

A Review on the Impact of Subjective Social Status and Socioeconomic Status on People

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Abstract. In today's society, the gap between the richer and the poorer social class is becoming more problematic: increase in advantage that wealthier people inherit outclasses endeavors of people from lower classes. Discriminations and prejudice towards people with a relatively poor family background also perpetuate. Therefore, the author believes that socioeconomic status would be a practical, functional topic of investigation. The topic of this paper is the impact of social economic status. The paper will cover several experiments: Impact of subjective social status (SSS) and Socioeconomic Status (SES) on student's academic performance, impact of SES on children's self-perceptions Self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-regulatory capacity, and the impact of SES on one's personality. The results of this study contribute to a further knowledge of the effects involving social economic status and to the development of different educational strategies for different families.

Keywords: Subjective Social Status, Socioeconomic Status, Mental health, Academic performance, Personality.

1. Introduction

Is not it contradictory when ideas——insisting that finance does not play such an important role as expected——emerge? It is definite that many other factors likely played a role in shaping one's personality, but financial background is still an overriding aspect of personality, especially extraversion. In fact, recent research shows a relationship between personality characteristics, academic performance and financial outcomes, showing that finance can shape a person's social behavior.

The socioeconomic status is separated in two parts——Objective socioeconomic status and Subjective socioeconomic status (SSS). This paper will explain the impact of social economic status and subject social economic status. To begin with, defining socioeconomic status is a kernel task——it refers to a person/group's economic ability determined by factors including income, education, occupation, residence, and ethnic origin or religious background. Additionally, the SSS focuses on persons' subjective cognitions of their social class associated with others, containing accounts of a person's human, social, and cultural judgment. It is not an exact account of a person's economic position but rather reflects the person's perception of their social standing [1].

The SES level does affect human well-being, including physical and mental health (MH). People from low SES groups usually have limited resources, which has a negative impact on one's educational achievement, and acceptance of oneself. Also, it will limit their access into infrastructure. Efforts to learn about and reduce socioeconomic disparities among people are beneficial to society [1].

The definition of personality is the unique behavior, thought, and emotion patterns that distinguish one person from others. People have unique personalities. Personality is closely related to biology and psychology, and it is common for one's personality to remain largely consistent throughout life. One's personality can be found in how those around him or her describe his or her traits and behaviors [2].

The hypothesis of the present study is that higher social-economic status or subjective social-economic status will influence people's academic performance, acceptance of oneself, and shape their personality.

2. Impact of SSS and SES on Academic Performance of Children

The first point of this paper is mainly on the impact of SSS and SES on children's academic performance. One of the key aspects of SSS is occupational and educational attainments which influence one's career choices and their future career development. Based on a prior study, it showed that children from families with low SSS levels tended to have relatively low educational attainments and college continuation rates than those of students with high SSS levels. Moreover, the percentage of students with low SSS levels in higher education is considered extremely low. Even if students in the low SSS group receive higher levels of education, believed to mitigate negative effects brought by low SSS, the social class gap between the low and high SSS groups cannot be easily narrowed. In addition, a 2003 Walpole study demonstrated that students with low SES tended to be more likely to drop out of college due to their relatively low grades in college and lack of adaptability to new environments [3].

On the website of the American Psychological Association, a 2009 study by Morgan, Farkas, Hillemeier, and Maczuga demonstrates that children in low-SES homes and communities gain academic competence rather slowly. Specifically, impaired emotional and social processing, cognitive growth, recollection and language which are linked to poor adult health and financial outcomes [4].

National Library of Medicine website has published an experiment about association between SSS status and students' psychological well-being from an Australian University. The study's findings showed a strong negative association between SSS and the perceived effects of loneliness and a lack of belonging on students' mental health. These problems were indicated to have a moderate influence on the psychological health of the students. Additionally, students identified a number of factors that affect their mental health over the previous 6 months for example, a lack of money—implications of low SES/SSS. The testing method of this experiment involving more than 30000 university psychology students, with 27% of them having low SES level, to each answer a questionnaire that assesses their mental health. The study tests the association between SSS and perceived impacting issues. The control variable is satisfaction with the student's university. Satisfaction with university positively influences mental health. Therefore, it is important to control for satisfaction with college when research want to examine the relationship between SSS and mental health. By successful completion of the questionnaire, student will receive extra credit.

