



THE EFFECTS OF FAMILY STRUCTURE ON CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

An ideal family structure is beneficial to a child's well-being because it ensures that the youngster will receive adequate support, strength, and stability from the family. While we all wish for the perfect family, we are well aware that each child comes from a distinct family structure. The majority of research shows that a child's home arrangement has a significant impact on their academic performance. Students from two-parent families had higher or better academic accomplishments than students from single-parent families. However, it is also noted that the findings of a recent study show that family structure has no bearing on children's academic performance. Other family structure features, such as socioeconomic status, family size, parent education, parental involvement, and so on, have a substantial impact on improving children's academic achievement. The goal of this research is to see how family structure influences children's academic success in school. This study also aims to fill any knowledge gaps about the impact of family structure on children's academic success. Articles published in international online journals were examined. This paper focuses on the findings and conclusions of the various studies examined.

Keywords: Academic performance, family structure, ideal family

INTRODUCTION

Academic performance is undoubtedly one of the methods used to assess a child's ability, capability, talents, and even success when he enters the world. Academic performance was defined by Pizarro (1985, as cited in Lamas, 2015) as a measure of the indicative and responsive capacities that convey, in an estimated fashion, what a person has learned as a result of an educational or training process. Furthermore, academic performance, according to Martinez (2007, as cited in Lamas, 2015), is "the product given by the students and it is usually expressed through school grades" (p. 34). Children who perform well in school or who exceed expectations are likely to make more and valuable contributions as they consider methods to improve society. As a result, society tends to evaluate people based on their academic achievements. In any modern culture, education is undoubtedly the most essential social institution. Education is a crucial social determinant of practically all areas of life for individuals, according to Goldin and Katz (2008, as cited in Lyu et al., 2019), and it holds the key to a society's technological advancement and economic prosperity Fischer and Hout (2006, as cited in Lyu et al., 2019).

On the other hand, "family structure" is a word that refers to the members of a household who are tied by marriage or heredity, and it is most commonly used when there is at least one child under the age of 18 living in the home. Two-parent, one-parent, and "living with neither parent" are the terms used today to describe these configurations (e.g., adoptive families, grandparent families or other relatives, foster care families, institutionalized children). Other changes in family life since the mid-1940s have resulted in more intricate family structure designations, such as blended families, single-parent plus partner families (cohabiting couples of opposite sex and same-sex, multigenerational families, and binuclear families) (Pasley & Petren, 2015).

As the cornerstone of civilization, the family is crucial to a child's whole development. As a result, the purpose of this research is to look into the relationship between family structure and a child's academic achievement. By determining the effects of family structure on a child's academic performance, appropriate intervention can be implemented to address educational concerns.

This literature study strives to increase our knowledge and awareness of the topic under investigation. By studying numerous similar publications, the researcher will be able to discover a gap in the existing literature relating to the effects of family structure on children's academic

achievement. The outcomes of this study will also serve as a foundation for future research in this field.

DISCUSSION

Parents play a crucial influence in their children's physical, emotional, and intellectual development, especially while they are young. Parents must closely monitor their children to ensure that certain attributes are fully developed. As Wade (2004) observed in his study, parents, educators, and casual observers all concur that parenting influences play a significant role in determining the intellectual, educational, and social outcomes of children and teens. Furthermore, a child's family environment is an important influence in their growth.

The studies and findings presented below provide a detailed understanding of the effects of family structure on children's academic success. Take for example the results of the study of Pong (1997) according to him, schools are increasingly containing students from single-parent families and stepfamilies, prompting researchers to investigate if these families have an impact on all students' academic ability. Even after controlling for individual demographic characteristics and family background, an analysis of eighth-grade math and reading achievement scores shows that schools with a high percentage of students from single-parent families and stepfamilies have a negative impact on their students' achievement. The unusually low socioeconomic position of students in these schools explains some of the harmful impact of single-parent homes and stepfamilies. When social interactions among parents are robust, the detrimental effects of single-parent homes and stepfamilies on school achievement can be mitigated.

The same idea presented by Uwaifo (2008) in his study, revealed that there were substantial variations in academic achievement between pupils from single-parent families and those from two-parent families. The findings also revealed substantial variations in male and female pupils' academic performance when comparing two types of family configurations. Based on these findings, it was suggested that school counsellors be employed in all schools and that they provide required support to kids, particularly those from single-parent families, in order to help them overcome their emotional issues.

Moreover, it is well accepted that single motherhood has scholastic disadvantages for the children of single parents, according to another study conducted by Pong (1998). Using NELS data, the author discovered that attending a school with a large number of children from single-parent homes had a negative contextual influence on 10th-grade math and reading achievement. Even when individual demographic variables and family history were taken into account, the effect was still visible. The author looked into the mediating impact of a school's net socioeconomic status (SES) and net social capital, as measured by parents' social ties and networks with other parents, to explain this contextual effect. She discovered that both can explain variations in math and reading achievement between schools with fewer than 25% of pupils from single-parent homes and schools with 25-49 percent. Further, there is proof that the scholastic disadvantage of attending schools with 50% or more students from single-parent families might be mitigated by strong social relationships and networks among parents.

