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The Mediating Effects Of Contextual And Socioeconomic Factors On Students' Reading Autonomy-A Linguistic Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The plan of this study is to investigate if the students with high parental socioeconomic statusas well as some other contextual scenarios, possess better reading comprehension skills than those having low parental socioeconomic status. Students' parental socioeconomic status and their environment's relationship with their reading and comprehension skills, in selected higher secondary schools within Lahore city, was investigated. Schools were divided into 3 main categories: Government, Semi-Government and Private. Samples were collected by 100 students, randomly selected. The three factors which were examined statically were listed below:

1. Socioeconomics background of parents
2. Educational background of parents and thirdly the level of their education
3. Students' reading comprehension skills

Questionnaire was filled by students and their reading skills were judged through making them read a paragraph. Marking was given on the base of their fluency, punctuation, intonation and accuracy to establish statistically significant data, to see the effect of their socioeconomic status on reading. Parental socioeconomic status has quite significant and their educational background has less important impact on student's reading skill. Parental educational qualifications influence their reading and comprehension skills greatly.

INTRODUCTION

The first educational institute of a child is his parental and home environment. Parental socioeconomic status has a substantial effect on a child's academic performance. A child of a labor and a child of educated parents, having a respectable designation in society, would be having different academic achievements. Children's home environment and their parental socioeconomic status definitely affect their reading skill and attitude towards studies. In the light of this ongoing discussion, it is evident that the factors included in home environment e.g. parent's qualification, their occupation, family size and life style possibly influence children's reading skill. Pakistan, like other "third world countries" is facing economic instability which immensely effect student's educational status especially reading skills(Lynd, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

This research investigates the influence of SES of children on their reading and comprehension skills at the Matriculation level

Research Objectives

The objectives of study are to:

a) find the impact of SES of parents on the reading abilities of student
b) examine the effect of educational qualification and social status of the parents, on the reading and comprehension skills.
c) explore the relationship between students' status and their reading skills.
d) assess the impact of parents' occupations, income, level of education and home environment on students' reading achievements in secondary schools.
e) scrutinise pupils' reading skills to identify problems and discover the main factors that influence pupils' reading achievements and results, and estimate the increase in results and achievements so that the chance of improvement in reading skills may be improved.

Research Questions

a) How does parents' occupation, income, level of education and home environment affect students' academic achievement in secondary schools?
b) To what extent does parental involvement in education of their children enhance academic achievement?

Significance of the Study

- This study can be a contribution to the body of research on the educational and societal barriers experienced by students from low- SES background.
- The academic achievement and psychological well-being of students can be enhanced positively by the present study.
- This study can be helpful to establish practice opportunities in community settings where students have access to diverse social class populations.
- explore and work to eliminate socioeconomic disparities in Pakistani context.

This research may help to explore some important factors responsible for unsatisfactory reading and comprehension skills of students at Matriculation level. By indicating them, through this research, the sole purpose is to assist the authorities to bridge the gap of academic performance of high and low income earners' children in the society. This study may provide guidance to the classroom teachers to deal with the students of various socioeconomic backgrounds and help them to adopt such strategies which could improve their reading and comprehension skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Morgan, Farkas, Hillemier,andMaczuga, (2009) analyzed that children belong to low socioeconomic status communities acquire academicskills slowly in comparison to children with high socioeconomic status. In this regard, Rothestein (2004)has argued, parents belong to different professions and classes have their own individual style to nurture their children, teaching them discipline and reacting to them. Due to these varieties, children do not exhibit themselves systematically; rather for various professional classes, they effect the usual inclination of families.

There are many contributing factors to find individual differences in the reading ability of Secondary school students. For maximizing the scope of reading strategies, one should learn about the interaction of SES and cognitive abilities of the learners. The correlation of social and cognitive domains has been presented the understanding of reading skill and the connection between these two aspects, thesocioeconomics background of a student and reading achievement.

In this context, Raz & Bryant, 1990; Rashotte, Torgesen, Wagner, & Hecht (2000) generated a hypothesis by emphasizing on these significant factors these are not independent from the relevant experience of the learner which may directly effect on the different other studies relating this domain of cognitive aspects and reading achievements. These are strongly coupled with SES of the students. The effects of these studies are naturally very considerable, for example, Gottfried (2003) observed that in childhood IQ, SES was responsible approximately 20% of the variance.

Hill and Taylor (2004) have asserted the academic performance of a student, does not show any sign of socioeconomic status of his parents. In fact, his point of view leads the way for encouraging the student with low SES to be competitive with other SES atmosphere and with the children of high economic background.

According to Ramey (2004) differences in SES are very much related with linguistic variation outcomes. These students get admission in kindergarten, but as for as cognitive and verbal skills are concerned, these are substantially different from their more rich and advantaged class fellows. This phenomenon shows some discrepancies which predict some special outcomes in the form of academic failure or success. By keeping in view these observations, Neville and Pakulak (2010) demonstrated the concluding impact of different multiple environmental factors on the life period.

