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Article

A GENERIC STUDY ON THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN SHAPING SOCIAL MOBILITY WITH REFERNCE TO THIRUVOTTIYUR

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Abstract: Education is widely recognized as a crucial factor in promoting social mobility and reducing socioeconomic inequalities. This study examines the role of education in shaping individuals' income levels, social status, and intergenerational mobility. Drawing on established theoretical perspectives, the research explores how educational attainment enhances opportunities for upward movement and improves confidence in achieving higher social positions. The findings indicate that education contributes significantly to better employment prospects, income growth, and social advancement. However, disparities in access and outcomes suggest that education alone may not fully eliminate structural inequalities. Overall, the study underscores the importance of education as a key driver of social mobility and social development.
Keywords: Education, Social Mobility, Educational Attainment, Income Growth, Intergenerational Mobility

1. Introduction

Education is widely regarded as a central mechanism in the process of social stratification and mobility, influencing individuals' socioeconomic trajectories across the life course. Social mobility, defined as the movement of individuals or groups within a hierarchical social structure, serves as a key indicator of equality of opportunity and social justice in contemporary societies. Despite economic growth and the expansion of educational systems, disparities in social mobility persist, raising questions about the effectiveness of education in reducing structural inequalities.

Theoretical frameworks such as human capital theory and status attainment theory emphasize education as a primary determinant of occupational status and income attainment. Education enhances skills and credentials that improve labour market outcomes, while also mediating the influence of family background on social position. Empirical research has consistently demonstrated a positive association between educational attainment and income levels, however, variations in educational quality and differential returns to education continue to shape unequal mobility outcomes.

Moreover, intergenerational transmission of advantage remains a significant concern, as access to higher education is unevenly distributed across socioeconomic groups. This study examines the role of education in shaping social mobility by empirically analysing its relationship with income levels, intergenerational mobility, and social advancement. The findings aim to contribute to the existing literature by providing evidence-based insights into the capacity of education to promote social mobility.

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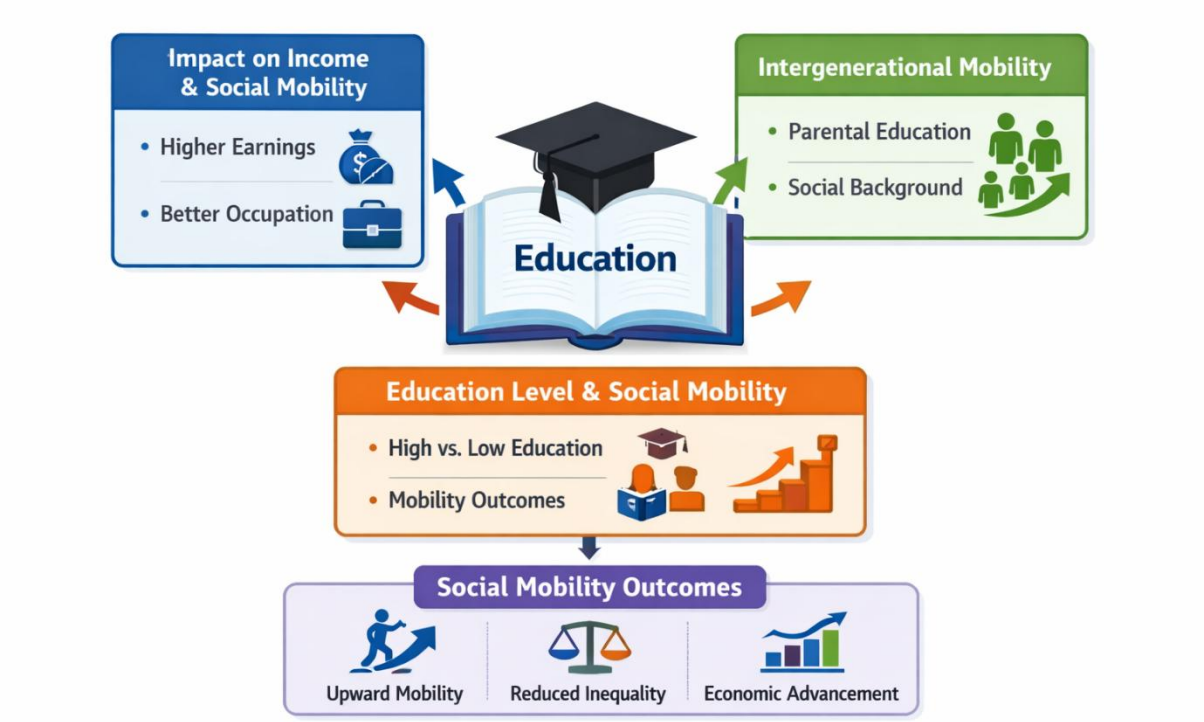
A framework for Education and social mobility

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Primary objectives

To study on the role of education in shaping social mobility

Secondary objectives



- To determine the relationship between educational attainment and social mobility
- To analyze how education impacts income levels and individual social growth
- To examine how education influences intergenerational social mobility.

