The Impact of Parent’s Socioeconomic Status on Parental Involvement at Home: A Case Study on High Achievement Indian Students of a Tamil School in Malaysia

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Abstract

The current study focuses on the impact of parent’s socioeconomic status on parental involvement in their child’s education at home. Forty Indian students studying in one the best performance-based National Type Tamil Schools in the state of Kedah, Malaysia were chosen based on purposive sampling. The sample comprised 10 students from Year Two, 10 students from Year Three, 10 students from Year Four and 10 students from Year Five. Those were the high achievement students identified based on the previous final year school examination results. Questionnaires were used by the researcher to obtain quantitative data related to the parent’s socioeconomic background and their involvement strategies in their children’s education at home from the students’ parent. In addition, in-depth interviews with twenty students, that is, five students from each Year were conducted to gather information on their parent’s involvement. The findings of this study indicate that most parents are from a higher socioeconomic background and they show a high degree of involvement in most of the involvement strategies at home to ensure their child’s educational success. Moreover, the economic and academic capital among the middle-class parents serve to enhance their understanding and knowledge on the actual values that need to be placed on their child’s education. As a result, these children gain in terms of good skills, behaviour and values, all of which are crucial to their academic success.

Keywords: Parental involvement, socioeconomic, education, National Type Tamil School, attitude, behaviour

Introduction

Recent educational developments in many countries have shown a growing importance of the concept of parental involvement. With the rise in educational parentocracy, the wealth and wishes of parents appear to play a more dominant role in a child’s education. Thus, the impact of the parent’s socioeconomic status on parental involvement and their child’s educational achievement has been of great concern to many researchers especially in the field of sociology.
It is widely believed that the parent’s socioeconomic status has a relatively strong impact on parental involvement compared to other variables. However, there is a question as to how far the strength of the parent’s socioeconomic status could inspire a child to achieve academic success.

In the context of Malaysia, ample research has been done on education. However, in a diverse society like Malaysia, only a little attention has been given to the issue of parental involvement in education. The academic interest and research-based studies on parental involvement is still insufficient to promote the importance of parental involvement to ensure a child’s educational success.

Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the parent’s socioeconomic status on parental involvement in their child’s education at home among the children who are high achievers at school. The present study attempts to trace the socioeconomic strength of Indian parents who have enrolled their children in National Type Tamil School in Kedah, Malaysia and its influence in inspiring the child to achieve academic success. By examining the impact of these Indian parents’ socioeconomic status on the parent’s involvement in their child’s education, we may have a better understanding as to why these students tend to achieve academic success at school.

**Literature Review**

To date, many studies have established the effect of parent’s socioeconomic status on parental involvement. One consistent finding is that parents from the higher socioeconomic status are more involved in their child’s education. In this case, the higher the parent’s education level, occupation status, income and their household income, the higher would be the parent’s involvement in their child’s education. As a result, the strength of parental involvement enables the children to achieve education success at school.

A number of studies have noted the importance of the parent’s socioeconomic status (i.e., parent’s education level, occupation status, income and their household income) as important indicators for parental involvement that leads to academic success of a child. For example, Lueptow (1975) in his study found that students who achieve high performance in education at school were from urban areas, who had educated parents with a higher occupation status and a higher income home. Consistent to Lueptow (1975), Katsilis & Rubinson’s (1990) and Ho Sui-Chu & Willms’s (1996) study indicated that the parent’s socioeconomic status has a significant and positive relationship with parent’s involvement in their child’s education. These studies found that the parent’s from higher socioeconomic status exert greater parental involvement in their child’s education.

In addition to the studies discussed above, many other studies (Balli et al., 1998; Baker & Stevenson, 1986; Poston and Falbo, 1990) have acknowledged parent’s education level as one of the important indicators that determines parental involvement. As stated by Lockheed et al. (1989), the higher the standard of the parents’ education level, the higher would be the
parent’s academic aspirations for their child. For example, Balli et al. (1998) in their study on sixth-grade students found that parents with higher level of education were more prominent in helping with their child’s homework compared to parents with low level of education who need help from schools to help their children. Another study by Baker and Stevenson (1986) on mothers of eighth-grade students from middle school indicated that well-educated mothers have more knowledge of their child’s schooling, are more aware of their child’s education and his/her achievement and they take greater effort to monitor their child’s academic progress than the less-educated mothers. A study conducted by Poston and Falbo (1990) also found that parents who were highly educated often communicate and interact with their children. Consistent with the studies above, Lueptow (1975) in his study also found that students who are high achievers at school are from urban areas, who have educated parents with a higher occupation status and a higher income home.

