

**A SURVEY TO DETERMINE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION
BETWEEN LOW-INCOME FAMILIES AND THEIR
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT SAN MARTIN
PRIMARY SCHOOL AND GARDEN CITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL IN BELMOPAN.**

**UNIVERSITY OF BELIZE
FACULTY OF EDUCATION & ARTS**

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Chapter 1 Introduction

Background

Belize is only 8,867 square miles in size and is situated on the northeast coast of Central America. It is a democratic country, bordered in the north by Mexico and in the south and west by Guatemala. Belize continuously experience high levels of immigration from the neighboring Central American countries and most recently globalization has put a strain on the economy due to the increase of world prices. This has resulted in the demands for jobs, an increase in poverty level, an increase in lower-income families and a strain on the social services. The effect can also be felt in the education of our children.

Education determines the life of the child, the more education children gets the more successful and less problematic he or she will be in society. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that, "Children besides being a country's future are a country's greatest resource so their well being should be our top priority." Yet there are many children that do not receive the benefits of an education in school which causes school failure, possible dropout, frequent disciplinary problems or limited employment opportunities. The researcher has gathered information through observation, discussion from teachers and personal experiences that schools that lie in the poverty belt usually perform poorly in the P.S.E (Primary School Exam). The overall performance of the children in the entire school is poor. Looking at these cases most of the children comes from household with low income or poor families. It seems as though the income of the family determines the quality and the quantity of education a child may receive. There seem to be a relationship between education and the family income. For this reason the

researcher has become interested in finding out if the income of the family does affect the performance of a child. Also, does the family income the only factor that determines the future of a child or are there other factors that also influence their performance? In examining the relationship between these two variables, the researcher has decided to conduct a survey of two schools, San Martin Primary School and Garden City primary School.

San Martin R.C School is located in a little settlement located in the outskirts of Belmopan City. The population is approximately 4,000 persons made up of immigrants or refugees from El Salvador. Most of the household are low-income family whereby only one parent works earning less than two hundred and fifty dollars a week. This statistics is gotten from discussion of teachers at the school and observation. Looking at the P.S.E result compared to other school the performance is poor.

Garden City Primary is located in the urban area in Belmopan. Children from the nearby surroundings attend the school. Children coming from the areas called, "Tiger Town" and "Salvapan", where poverty is evidence makes up a large portion of the school population.

PROBLEM

The researcher has seen some children who demonstrated academic potential, but do not function well in their schoolwork. The reason for this problem is because their parents do not have the sufficient funding to provide for some of the basic needs of their children. So these children arrive at school without school materials. They also do not have breakfast or lunch thus causing their inattentiveness in class. Little parental supervision is given to them and their parents rarely visit the school to check on their children's progress because they are busy working. These are the same children who are regularly absent from school for some reasons or the other. They also do not have breakfast or lunch thus causing their inattentiveness in class. Little parental supervision is given to them and their parents rarely visit the school to check on their children's progress because they are busy working. Without the basic requirements a child cannot perform well in the classroom a child that is hungry cannot concentrate well, a child that is sick cannot perform, and a child that does not have the necessary material cannot execute the task been given. The significant effect of the living condition is manifested in a child's academic performance.

The Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to conduct a survey to gather teachers' perceptive on the relationship a low family's income has on the academic performance of their children. It is to aid the researcher in drawing conclusion and make recommendation on this problem. It is to test the researcher's hypothesis which is, "Most children that come from a low-income family have a poor academic performance."

To investigate this problem the following questions should be asked?

1. Do families low-income status has an effect on their children academic performance?
2. Does the behavior and attitude the parent demonstrates towards education have an influence on their children's academic performance?
3. Is their any provision in our educational system for children in the classroom who comes from a low income family?

Significance

The purpose of our educational system is to provide a sound education to our children so they can become productive citizens and help in the development of our country. Therefore this study can be of most interest to every stakeholder in our educational system who are interest in improving the educational system. There have been a lot invested in our education system yet there are much more that can be done. A lot of attention is given to our urban schools and little is done in the rural schools so this study can act as a guide to the stakeholders in the education system to alleviate some of the factors that contributes to students' poor academic performance.

Mangers, principals and teachers can also benefit from this study. This study will highlights what are some of the factors that causes children that comes from a low-income family to perform poorly and to make recommendation on how they can help to alleviate these factors. They will be aware of the limitations some children go to school with and in this way they will be able to better assist the children.

Parents can also benefit form this study, although they might solve their financial situation but there are alternative ways in which they can assist their children to perform well at school despite their current situation.

Limitations

Due to the time frame which was limited the researcher was only able to conduct the survey with the teachers. This survey only contains the perception of the teachers which made the information limited. Also only two schools were used therefore, the population was only limited to a certain number of teachers which also made the information limited.

Chapter 2 Review of Literature

Many different factors have been cited to explain why poverty occurs. There is no single explanation that has gained collective acceptance but some possible factors include environmental factors, economics factor, health care, governance of governments and over population.

Environmental factors include rigorous farming which often leads to a vicious cycle of exhaustion of soil fertility and decline of agricultural yields and hence, increased poverty.

Economics factors are another factor that contributes to poverty. Majority of the population do not have job that would earn them money to meet their basic needs. Also those that do have a job do not earn sufficient and with the continuous increase of prices of goods and service it is difficult for them to meet most of their basic needs thus increasing poverty.

Heath Care can also contribute to poverty. Poor access to affordable health care makes individuals less resilient to economic hardship and more vulnerable to poverty. Inadequate nutrition in childhood, due to their financial status undermines the development of their cognitive ability, therefore they are unable to develop their full human capabilities and thus cause failure in school. At the end of their schooling, they are more vulnerable to poverty because they are unable to get a stable and financially secure job that would allow them to sustain themselves adequately.

The effectiveness of the governance of governments has a major impact on the delivery of socioeconomic outcomes for poor populations. Poor management of

resources can mean that rather than lifting countries out of poverty, revenues from such activities as oil production or other resources if not used effectively for the benefit of the population can cripple economic status of the country, resulting in the increase of the poverty rate. Failure by governments to provide essential infrastructure increases poverty and discourage tourism.

Overpopulation is another factor that contributes to poverty. Meaning more mouths to feed but not an increase in the earnings to meet everyone basic needs thus increasing the poverty level. Of the mentioned causes of poverty, Belize's major cause of poverty would be due to economics. Most household earn an income but a very low income due to underpaid jobs and low educational attainment. Their wages barely sustain some of their basic needs and with the constant increase of prices of basic goods and services add on an extra burden to their expense. These parental attributes, separately or in combination, might account for some of the observable negative consequences of poverty on children who contribute to the cycle of poverty being difficult to break.

Family income also has a profound influence on the educational opportunities available to children and on their chances of educational success. Science Daily (Mar. 26, 2008) — A new study published in the March/April 2008 issue of the journal *Child Development* finds that family wealth might partly explain differences in test scores in school-age children.

Leroy & Syness (2001) states, that poverty is considered a major at-risk factor. Some of the factors related to poverty which may place a child at-risk for academic

failures are, low educational level parents and exposure to inadequate or inappropriate educational resources.

Low-income has a negative and a positive influence on the academic performance of a child. Low-income students usually attend schools with lower funding levels, which result in reduced availability of instructional materials which causes the students to be unable to accomplish their tasks which results in poor performance. Achievement Trap: How America Is Failing Millions of High-Achieving Students From Lower-*Income* Families, by Joshua S. Wyner, John M. Bridgeland, and John J. Dilulio Jr.,(2000) finds that even academically talented poor students do not fare as well as their richer peers. The report looks at students in kindergarten through grade 12 from *low-income* families whose standardized test scores rank in the top 25 percent. Those students are less likely to maintain their high achievement through middle school, attend more-selective colleges, finish college, or attend graduate school than are similarly high-achieving students from richer families, the study found.

