

# AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON THE ANTECEDENTS OF PARENTAL ASPIRATIONS WHICH CATALYZES STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

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## Abstract:

Parents' aspiration plays a significant role in navigating the academic performance of the children. The major role played by this parental aspiration has various root based that are to be well understood and this paved way for a empirical research which helped in developing a conceptual picture of the enabling factors of parental aspiration. The various factors are categorized as-socio economic profile, demographic profile, healthy family environment, environmental influence and aspiration based on children.

**Key words:** Parental aspiration, antecedents of parental aspirations and children's academic performance.

## INTRODUCTION:

As the job market trends are looking for smarter employees so do the parents who also want achieving children. This is especially true when it comes to education where most of the parents place a very high educational aspiration on their children and they want them to be achieved by them. There is no difference among the world countries and even among urban or rural places. Though these parental aspiration seem to be existing with ages, even now in this technological world they seem to show a very strong external source of influence when it comes to academic achievements.

For a long time many researches has been undertake to understand the motivating factors for children academic success and achievement. As a note for attention it is necessary to mention that parental aspiration happens to be one of the major external forces influencing children academic performance. Though parental aspiration is identified as one of factors not much studies have been undertaken to understand it a s whole .This major factor i.e. parental aspiration has not been given a greater attention so far and this paper makes an empirical analysis on the antecedents of parental aspiration. In brief to say the paper analyses the significant predictors of parental aspiration which in turn becomes one of the major sources of academic achievement of children.

## MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

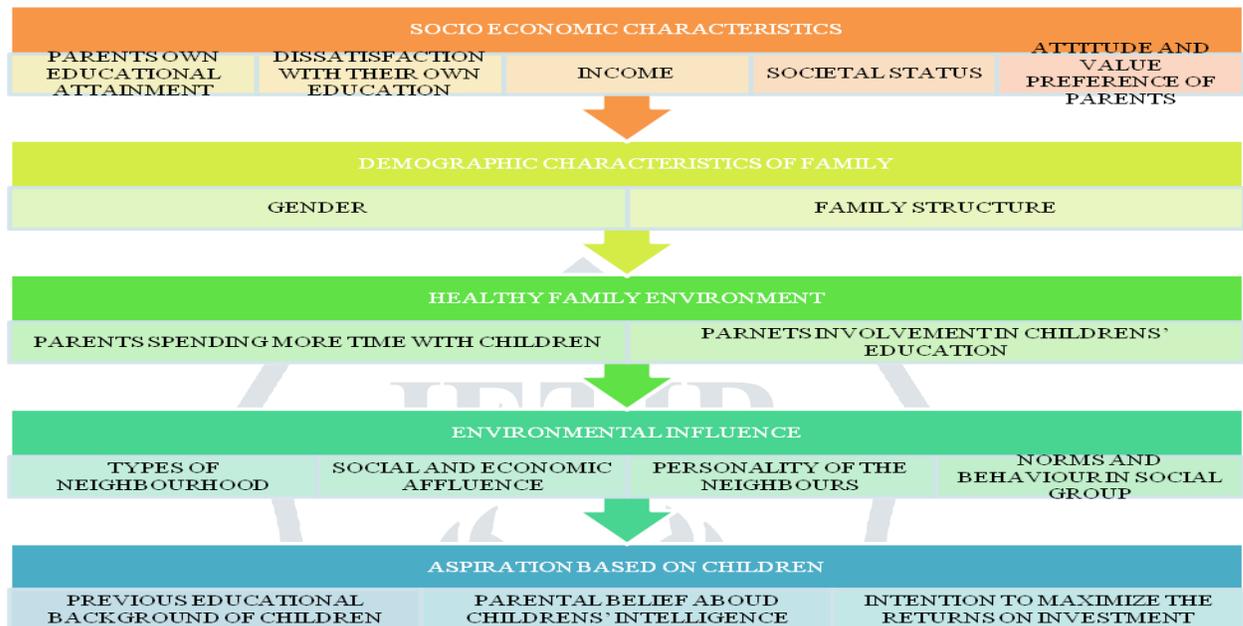
- To picturize the nature of parental involvement in their children's higher education.
- To identify the antecedents of parental aspiration towards their children's higher education.