Shaver & Wall (1998) and Desimone (1999) went a bit further to investigate the impact of parental involvement on children’s educational achievement. According to Shaver & Wall’s (1998) study on reading and mathematics achievements of eighth-grade students, they found that the children from the higher socioeconomic background achieved academic success in reading and mathematics due to effective parental involvement. On the other hand, Desimone’s (1999) study on eighth-grade students indicated a positive and significant relationship between student’s socioeconomic status, parental involvement and student’s achievement. The higher the parent’s family income, the higher would be the parental involvement. Hence, the students gain high achievement in reading and mathematics. Lockheed et al. (1989) who carried out a study on grade eight students in Thailand also reported that a child whose mother is highly educated and father is a professional obtained high scores in Mathematics. Another study carried out by Lockheed et al. (1989) on grade eight students in Thailand also reported that a child whose mother who is highly educated and father is a professional obtained high scores in Mathematics.

There were also studies that have been focused on parent’s social class rather than socioeconomic status. For example, Lareau (1987) in her studies on first grade classrooms in a working class community and a middle class community found that parents in the middle class community tend to help their child more due to the better skills, the occupation status, income and time compared to the working class parents. Reay (2004) in one of her studies found that mothers from the middle class have a good educational background that enables them to inculcate academic values in their child, thereby promoting self-confidence and participation which are transformed by the child into a more positive attitude and behaviour of learning towards academic success. In Sewell and Hauser’s (1980) study, a better financial resource among the middle class parents enhances the motivational support to their children; thereby encouraging the children to have high aspirations in education. Although the above studies ascribe parent’s social class to parental involvement, it shares the same indicators as parent’s socioeconomic status.

In attempting to identify the relationship between working mothers and their child’s achievement, the importance of the effects of the parents’ education level, occupation status
and income (Heyns & Catsambis, 1986; Myers et al., 1987; Milne et al., 1986) and alternative families (Astone & McLanahan, 1991, Mulkey et al., 1992; Myers et al., 1987 and Milne et al., 1986) cannot be denied. In addition, the studies carried out by Astone & McLanahan (1991), Biblarz Dan Raftery (1999), Milne et al. (1986), Mulkey et al. (1992) and Myers et al. (1987) pointed out that single parent’s family lacked in economic resources that affect the household management and their child’s academic achievement.

Thus, the literature review discussed above indicates that the parent’s socioeconomic status has a great impact on parental involvement in their child’s education. The higher socioeconomic status of parents determines the degree of parental involvement and its effectiveness in enhancing the educational success of the child.)

**Methodology**

**Sample**

Forty Indian students were chosen from one of the best performance-based National Type Tamil Schools in the state of Kedah, Malaysia by using purposive sampling. The sample comprised 10 students from Year Two (aged 8), 10 students from Year Three (aged 9), 10 students from Year Four (aged 10), and 10 students from Year Five (aged 11). Those were the high achievement students in each Year identified based on the previous final year school examination results. From the forty students who were chosen based on purposive sampling, one parent for each student was selected (according to the student’s view about the individual who spends the most time being involved in their education) to be the respondent for this study. This will provide an explanation about the parent’s background and their involvement in their child’s education. In addition, twenty students from among the forty high achievement Indian students who were chosen earlier based on purposive sampling were also selected randomly to be interviewed.

**Instrument**

Questionnaire was used by the researcher to obtain quantitative data from the selected parents. Questions were adapted from Walker et al., (2005). The researcher has modified the structure of the questions according to the objective of the current study. Some changes were made in its response format. The questionnaire was divided into six parts that is parent’s background, parental involvement at home, and parental involvement at school, school's cooperation on parental involvement at home, school's cooperation on parental involvement at school and parent's perception on school. This paper only focuses on the first two components, namely, parent’s background specifically on parent’s socioeconomic status and parental involvement at home.