Ghani (2003) also worked on the effect of SES on EFL learning in Pakistani context. In this regard, she searched in three ways the learner linguistic proficiency level, by using a method, the language proficiency of the learners: by administering a past test of Cambridge First Certificate exam (2015), already conducted in the past (1995)named CFC(Cambridge first certificate) exam.On these tracks especially reading skills, Brooks-Gunn and Smith, (1997), also investigated this SES and EFL learning relation from the scores in the intermediate annual examination in English with areas covering grammar, translation and composition. They presented results by calculating SES effects on reading skills of students.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

Research Locale

This research was conducted on Government, Semi-Government schools of Lahore Cantonment and a private school of New Garden Town.

The Respondents

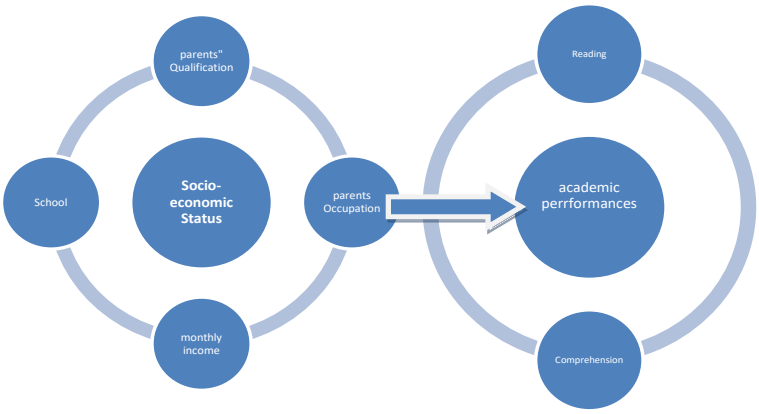
Data was collected 100 students through questionnaires filled by students of Matriculation level in their classrooms.

Research Design

This is a quantitative research design. In this experimental research the parental socioeconomic status, qualification, residence, occupation and family size(independent variables) were monitored, and students' comprehension and reading skills (dependent variables) were measured. The pilot study was conducted, where a pre-test and a post-test were managed, it was same.A questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection.

Theoretical Framework

Independent variable dependent variable



Research Instrument

Questionnaire with close ended questions was used as the research instrument to determine the effect of student's parental socioeconomic status on their reading comprehension skills. The questionnaire was divided into two portions i.e. student's parental socioeconomic status, qualification, residence, occupation and family size. The other part was based on their own reading and comprehension skill.

Data Gathering

Data was collected through following steps;

1. The researcher got permission for data collection then submitted to the school administration to perform the research.
2. Questionnaire was filled by respondents and their reading skill was judged through their accuracy, punctuation, intonation and fluency.
3. Questionnaires were recovered by the answerers.

Procedure

For the above mentioned purpose, schools were divided into three main categories on the basis of their socioeconomic status i.e.

1. Government,
2. Semi- Government
3. Private.

Government schools come under the category of low socioeconomic status whereas semi-Government and private schools were regarded as high socioeconomic status level. Permission was granted by relevant schools administrative bodies of Lahore Cantonment to execute the research and got the questionnaires filled by the students of Matriculation.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data was analyzed by using descriptive analysis comprises of mean, median, mode, standard deviation and variance. Pie charts were made and correlations were also used to analyze the data and for the interpretation of the results. The reliability of our results was also analyzed.

Demographic Data

According to demographic data male respondents were 39 and 41 were female. Age was divided into four groups i.e. 8-13 years, 14-17 years, 18- 23 years and others. The students under the age of 8-13 were only one, the students under the age of 14-17 years were seventy seven, and the students under the age of 18-23 were only two whereas no one belonged to others.

Graphical Presentation

1. Which gender you belong?
2. Which age do you belong?
3. Where is your residence?
4. Which city you belong
5. Which category does your school belong? .
6. What is your father qualification?
7. What is your mother's qualification?
8. What is your mothers occupation
9. What is your parent's monthly income?
10. Who teaches you at home?
11. How many members are in your family?
12. What kind of personality do you have?

	Sex		age			Others
	Male	Female	8-13	14-17	18-23	24 above
Frequency	39	41	1	77	2	None

percentage	48.75%	51.25%	1.25%	96.25%	2.5%	-

Results of the Analyzed Data

According to the data collected, parental socioeconomic status, educational background and qualification have an important effect on student's reading and comprehension skill. Results of the analyzed data collected, are as following:

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Statistics

	What is your Gender ?	Circle your age group ?	Which City do you belong to ?	Where is your residence ?	Which category does your school belong ?
N Valid	80	80	80	80	80
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	1.5125	2.0750	1.4125	2.3875	1.9375
Median	2.0000	2.0000	1.0000	2.5000	2.0000
Mode	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	2.00
Std. Deviation	.50300	.34769	1.00245	1.37329	.73508
Variance	.253	.121	1.005	1.886	.540
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	3.00