## CONCEPTUALIZATION OF IDEA:

Parental aspiration happens to be one of the key complementing catalytic forces that drives the academic achievement of the college students. This has been proved in several studies and it has been

universally recognized as one of the forms of external independent variable that influences the academic performance of children which appears to be a dependent variable that fluctuates in various degrees with influence. But this major factor parental aspiration itself has some significant antecedents which act as sources of parental aspiration and this which ultimately catalyzes academic achievement of the children.

Analyzing and reviewing various works of researchers it has been found that the parental aspirations has various fundamental foundations and can be categorized as follows,



Expressing in detail about the various factors and its nature:

## **SOCIO ECONOMIC CHARATERISTICS OF THE PARENTS:**

### PARENTS OWN EDUCATION ATTAINMENT:

Parents own education attainment and their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with them have an everlasting influence on their children's educational performances. They stand as a realistic example for the children and motivate them for showing higher end academic performance. (Eamon, 2005) have found solid evidences through their study and has lime lighted that "The children's educational attainment has mainly been associated with parental education levels". William H. Sewell, Vimal P. Shah (1968) work on *Parents' Education and Children's Educational Aspirations and Achievements* provides statistical proof which show that father's education showed a slightly stronger effect than did those for mother's education at each stage in the process of educational aspiration and achievement for males, but both father's and mother's education indicated almost equal effect for females and parents' education had slightly more effect on females than on males at all levels of the higher education process. The more education parents have completed, the higher their expectations for their child's educational attainment (De Civita et al., 2004; Hossler & Stage, 1992). The correlation between mothers' educational attainment and expectations appears to grow stronger at higher levels of education; mothers who have a bachelor's degree have even higher expectations for their children than mothers who have some college education (Zhan, 2006). As a whole parental education has been demonstrated to be the single most significant predictor of parental expectations.

### PARENTS' DISSATISFACTION WITH THEIR OWN EDUCATION:

Parents who are dissatisfied with their education have been found to strongly motivate their children for good academic performance with an intention of providing better education for their children. It also provides them an indirect achievement. This also has been highlighted in different studies as "the

discrepancy in the educational achievements of parents has been suggested as a major source of dissatisfaction among parents, which presumably leads them to motivate their children to high levels of aspiration and achievement and the father's dissatisfaction plays in leading the parents to encourage their children” **William H. Sewell, Vimal P. Shah (1968)**. It has been found that parental education significantly predicts parental expectations for their child’s educational attainment; this effect is even greater when parents report a high degree of negative self-feelings (e.g., not having much to be proud of, feeling like a failure, etc.) (**Kaplan, Liu, & Kaplan, 2001**).

#### INCOME:

The income of the parents found to be producing an impact on the educational attainment and academic performances of the children. Children born of parents with affordable income show a strong edge in academic excellence. Studies show that “parents who had a higher net worth also held higher expectations for their children’s education” (**Zhan, 2006**). In a study that sought to more thoroughly examine the impact of financial hardship on families and students, four economic groups were compared: welfare dependent families, work-and-welfare-dependent families, working-poor families, and never-poor working families and results indicated that compared with mothers in families who had never experienced poverty, mothers who were classified as welfare-dependent and those classified as working-poor held significantly lower aspirations for their child’s educational attainment (**De Civita, Pagani, Vitaro, & Tremblay, 2004**).

The income and socio-economic status of a household, including its educational status have for long time been known to be a consistent predictor of children’s educational attainment (**Mangione and Speth, 2008; Ou and Reynolds, 2008**). The argument goes that households with higher income and better education attainment have the resources and the educational experience to help their children achieve higher levels of education.

