

# The role of economic status in education

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From the time human beings are born, there are goals society expects them to achieve. Considering life is lived in stages, accomplishing these goals is immensely important in order to move onto the next stage. This leads human beings to be goal oriented creatures. The most difficult and most important goal people strive for their whole life is to be successful. No matter what that might mean to each individual. A part of being successful for a majority of people includes obtaining a higher education. To some a degree is like a key that can open an endless amount of opportunities.

Acquiring a higher education can be more of a dream than a reality to some people, especially those that belong to the lower economic class. It more often than not is unlikely for these individuals to triumph in college. Students belonging to a lower income household struggle to succeed in college because of the pressure they endure due to other responsibilities, insufficient financial aid, and an absent sense of belonging. Low-income students face constant pressure from their other responsibilities. Upper-class students have the luxury of not having to worry about anything other than their education if they choose to. Lower class students have to worry about a part-time job, helping their families financially, and making sure in the end all of their struggles are so they can have a better life. Some students have a part-time job to be able to pay for their education and help their families with bills. This is extremely stressful because the students do not have as much time as they might need to dedicate themselves to school. When students do not have time to complete their assignments or study for exams they put themselves at a higher risk of failing a class and having to repeat it when they do not have the resources to do so. Students that belong to the lower

class “tend toward “useful” majors, such as computer science, math, and physics”. They do this in hopes of obtaining a higher economic status. High-income students do not have to worry about how much their job pays “because they have the knowledge that their parents’ money will arrive eventually”. Students that come from well-situated families have the liberty to study anything that interests them without having to panic about their future financially, while lower-class students do not. If a student has too much pressure being put on them, it could come to a point where they give up. These students need help in finding a balance in their lives.

One of the biggest issues lower-class students face is that they do not receive enough financial aid. Going to college can be one of the most expensive decisions a student makes. To make it more affordable, specifically for low-income students, colleges and the government give scholarships and grants. The sad truth is that even with these options, lower-class students are still not getting the help they need. Meanwhile, students from wealthy families that attend “public universities, they get \$1,180 more than they need, according to the College Board” to cover their tuition. Instead of helping the students that really need the money, financial aid is going to individuals that would be just fine without it. Hence, students that belong to the lower class are being pushed away from obtaining a higher education. The education system is biased because “if you’re a bright kid coming from a relatively low-income family, your chances of enrolling in and eventually completing college are much, much lower than a less-talented student coming from a wealthy family”.

There needs to be a major shift in the financial aid system where more money goes to those that belong to the lower class. If change does not happen there will come a time where only wealthy children are getting a higher education, this would be a major regression for civilization. The education system should be a place where all students are seen as equal with no regards to their economic status. The need to belong is a part of every individual's life. The transition from high school to college is extremely drastic. Students all of a sudden have to adjust to adulthood. If students feel like they do not belong it can make the transition harder. This happens to students that come from lower class families because they tend to feel disconnected from their peers and administration. When a low-income student is trying to work with their upper-middle class administration, who "exhibits upper-middle class expectations", it can be hard for them to understand one another. The administration will not understand the struggles a lower class student has to overcome because they themselves have not been through them. Consequently, the students feel discouraged and alone. Upper-class students tend to have a better education compared to lower class students, therefore they understand college concepts better. When students are "reminded of being undereducated, you'll see a decrease in their scores". This makes the individual question their self-worth and their ability to learn. The classroom should be a place where "cultures have to strive to acknowledge and to understand each other's differences".

College should be a place where students try to learn as much as possible from one another by embracing each other's differences. Only then will every student feel like they are welcomed no matter what their background

is. Having goals in life is an essential part of human nature. The one goal that individuals work to complete their entire life is becoming successful. To a lot of people, part of becoming successful includes getting a higher education. This can give a person the ability to do what they are passionate about for a living. Unfortunately for students that belong to a low-income family achieving this goal can be impracticable. Lower class students struggle to be successful in college because of the pressure that is put on them, inadequate financial aid, and a lacking sense of belonging.