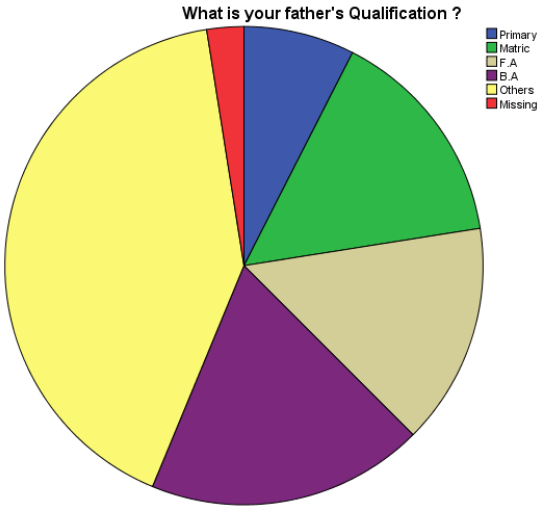
Statistics

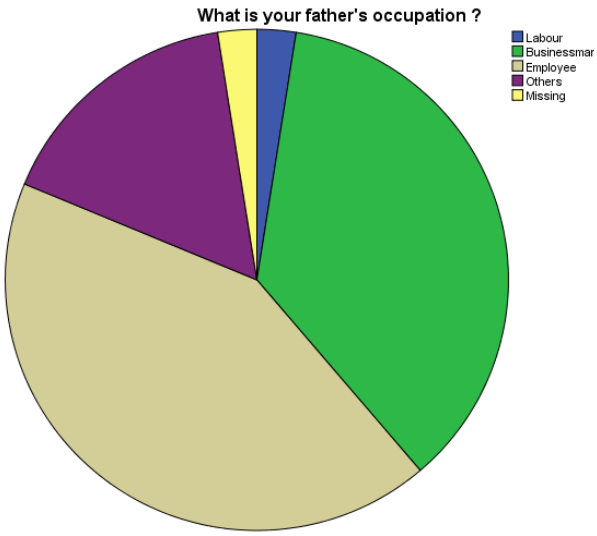
	What is your father's Qualification ?	What is your father's occupation ?	What is your mother's Qualification ?	What is your mother's occupation ?	Circle the option closer to your parents monthly income.
N Valid	78	78	78	80	80
Missing	2	2	2	0	0
Mean	3.7308	2.7436	3.5256	1.2875	3.2875
Median	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	1.0000	4.0000
Mode	5.00	3.00	4.00	1.00	4.00
Std. Deviation	1.35487	.76338	1.31647	.73250	1.03354
Variance	1.836	.583	1.733	.537	1.068
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	5.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	5.00

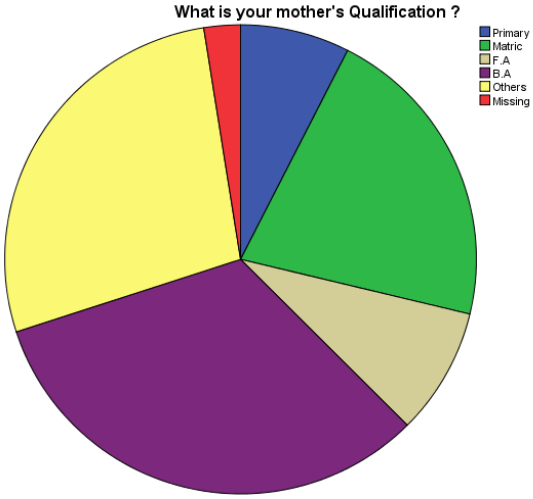
Statistics

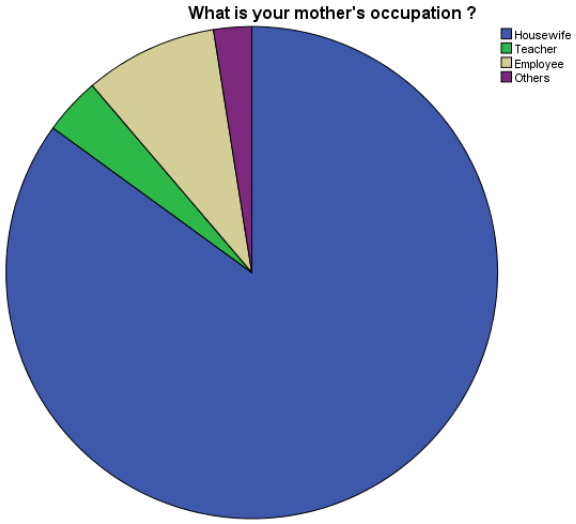
		Who teaches you at home other than school ?	Circle the right number of your family members.	What kind of personality do you have ?	Reading	Comprehension
N	Valid	76	80	79	80	80
	Missing	4	0	1	0	0
Mean		3.6053	3.7625	1.6456	3.2750	3.3500
Median		4.0000	4.0000	2.0000	3.0000	4.0000
Mode		5.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.54125	.53353	.69868	.88554	.99492
Variance		2.375	.285	.488	.784	.990
Minimum		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		5.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	5.00

