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**The Disadvantaged: Parental Involvement at Home and Low School Performance**

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**Abstract**

The current study explores 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 was identified as low achievement students, based on the previous final year school examination results. A questionnaire was used by the researcher to obtain quantitative data from the students' parent; related to the parent's socio-economic background and their involvement strategies in their children's education at home. 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 indicated that most parents from the low socioeconomic background claimed that they showed high involvement in most of the involvement strategies at home to ensure their child's education success. However, the education level, employment status, and income among the the parents fom the lower socioeconomic background affect their understanding and their knowledge on the actual values that need to be placed on their child's education. As a result, there is a lack among these children in terms of good skills, behaviour and values which are extremely important for their academic success.

**Keywords:** Parental involvement, socioeconomic, education, National Type Tamil School

**Introduction**

In general, many studies have placed importance on the issue of parental involvement in their child's education. Parental involvement is believed to affect a child's ability to perform well at school. Many studies done on parental involvement also support this argument. To date, a number of studies have justified that a parent's socioeconomic status impose a great influence on their strategies of involvement in their child's education at home and at school. It is well established that parents from a higher socioeconomic level show greater involvement in their children's education than the parents from a lower socioeconomic level. With regards to the

parent's socioeconomic status, the failure of a child from the working class family is basically caused by the poverty and the low education level of their parents (Krieken, et al., 2000; Marsh, 2000; Eitzen & Zinn, 2001). Furthermore, besides the low level of values and beliefs placed by the working class parents on education, the family also seems to be lacking in important academic resources (Marsh, 2000) which leads to their child's academic failure (Marsh, 2000; Fulcher & Scott, 2007).

In contrast, a child of middle class parents has a stronger economic background besides the ability to acquire skills and knowledge from

home (Haralambos & Holborn, 1990). Thus, a child of parents from a higher socioeconomic background gain more education opportunities and academic success (Bowles & Gintis: 1976). In short, a child who comes from lower socioeconomic background lack in his/her ability to acquire the skills, knowledge, behaviour and values which are the crucial determinants of his/her academic success.

In the context of Malaysia, many studies have focused on education. However, very little attention has been given to the issue of parental involvement in education; especially among the minorities. To date, studies on minority groups, especially the Indians is very limited and as such, the education of the Indian ethnic group needs to be explored as well. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of parent's socioeconomic status on parental involvement in their child's education at home among the children who have low school performance. By doing this, the present study also attempts to trace parent's socioeconomic status and its effects on Indian parents who have enrolled their children in National Type Tamil Schools in Kedah, Malaysia. 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 fail at school.

### **Literature Review**

The relationship between parent's socioeconomic status and parental involvement has been well established in many studies that have been carried out on this topic. One general finding is that the higher the parent's socioeconomic status, the higher would be the parental involvement and the stronger would be the children educational achievement. Hence, the greater the parent's education level, occupation status, income and household income, the higher the educational attainment of their child.

In the last three decades, many studies have focused on the issue of parental involvement at home. Some researchers subscribe parent's social class to understanding parental involvement. Others trace the parent's

socioeconomic status to understand parental involvement in their child's education. For example, Lareau's (1987) study on parental involvement in two first grade classrooms in two different communities established the relationship between parent's social class and parental involvement. Her study on a white working class community and a professional middle-class community found that parents' social class has a significant positive influence on their child's education. According to Lareau, working class parents encounter some negative effects in helping their child due to the lack of skills, the occupation status, income and time. Furthermore, her study also reported that working class parents were not clear about their child's school curriculum. Sewell & Hauser (1980) in their study pointed out that working class students failed to have high aspirations in education which was caused by the absence of motivation from their parents due to poor financial resources. Based on a study conducted by Reay (2004), mothers from the middle class seem to have a good educational background and this enables them to inculcate academic values in their child, thereby promoting self-confidence and participation. The academic values in the form of self-confidence and participation received by the child are transformed into a more positive attitude and behaviour of learning. The more the self-confidence and participation gained by the child, the better the formation of their attitude and behaviour for learning towards educational success.

