 2.346 + 0.069x_1 - 0.052x_2 + 3.213 \times 10^{-7} x_3 - 0.063x_4 - 0.061x_5 + 1.432x_6 + 1.480x_7 - 0.091x_8 - 0.401x_9 - 0.151x_{10} - 0.113x_{11} - 0.156x_{12}$$

From the multiple regression analysis we get the following five variables are significant and these are mother education secondary, mother's education university, economic status mid-middle class, economic status upper middle class, and accommodation of friends or relatives.

Findings and Conclusions: ▼

A student whose mother has completed secondary level education can achieve 0.901 more than a student whose mother has completed only primary education. Again a student whose mother has completed university level education can achieve1.065 more than a student whose mother has completed only primary education. Again students of rich family may do good 0.226 more than students of mid- middle class and students of rich family can achieve 0.083 better than a student from upper middle class.

A student from mid-middle class or upper-middle class are doing good in undergraduate level than the students of rich family. Moreover, students of rich family may do well 0.226 more than students of mid- middle class and students of rich family

can achieve 0.083 better than a student from upper middle class.

Study environment is the most significant for a student. We can conclude from our study, a student who lives with his own family do good result than a student who lives in a mess. Moreover, students who live in friend's or relative's house may do well 0.086 more than students who live in his/her own family. Again students who live in his/her own family may do good 0.061 more than students who live in a mess.

Recommendations: ▼

Our study shows that mother's education is most important for a student. When the child is in the womb, mothers are advised on healthy living and eating that can enhance the development of the unborn child's brain. The child gets education through the process of learning to live. This process starts from infancy and infants depend on others to make plans for them and help them achieve it.

From the research we can say that, mid-middle class and upper middle class students are doing well than the rich students. Sometimes student from a rich family are not so conscious their career life because they think their life is well secured and if they can't do anything much. But a student who belongs to a middle class family is more concerned about their study as well as career because he/she has huge responsibilities for their parents and family.

We can also conclude that study environment is really significant for a student for his/ her study. If a student lives in a mess then he can't continue his study properly. Here our study result shows that 57% students have accommodation problem. Universities may consider any plan for better accommodation.

Another most important variable for the students turned out to be past result variable. This indicates that better students are doing well in the university level. We should not be contented with this result as it may show that teaching of universities has no contribution to better performances of the students. ⊛

"What gets measured, gets managed."

- Peter Drucker

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