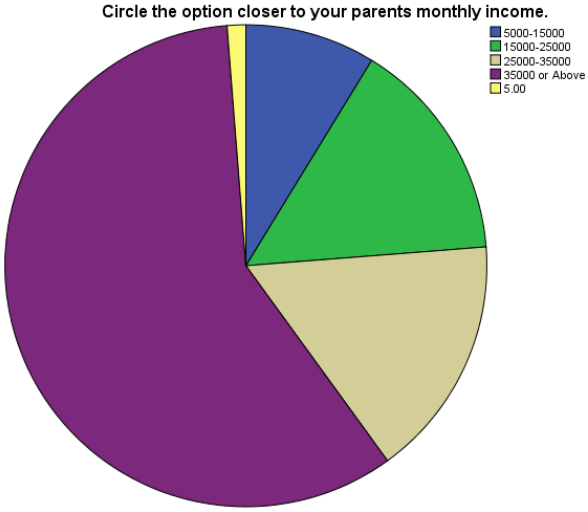
RESULTS IN PIE CHARTS

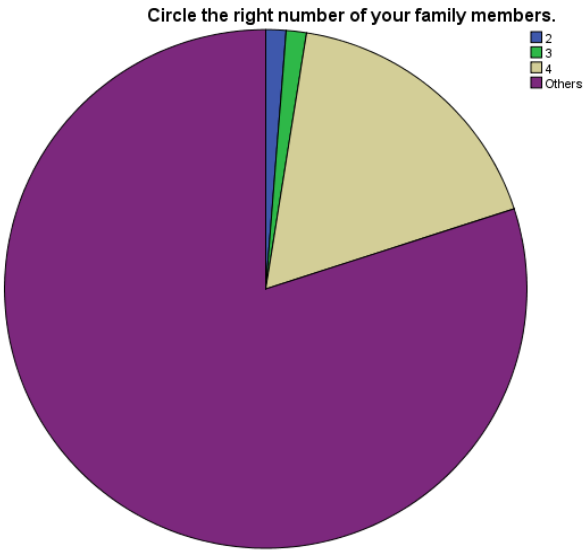

What is your father's Qualification ?
Primary
Matric
F.A
B.A
Others
Missing

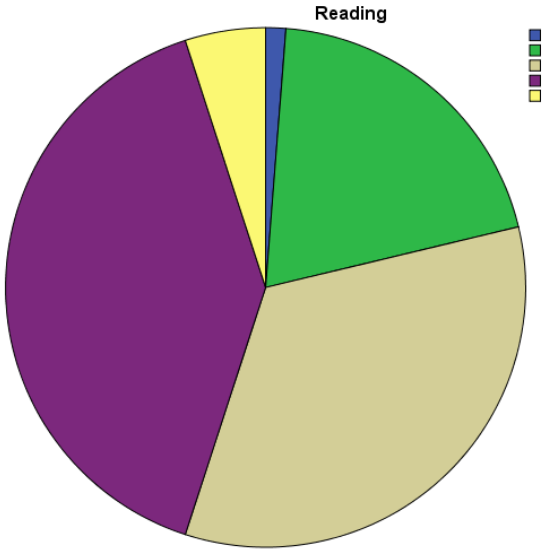

What is your father's occupation ?
Labour
Businessmar
Employee
Others
Missing


What is your mother's Qualification ?
Primary
Matric
F.A
B.A
Others
Missing


What is your mother's occupation ?
Housewife
Teacher
Employee
Others







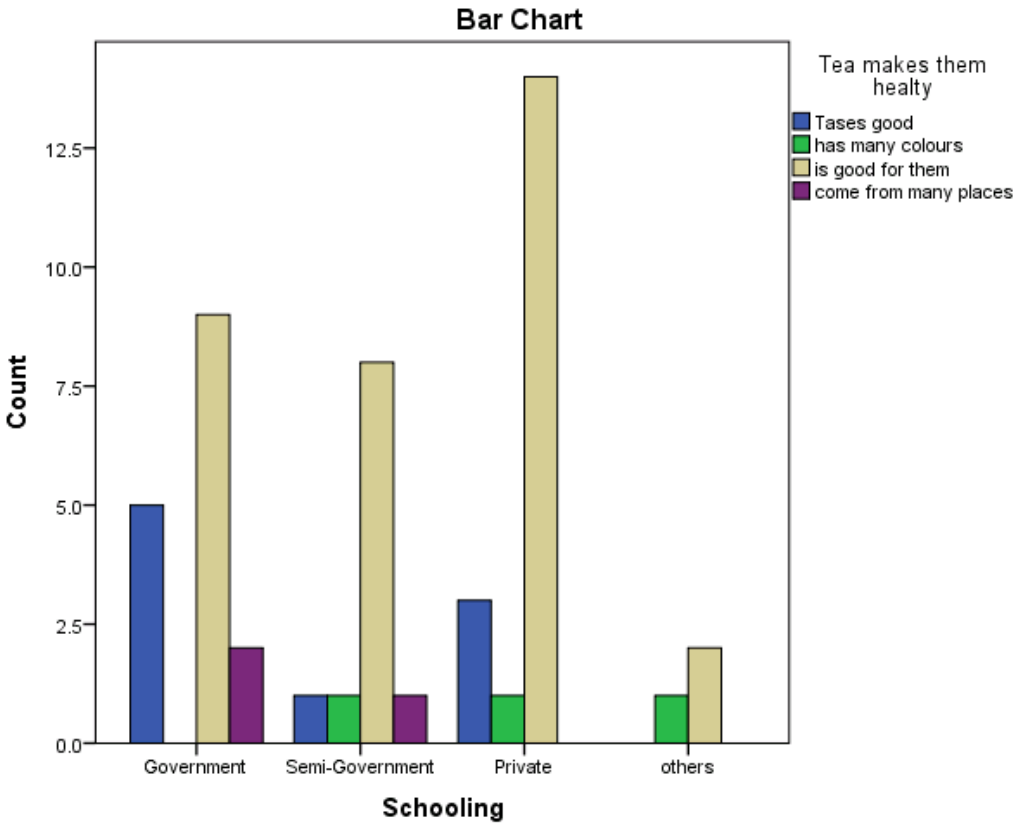
Correlations

		What is your Gender ?	Circle your age group ?	Which City do you belong to ?
What is your Gender ?	Pearson Correlation	1	-.223*	-.199
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.047	.077
	N	80	80	80
Circle your age group ?	Pearson Correlation	-.223*	1	.382**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.047		.000
	N	80	80	80
Which City do you belong to ?	Pearson Correlation	-.199	.382**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.077	.000	
	N	80	80	80
Where is your residence ?	Pearson Correlation	.369**	.124	.020
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.273	.858
	N	80	80	80
Which category does your school belong ?	Pearson Correlation	-.083	-.031	-.119
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.462	.785	.292
	N	80	80	80
What is your father's Qualification ?	Pearson Correlation	-.457**	.098	.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.391	.571

	N	78	78	78
What is your father's occupation ?	Pearson Correlation	-.194	.074	.188