A number of studies have indicated a significant positive relationship between parents' socioeconomic status and their involvement in their child's education. Katsilis & Rubinson's (1990) study on 395 public high schools' seniors found that the parent's socioeconomic status influences the educational success of their child at school to a greater extent. Consistent with Katsilis & Rubinson's study, Ho Sui-Chu & Willms's (1996) study on eighth grade students, their parents and teachers at public and private school in United States indicated that although a significant and positive relationship has been established between parent's socioeconomic status and their involvement in their child's education but

it was not strong. However, it was quite clear that parent's from a lower socioeconomic status impose lower parental involvement in their child's education. Based on a study conducted by Lueptow (1975) on high school seniors in twenty Wisconsin public high schools, he 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.

Shaver & Wall's (1998) study that investigated the impact of parental involvement on reading and mathematics achievements of eighth grade students found that the children from the higher socioeconomic families achieved academic success in reading and mathematics due to effective parental involvement. Desimone (1999) conducted a study on eighth grade students to examine the effects of the students' socioeconomic status on parental involvement. The findings of the study indicated that the students' socioeconomic status influence parental involvement and the students' achievement. The higher the parent's socioeconomic status in terms of family income, the more would be the parental involvement. As a result, the students achieve high scores in mathematics and reading.

Moreover, parent's education level is also reported to be an important indicator for parental involvement. The higher the standard of the parents' education level, the higher would be the academic aspirations for their child (Lockheed, et al., 1989). For example, Balli, et al., (1998) in their study on 74 sixth-grade students found that parents with low levels of education encounter difficulties in helping their child with homework and they need the help from schools to help their children. On the other hand, Baker & Stevenson (1986) who interviewed 41 mothers of eighth-graders from middle school have noted that well-educated mothers have more knowledge of their child's schooling than the less educated ones and they are more aware of their child's education and his/her achievement. In addition, they take a greater effort to monitor their child's progress in education. Along with these studies, Poston & Falbo's study (1990) also found that parents who are highly educated often communicate and interact with their

children. 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 obtains high scores in Mathematics. In addition, Malik Muhammad Sohail, et al. (2012) in their study also indicated that parents' education and occupation strongly influence students' learning in classroom. Their study shows positive relation between parents' education and occupation, and students' learning.

Thus, the literature review above justifies that the parent's social class and the socioeconomic status (i.e., education level, occupation status, income and household income) has a great influence on parental involvement in their child's education. The parental involvement of the parents from the lower socioeconomic status and the higher socioeconomic status vary in the degree of involvement and its effectiveness in enhancing the educational success of the child. It can be said here that the higher the parent's education level, the greater the opportunities gained by the child to develop motivation and educational aspirations that enable him/her to be involved in various educational activities (Sewell & Hauser, 1980; Tudge, et al., 2006) which could ensure their academic success.

## **Methodology**

### **Sample**

Forty Indian students were selected from one of the best performance-based National Type Tamil Schools in the state of Kedah, Malaysia through 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), all of whom were identified as low achievement students (the last ten students by ranking in classroom) 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 the forty low achievement Indian students who were chosen earlier based on purposive sampling were also selected randomly to be interviewed.

### **Instrument**

A questionnaire was used by the researcher to obtain quantitative data from the selected parents. The questions were adapted from Walker, et al., (2005). However, the researcher has modified the structure of the questions according to the objective of the current study and made some changes in its response format. In this study, the questionnaire was divided into six parts, namely, *parent's background*; *parental involvement at home*; *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, that is, *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 section which measured the parental involvement showed by the parents at home.

Besides the questionnaire which was used to collect information from parents, in-depth interviews were conducted with twenty students (five students each from Year Two, Year Three, Year Four and Year Five). This was done to gather concrete information on the amount and the quality of their parent's involvement in their education at home and will serve as supportive documentation to evaluate the degree of involvement and its effectiveness as stated by the parents earlier in the questionnaire.