Comparing the P.S.E result of two schools in Belmopan, San Martin Primary School located in Las Flores a community where the poverty rate is high and Christian Academy which is a private school where most of the students are from rich families it clearly shows that there is a much better academic performance. This goes in accordance to Jeanne Brooks-Gunn and Greg J. Duncan in their article *The Effect of Poverty on Children* state, that children living below the poverty threshold are 1.3 times more likely as to experience learning disabilities and developmental delays which affect their academic performance. They also state that although health is itself an outcome, it can also be viewed as a pathway by which poverty influences other child outcomes, such as

cognitive ability and school achievement. Poor children experience increased rates of low birth weight and elevated levels of lead in the blood. These conditions have, in turn, been associated with reduced IQ and other measures of cognitive functioning in young children. Low birth weight is also associated with increased rates of learning disabilities, grade retention, and school dropout in older children and youths. A 1990 analysis indicated that the poverty related health factors such as low birth weight, elevated levels of lead in the blood, anemia, and recurrent ear infections and hearing loss contributed to the differential in IQ scores between poor and non poor four-year olds. The findings suggest that the cumulative health disadvantage experienced by poor children on these four health measures may have accounted for as much as 13% to 20% of the difference in IQ between the poor and non poor four-year-olds during the 1970s and 1980s. Discussed in the Child Indicators article malnutrition in childhood (as measured by anthropometric indicators) is associated with lower scores on tests of cognitive development. Deficits in these anthropometric measures are a child's home environment. A number of studies have found that a child's home environment—opportunities for learning, warmth of mother-child interactions, and the physical condition of the home—account for a substantial portion of the effects of family income on cognitive outcomes in young children. The HOME scale is made up of items that measure household resources, such as reading materials and toys, and parental practices, such as discipline methods. The HOME scale has been shown to be correlated with family income and poverty, with higher levels of income associated with improved home environments as measured by the scale, 7.40 Several studies have found that differences in the home environment of higher and lower-income children, as measured by the HOME scale, account for a

substantial portion of the effect of income on the cognitive development of preschool children and on the achievement scores of elementary school children. In one study, differences in the home environment also seemed to account for some of the effects of poverty status on behavioral problems. In addition, the provisions of learning experiences in the home (measured by specific subscales of the HOME scale) have been shown to account for up to half of the effect of poverty status on the IQ scores of five-year-olds. Parents who are poor are likely to be less healthy, both emotionally and physically, than those who are not poor. Some studies have established that parental mental health accounts for some of the effect of economic circumstances on child health and behavior. Additionally, poor parental mental health is associated with impaired parent-child interactions and less provision of learning experiences in the home. Another possible pathway through which family income operates has to do with the neighborhoods in which poor families reside. Poor parents are constrained in their choice of neighborhoods and schools. Low income may lead to residence in extremely poor neighborhoods characterized by social disorganization (crime, many unemployed adults, neighbors not monitoring the behavior of adolescents) and few resources for child development (playgrounds, child care, health care facilities, parks, after-school programs). The affluence of neighborhoods is associated with child and adolescent outcomes (intelligence test scores at ages 3 and 5 and high school graduation rates by age 20) over and above family poverty. Neighborhood residence also seems to be associated with parenting practices, over and above family income and education. Neighborhood effects on intelligence scores are in part mediated by the learning environment in the home. Living in neighborhoods with high concentrations of poor people is associated

with less provision of learning experiences in the homes of preschoolers, over and above the links seen between family incomes and learning experiences.

Despite the negative influences low-income of family has on the academic performance of their children, there are some positive influences. Educators have realized that these students are the future leaders of our country. If our future leaders are to bring our country forward and strive for the betterment of everyone they need to be educated with the skill to make responsible decisions that would impact the country in a positive way. For this reason the government and other organization has invested a lot in the education system to help these students especially those that comes from low-income family.

Government will offer \$300 subsidy to high school students posted (May 12, 2008) by 7 newsbelize.com, Hon. Patrick Faber, Minister of Education, *"We are offering an additional \$300 subsidy to students in first and second forms that are in need of it."* According 7newsbelize posted (July 8, 2008), Scotia Bank Gives Education Grants. Scotia Bank handed out checks to 65 primary school students. The checks were for about three to four hundred dollars each and are education grants to help the students and their parents pay fees and buy books for the upcoming school year. The previous government has introduced a free textbook program which is presently still carried out alleviate the expense of parents in purchasing books. Today all the children are equipped with the necessary textbooks. You rarely hear people saying "my child cannot go to school due to my financial situation." There are organization that offers scholarship in order to aid low-income families for example, Social Security Board Awards 37 Scholarships posted (August 9, 2007) by 7 newsbelize.com. The scholarship program was started five years

ago. The high school scholarships are for four years and valued at \$4,000. The sixth form scholarships are for two years and valued at \$4,500. The UB scholarships are for two years and valued at \$20,000. Those scholarships were awarded in the areas of social work, tourism management, natural resources management, nursing, and information technology. BEL Awards UB Scholarships to 7 Students posted (August 7, 2007). If we compare our literacy level now and ten years ago there is a constant increase.

As mentioned before poor health and nutrition is a factor of poverty that contributes to the deficiency in the learning abilities of a child. A sick child cannot perform well, cannot develop their cognitive ability to become successful thus causing them to receive a minimal education that does not offer much to improve their condition thus not breaking the vicious cycle of poverty. In this light, a lot has been invested in our health system, improvement of hospital, health clinics in the rural areas, making it more accessible to good health care. Clear Vision for BCVI and GOB Partnership posted (February 8, 2007) by 7newsbelize.com Since 1982 the Belize Council for the Visually Impaired has been working with the Ministry of Health to provide free or very affordable eye care services. Also there are feeding programs in the schools that provide children with one or two meals. Lifeline Donates Cafeteria to Calvary Temple School posted (September 30, 2008) by 7newsbelize.com. Lifeline Foundation presented a cheque for the construction of a cafeteria and brand new kitchen both were inaugurated today. That means that as of Wednesday the students who may have gone hungry for months because they simply do not have the money to buy a meal will now be able to eat well and healthy for a minimal fee of one dollar. Zebedee Pitterson: Spirit of the Ubuntu

posted (May 12, 2008) by 7newsbelize.com, Zebedee Pitterson, Belize City's well known baker who has been providing free food for needy school children for 13 years. There a churches that invites their counterparts from other developed countries to come a provide health care especially to poor communities. According to Air news (SUMMER | 2008 | N0. 28, AIR) has joined forces with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) in an effort to improve the literacy and reading readiness of the youngest members of low income families.. Many literacy campaigns highlight the activities parents should engage in to help increase their children's reading readiness. But for many low income families, simply knowing what steps they should take to help their children — reading to them daily, playing words games — is not enough to encourage new behavior UNICEF is a non profit organization that aids poor family with clothing and food. Mônica, Brazil's Favorite Cartoon Girl, Becomes UNICEF Ambassador, (Newsroom Friday, 09 November 2007). Mônica is adored by millions of children and will be a powerful force in helping children throughout Brazil to understand their rights to health, education and protection, because she speaks the language of children," said Poirier. One hundred children from low-income families in São Paulo were invited to participate in the ceremony, which took place at Mônica's Park, a 100,000-square-foot theme park. There is a program "Wheels for the poor" travels to needy communities at least once a month and provide the residence with provisions; so more families experience good nutrition and health care. Single mothers, school dropouts, unemployed are given opportunities to learn a trade and encouraged to be productive in order to provide for their families through the programs such as the Y.M.C.A and other programs offered in the community. The Ministry of Human

Resources, Refugees Department, development NGOs, the Patriotism Committee, the Consciousness Youth Movement are organizations that contribute to social integration. Some have been effective with marginalized communities, e.g. BEST, SPEAR, and HELP. A lot is being done to break the vicious cycle of poverty not only in Belize but in other countries. For example in United States there is a Children's Trust Foundation that has awarded nearly three-quarters of a million dollars to Family Support Centers across the state of Washington in order to help, life-changing work of the families. Some recipients are The Angle Lake Family Resource Center grant will help fund a new "Play & Learn" group for Spanish-speaking parents aimed at promoting early literacy. Some 40 percent of the nearly 1,500 people served by the Angle Lake center are Hispanic parents, who have expressed a need for local programs to strengthen their families, support them in raising their children, and help them prepare their children for school. The Catholic Charities' Childbirth and Parenting Alone grant will support monthly play groups that provide young, low-income, single parents with a social network and beneficial play and learning time with their children. The play groups strengthen the bond between parents and children and help prevent abuse and neglect by teaching parents how to lovingly communicate with their children. Many children from low income families experience a sound education, good health care and receive basic needs.