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.088	.518	.100
	N	78	78	78
What is your mother's Qualification ?	Pearson Correlation	-.491**	.080	-.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.488	.610
	N	78	78	78
What is your mother's occupation?	Pearson Correlation	-.336**	.461**	.198
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.078
	N	80	80	80
Circle the option closer to your parents monthly income.	Pearson Correlation	-.336**	.186	.080
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.099	.483

Results of the Analyzed Data Based on Reading Comprehension

According to the data collected, the questions about reading comprehension, demonstrate some statistical significance of the research questions. The following data pave ground for understanding the significance of SES status on the readingskills of different students at SSC level belonging to three different schools. Results of the analyzed data collected, are as following:



Schooling * Things that are delicious

Count

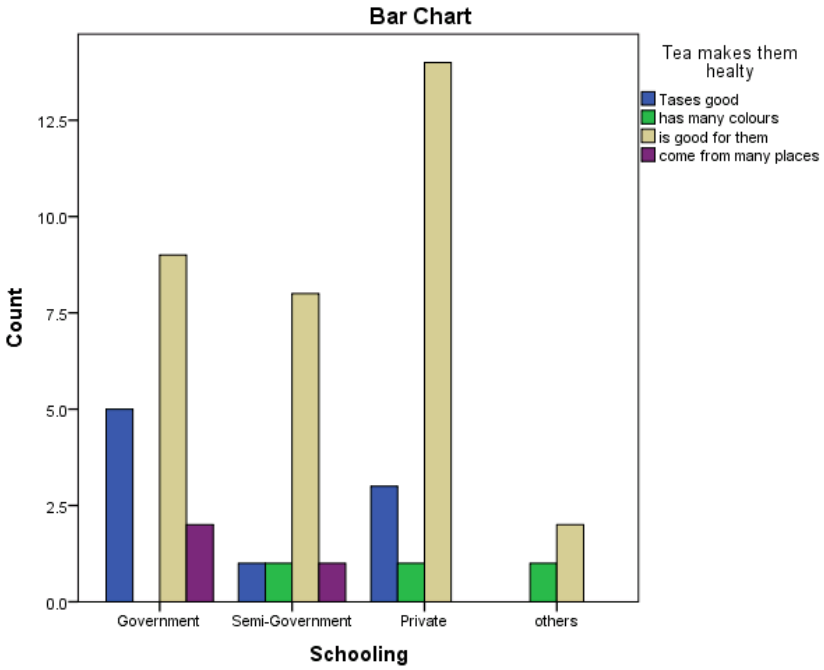
		Things that are delicious				
		are green	are yellow	taste very good	are good for you	Total
Schooling	Government	2	2	7	5	16
	Semi-Government	0	0	8	3	11
	Private	2	0	16	0	18
	others	0	0	1	2	3
Total		4	2	32	10	48

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.050	.147	.342	.734[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.011	.154	-.077	.939[c]
N of Valid Cases		48			

Interpretation:

The above analysis describes that there is positive correlation between the given two variables.