The first part of the questionnaire contained close-ended questions which were related to the parent’s background such as gender, age, home, education status, occupation, income and household income, number of children, number of school-going children and number of
children who were already working. The second part of the questionnaire was related to the questions on parental involvement at home. There were ten questions in this part which measured the parental involvement at home.

In order to obtain qualitative data from the students, an in-depth interview was also used in this study. The purpose of the in-depth interview was to gather concrete information from the students interviewed on the amount and quality of their parent’s involvement in their education at home as a supportive documentation to evaluate the degree of involvement and its effectiveness as stated by the parents earlier in the questionnaire.

**Method**

Questionnaires were distributed to the parents who had been chosen as respondents. All the respondents in this study were informed about the nature of this study. Of the forty questionnaires distributed to the respondents, thirty-nine were collected back. Only one respondent was not willing to participate in this study. The questionnaire contained questions on parent’s background and the parental involvement in their child’s education was used by the researcher to obtain quantitative data from the respondents. For each question, the respondents were asked to respond with ‘Daily’, ‘Few times a week’, ‘Few times a month’, ‘Once in few months’ or ‘Never’ for each strategy regarding the parents’ involvement in their child’s education. Each respondent who was engaged in the study was informed that all the information provided by the respondent would be kept confidential.

All the information gathered from the respondents from the questionnaire was analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The reliability analysis showed that all ten items in the category of ‘parental involvement at home’ were consistent. The Cronbach’s alpha measure was 0.8 which indicated that the measure of these items was reliable.

In addition, an in-depth interview was used by the researcher to obtain qualitative data from the selected twenty high achievement students. It comprised five students each from Year Two, Year Three, Year Four and Year Five. The students were asked about the strategies and the level of involvement shown by their parent in their education at home. Each interview took approximately 20-30 minutes. The interview was conducted by the researcher himself. The information gathered from the in-depth interview with the students was cross checked with the information provided by parents in the questionnaire they had submitted earlier to the researcher.

**Results**

The findings of the current study are discussed based on two main aspects. First, the discussion is based on the quantitative data which covers the parent’s background especially on their socioeconomic status and the parental involvement strategies. Second, the discussion covers the qualitative data which focuses on the strategies and strength of parental involvement in their child’s education that had been gathered from the interview with the students.
The descriptive analysis showed that 92.3% of the parents studied were female. This clearly indicates that mothers were more involved with their child and spent more time with them in helping with their child’s education. Mothers tend to have a greater responsibility in helping with their child’s education compared to fathers (7.7%). The majority of the parents were between 31-40 years of age (69.2%). All the parents were from the urban area. Since the school is located in the heart of a town, it enables the parents to send their children to the school located nearby to their home. It was noticed that only one parent was a single parent.

Table 1 presents the socioeconomic status of the parents in this study. As can be seen from Table 1, about 46.2% of the parents in this study had completed their tertiary education. From this percentage, about 30.8% of the parents had completed a course either at certificate or diploma level. A total of 12.8% of the parents had completed their degree and one respondent (2.6%) had completed her postgraduate degree. About 46.2% of the parents had completed secondary education but here was no evidence that they had passed their SPM examinations. Meanwhile, 5.1% of the parents in this study managed to go to secondary school but did not complete their secondary education. Only 2.6% of the parents had not completed primary education.

Table 1: Parent’s Socioeconomic Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socioeconomic Status</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level of education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete primary education</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not complete secondary education</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed secondary education</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate/Diploma holders</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters/PhD</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not working</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working class</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle class</td>
<td>51.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM1000 and below</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM1001 - RM2000</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM2001 – RM3000</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM3001 – RM4000</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM4001 – RM5000</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RM5001 and above</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is apparent from Table 1 that most parents (51.3%) in this study were from the middle class. Generally the middle class parents work in five main fields namely, professionals, technical, administration and clerical, service and business. Only 5.1% of the parents were in the working class. Most of them in this category work as labourers in the nearby factories. Hence, parents with higher level of education especially those who possess certificates, diplomas, first degrees or postgraduate degrees are ensured of a steady job. The other 43.6% of the respondents studied were housewives.

