

## Research Summary

# Does school location and parents' education affect language learners' motivation?

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## What is this study about?

Socioeconomic Status (SES) is a relative measure for social and economic position of individuals and families in a society based on their educational level, where they live, what they do, and how much they earn. SES is consistently associated with student achievement, but little is known about the relationship between SES and student motivation. This study used two indicators of SES including school location and parent education to see if they can exert their influence on student motivation to learn English as a foreign language in Poland.

## What did the researcher do?

The researcher tailored a two-part questionnaire for this study. The first part includes statements for the participants to respond on a five point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) based on their own experience. These statements belong to seven categories of motivational concepts such as ideal self, self concept, intrinsic motivation ect. The second part consists of background questions such as gender, history of English learning, and parents' education. After that, she visited 10 schools and asked the students in English classes to complete the questionnaire. A total of 599 Polish students aged from 15-16 participated. 55% of the learners were from rural schools and approximately 45% of them were from urban schools. Finally, she analyzed the data to see if the statements consistently match with their prior categorization based on the students' responses. She also tested whether school location (rural vs. urban) and parents' education (father & mother) were associated with scores on different motivational scales.

## What did the researcher find?

The results indicated that both school location and parents' education affect students' motivation to learn English. Specifically, the data showed a small overall effect of school location on students' motivation. Second, both father's and mother's education level affected the students' learning motivation, but the effect was small and affected the different motivational constructs. In short, students from the cities' schools and parents who have higher levels of education tend to be more motivated in English language learning than students from the rural school and parents who have lower levels of education.

## Why is the finding important?

The finding raises teachers' awareness and researchers' attention to how students' SES plays an important role in language learning motivation. It may help instructors to use appropriate methods to motivate students in the learning process. It also suggests that future research of motivation on second language learning should take SES factors into consideration.

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