In conclusion low-income has a negative and a positive relationship in the academic performance of a child. It's up to the stakeholders of education to seize the opportunity to aid our children, it is not their fault that they come from a low-income family and we can break this cycle. Based on the results of one study, the authors estimated that, if poverty were eliminated for all children, mean years of schooling for all children would increase

by only 0.3% (less than half a month). This might seem unrealistic but it is something that can be done because there is the medium available as mentioned earlier.

Chapter 3 Research Design

Method

The survey was to determine the relationship between children from low-income families and their academic performance from two primary school in Belmopan, namely San Martin primary School and Garden City Primary School. A questionnaire will be designed by the researcher to use as the instrument to collect data from the two groups of respondents involve. After acquiring permission from the principal of both schools, the questionnaire will be distributed by the research among a random selection of fifteen teachers out of a staff of twenty five teachers from San Martin Primary School and among the staff of fifteen teachers at Garden City Primary School. Each questionnaire will be accompanied by a cover letter explaining to the teachers the purpose of the survey and asking them for their consent to participate in the survey. The questionnaire will consist of likert type statement and open ended questions.

Sample

The population for the study consisted of thirty teachers, fifteen from Garden City Primary School¹, located in the urban area of Belmopan and fifteen from San Martin Primary School, located in the rural area of Belmopan. The teachers were selected using simple random sampling. After getting permission from the principals the researcher randomly selected the teachers from the attendance register making sure there was representation from each division that is the lower, middle and upper division.

Instrument

The survey was to determine teachers' perception about the relationship between children from low-income families and their academic performance from two primary

schools in Belmopan, namely San Martin primary School and Garden City Primary School. A questionnaire was designed by the researcher to use as the instrument to collect data from the two groups of respondents involved. The survey, questionnaire designed in three sections. Section one (1) consisted of biographical, i.e. each respondent's gender, age, years of services and qualification. Section two (2) consisted of eleven Likert type statements to get an insight into possible situations/conditions that may determine the factors that influence the performance of children in their school work. For each statement there are four possible answers to choose from. Strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), agree (A), and strongly agree (SA). Section three (3) includes four opened ended statements teachers are asked to give their own opinion based on their knowledge and experiences of each situation. To test the reliability of this instrument it was given to two groups of teachers teaching under different teaching condition. One group was from the rural area and the other group was from the urban area. To test the validity of the instrument the questions were designed to match the objective of the research by checking if they answered the three questions in chapter 1 concerning the purpose of the research. Secondary data was collected by doing research in the library and using the internet.

Data Collection

Two schools were chosen namely, Garden City Primary School and San Martin Primary School. After acquiring permission from the principal of both schools, a random selection was done using the attendance register ensuring that there was representation from each division. Fifteen teachers from a staff of twenty five teachers from San Martin Primary School and fifteen teachers at Garden City Primary School out of a staff

of nineteen teachers were selected. The questionnaires were personally distributed by the researcher. Each questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter explaining to the teachers the purpose of the survey and asking them for their consent to participate in the survey. The questionnaires were distributed on a Friday and were collected on the following Monday evening. Teachers that did not complete their questionnaire were given an extra day.

Data Analysis

The data collected was compiled and tabulated. Each question was dealt with one at a time and the results were analyzed. The demographical information were tabulated and shown on bar graphs except for the information showing the gender of the participants in the survey. A pie chart was used to illustrate that information. The tabulation of each of the close-ended questions was done in the form of percentages which was shown on a bar graph and a table which also showed a 4 point scale to determine the negative or positive response for each statement. The following 4 point scale was used to show a negative or a positive response to the questions.

<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly Agree</u>
1	2	2.5	3	4
Negative Response			Positive Response	

Strongly disagree (1 point), disagree (2 points), agree (3 points) and Strongly Agree (4 points). To construct the tables the total number of respondents and their respondent was recorded. The number of respondents was multiplied by the point (s) assigned to the response in order to get a total response score. To obtain the average the total number of respondent was divided by the total number of response score. Average score was used to determine if the statements were favorable or not. If the average number or points for the responses was between the score of 2.5, the median and 4.0 which represent e agree and strongly agree. The statement considered a

positive or favorable statement. However, if the number or points for the responses was between the score of 2.5 and 1.0 which represent disagree and strongly disagree then the statement was considered a negative or unfavorable statement. Positive responses gave a positive connotation of the possible factors that would cause low performance of the students. In contrast, negative responses gave a negative connotation of the possible factors that would cause low performance of the students. To obtain the percentage for each response the total number of response was divided by the number of respondents of each question then multiplied by a 100. A descriptive analysis of the responses was written below each table.

Section 1: Presentation of Demographical Data

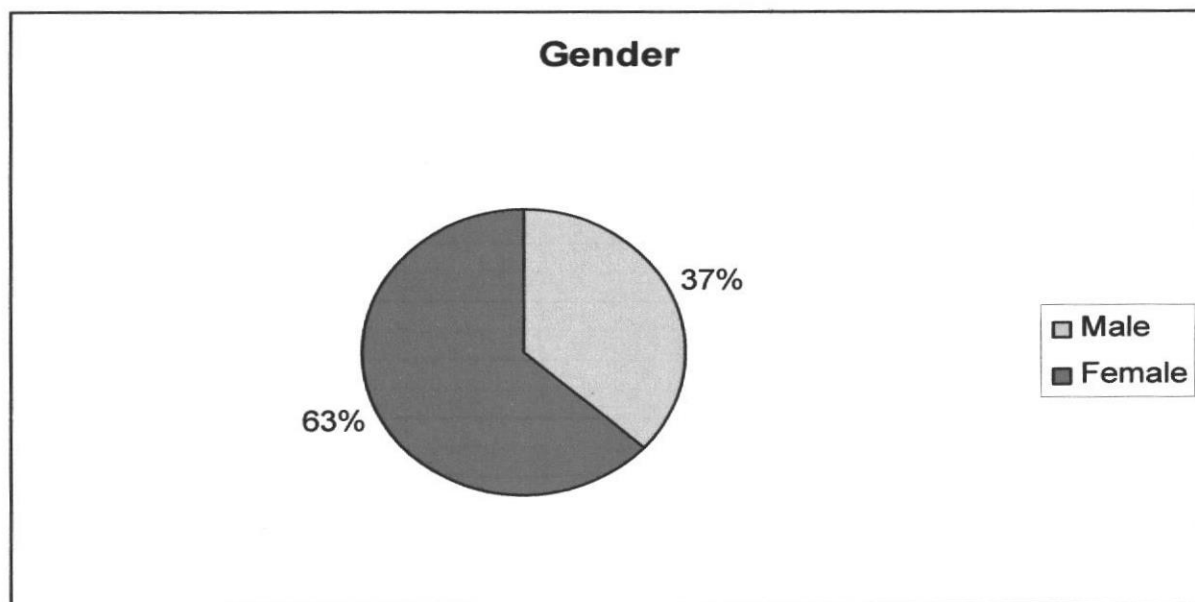


Figure 1.1 showing the total number of female and male of the respondents.