3. REVIEW OF LITRATURE:

Gupta and Sahu (2024) examined the role of education in facilitating social mobility in Uttar Pradesh using data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 2019–2020. Employing multiple linear regression analysis, the study assessed the impact of educational attainment on income and occupational status while accounting for caste, gender, and household income. The findings reveal that higher education significantly improves social mobility outcomes; however, persistent caste- and gender-based inequalities limit the extent of these benefits for marginalized groups and women. The study also demonstrates that household income amplifies the positive effects of education, indicating that economic resources play a crucial role in converting educational attainment into upward mobility. Overall, the research provides robust empirical evidence and highlights the need for integrated educational and socio-economic policies to address structural inequalities and promote inclusive social mobility.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study uses a mixed-methods design to investigate the role of education in shaping social mobility. Quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews are combined to capture both measurable outcomes and lived experiences. The integration of these approaches ensures rigor, depth, and validity in the findings. **Sample size: 181**

5. TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRET FOR THE COLLECTED DATA

The collected data were analysed and interpreted using this tool to ensure accurate and meaningful insights.

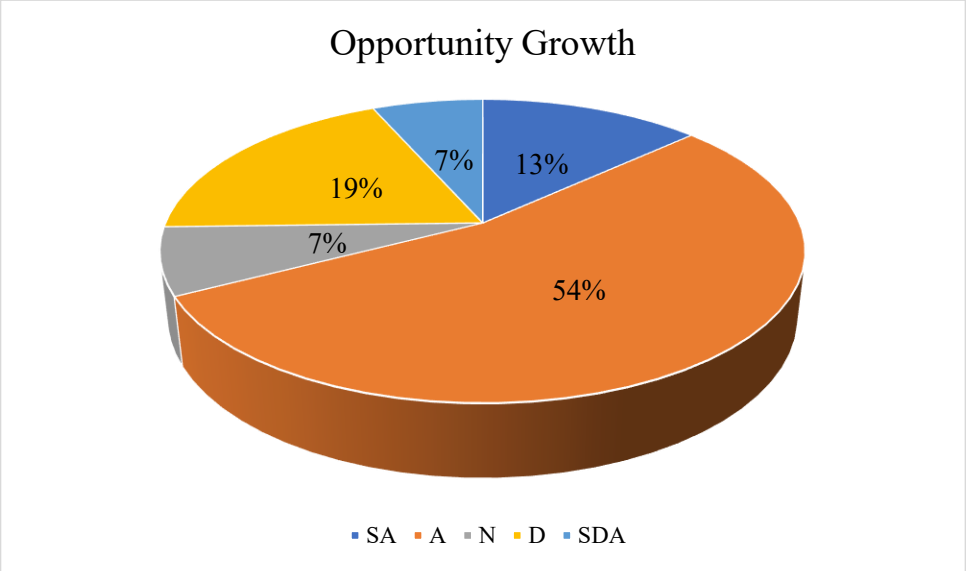
- Percentage Analysis
- Regression Analysis
- ANOVA

6. PERCENTAGE ANALSIS

This helps identify the proportion of respondents in each educational category providing clearer insights into learning trends, preferences and overall perceptions toward education

Your current opportunities are better than your parents because of your education

S. No	Descriptions	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	24	13%
2	Agree	98	55%
3	Neither agree nor disagree	13	7%
4	Disagree	34	18%
5	Strongly disagree	12	7%
6	TOTAL	181	100 %



INTERPRETATION:

The analysis reveals that a majority of respondents 54% agree that their current opportunities are better due to their education, indicating a positive perception of education's impact on career growth. Only a small portion 19% Disagreed, showing limited negative view among respondents.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

This analysis helps to understand how education influences social mobility and confidence levels in achieving higher positions in the relationship between educational attainment and social mobility

SUMMARY OUTPUT

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.37867
R Square	0.143391
Adjusted R Square	0.138605
Standard Error	1.158634
Observations	181

INTERPRETATION:

The regression results indicate a moderate positive relationship between educational attainment and social mobility, along with confidence in achieving higher positions. The Multiple R value 0.378 indicates a fair degree of association between education and the outcome variables, while the R^2 value 0.143 suggests that education accounts for 14.3% of the variation in social mobility and confidence levels. Although the explanatory power is modest, the findings highlight that higher education contributes to improved social positioning and self-assurance. Overall, education plays a meaningful role in enhancing individuals' prospects for upward mobility.

ONE WAY ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

Null Hypothesis (H_0):
There is no significant difference in respondents' mean income perceptions between the statements Education has significantly improved your income level and Higher education leads to higher income.