#### PARENTS ATTITUDE, EXPECTATION AND BELIEF:

Parents’ attitudes, expectations and beliefs about schooling and learning guide their behaviour in relation to their children and exert a causal influence on the children’s development of achievement, attitudes and behaviours. These studies confirm that over time the parents’ aspirations and those of their children do come to a convergence (**Harter, 1992**). Parents who believe their children have low academic ability may aspire to low levels of education attainment for them and vice versa (**Wentzel, 1998**).

#### HEALTHY FAMILY ENVIRONMENT:

##### PARENTS’ SPENDING MORE TIME WITH CHILDREN:

The more time the parents spend with their children the higher positive correlation they create with their children academic performance. Researchers have demonstrated that parents who believe that they can positively impact their child’s education are more involved in their child’s education, spending more time volunteering in the classroom and more time on educational activities with their children at home (**Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992**).

##### PARENTS’ INVOLVEMENT:

Worldwide the impacts of parental involvement on educational aspirations are found to differ across groups **Yun Zhou, Jennifer Glick(2000)** . The influence of involvement is lower but still significant for Asians when compared to whites. **Kao’s (1995)** findings show that Asian parents are less involved in school activities. With regard to mother’s involvement it has a strong influence on the academic skills of children of lower educated mothers.

## SOCIAL STATUS:

Socioeconomic status has been demonstrated to be a significant predictor of parents' educational expectations and aspirations for their children (De Civita, Pagani, Vitaro, & Tremblay, 2004; Singh, Bickley, Trivette, Keith, & Anderson, 1995; Zhan, 2006), as has parents' own levels of educational attainment (Davis-Kean, 2005; Englund, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004; Gill & Reynolds, 1999). Researches has demonstrated that parents who are of lower socioeconomic status, as well as parents who have completed lower amounts of school, expect their children to complete less education than parents who are of higher socioeconomic status and have attained more education. **Monica J Jacob (2010).**

Socioeconomic status has been demonstrated to be a significant predictor of parents' educational aspirations and expectations for their children (Singh et al., 1995), although some research has suggested that the impact of socio economic status on parents' expectations and aspirations is stronger for parents of males than parents of females (Trusty, 2002). Aside from merely utilizing household income as an indicator of socio economic status, additional research using parental assets as an indicator of socio economic status has demonstrated a positive and significant relationship with children academic achievement. **Monica J Jacob (2010).**

## **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS:**

### GENDER:

Being a male or a female has a very important role to play when it comes to the agenda of parental aspiration. The society in general has difference in view for male and female and this is also reflected in terms of parental aspirations. It has been very keenly observed in the study under the title '*Parents' Education and Children's Educational Aspirations and Achievements*' and proved that "First, at each of the four stages in the process of educational aspiration and achievement, males make a more favorable showing than females. Second, the differential levels of parental encouragement perceived by males and females seem to reflect the differential role expectations of the sexes. Third, the almost negligible difference in the percentage of females who planned on college and attended college indicates that females are more likely than males to have realistic plans for higher education. Fourth, the fact that a significantly higher percentage of males actually attended college than planned on college suggests that experience in the labor market or in military service is likely to cause males to revise their plans upward". **William H. Sewell, Vimal P. Shah (1968).**

### FAMILY STRUCTURE:

Children raised in families with both the parents and with more children seem to receive a moderate level of aspiration as the aspiration is spread among the family members whereas children of single parent and especially that of single mother seem to receive a greater aspiration which reflects the need for security in the society. single-mother family have significant higher aspirations and those living with one-parent-and-one-partner family have significant lower aspirations. **Yun Zhou, Jennifer Glick(2000).**

### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE:**

The facts that a human learns from his immediate environment has to be considered while discussing parental aspiration. Every parents receive input from their neighbours, their personalities, their economic and social affluence and norms and behaviors in social group. The link between parental socio-economic status and their children's educational attainment can also be attributed to differences at the neighbourhood level in terms of social and economic advantage (Gibbons, 2001). Neighbourhood contextual effects on educational attainment could potentially operate through a wide variety of processes,

ranging from individual personality development to direct environmental influences (**McLoyd and Steinberg, 1998**).