However, this experiment does have several limitations. The present results prove that SSS is beneficial for mental health. The first limitation of this experiment is whether these results are objective or not. It is possible that drug use, experience of being a victim of violence during the experimental period, and other external factors may have influenced the mental health of the students. In addition, the imbalance in the male/female ratio may have created a bias since the present sample consists of 83.83% women, there may be somewhat more data on women's mental health problems [5].

There is another experiment that investigates the relationship between SES and Adolescents' Academic Achievement (AA). Longitudinal data were used to observe whether the level of SES in the home affects adolescents' AA. The research also text whether other variables can play a role in this relationship. The experimental subjects were 827 adolescents, ages 11-14, attending public schools in five Chinese cities. The results showed that family socioeconomic status level, including parent's educational background, parent's occupation, and income level, had positive correlations with the child academic performance in specifically two subjects: Chinese language, and math. Low socioeconomic status affects one's achievement in Chinese and math. However, if a person has a high subjective social mobility (SSM), it can act as a protective factor against the effects of low socioeconomic status on students' achievement in Chinese and math. SSM is known as people's beliefs about their abilities to aim for higher SES levels in the future. The role of SSM could be a motivation for teenagers, and especially it is significant for students who are from low SES families [6].

Students from public schools in townships were the convenient sample for this experiment since these schools may have smaller class sizes and fewer educational resources than public schools in

cities. Researchers selected two local schools from Hebei and three local schools from Anhui provinces. There were 1001 participants in the study. However, some students were absent from the examinations, so the final number of participants was less than 1000 [6].

Independent variable is SES level of the family and common variables (parents' education level, employment status and family monthly income) are used to measure it. The dependent variable is students' academic performance. Teachers will deliver the exam results for the teenagers' two primary subjects—Chinese and math—at semester 1 and 2 (about 9 months apart). Based on objective, time-limited exams that followed each school's national curriculum criteria, the academic success scores were measured. For both the Chinese and math term exams, initial maximum scores were 100 for elementary school students and 150 for middle school students. In order to compare Chinese and math success across classes and increase the fairness of the experiment, grade levels for each student's performance in each subject was standardised independently within their courses [6].

3. Impact of SES on Children's Self-perceptions Self-esteem, self-efficacy, Self-regulatory Capacity

The second issue in this is the impact of SES on children's self-perceptions (SP), self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-regulatory capacity. According to the American Psychological Association website, prior studies suggested that low SES affects children's academic development and ultimately leads to negative psychological outcomes. Adverse stress in early childhood has lasting effects on learning, behavior, and health. In addition, a 2009 experiment by Mistry, Benner, Tan, & Kim et al. demonstrated that family economic stress led to emotional distress in students, which in turn affects their academic performance [7].

The National Library of Medicine website has posted about an experiment focusing on national well-being in China. In recent decades, China's economy has been growing rapidly, and the average standard of living of its people has improved significantly. Despite better education, better medical care, and other preferences due to wealth, this has not been accompanied by an increase in the Chinese people's happiness level. This phenomenon is a social phenomenon that can be seen not only in China, but also in Western countries. The Easterlin Paradox is a phenomenon in society which asserts that there is no correlation between a society's economic progress and its general degree of well-being. Through this experiment, it was proven that individuals belonging to relatively lower social classes have lower subjective well-being (SWB) and psychological well-being. The goal of the study is to lessen class disparities in China's (SWB) and psychological well-being. Social mobility is an important way to reduce class differences in subjective well-being and mental health in China [7].

The experiment was conducted in Wuhan, China, where the experimenter distributed a total of 380 questionnaires. The sample for this study consisted of 356 undergraduate students (281 females and 75 males) with an average age of 20.32 years. Firstly, for Subjective Social Class, researchers used MacArthur Scale a testing method. It is known as the developed to capture a general sense of social status based on a socioeconomic status index and to select the tier that best represented participants' subjective social class. Secondly, for Self-Class Discrepancy, researchers asked participants to imagine five significant characteristics of their desired social class and indicate how closely they felt each of them described their current situation. Higher scores indicate a greater discrepancy, while lower scores indicate a smaller one. Thirdly, the Subjective Social Mobility Scale (SSMS), which measures people's perceptions of their likelihood of achieving greater social standing, was utilized by the researchers. Fourthly, for Subjective Well-Being, researchers used the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), with a seven-point scale. Fifthly, to examine individuals' experiences with depression, anxiety, and/or stress symptoms, researchers utilized the short-form of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS21), which is made up of three seven-item subscales [7].