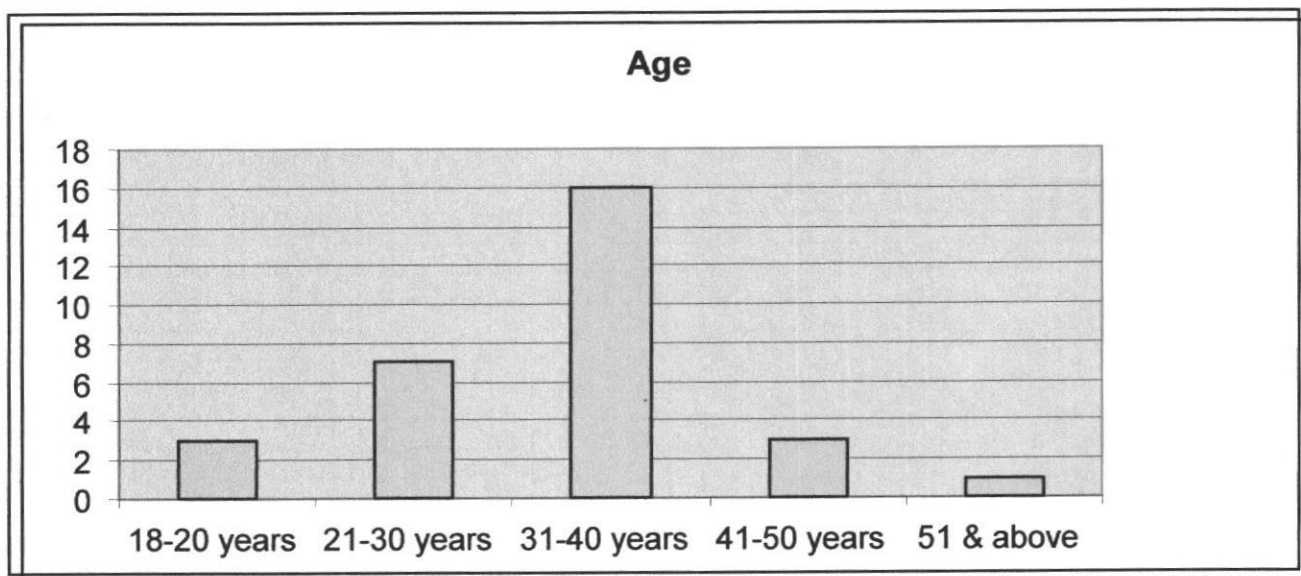


Figure 1.2 showing the age range of the respondents.

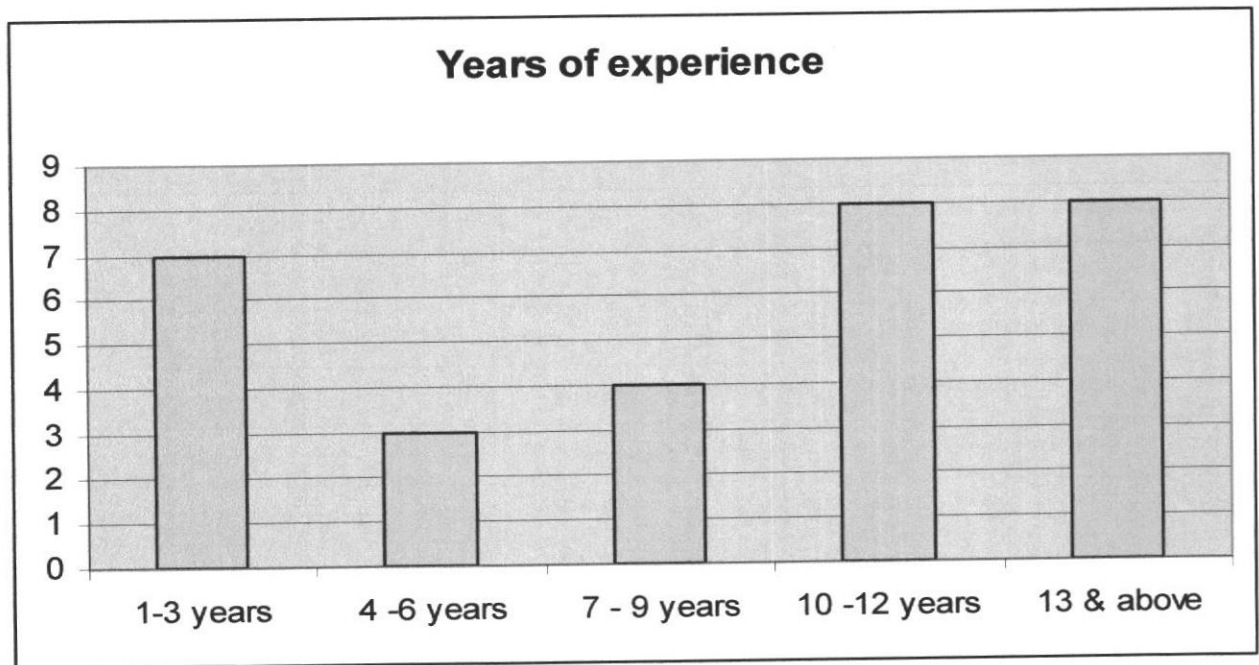


Figure 1.3 showing the years of experience range of the respondents.

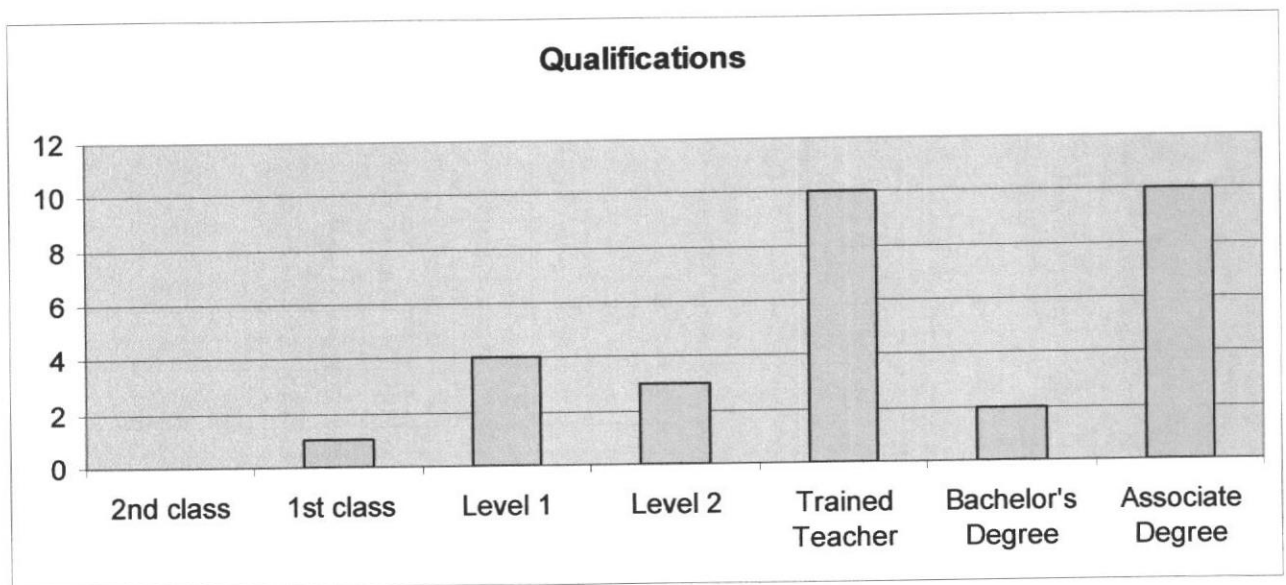
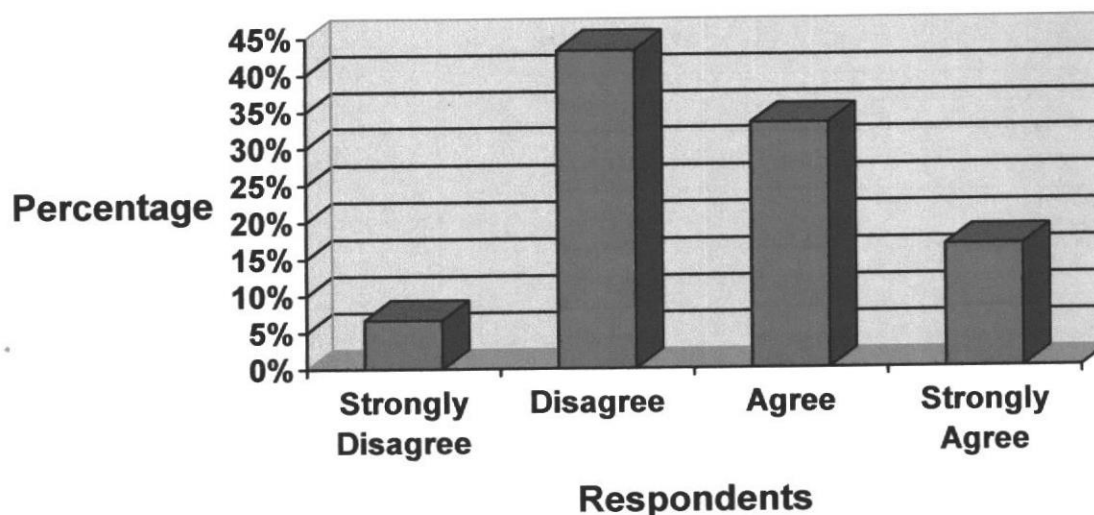