### **Method**

All the respondents in this study were informed about the nature of this study. Of the forty respondents, only thirty-three respondents agreed to participate in this study. The questionnaires were sent to the parents who had been chosen as respondents. It contained questions on the parent's background and the parental involvement in their child's education so that the researcher could obtain quantitative data from the respondents. For each question, the respondents were asked to pick one of the following five responses: 'Daily', 'Few times a week', 'Few times a month', 'Once every few months' or 'Never' for each strategy regarding their involvement in their child's education. Each respondent who was engaged in the study was informed that all the information provided would be kept confidential.

All the information gathered 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 internally consistent. The Cronbach's alpha measure was 0.9 which indicates that the measure of these items was reliable.

In addition, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews to obtain qualitative data from the selected twenty students. The students were asked about the strategies and the level of involvement shown by their parents 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 interviews with the students was cross checked with the information provided by the parents in the questionnaire submitted earlier to the researcher.

### **Research Findings**

The results of the current study on parental involvement at home among the low achievement students are discussed based on two main aspects. First, the discussion is based on the quantitative data which covers the parent's background, with particular emphasis on the socioeconomic status and the parental involvement strategies. Secondly, 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 interviews with the students.

The findings of the study show that 57.6% of the parents studied were female. This justifies that mothers are more involved with their child and spend more time with them in helping with their child’s education. Mothers tend to have a huge responsibility in helping with their child’s

education compared to fathers (42.4%). The majority of the parents were aged between 31-40 years (60.6%). About 84.8% of the parents were from the urban area. Only 15.2% of the parents came from the rural area. Since the school was located in the heart of the town, it was possible for the parents to send their children to the school located nearby to their home. It was observed that 45.5% of the parents were single parents; with either one of the parents deceased, divorced or separated.

**Table 1:** Parent’s Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic Status		Percentage (%)
Level of education	No formal education	6.1
	Did not complete primary education	15.2
	Completed primary education	21.2
	Did not complete secondary education	27.3
	Completed secondary education	24.2
	Certificate/Diploma holders	6.1
Occupation	Not working	36.4
	Working-class	57.6
	Middle-class	6.1
Income	None	36.4
	RM1000 and below	54.5
	RM1001 - RM2000	9.1
Household income	RM1000 and below	24.2
	RM1001 - RM2000	39.4
	RM2001 – RM3000	33.3
	RM3001 – RM4000	3.0

n = 33 respondents

Table 1 presents the socioeconomic status of the parents in this study. The education background of the parents is quite unsatisfactory. As can be seen from Table 1, 6.1% of the parents had never been to school, 15.2% of the parents had not completed primary education while 21.2% of the parents had only completed primary education. Meanwhile, 27.3% of the parents in this study managed to go to secondary school but did not complete their secondary education. About 24.2% of the parents had completed secondary education but here was no evidence that they had passed their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (a

public examination that all students in Form Five have to sit for). Only 6.1% of the parents in this study had completed their tertiary education. Most of them in this category had only completed either a certificate or diploma course. Thus, more than 90.0% of the parents in this study have no professional qualifications.

In terms of occupation, most parents (57.6%) in this study were in the working class. Generally the parents work as labourers in the nearby factories. Only 6.1% of the parents are in the middle-class and they work in four main fields, namely, technical, administration and clerical,

service and business. Parents with higher level of education, especially those who possess a certificate, diploma or first degree, are more likely to have a stable job. The other 36.4% of the respondents in the study were housewives, some of whom possess a certificate or a diploma. As shown in Table 1, 54.5% of the parents studied earned a total income of RM1000.00 and below a month. Another 9.1% of the parents earned between RM1001.00-RM2000.00 a month. However, none of the parents earn more than RM2000.00 a month. In addition, 36.4% parents in this study had no income since they were housewives.