### **ASPIRATIONS BASED ON CHILDREN:**

#### **PREVIOUS EDUCATIONAL BACKGORUND OF THE CHILDREN:**

The previous academic achievement of the children and their performances in their previous education makes the parents to frame out a realistic picture on the present academic performance and this paves way for their aspirations. From the works of **Goldenberg et al., (2001)** parental expectations for educational attainment became increasingly linked to students' previous academic performance as students progressed through elementary school and Parental expectations for their children's educational attainment have been demonstrated to strongly predict academic achievement. Parental expectations for educational attainment positively predicted students' achievement test scores (**Benner & Mistry, 2007; Neuenschwander, Vida, Garret, & Eccles, 2007; Singh et al., 1995**); the students who had better grades reported that their parents had higher aspirations for their future educational attainment (**Spera, 2006**).

#### **RETURN ON INVESTMENT:**

The economic benefits that the parents are to receive in future makes them aspire for higher academic performance of their children. This is true from the words of the researcher **Buchmann and Hannum (2001)** "the choice to educate a child is an aspect of a family's intention to maximize returns to its investments". Parental aspirations thus form a core element in determining the economic future of the family (**Al-Samarrai and Peasgood, 1998; Seginer and Vermulst, 2002; Spera et al., 2008; Zhang et al., 2007**). Also the cost benefit analysis explains that parents consider this return on investment as a source of support which parents require in their old age also researches highlight that there is greater likelihood that parents rely on children in old age (**Buchmann, 2000**). Apart from this there is also a distinct variation in the aspiration set among the rural and urban children, it is been said that "families may employ a 'diversified' strategy in deciding to how to educate some children more than others e.g. in rural areas where some children are relied upon in farm labour. In this case, the strategy may be to maximise family utility but it may not lead to the same cost-benefit analysis at the level of the individual child as would be pursued if each child were considered as separate 'investment'. **Moses Oketch, Maurice Mutisya, Jackline Sagwe.(2012)** While in case of urban children parents generally seem to place their aspirations based on other forms of utility factors. **Moses Oketch, Maurice Mutisya, Jackline Sagwe.(2012)**

#### **PARENTS BELIEF ABOUT CHILDS INTELLEGENCE:**

Children who are born intelligent seem to naturally attract the confidence of parents when it comes to academic performance. The parents of intelligent children have usually higher level of parental aspiration and the parents of less intelligent children seem to receive lesser parental aspiration. Intelligence increase greatly as one moves forward in the process of educational aspiration and achievement. **William H. Sewell, Vimal P. Shah (1968)**.

From the words of authors " Among males, those in the high intelligence category are twice as likely to receive parental encouragement, four times as likely to plan on college and attend college, and more than ten times as likely to graduate from college as those in the low intelligence category. Similarly, among females, those in the high intelligence category are twice as likely to perceive parental encouragement, almost four times as likely to plan on college and attend college, and almost twelve times as likely to graduate from college as those in the low intelligence category". Thus the intelligence of the children makes the parents to believe that their children can achieve more and this motivates them to develop higher aspiration towards their academics. **William H. Sewell, Vimal P. Shah (1968)**.

Thus the entire paper has presented an enumerative list of the antecedents of parental aspirations..

**FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION:**

On exploring the various factors influencing parental aspirations it can be concluded that this aspiration of the parents form a very strong base for children's academic performance amidst other factors of consideration and these aspiration of the parents even though vary in their nature and by source are in general navigated through parents interaction with the society and from what learning they have developed out of their experience.

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