Figure 1.4 showing the qualification of the respondents.

Section 2: Presentation of Liker type statement.

Statement 1: Parents of low-income families' show less interest in their children's schoolwork.

Figure 1: Graph showing percentages of response to statement 1.



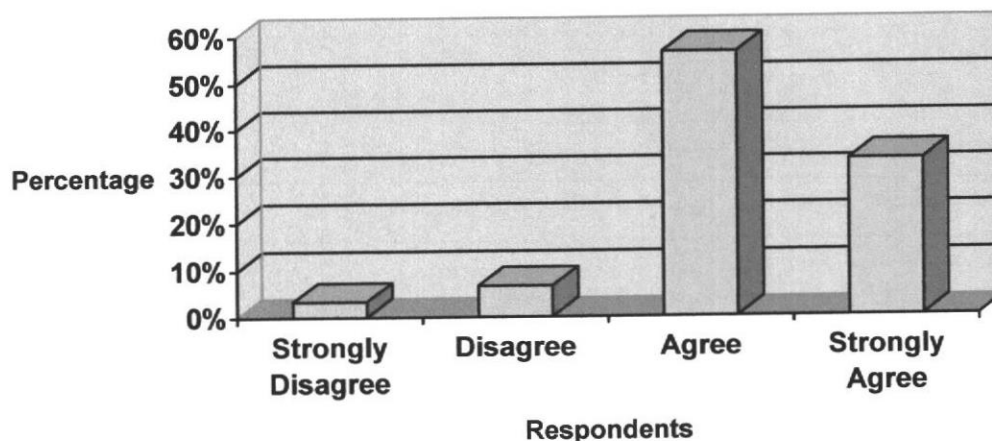
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	2	13	10	5	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	2	26	30	20	78		
Average					2.6		
Percentage	6.67 %	43.33%	33.33%	16.67%			
Total		50%		50%			

Table 1

Table 1, shows a total of 50% of the total percentage of the respondents agreed that parents of low-income families' show less interest in their children's schoolwork. However, it shows that 50% of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Therefore, there was an equal distribution of the responses, although the average falls between 2.5 and 4 making the statement positive or favorable.

Statement 2: Children who do their homework usually perform well in their schoolwork.

Figure 2: Graph showing percentages of response to statement 2.



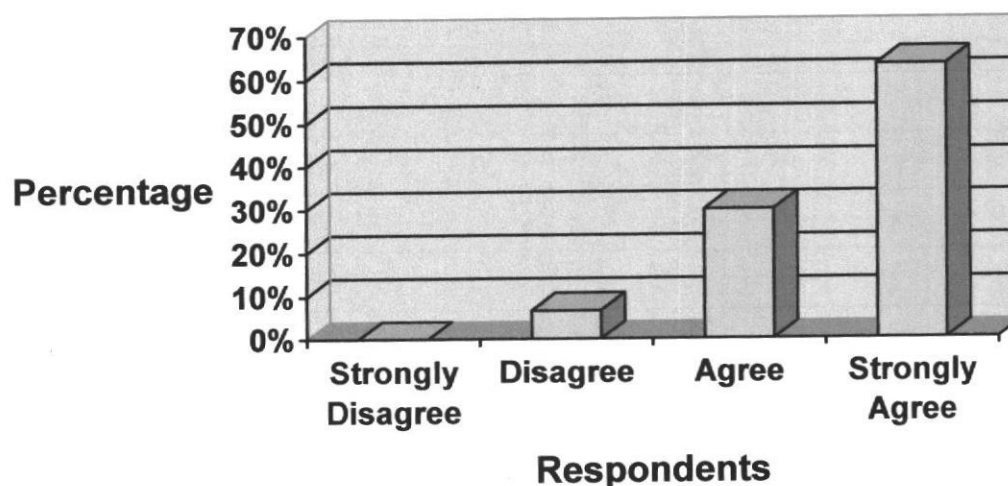
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	1	2	17	10	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	1	4	51	40	96		
Average					3.2	*	
Percentage	3.33%	6.67%	56.67%	33.33%	100%		
Total		10%		90%			

Table 2

Table 2, shows a total of 90% which is about three fourth of the respondents agreed that children who do their homework usually performs well in their schoolwork. Although, a total of 10% which is about only one fourth of the respondents disagreed. The average 3.2 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Statement 3: Extra tutoring helps to improve the performance of those children who are slow.

Figure 3: Graph showing the percentages of response to statement 3.



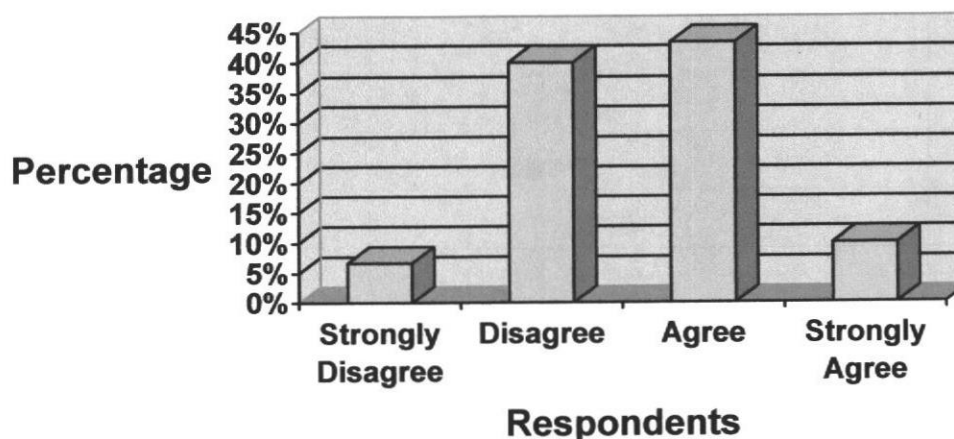
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	0	2	9	19	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	0	4	27	76	107		
Average					3.57	*	
Percentage	0%	6.67%	30%	63.33%	100%		
Total		6.67%		93.33%			

Table 3

In Table 3, shows a total of 93.33% agreed that extra tutoring helps the performance of those children who are slow. However, a total of 6.67% disagreed. The average point of 3.57 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Statement 4: The family's income influences the parents' attitude towards their children's schoolwork.

Figure 4: Graph showing the percentages of response to statement 4.