The findings of this study also show that the household income of the parents studied is not high. As shown in Table 1, 24.2% of the parent’s household income was RM1000.00 and below. On the other hand, 39.4% of the parent’s household income was between RM1001.00-RM2000.00. The other 33.3% of the parent’s household income was between RM2001.00-RM3000.00 while only 3.0% of the parent’s household income was between RM3001.00-RM4000.00. It is apparent from Table 1 that almost 63.6% of the parent’s household income is RM2000.00 and below. This justifies that their family faced financial constraints in the form of economic capital. One of the main reasons is that 94.0% of the respondents studied were labourers and housewives. The low level of education

especially among those who worked as labourers prevented them from working in jobs that paid a higher salary. In addition, those who were housewives were dependent on their husband’s income and the income generated by their children. Furthermore, 60.0% of the respondents were between 31-40 years of age where those categorized in this age group tend to have more children who are still schooling. Hence, the financial contributions from the spouse and the children do not have much impact on their household income. Along with this, the status of 45.5% of single parents and their struggles in generating income for their family also need to be considered here.

Besides the importance 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 centred on ‘Daily’ and ‘Few times a week’ scale for every item listed in the category of ‘parental involvement’. This response indicated that in general, the parents in this study are aware of their role and responsibilities in their child’s education. This encourages them to be highly involved in their child’s education at home. This awareness about their role and responsibilities was shown through their actions and behaviour in helping with their child’s learning patterns at home.

**Table 2:** Parental Involvement in Their Child’s Education

Parental Involvement	Percentage (%)				
	Never	Once in few months	Few times a month	Few times a week	Daily
Discussion on future planning	3.0	30.3	15.2	27.3	24.2
Discussion on school activities	15.2	15.2	3.0	42.4	24.2
Identifying academic problems at school	12.1	12.1	6.1	36.4	33.3
Identifying academic problems at home	12.1	12.1	0.0	24.2	51.5
Assisting with homework	24.2	3.0	0.0	36.4	36.4
Identifying homework	21.2	3.0	9.1	27.3	39.4
Guidance for examination	21.2	3.0	18.2	30.3	27.3
Motivation	9.1	15.2	6.1	33.3	36.4
Time Limits	15.2	12.1	6.1	33.3	33.3
Identifying learning patterns	21.2	6.1	9.1	24.2	39.4

n = 33 respondents

By coding the 'Daily' and 'Few times a week' scale into 'high parental involvement', this study indicated that the parents are highly involved in their child's education at home in all ten strategies. A total of 75.7% of the parents show high involvement in identifying academic problems faced by his or her child in the learning process at home. Meanwhile, 72.8% of the parents also help their child with school homework if the child encounters difficulty in completing it. They help the child to complete all the homework assigned by the school. In addition, 69.7% of the parents show high involvement in motivating their child to achieve academic success. About 69.7% of the parents identify the academic problems faced by their child in school. Many parents meet their child's class teachers regularly and they obtain feedback from the teachers and discuss the problems faced by their child in their education.

As shown in Table 2, about 66.7% of the parents identify their child's homework given by the school. About 66.6% 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. Parents gathered information about the activities organized by the school from their children. Moreover, 66.6% of the parents provide time limits for their children for activities including studying, watching television and other personal activities. In addition, 63.6% of the parents also identify the learning patterns of their child at home. About 57.6% of the parents show high involvement in guiding their children in their preparation for school examinations. Finally, a total of 51.5% of the parents also discuss their child's future with them.

Based on the results discussed above, although the quantitative data gathered from the parents through questionnaires indicated that parents do show high involvement in their child's education, the qualitative data gathered from the students through in-depth interviews gives another interesting picture in the explanation on the parental involvement process. The in-depth interviews with twenty low achievement students also revealed that parents do show high involvement in various strategies to help

their child in their education. This provides us with a clear illustration that parents have high expectations of their children and they want them to succeed in education. However, the strength of the parent's credibility, attitude and behaviour in terms of the amount and quality of involvement instilled in their child's education need to be thoroughly examined and understood, especially of those parents in this study who were mainly from the lower socioeconomic status group.