In this experiment, there are several limitations are existing for this study. Firstly, causal relationships between the variables cannot be determined. Secondly, kernel components of self-class

discrepancy affecting SWB and MH are not identified. Thirdly, the reasons behind SSM moderating the relationship between self-class discrepancy and SWE and MH are unknown. Lastly, research samples were only college students, limiting the generalizability of the study which requires a broader range of participants. [7]

There is another experiment which explained impact of SES on children and adults' self-perceptions and Self-esteem. In the study published by University of Chicago Press demonstrates that social class and self-esteem reveal a paradoxical relationship., sometimes shows positive correlation, sometimes invalid, and sometimes inverse. The University of Chicago Press study determined two groups, one of children aged 8 to 18 and the other of adults aged 18 to 65 and detected the association between SES and self-esteem in each group. Results indicated that there was virtually no association for younger children, a less association for teenagers, and a moderate association for adults [8].

Independent variable for this experiment is social class, and dependent variables are one's self esteem level. In this experiment, researchers also changed age range in order to collect data from various people, from young teenagers aged 8 to 18 and adults aged 18 to 65. For measuring teenagers self-esteem level, researchers collected data from the school. In the school pupil study, the measurements for self-esteem is 6-item Guttman scale. The participants in this experiment were Baltimore City public school children. The researchers selected 2625 students from a total of 25 schools, ranging from third through twelfth grades, and divided them into proportions of nonwhite and median income of census tracts. two groups. The results were obtained by interviewing 1,917 students through a randomization procedure [8].

4. Impact of SSS on People's Personality

There is a study which have shown the correlation between one's SSS level and their personalities. The study between social status and personality traits by Netspar directly prove the effect of social status on personality. The research directly uses survey data to test the relation. With SSS as the independent variable and all Big Five personalities as dependent variable, the source shows that SSS is positively associated with the Big Five traits [9].

Another study published by national institute of the health proven that low SES level will have negative relationship to one's personality. Researchers utilized multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to measure the participant's education, family income, and parents' and mothers' educational backgrounds all exhibited significant main impacts on personality when modeling Big five personalities. Depending on whether the education of the mother or the father was used to index childhood SES, various patterns appeared for each area when the life course—a mix of present and childhood SES—was examine. High life course SES (high participant's SES/high mother's education) was connected to high extraversion and openness. Using the father's education as a measure of childhood SES, low life course SES (low participant's SES/low father's education) was associated with disproportionately high neuroticism and low conscientiousness. Race or gender had no impact on these results. There are some corresponding restrictions. For instance, the study's design resulted in the low SES group's members being generally healthy, which means that the experiment probably missed those who had to deal with the negative effects of living in a low SES environment [10].

5. Conclusion

Overall, the investigations show that Subjective Social-economic Status positively correlates with people's personality, self-perceptions Self-esteem, self-efficacy, self-regulatory capacity, and children's academic performance. In other words, the change in socioeconomic status leads to a change in some traits and performances. The results of the studies possibly imply that even though one's actual socioeconomic status is not that high if their subjective socioeconomic status level is high, people will perform well in their academic performance and better accept themselves. Also, a person will tend to have an extrovert personality. By learning about the influence of SES/SSS on people,

people can understand that their perceptions of themselves, which are likely to be seen as less effective, and can most likely positively improve their well-being. However, current investigations have different limitations ranging from objectivity, generalizability, etc. Therefore, there is still room for further development.

For the experiment impact of SSS and SES on children's academic performance, in this paper, there are two limitations. It is possible that other external factors may have affected the mental health of the students. In addition, the imbalance in the male/female ratio may have created a bias. Therefore, there are areas for improvement such as increase diversity of participants, make the answer more objective.

Furthermore, it is hard to establish a causal connection between the variables. Second, the fundamental causes of the self-class discrepancy that affects SWB and mental health are not known. Third, there is no explanation for why subjective social mobility moderates the association between self-class disparity, SWE, and mental health. The research samples, which were limited to college students, prevented the study from being generalized, which calls for a wider variety of participants.

Lastly, the impact of SES/SSS on people's personality has a limited range of participants. As mentioned, the experiment invites participants with different levels of SES/SSS. For the groups who have very low levels of SES/SSS, they were mostly healthy. This disregards the impacts of low SES/SSS on people, decreasing the scope and accuracy of the experiment in which not all impacts of SES/SSS are observed.

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