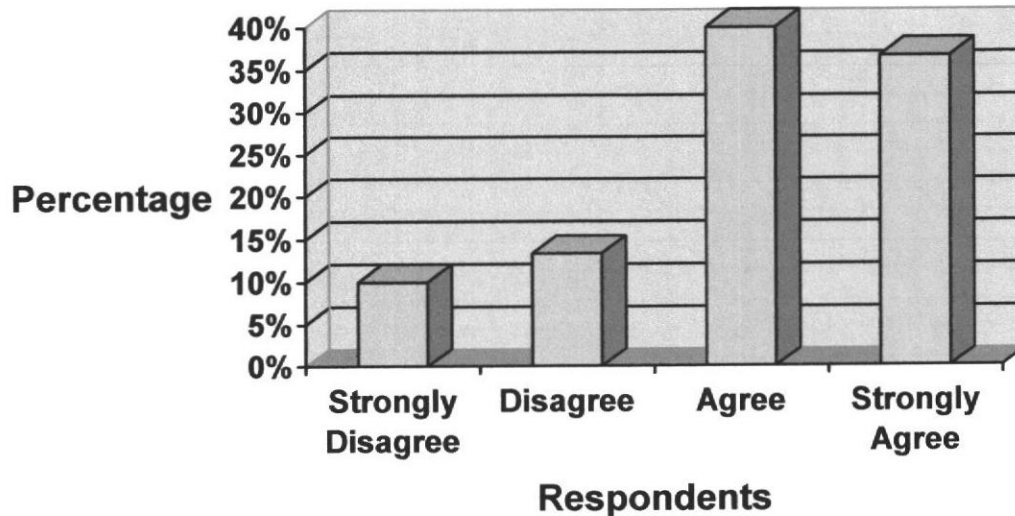
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	1	11	14	4	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	1	22	42	16	82		
Average					2.73	*	
Percentage	3.33%	36.67%	46.67%	13.33%	100%		
Total		40%		60%			

Table 4

Table 4, shows a total of 53.33% agreed that the family's income influences the parents' attitude towards their children's schoolwork. However, a total of 46.67% disagreed to this statement. The average 2.73 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Statement 5: Parents involvement in school involvement in school activities, contributes to the improvement is shown in their children's performance at school.

Figure 5: Graph showing the percentages of respondents to statement 5.



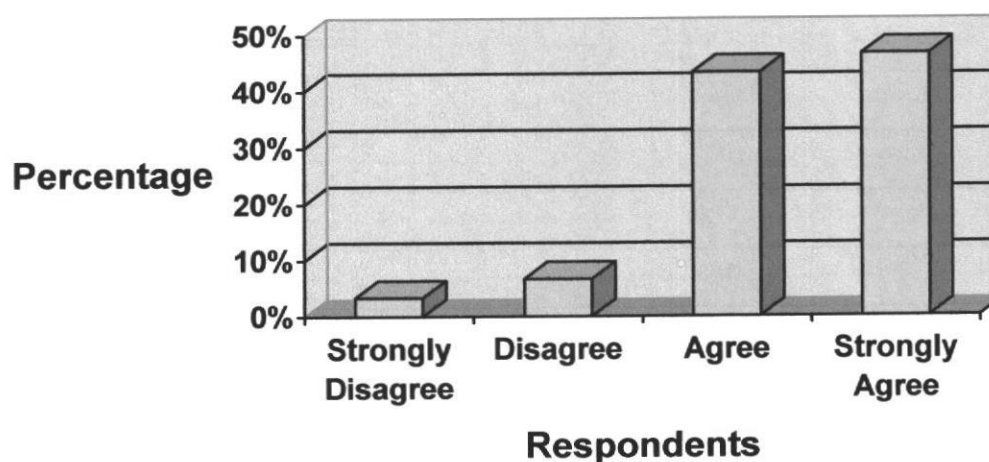
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	3	4	12	11	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	3	8	36	44	91		
Average					3.03	*	
Percentage	10%	13%	40%	37%	100%		
Total		23%		77%			

Table 5

In Table 5, a total of 77% agreed that parents involvement in school activities, contributes to the improvement shown in their children's performance at school. However, a total of 23% disagreed on this. The average 3.03 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Statement 6: Parents visiting their children's teacher at least twice a month to check on their progress in their schoolwork contributes to the improvement in their children's performance at school.

Figure 6: Graph showing the percentage of respondents to statement 6.



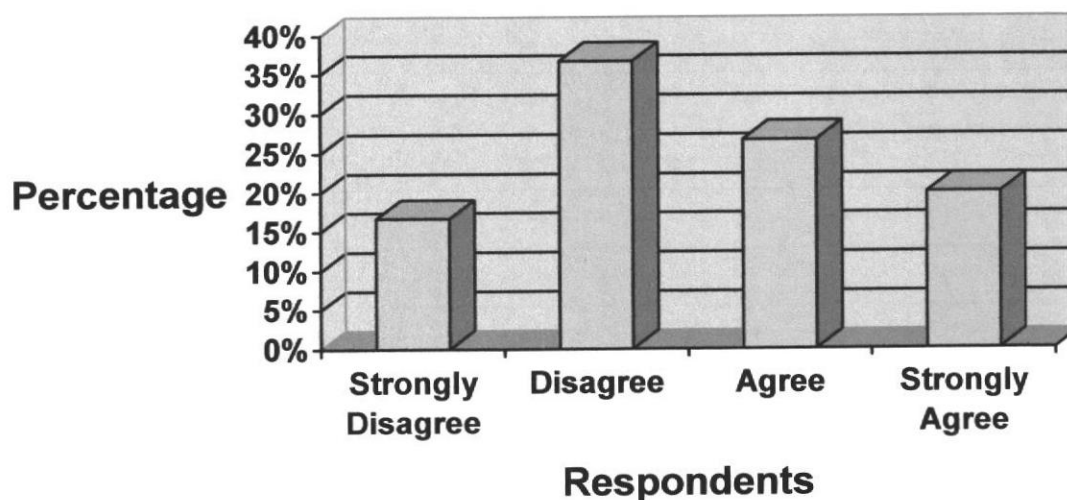
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	1	2	13	14	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	1	4	39	56	100		
Average					3.33	*	
Percentage	3.33%	6.67%	43.33%	46.67%	100%		
Total		10%		90%			

Table 6

In Table 6, a total of 90% agreed that parents who visit their children's teacher at least twice a month to check on their progress in their school work, contributes to the improvement in their children's performance at school. However, a total of 10% which is a minority disagreed on this statement. The average 3.33 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered favorable or positive.

Statement 7: Children who spend time in doing chores do not have time to do their homework.

Figure 7: Graph showing the percentage of respondents towards statement 7.



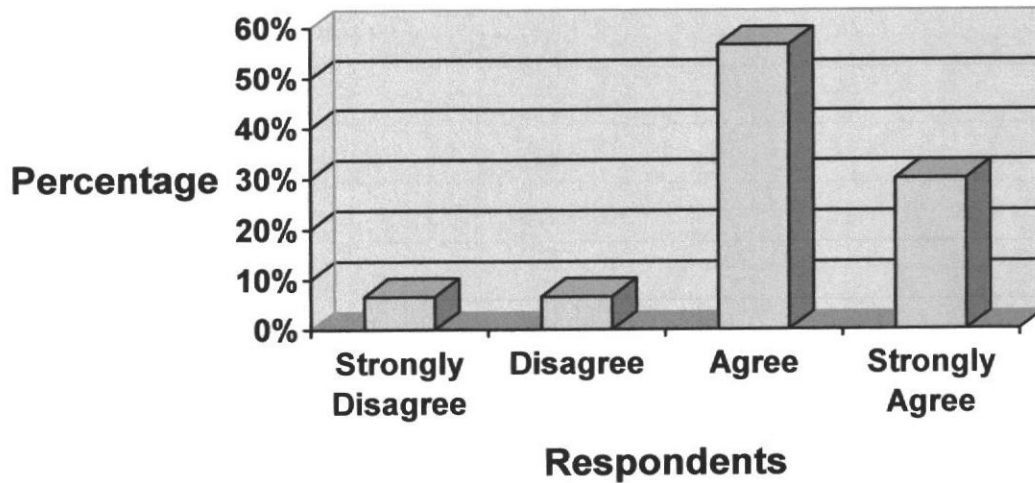
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	5	11	8	6	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	5	22	24	24	65		
Average					2.16		*
Percentage	16.66%	36.67	26.67%	20%	100%		
Total		53.33%		46.67%			

Table 7

Table 7, shows a total of 53.33% disagreed that children who spend time doing chores do not have time to do their homework. However, a total of 46.67% agreed to this statement. The average 2.16 falls between 1 and 2.5. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered negative or unfavorable.