For example, during the in-depth interview, a respondent was questioned about how his parent manages the time limitations that have been given to him at home; which is the effort taken by the parent to provide time limits to his/her child for studying, watching television and personal activities. According to the respondent:

*"My mother gives me a time limit daily for learning, homework completion and for watching television. Usually, I will try to complete my homework but there are times that I forget my homework. I will do my homework within the time frame given by my mother or earlier than that. Only then I can spend more time watching television or to play. She won't scold me as long as I inform her that I've completed my homework given at school. Sometimes I don't really complete my homework. She hardly checks my work. But if she checks, then I'm in trouble"*

It can be said that even if the parents set time limits for their child, they do not monitor the outcomes from the time limit given. Furthermore, they failed to identify their child's attitude and behaviour during the time frame given. Thus, they seem to have limited knowledge and understanding about parental involvement.

A comment by another respondent on her mother's involvement in her homework also reveals this lack of knowledge and understanding in guiding the children with their homework. As the respondent said:



*“My mother often helps me with my homework. Although she doesn't sit beside me to coach me since she prefers to do her own activities at home but she is always there when I need her help to complete my homework. She encourages me to study hard since she did not complete her secondary school. In completion of my homework, she finds difficulty in helping with my homework especially in Malay language, English language and Science. She often asks me to refer to my teacher if I don't understand any questions regarding my homework or subject matters.”*

Yet another respondent, who was asked about her parent's behavior in identifying homework given by school stated:

*“My father will ask me whether I have any homework given by the school for the day. He will ask me to complete my homework if there is any to be done. He never checks on it.”*

In addition, a respondent whose mother was a school dropout explained the preparations done by his mother towards examinations in this way:

*“My mother is very concerned about my examinations. She helps me daily in my school work. She sets an hour daily for this purpose. Often, she asks me to refer to the answer at the back of the revision book once I complete the practices on certain parts or chapters.”*

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 background, that is, their socio-economic status, reflects their existing knowledge and their understanding of parental involvement and its impact on them. Hence, the credibility, attitude and behaviour of parents who are socioeconomically disadvantaged have an impact on the amount and quality of involvement in their children's education. In short, the degree of parental involvement and its effectiveness on a child's educational

achievement is greatly influenced by the parent's lower socioeconomic status, and this in turn has the capacity to diminish their child's educational success.

### **Discussion**

In general, many studies on parental involvement address the issue of why some children do better in school than others. These studies had identified the parent's socio-economic background and their social class as the predisposing factor to their child's educational success at school. To date, many studies have proven that parents from a higher socioeconomic level or social class show a higher degree of involvement in their children's education. Thus, the parent's involvement in various strategies in their child's education enables the children to perform well at school. However, most of the studies on the relationship between parental involvement and academic success are in favor of students from middle-class families, whose school performance is much better. In contrast, many researchers have failed to focus on parental involvement among disadvantaged students.

Thus, the current study focuses on the issue of why some students fail in school. The study is intended to highlight the impact of parent's socioeconomic status and their involvement in their child's education among the low-performing students. Based on the data analysis, the majority of the parents in this study are from the urban area, but with a low socioeconomic status. Only a small percentage of the parents are from the middle class. The majority of the parents are not highly educated and they are from the low income group. These findings support the previous research of Lueptow (1975) who found that the students with low achievement values come from families who are less educated, have lower income and who have lower occupation status.

However, the current study shows that parents from low socioeconomic status seem to be highly involved in their child's education at home and show a high degree of parental 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 display an interest in identifying their child's homework, identifying the child's learning patterns, assisting in the completion of the homework and guiding them in their preparations for examinations. The parents in this category also set time limits for their child's home activities. Thus, the data obtained from the parents seems not to be in agreement with Lueptow (1975), Baker & Stevenson (1986), Katsilis & Rubinson (1990), Ho Sui-Chu & Willms (1996), Shaver & Wall (1998) and Desimone's (1999) study which supports the idea that there is a positive and significant relationship between parent's socioeconomic status and parent's involvement in their child's education.