As shown in Table 1, only 5.1% of the parents studied earned a total income of RM1000.00 and below a month. Another 17.9% of the parents earned between RM1001.00-RM2000.00 a month and 15.4% of the parents earned between RM2001.00-RM3000.00 a month. Moreover, 7.7% of the parents earned a total income of between RM3001.00-RM4000.00. In addition, 5.1% of the parents earned between RM4001.00-RM5000.00 a month while another 5.1% of the parents in this study earned a total income of more than RM5000.00 a month. However, 43.6% of the parents in this study had no income since they were housewives.

The results of this study also shows that to a certain extent, the household income of the parent’s studied were also good. As can be seen from Table 1, 30.8% of the parent’s household income was more than RM5000.00 per month. Another 5.1% parent’s household income was between RM4001.00-RM5000.00 and 58.9% of the parent’s household income was RM2001.00-RM4000.00. Only 5.2% of the parent’s household income was RM2000.00 and below. This indicates that their families are financially and economically stable. One of the main reasons is that more than 50.0% of the parent’s studied were from the middle class. The high level of education especially among the middle class provided them more opportunities to work and earn a higher salary. This does not include the income generated by the spouse. In addition, 97.4% of the parents in this study have at least one to two children who are working. Along with this, only one respondent claimed to be a single parent. Hence, the contribution from the spouse and their children adds to their household income, thereby making them even more economically and financially strong.

Despite the importance that had been given to the background of the parents; this study also expands its work to identify the parent’s involvement in their child’s education at home. As can be seen from Table 2, the respondent’s answers were centralized on ‘Daily’ and followed by ‘Few times a week’ scale for every item listed in the category of ‘parental involvement’. This response indicates that in general the parents in this study are absolutely aware of their roles
and responsibilities in their child’s education. This encourages them to be highly involved in their child’s education at home. The awareness of their roles and responsibilities was shown through their actions and behavior in helping their child’s learning patterns at home.

Table 2: Parent’s Involvement in Their Child’s Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Involvement</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion on future planning</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion on school activities</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying academic problems at school</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying academic problems at home</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisting with homework</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying homework</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidance for examination</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Limits</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying learning patterns</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 39

As shown in Table 2, there were ten strategies where parents showed their involvement in their child’s education at home. Most of the parents were involved in their child’s education on a daily basis. More than 80.0% of the parents were likely to identify their child’s homework given by the school every day. About 74.0%-77.0% of the parents discuss their child’s activities in school in order to get an overview of the things done by their children in school, identify problems faced by their child in the learning process at home; and they are also likely to identify academic problems faced by their child at school. Moreover, the parents also take the effort to motivate their child to achieve academic success and they provide time limits for their children for activities such as studying, watching television and other personal activities. About 53.0%-59.0% of the parents are also likely to identify the learning patterns of their child at home. They too help their child with school homework if the child encounters difficulties in completing it. In addition, 38.5% parents are likely to discuss their child’s future with them.

The analysis discussed above and which is based on the quantitative data gathered from the parents through questionnaires is supported by the qualitative data gathered by the researcher from the students through the in-depth interviews. The in-depth interviews with twenty high achievement students who are mostly from the middle class also gives an interesting illustration in explaining parents’ high expectations and their involvement in various strategies.
to help their child in their education. The in-depth interviews illustrate the strength in the parents’ credibility, attitude and behavior in terms of the amount and the quality of involvement in their child’s education to ensure their child’s academic success.

For example, during the in-depth interview, a respondent was questioned about how his parent identifies his homework given by the school. His answer was:

“First, my mother will ask me if I have any homework to be completed at home. Then, she will check my school bag to identify if there is any homework given by school. She does that daily on school days. She also contacts her friend to confirm on this matter, if it is necessary.”

Another respondent was questioned about how his parent manages handle the time limitations that have been given to him at home; which is the effort taken by the parent to provide time limits to her child for studying, watching television and personal activities. According to the respondent:

“My mother is quite strict in setting time limits for these purposes. She sets 3.00-4.30 pm for my personal activities. I can choose either to play or to take a nap during this time. From 4.00-7.00 pm I can watch my favorite programmes on television. Daily at night, one and a half hours (8.00-9.30 pm) is strictly used to complete my homework. If there is no homework given by school or if the homework given has been completed, she will go for some other additional exercises to be done during this time. She is really particular when it comes to academic practice. She will make sure that the task given to me is fully completed.”