Statement 8: The environment in which the family lives affect the child's performance at school.

Figure 8: Graph showing the percentages of respondents to statement 8.



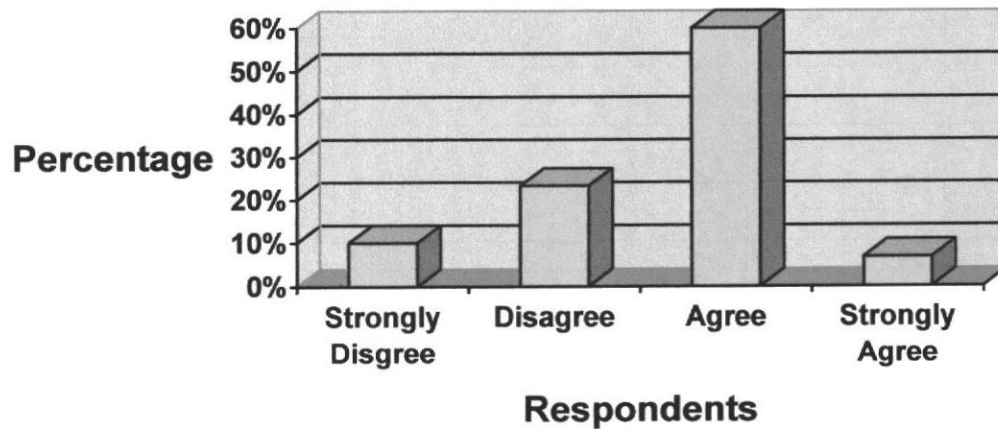
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	2	2	17	9	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	2	4	51	36	93		
Average					3.1	*	
Percentage	6.67%	6.67%	56.66%	30%	100%		
Total		13.34%		86.66%			

Table 8

Table 8, shows a total of 86.66% agreed that, the environment in which the family lives can affect the child's performance at school. However, a total of 13.34% disagreed to this statement. The average 3.1 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Statement 9: A child that is provided with the necessary school materials by his/her parents usually performs well in his/her schoolwork.

Figure 9: Graph showing percentages of respondents to statement 9.



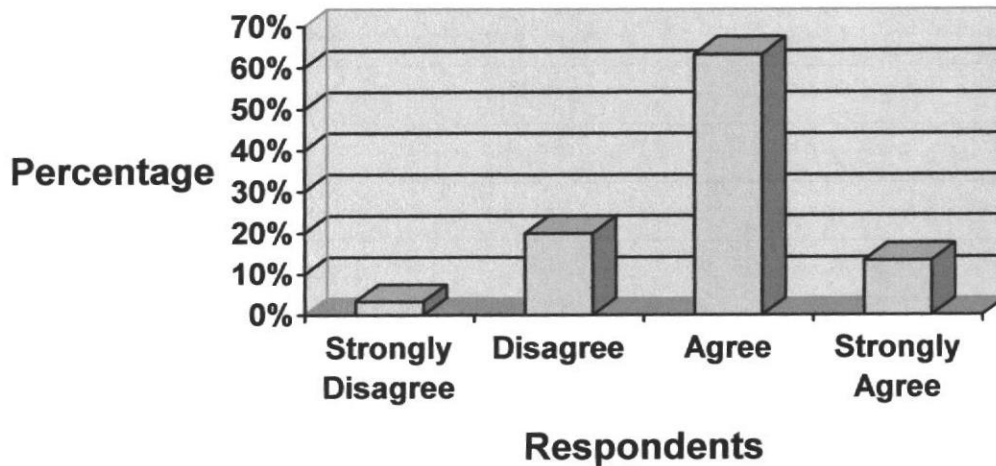
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	3	7	18	2	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	3	14	54	8	79		
Average					2.63	*	
Percentage	10%	23.33%	60%	6.67%	100%		
Total		33.33%		66.67%			

Table 9

Table 9, shows a total of 66.67% agreed that, a child that is provided with necessary school materials by his/her parents usually performs well in his/her schoolwork. However, a total of 33.33% disagreed. The average 2.63 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Statement 10: The performance of a child depends on the quality of life his/her parents provide.

Figure 10: Graph showing the percentages of respondents to statement 10.

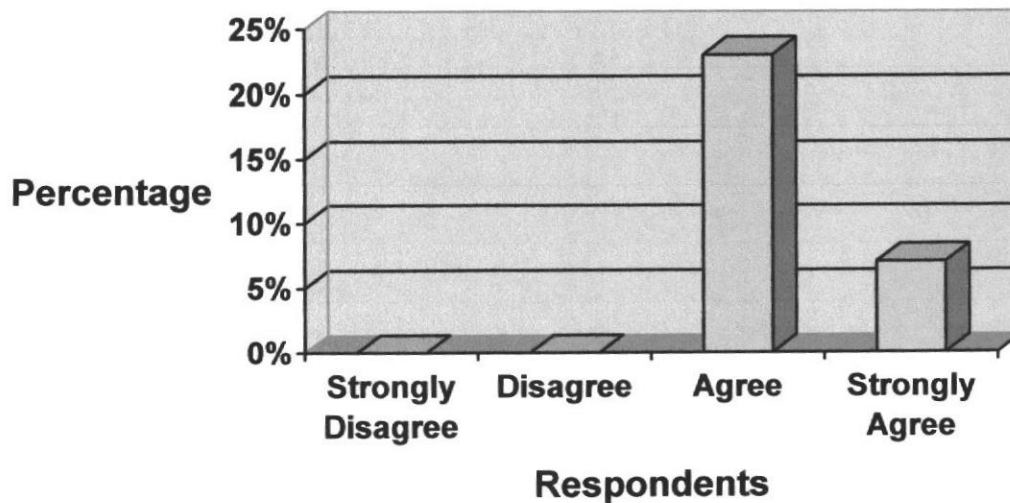


	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	1	6	19	4	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	1	12	57	16	86		
Average					2.87	*	
Percentage	3%	20%	64%	13%	100%		
Total		23%		77%			

Table 10, shows a total of 77% agreed that, the performance of a child depends on the quality of life his/her parents provides. However, a total of 23% disagreed. The average a child that is provided with necessary school materials by his/her parents usually performs well in his/her schoolwork. However, a total of 33.33% disagreed. The average 2.87 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Statement 11: The performance of a child depends on the support the teacher provides for them in their schoolwork.

Figure 11: Graph showing the percentages of respondents to statement 11.



	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Positive	Negative
No. of respondents	0	0	23	7	30		
Points	1	2	3	4			
Total Points	0	0	69	21	90		
Average					3.0	*	
Percentage	0%	0%	76.67%	23.33%	100%		
Total		0%		100%			

Table 11, shows a total of 100% agreed that, the performance of a child depends on the support the teacher provides for them in their schoolwork which is the total percentage of the respondents. No respondent disagreed with this statement. The average 3.0 falls between 2.5 and 4.0. Therefore, the response to this statement is considered positive or favorable.

Section 3: Presentation of Open ended questions.

1. What do you think are some of the reasons why students do not do homework?

Twenty five of the respondents said that a reason why students do not do homework is because they are lacking parental interest. Five of the respondents said that parents might not have knowledge of the homework since most of them did not complete primary school. Five of the respondents said that children lack resources and materials. Two of the respondents said that children go to church every night and reach home late. Ten of the respondents said that there were too many distractions such as television and friends.