According to Kurdek & Sinclair (1988), students in two-parent nuclear families had superior academic achievement and fewer troublesome school conduct than students in either mother-custody or stepfather families. Boys were given more detentions than girls. Despite significant disparities across the three family structures, the family structure variable only accounted for around 7% of the variance in academic performance and behavior at school. Beyond what was accounted for by family structure, gender, and family conflict, a family environment that valued accomplishment and intellectual activities accounted for heterogeneity in end-of-year grades. Family structure, gender, and family environment all accounted for just around 17% of the variance in academic performance and school conduct. Contact with the father was unrelated to academic performance for students in mother-custody and stepfather homes. The results are analyzed in terms of achievement motivation and behavior models.

Another study found that most students who lived in a family with two natural-birth parents who were married and living together performed better academically than students who lived in other family structures, and that students' academic achievement levels declined as the family structure shifted away from natural parents or included outside people. Administrators and other educators can educate themselves to prepare for the future by knowing the external settings of current pupils, according to this study (Coward, 2001).

The same concept as that students from traditional households did better than students from non-traditional families, according to a study done by Latu Latu (2018). Students' family structure has a considerable impact on their academic achievement, according to the findings. School, parental participation, family structure, age, family expectation, and family religious status are the most important factors for academic performance, according to the study.

Some other notable findings are studied by Suleman et al. (2012), they found that having a large family, having a large number of brothers and sisters, having domestic troubles and tension among family members, having a low socioeconomic position, and not having a parent involved has a negative impact on a student's educational attainment. Home tuition, parent education, high socioeconomic level, and parental participation, on the other hand, were proven to play a fundamental and substantial influence in improving student academic achievement.

Another one is that both procedural and structural aspects of family social capital are major factors determining high school students' educational attainment, according to a study done by Israel et al. (2001) utilizing data from the National Education Longitudinal Survey (NELS). Community social capital's process and structural characteristics also assist youths in excelling, however they play a smaller role in achievement. These findings suggest that strategies aimed at improving educational attainment should go beyond the classroom and include efforts to improve social capital in the home and community.

Meanwhile, talking about children's dropout behavior that greatly affect their academic performance, Zimiles & Lee (1991) evaluated students from intact, single-parent, and remarried homes in terms of academic achievement, high school grades, and educational persistence in a secondary analysis of a subsample of high school sophomores from a national data set. The differences in achievement test scores and high school grades across the three groups were minor, but statistically significant. When it came to drop-out behavior, there were more variations between groups. Dropout rates were lowest among students from intact homes. Students from single-parent and remarried homes dropped out at almost the same rate, but there were significant gender differences. Dropout behavior was found to be influenced by the student's gender in combination with the custodial parent's gender, with children living with like-gender custodial parents being less likely to drop out in single-parent households but more likely in stepfamilies.

In addition, Rodgers and Rose (2001) discovered that when compared to peers from intact households, adolescents from divorced families do worse academically. They ran hierarchical regressions using an ecological framework to look at the impact of parental support and supervision, as well as school attachment, on grade point average (GPA) in teens from intact (60%) homes, single-divorced (20%) households, and blended (20%) families. A survey was completed by 1925 students in grades 7 (45 percent), 9 (31 percent), and 11 (24 percent), with an average age of 15 years. The sample was predominantly White (88%) with 11% African-American; 53% of the participants were female. They expected that adolescents from divorced or remarried households would receive less parental support and monitoring, and that school attachment would be more strongly linked to GPA for these children. School attachment was significant for kids from all types of households, but it was especially important for teens from step- or single-divorced families. Parents, schools, parenting education, and youth programs will all benefit from our findings.

In contrast to the studies presented above, Azumah et al. (2018) discovered no significant differences in relationships between children from single-parent and two-parent homes (family structure) as the independent variable and academic performance of pupils ($p=0.791$) as the dependent variable in a recent study. The findings of this study showed that family structure had no substantial impact on children's academic achievement. The researchers suggest that more research be done to explore additional family characteristics. The second hypothesis, which was to evaluate the difference in parental participation in children's academic success, was tested using the Chi-square test of independence. The study's findings also revealed that parental participation in children's academic performance differed significantly ($p=0.223$).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

We discovered that there are inconsistent research results on the influence of family structure on children's academic achievement based on the data and various research studies offered in this paper. The majority of the research demonstrates that the family structure of children has a significant impact on their academic achievement. When compared to students from single-parent households, students from two-parent families have higher or better academic achievement. However, it is also stated that the result of a recent study demonstrates that family structure has no significant impact on children's academic ability. Other family structure characteristics, such as socioeconomic position, family size, parent education, parental participation, and the like, on the other hand, have a significant impact on enhancing children's academic achievement. As a result, more research and analysis into additional family features is still recommended. Thus, the study recommends that family structures be strengthened in order to improve children's educational outcomes.



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