It can be said that even if the parents place time limitations on their child, they do monitor the outcome from the time limit given. Furthermore, they try their best to identify their child’s attitude and behavior during the time frame given. Thus, it is apparent that they are knowledgeable and have a clear understanding on how they should be involved in their child’s education.

Another respondent, commenting on her mother’s involvement in identifying problems faced by her child in the learning process at home also proved that the mother is more aware about her child’s attitude and behaviour throughout the learning process which has taken place at home.

“Whenever I do my revision or homework, my mother will be very observant. She knows things well ... she can easily trace my problems from my body language and face expression if I encounter any difficulties with the things that I’m doing at that time ... doesn’t matter if it is revision or homework. She always asks me about my problems and provides the right solutions for that.”
Moreover, another respondent who was asked about her parent’s behavior in identifying the academic problems she faced at school stated:

“My mother always asks me about lessons taught in school. She wants to make sure that I understand the things taught by the teachers. Sometimes she takes the effort to contact my school teachers to discuss certain aspects regarding my conduct in class and the academic problems I encounter in class.”

A comment by another respondent on her mother’s involvement in discussing her activities in school in order to get an overview of the things done by the children in school also confirms the strength of parental involvement. As the respondent said:

“Once I come back from school, she will ask me about things that happened in school. It could be anything ... from the lessons conducted by teachers to activities or programmes held in school. Often, she wants to know whether I could cope with the lessons taught in school. She also wants to know if I am involved in any of those activities or programmes held in school.”

Moreover, another respondent who was asked about her mother’s (who was a teacher) behavior in providing motivation to him stated:

“My mother always motivates me to study hard. She has told me a lot of stories about her past and the struggles of their parents who were poor. She wants me to become a doctor when I grow up. When we go to book shops, she always gets for me books and asks me to practice on that. And, if I do well in my exams, she buys presents for me. I will be a doctor one day.”

In addition, a respondent explained the preparation done by his mother towards examinations in this way:

“My mother buys a lot of books for me to practice. Besides that, she checks on my school work and gives me more practice which is similar to my school work. Once I get my timetable for any of my school exams, she will coach me more on the exams. She will erase all my previous answers in the practices that I had done earlier and then she will ask me to do it again and again.”

Another respondent was questioned about how his parent helps him with school homework if he encountered difficulties in completing it. He stated:

“Sometimes I find that some of the homework given by my teachers is very tough. Usually my mother will help me in this. She sits down with me when I do my homework. She will make sure that all the homework given by the school is completed.”
Thus, it is notable in the current study that every parent wants their child to do well at school. They are involved in their child’s education with their existing knowledge and the understanding about involvement that is accessible at their level. However, their existing knowledge and their understanding of parental involvement solely reflects their background (i.e., socioeconomic status) and its impact on them. Hence, the parents of higher socioeconomic status are more overwhelmed in the credibility, attitude and behavior in terms of the amount and the quality of involvement invested in their children’s education. In short, the higher the parent’s socioeconomic status, the greater the effects on the degree of parental involvement and its effectiveness, which has the capability to enhance their child’s educational success.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of parents’ socioeconomic status on parental involvement in their child’s education at home and to trace the strength of their socioeconomic status and its influence in inspiring the child to achieve academic success. From the sample of students who are high achievers at school, the current study indicates that the parents’ socioeconomic status provides greater strength in the form of knowledge and wealth, thereby enabling the parents to be highly involved in their children’s education at home.

Based on the data analysis, the majority of the parents in this study are from urban areas with a higher socioeconomic status. A large percentage of the parents are from the middle class. The majority of the parents possess a good educational background and they are from the higher income group. These findings are in agreement with Lueptow (1975) who found that the students with high achievement values are from urban areas, who have educated parents with a higher occupation status and a higher household income.