Schooling * Things that are delicious

Count

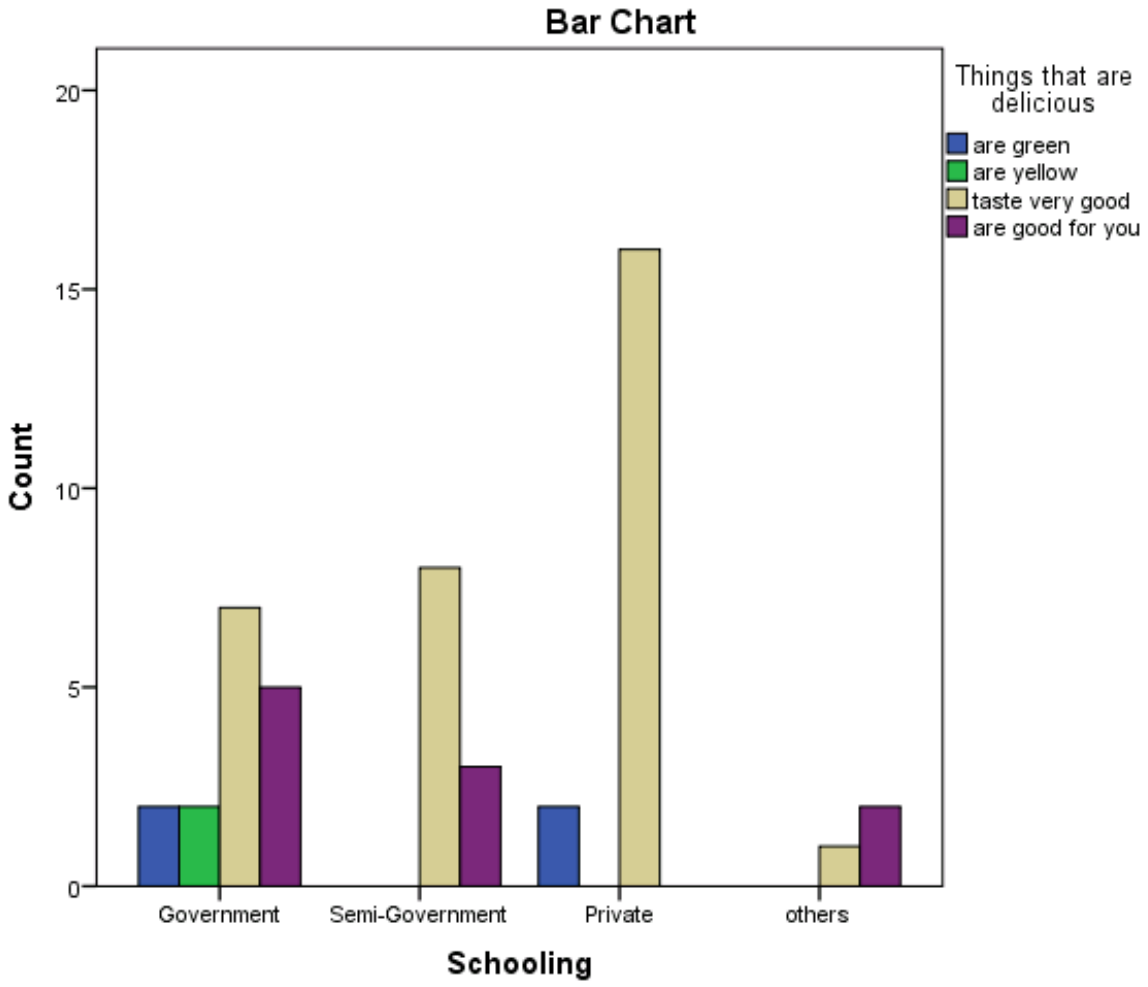
		Things that are delicious				
		are green	are yellow	taste very good	are good for you	Total
Schooling	Government	2	2	7	5	16
	Semi-Government	0	0	8	3	11
	Private	2	0	16	0	18
	others	0	0	1	2	3
Total		4	2	32	10	48

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.028	.161	.192	.849[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.026	.170	-.176	.861[c]
N of Valid Cases		48			

Interpretation:

The above analysis describes that there is positive correlation between the given two variables.


Bar Chart
Things that are delicious
are green
are yellow
taste very good
are good for you
Count
20
15
10
5
0
Government
Semi-Government
Private
others
Schooling

Schooling * Some thing sweet

Count

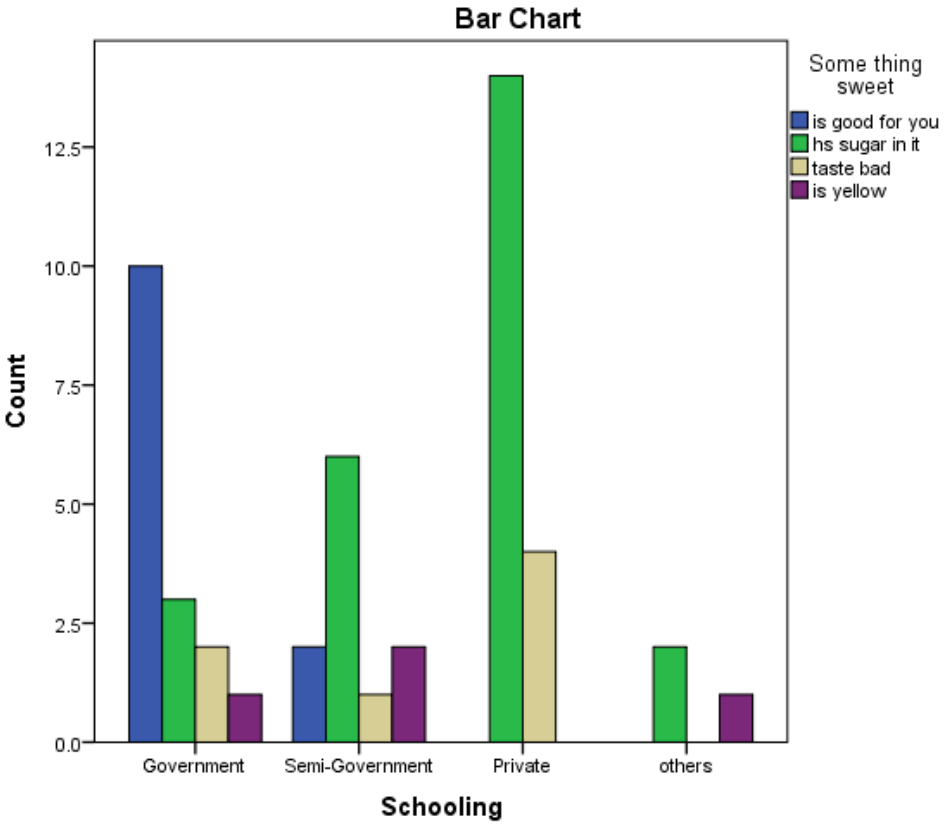
		Some thing sweet				
		is good for you	hs sugar in it	taste bad	is yellow	Total
Schooling	Government	10	3	2	1	16
	Semi-Government	2	6	1	2	11
	Private	0	14	4	0	18
	others	0	2	0	1	3
Total		12	25	7	4	48