2. Do you think that the family's low income has an effect on the child's performance?

Fifteen of the respondents said that the family's income has an effect on the child's performance because they are not provided with the necessary materials such as textbooks, materials and resources needed for them to perform well. Five said they have little or no food to eat so they cannot focus in class. Ten of the respondents said no because it all depend on the interest of the child and support they get from home.

3. What support is available for students that come from low-income families to improve their performance?

Eleven of the respondents said that teachers usually give a lot of support to children that need help. Eight of the respondents said that free textbooks are available and library services. Six of the respondents said that teachers provide support by giving extra classes in the evening or on weekends for children to improve their performance. Five of the respondents did not answer this question.

4. Do you think children perform poorly when there are a large number of people in the family? Give reason for your answer.

Fourteen of the respondents did not believe that children from large families performed poorly because they get support from siblings or other family members. Five respondents disagreed they thought it depend because it depends on the interest of the child and their parents not the number of people in the family. However, eleven of the respondents agreed because parents are busy and some of the children get neglected especially when it comes to homework. .

Analysis of Data

The researcher believes that most of the responses of the respondents were based on their experiences to the situation in each of the statement.

Comparing the response from the respondents of both school the researcher noticed that there was a trend in their responses. The majority of them responded positively to the positive statements and negative to the negative statement.

Looking at the qualification of the respondents the researcher noticed that there was a trend in the response of the respondents that have seven years and above teaching experiences. They either agreed or strongly agreed to the statement except for statement seven they all disagreed that children who spend time doing chores do not have time to do their homework. However, the respondents that had one to six years of teaching experiences either disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statements. Also they were the younger teachers. The researcher believes the reason for this deviation is due to limited of years of exposure to the situations in the statements or their experience made them believe differently towards the situation in the statements.

All the respondents agreed or strongly agreed the performance of a child depends on the support the teacher provides for them in their schoolwork. This goes in accordance to their response to question three of section three of the questionnaire, (What support is available for student that comes from low-income families to improve their performance?), whereby most of the respondents said that s teachers usually give a lot of support to children that need help.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This survey was to determine teacher's perception about the relationship between a family's income and academic performance of students at San Martin Primary School and Garden City Primary School in Belmopan. Also to test the researcher's hypothesis, "Most children that come from a low-income family have a poor academic performance." This survey was conducted using a questionnaire to gather teacher's perception base on their experience on the above mention situation.

From the survey the researcher gathered the following factors that may place a child at-risk for poor academic performance.

Children lack parental interest and support because the parent has a low educational level so they are unable to assist their children. Also children are not provided with the necessary materials such as textbooks, materials and resources needed for them to perform well. This goes in accordance to what Leroy & Syness (2001) states, that poverty is considered a major at-risk factor. Some of the factors related to poverty which may place a child at-risk for academic failures are, low educational level parents and exposure to inadequate or inappropriate educational resources.

Children's performance has a lot to do with the attitude and the behavior their parents demonstrate towards their education. A number of studies have found that a child's home environment, opportunities for learning, warmth of mother-child interactions, and the physical condition of the home account for a substantial portion of the effects of family income on cognitive outcomes in young children. This can be clearly seen from the response gathered from statement 8 (The environment in which the

family lives can affect the child's performance). Whereby a total of 86.66% of the respondents agreed oppose to 13.34% that disagreed. Also this can be clearly been see in the response gathered from Statement 4 (The family's income influences the parent's attitude towards their schoolwork.) Whereby a total of 60% of the respondents agreed only 40% disagreed.

According 7newsbelize posted (July 8, 2008), Scotia Bank Gives Education Grants. Scotia Bank handed out checks to 65 primary school students. The checks were for about three to four hundred dollars each and are education grants to help the students and their parents pay fees and buy books for the upcoming school year. The previous government has introduced a free textbook program which is presently still carried out elevate the expense of parents in purchasing books. This goes in accordance to the response gathered from the respondents whereby the majority of the respondents agreed that there is support available for students that comes from-low-income families to improve their performance. However, most of this response was gathered from the teachers in the urban area. Majority of the teachers agreed that teachers do provide support for children that comes from a low-income family and needs help.

This research proves that families' low-income status has an effect on their children academic performance. The behavior and attitude the parents demonstrate towards education have an influence on their children's academic performance. However, there is provision available in our educational systems for children in the classroom who come from a low income family but, how readily and why are they not accessible to all the children that needs it, is another issue that needs to be addressed.

Recommendations:

Based on the analysis of the data collected indicates the families' income do has an effect on their children's academic performance and a major factor that contributes to that is their parents. Parenting is the means through which children experience the world. Because the parent-child relationship is the primary context for early behavioral, social and cognitive development, negative effects on parents due to poverty factors in turn have a negative effect on the development of the child. Children rely on their parents to mediate their environment, respond to their needs and provide emotional stimulation and support. If, because of poverty related stresses, the parent does not do this, the child's development could be delayed or be otherwise negatively affected (Kaiser and Delaney, 1996).

Therefore, my recommendations to solve or alleviate this problem are as follows:

Create a close relationship with our parents. By educating our parents so they can help their children. Teach them the same concepts that we are teaching our children.

Motivate our parents by providing them with incentives such as social gatherings to increase their involvement in their children's schoolwork.

For the teacher's in the rural area they need to be inform of some of the support given to aid low- income families and try to lobby to get that support for their children

The administrative body in the education system needs to reach out into the rural area because there is where there are much needed help.

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Dear Teachers,

In partial fulfillment for a Bachelor's Degree in Primary Education, I am conducting an investigation to determine the relationship between children of low-income families and their academic performance. This questionnaire is designed to collect data to complete the research paper.

I would be grateful if you could complete this questionnaire, being as honest as possible. I assure you that the information collected will be kept confidentially and will be used solely for the purpose of this research paper.

Thanks in advance for your kind co-operation.

Respectfully yours,

Jacqueline Rancharan
Student

Teacher's Questionnaire

Instructions: Please give your answer to the questions by placing an "X" in one of the answer box or fill in the blank spaces provided.

Section I

1. Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age range: 18 - 20 years ☐
21 - 30 years ☐
31 - 40 years ☐
41 - 50 years ☐
51 and above ☐
3. Educational status: ☐ Second Class
☐ First Class
☐ Level 1
☐ Level 2
☐ Trained Teachers' Diploma
☐ Bachelor's Degree in Primary education
_____ Others
4. Years of Experience: ☐ 1-3 ☐ 4-6 ☐ 7-9 ☐ 10-12 ☐ 13 or above

Section II

Please give your answer to the following questions by circling your appropriate response.

SD – Strongly Disagree D – Disagree A – Agree SA – Strongly Agree

1. Parents of low-income families' show less interest in their children's schoolwork.
SD D A SA
2. Children who do their homework usually performs well in their schoolwork.
SD D A SA
3. Extra tutoring helps to improve the performance of those children who are slow.
SD D A SA
4. The family's income influences the parents' attitude towards their children's schoolwork.
SD D A SA

5. Parents involvement in school activities, contributes to the improvement is shown in their children's performance at school.

SD D A SA

6. Parents visiting their children's teacher at least twice a month to check their progress in their school work, contributes to the improvement in their children's performance at school.

SD D A SA

7. Children who spend time in doing chores do not have time to do their homework.

SD D A SA

8. The environment in which the family lives can affect the child's performance at school.

SD D A SA

9. A child that is provided with the necessary school materials by hi/her parents usually performs well in his/her schoolwork?

SD D A SA

10. The performance of a child depends on the quality of live his/her parents provide.

SD D A SA

11. The performance of a child depends on the support the teacher provides for them in their schoolwork.

SD D A SA

Section 111

Briefly respond to the following questions as honestly as possible.

1. What do you think are some of the reasons why students do not do homework?

2. Do you think that the family's low income has an effect on the child's performance? Give reason for your answer.

3. What support is available for student that comes from low-income families to improve their performances?

4. Do you think children perform poorly when there are a large number of people in the family? Give reasons for your answer.