Perhaps, one important point needs to be noted here. The information gathered from the parents through the questionnaire lacked detail on the practices that parents had placed in each strategy of involvement. Although these parents with a lower level of education claimed to be involved in various strategies of involvement at home to foster academic excellence in their child's education, they may not be successful in utilising the strategies effectively. Hence, the strength of their involvement asserted in their children's education then is questionable. This is an important issue because any parent could obviously state that they are highly involved in their child's education but a parent's credibility, attitude and behaviour towards the involvement may vary and need to be considered too. In other words, the amount and quality of help that is offered by the parents in this study vary in terms of degree of involvement and effectiveness. Thus, this study points out the importance of understanding and evaluating the strength of involvement of the parents in their child's education at home. In-depth interviews with the students have revealed some weaknesses on the part of the parent's credibility, attitude and behaviour in explaining their involvement in their child's education, specifically among low-performance students.

The analysis from the in-depth interviews indicates that the students do not deny the involvement shown by their parents at home but the way they are involved in their child's education needs to be clarified as well. For

example, it is clear that parents set time limits for their child's activities, including for studying, watching television and other personal activities. However, they fail to monitor their child's activities within the time limit given. Some of them are not aware that the time limit given is being misused by their child. There are cases where the children did not complete their homework within the time frame given. Also, they try to manage their homework earlier so that they could play or enjoy watching television. Most of the parents also seem to help their child with their homework but the parents do not guide them throughout the session. The parents do face difficulties in helping with their child's homework due to their own educational background. Furthermore, the parents also identified homework given by the school by asking their child if there is any homework but they do not go to the extent of looking into their child's school bag to identify the particular homework. Since their education level is low, they are unable to guide their child in preparing for examinations, unlike the parents with a higher education level.

Thus, the low socioeconomic status of the parent's (i.e., their level of education, occupation status, monthly income and household income) affects the strength of the parental involvement emphasized in their child's education. These parents are lacking in terms of education and economic resources to provide effective involvement in their child's education. In addition, they fail to instil a positive learning attitude and behaviour in their children as a result of the lack in the amount of help and the quality of involvement in their child's education.

In general, it can be said that the cultural environment of a child provides the child with various educational opportunities (Krieken, et al., 2000). However, the deprivation experienced by a family due to poverty limits the parents from channeling education-related activities and cultural activities to their child (Marsh, 2000). Even though all the parents want their child to succeed in education, the socioeconomic status and cultural environment between the parents and the strategies used by them are different. Hence, parents from the

lower socioeconomic class do not view education as it is viewed by the parents from a higher socioeconomic status.

The same holds true in the case of the current study. The parent's socioeconomic status in this study has a great influence over their involvement in their child's education. In this aspect, poverty among the poor affects the strength of parental involvement in their child's education. It limits the parents from meeting educational demands and providing educational resources that are essential for a child to ensure his/her academic success. It disables the child from receiving the skills, knowledge, behaviour and values that are needed for their academic success. Hence, children from the low socioeconomic status do not achieve academic success due to ineffective parental involvement. In line with this, the findings of the current study are consistent with the findings of Lueptow (1975), Baker & Stevenson (1986), Lockheed, et al. (1989), Katsilis & Rubinson (1990), Poston & Falbo (1990), Ho Sui-Chu & Willms (1996), Shaver & Wall (1998), Balli, et al. (1998) and Desimone's (1999) study which suggest that a child from the low socioeconomic status experience lower parental involvement in their education; and, in a way, this affects their educational achievement.

However, this paper has its limitations. The paper only focuses on the relationship between parent's socioeconomic background and parental involvement among children with low performance. It does not take into account the relationship between parent's socioeconomic background and parental involvement among children with higher performance. Thus, future research should address this issue. A comparative study on these two groups of students (based by their performance) also needs to be addressed. Apart from that, a study exploring the relationship between parent's socioeconomic background and parental involvement and which cuts across ethnic groups in this country should be undertaken. 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 parental involvement in strengthening their children's educational success.

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