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	.342	.141	2.471	.017[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	.413	.141	3.071	.004[c]
N of Valid Cases		48			

Interpretation:

It is clear from above analysis that there is positive correlation between the two variables.


Bar Chart
Some thing sweet
is good for you
hs sugar in it
taste bad
is yellow
Count
12.5
10.0
7.5
5.0
2.5
0.0
Government
Semi-Government
Private
others
Schooling

Schooling * If you add milk to your tea

Count

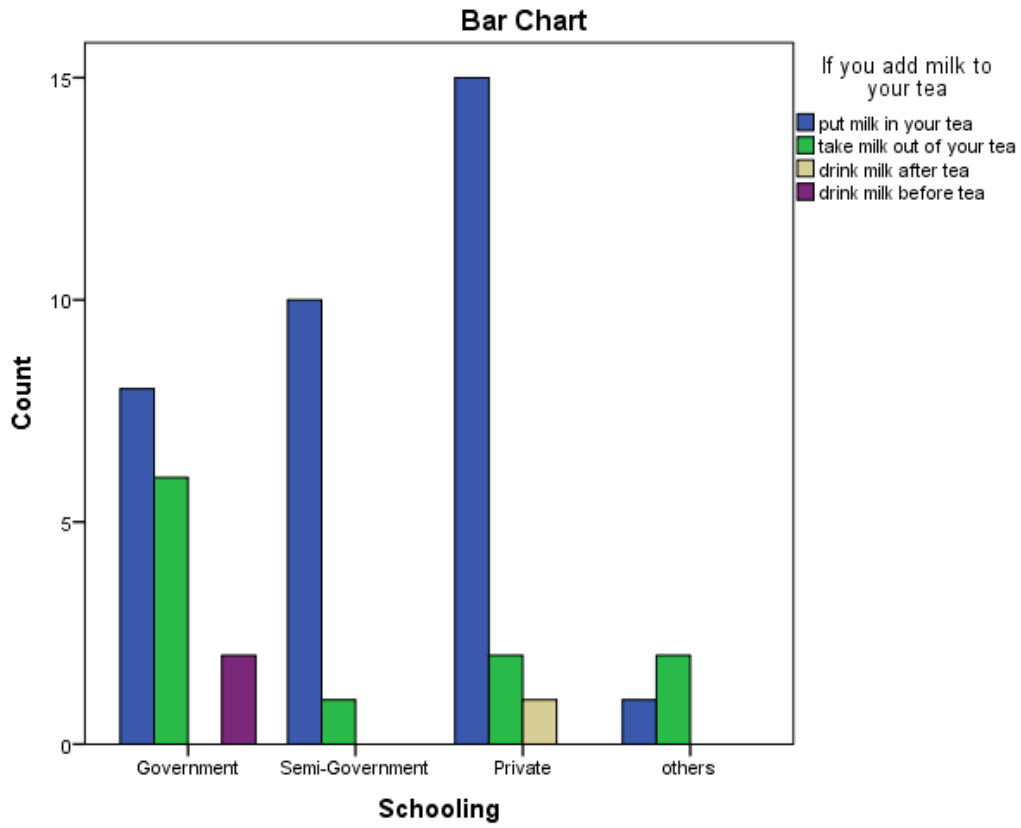
		If you add milk to your tea				
		put milk in your tea	take milk out of your tea	drink milk after tea	drink milk before tea	Total
Schooling	Government	8	6	0	2	16
	Semi-Government	10	1	0	0	11
	Private	15	2	1	0	18
	others	1	2	0	0	3
Total		34	11	1	2	48