Alternate Hypothesis (H_1)
There is no significant difference in respondents' mean income perceptions between the statements Education has significantly improved your income level and Higher education leads to higher income.

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY				
Groups	*Count*	*Sum*	*Average*	*Variance*
Higher education leads to higher income	181	537	2.966851	1.343339
Education has significantly improved your income level.	181	598	3.303867	1.579374

ANOVA

Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*
Between Groups	10.27901	1	10.27901	7.033879	0.008352
Within Groups	526.0884	180	1.461357		
Total	536.3674	181			

INTERPRETATION:

One-way ANOVA indicates a significant difference between the two education-related income statements ($F = 7.033879$, $p = 0.008352 < 0.05$), indicating that respondents' income perceptions vary significantly with educational attainment.

7. FINDINGS

➢ The gender distribution shows a higher proportion of males 51% than females 49% among the respondents.

➢ Most respondents are young adults, mainly from the 21-25 age group 30% in followed by 26-30 years 27%. Very few belong to the below 20 is 10% or above 50 is 2% age groups, showing low representation at the extremes. The highest proportion of respondents are working in the private sector 41%, followed by professional 22% and business 18% categories.

➢ Majority of respondents are undergraduates 43%, followed by postgraduates 25%, showing a well-educated sample.

➢ Most respondents 48% fall in the ₹11,000–₹25,000 income group, showing a middle-income background. Majority grew up in middle-income 33% and lower-income 34% families, indicating modest backgrounds.

➢ Education improves social status 44% of respondents agree that education improves social status. Lack of education limits mobility 36% agree that lack of education restricts upward mobility. Education builds confidence 37% agree that education gives confidence to move to higher positions. Education reduces generation gap 49% agree that education helps reduce generational differences. Educated parents help children 38% agree that children of educated parents achieve better social mobility.

8. INFERENTIAL ANALYSIS

➢ The Chi-square test shows that the Pearson Chi-Square value is 1.398 with a p-value of 0.706, which is greater than 0.05. This indicates that there is no significant relationship between gender and family's economic condition during childhood. It can be concluded that gender does not significantly influence the family's economic condition among the respondents.

➢ The regression results show that the R value is 0.137, indicating a positive relationship between education level and improvement in income level. The R Square value of 0.019 shows that education level explains about 1.9% of the variation in income improvement. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.013 also supports a small but positive contribution of education to income changes. Education has a positive influence on improving income level, though the effect is modest.

➢ The correlation analysis shows a positive relationship between education-based respect in society and income with social status (R=0.065). The significance value (P =0.385) is greater than 0.05 indicating that the relationship is statistically significant. This means that higher education is associated with increased respect in society which in turn relates to better income improved social status.

➢ The ANOVA results indicate that there is no significant difference between age and education level in improving family living standards. The p-value (0.073) is greater than 0.05 confirming that the result is not statistically significant. Hence, variations in living standard improvement are mainly due to individual differences rather than gender or education factors.

9. SUGGESTIONS

➢ Support First-Generation Learners

o Many students in from families with low educational backgrounds, making it difficult to continue higher studies.

o Special scholarships, mentoring, bridge courses, and academic support should be provided to help them succeed.

➢ Strengthen Industry-Education Linkages

o Industry partnerships help students gain real work experience and job exposure.

o Internships, training, and placement programs should be developed with private and public organizations.

➢ Expand Government Scholarships and Education Loans

o Financial support helps poor students continue higher education without burden.

o Schemes like NSP, Vidya Lakshmi, and PMKVY should be easily accessible and well promoted.

➢ Improve Quality of Teaching and Curriculum

o Well-trained teachers and updated curriculum improve learning outcomes.

o Digital tools, modern teaching methods, and practical learning should be encouraged.

➢ Create Awareness Among Families and Communities

o Parents must understand the importance of education for future social growth.

o Community programs can motivate families to support children's education.

➢ Link Education with Employment Opportunities

o Education should lead to better jobs and income growth.

o Skill training, entrepreneurship support, and job placement cells should be strengthened.

10. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant role of education in shaping social mobility among individuals. The findings demonstrate that higher educational attainment is positively associated with improved income levels, social status, and confidence in achieving upward mobility. Percentage analysis shows that a majority of respondents perceive education as a key factor in accessing better opportunities than previous generations. The regression results confirm a moderate and meaningful relationship between education and social mobility, explaining a substantial portion of variation in social advancement. Furthermore, the ANOVA results reveal statistically significant differences in income perceptions linked to educational levels. These outcomes support established theories emphasizing education as a critical driver of social and economic progress. However, variations in returns to education suggest that structural inequalities continue to influence mobility outcomes. Overall, the study reinforces the importance of strengthening educational access and quality to promote inclusive social mobility. The findings contribute empirical evidence to the broader discourse on education and social transformation.

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