The current study suggests that parents from high socioeconomic status are highly involved in their child’s education at home. The parents are involved in various strategies of involvement at home to foster academic excellence in their child’s education. The results suggest that the parents from this category show high involvement in motivating their child, discussing their future plans, discussing their school activities, identifying academic problems faced by the child at home and at school. The parents also have the interest to identify their child’s homework, identify the child’s learning patterns, assist in the completion of homework and guide them in preparing for examinations. The parents in this category also limit the time for their child’s home activities. Thus, the data obtained from the parents are in agreement with Lueptow (1975); Baker and Stevenson (1986); Katsilis and Rubinson (1990); Ho Sui-Chu and Willms (1996); Shaver and Wall (1998) and Desimone’s (1999) study which support the idea that there is a positive and significant relationship between parents’ socioeconomic status and parents’ involvement in their child’s education.

The question that arises is the extent to which the strength found in the parent’s socioeconomic status influences the child in achieving academic success. The analysis from the
in-depth interviews with the students has revealed some interesting points in parent’s credibility, attitude and behaviour based on the parents’ socioeconomic status in explaining the parents’ involvement in their child’s education, specifically among these high achieving students. For example, it is clear that parents take great efforts to identify their child’s homework given by the school and they go to the extent of looking into their child’s school bags to identify the particular homework. Moreover, they take the trouble to contact their friends to confirm about the home work that needs to be completed. Parents also introduce good strategy on time limitations placed on their child. They monitor the outcome from the time limit given. Furthermore, they try their best to identify their child’s attitude and behavior during the time frame given. Parents also provide more academic activities to their child to utilize the time available upon completion of the home work. In fact, based on their better education level they are better equipped in terms of knowledge and understanding as to how they should be involved in their child’s education during this time limit. Furthermore, the parents are more aware about the academic problems faced by their child at home and at school. They often find out from their child about the lessons taught in school to make sure they have a good understand of what has been taught in school. They also countercheck this with the teachers. In addition, they also get information on their child’s academic and discipline from the school.

The in-depth interview emphasizes the strength in the parent’s involvement especially the parent’s effort in discussing with their child about their child’s activities in school in order to get an overview of the things done by their children in school. In this case, they were keen to find out about the lessons conducted by the teachers in the classroom and the activities held in school. The parents motivate their child to be professionals in future. Their economic and financial strength enable them to get more books and give more rewards upon their child’s achievement in their examinations. Based on their educational background and academic qualifications, the parents guide their child on the home work given by the school if the child encounters difficulties in completing it. The parents also sit together with their child to make sure that all the home work given by school is completed. They also give them further practice and check their work as a preparation for the examinations.

Thus, the higher the level of parent’s socioeconomic status (i.e., their level of education, occupation status, income and household income), the greater the strength of the parental involvement in their child’s education. This is due to their education and economic resources gained from their socioeconomic status which provides for effective involvement in their child’s education. Thus, the parents could provide more help and better quality of involvement in their child’s education. In short, a positive learning attitude and behaviour is created and instilled in the mind of their child to ensure their academic success.

Based on the discussion above, it is clear that the parent’s socioeconomic status has a great influence over the parent’s involvement in their child’s education. In this aspect, the parent’s socioeconomic status provides parents with greater education capital, economic capital and social capital which strengthen parental involvement in their child’s education. It enables their child to receive the skills, knowledge, behavior and values that are needed for their academic success. Hence, children of higher socioeconomic status tend to achieve academic success due
to effective parental involvement. The findings of the current study are consistent with the findings of Lueptow (1975); Baker and Stevenson (1986); Lockheed et al. (1989); Katsilis and Rubinson (1990); Poston and Falbo (1990); Ho Sui-Chu and Willms (1996); Shaver and Wall (1998); Balli et al. (1998) and Desimone’s (1999) study which suggest that a child from a higher socioeconomic status experiences greater parental involvement in their education; and, in a way this enhances their education achievement as a whole.

However, as with many other studies in this area of research, this study has some limitations. The paper only focuses on the relationship between parent’s socioeconomic background and parental involvement among children who are high achievers. It does not take into account the relationship between parent’s socioeconomic background and parental involvement among children who are low achievers. A comparative study on the high achievement students and the low achievement students also needs to be addressed. Apart from that, a study that could explore the relationship between parent’s socioeconomic background and parental involvement needs to focus across ethnic groups in this country. Moreover, the sample of this study was drawn from only one National Type Tamil School in Kedah, Malaysia. It may be difficult to generalize the findings across the country. Thus, further research is recommended within this scope to understand the importance of parent’s socioeconomic background and their parental involvement in strengthening their children’s academic success.

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