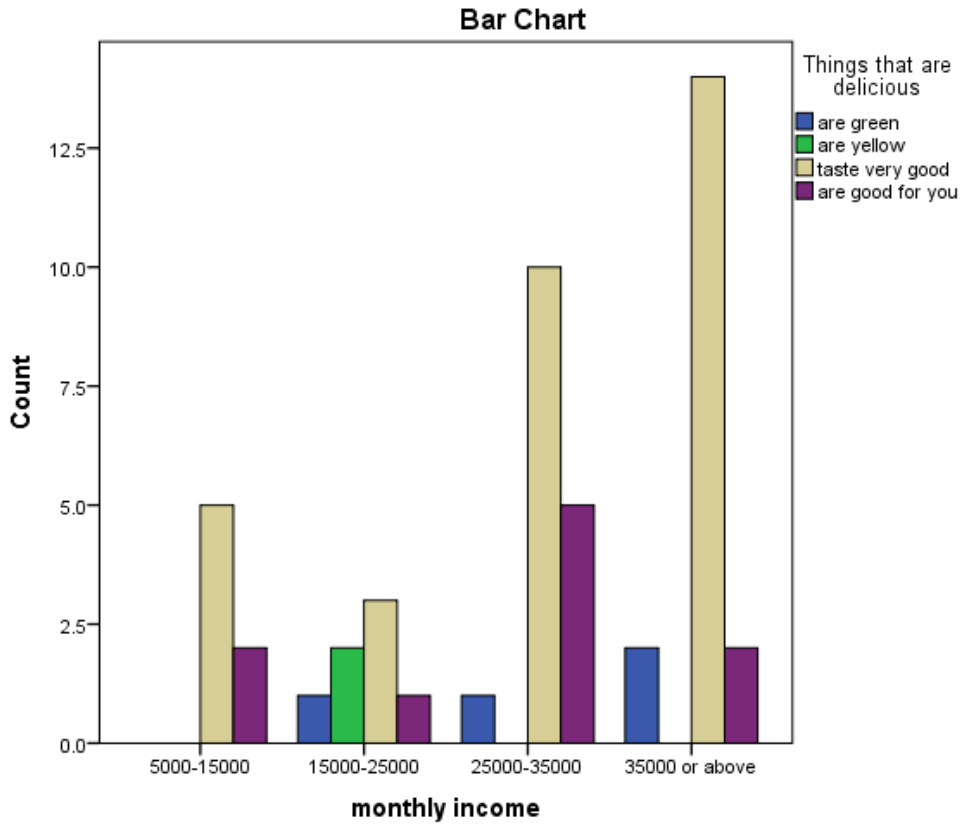
Symmetric Measures

		Value	Asymptotic Standardized Error[a]	Approximate T[b]	Approximate Significance
Interval by Interval	Pearson's R	-.212	.138	-1.474	.147[c]
Ordinal by Ordinal	Spearman Correlation	-.185	.162	-1.274	.209[c]
N of Valid Cases		48			

Interpretation:

The above correlation indicates that there is negative correlation between the two under study variables.


Bar Chart
If you add milk to your tea
put milk in your tea
take milk out of your tea
drink milk after tea
drink milk before tea
Count
15
10
5
0
Government
Semi-Government
Private
others
Schooling



Summary of the Findings

The results of above mentioned three hypotheses i.e. impact of parental socioeconomic status and parental educational background and qualification were statistically proved to be quite significant. These definitely affect students reading skills as they point to a child's home environment and learning. The reading skill of high parental socioeconomic status and well educated parents was high as compared to those whose parental socioeconomic status was low and parents were uneducated. The link between parental qualification and student's performance is very strong. Students' score rates were eminent with educated parenthood.

CONCLUSION

In the light of above mentioned discussion and results, it can be derived that parental socio-economic status, educational background and qualifications are important components which certainly affect student's reading and comprehension skill.

Recommendations

Such social and economic plans of action to be made which change the individuals from low economic parental background to have adequate chances to progress for the venture of learning.

1. Uneducated or low learned parents should send their children to join healthy summer classes during vacation to increase their school progress.

Discussion

According to above mentioned results and statistics, the relationship between parental socioeconomic status, their educational background, qualification and student's reading skill is quiet remarkable. As declared by Eze (2002), Craig Ronald (2003), Hill et al (2004) and Rothstein (2004) that parental socioeconomic status not just affect children's performance in studies but it also constitute infeasibility for the students whose parents belong to low socioeconomic status, to compete those students who come from high parental socioeconomic setting, even having similar academic situation.

They further stated that uneducated parents may not come up with their children's reading and comprehension problems which proves to be a great hurdle in their (students) academic performance. Rothstein and Hill et al (2004) are of the view that children of highly educated parents are more curious and speculative to learn, in contrast to those whose parents are not very qualified.

The role of socioeconomic background is very pivotal in predicting early reading ability of young learners. This idea fosters a deeper insight that multiple social factors affect on the development of reading skills. Furthermore, it also predicts the concept that a child will become a good reader or face obstacles in acquiring this skill (Catts, Scarborough, &McCardle, 2001)

Collectively, these studies support the notion of close connection between SES and reading ability of the learners. Significantly, studies mentioned above examined the variance in reading ability accounted for by SES are unique but still there are many areas to discover regarding this connection. Does the effect of independent variable SES on reading ability really vary? Many researches participated in this endeavor, including of Barker,, Anthony, and Burgess (1998), Bryant, Raz&Adams, 1990).

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