Socioeconomic Influences on Educational and Career Attainment.

Harriet Grace Evans

BSc Economics

School of Economics

University of Kent, July 2025

Abstract

Socioeconomic status (SES) plays a crucial role in shaping educational and career attainment. This study examines the relationship between SES and three key milestones: GCSE performance, university attendance, and future earnings expectations. To explore and examine any potential relationship between them, UK cross-sectional data was used from the age 17 sweep of the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS). Utilising this data, the binary logit regression methodology was applied. The analysis conducted provides evidence to suggest that SES significantly influences GCSE performance but has a weaker impact on university attendance and future earnings expectations, possibly due to policy interventions reducing barriers.

AI Statement

I acknowledge the use of generative AI in drafting/literature search/ code development in this paper. However, the work reported remains my own.

Acknowledgements

To my supervisor, Dr Andrey Launov, thank you for your patience, guidance and encouragement throughout this journey.

To my family, thank you for your endless support and belief in me. You have instilled in me the determination and resilience that has brought me to this point.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my nan, who sadly passed away just two weeks before its submission. She was always proud of my decision to pursue higher education and follow my aspiration to become a teacher.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background & Context

Imagine being the first in your family to pass your GCSEs, attend university, or have a job with high earnings, a moment of immense pride and accomplishment. For many, this is a reality, but it comes with challenges that have already been overcome, as well as those that lie ahead. These challenges are often connected to socioeconomic status (SES), which represents an individual's or family's social and economic standing within society, incorporating factors, such as, income, parental education and occupation (Mistry et al., 2010). Firstly, income determines a family's financial resources, influencing access to quality schools and educational materials. Secondly, a parents education can impact the support they can offer, such as, helping with homework or navigating university applications. Finally, occupation affects family stability and the time parents can dedicate to their children's education. Together, these factors significantly shape educational opportunities and outcomes, often creating barriers for students from lower SES backgrounds. These SES gaps between students can lead to significant disparities in educational experiences and achievement, extending into career prospects and earnings. Students from higher SES backgrounds are more likely to attend prestigious universities, secure internships, and enter high-paying careers, while those from lower SES backgrounds often encounter greater challenges in achieving similar outcomes (Reality Changers, 2024). Research has consistently demonstrated a strong relationship between SES and academic success. Several studies (OECD, 2018; Reardon, 2018; Sirin, 2005) have found that students from higher SES backgrounds tend to achieve higher test scores, better grades, and greater overall educational attainment than their lower SES peers.

One major challenge when attending university for lower SES students is financial constraints, which include tuition fees, rent, and daily expenses. This issue has persisted for decades, but policy reforms and increased support for low-income students have helped narrow the gap (Berumen, Zerquera and Smith, 2015). Eligible students can receive a tuition fee loan to cover the full cost of university fees, which currently stand at £9,250 per year, along with a maintenance loan to help with living costs, such as, rent and bills (UCAS, 2014). For students whose household income is £25,000 or less and who are living away from home in London, the maximum maintenance loan available is £13,348 per year (Department for Education, 2024). These reforms have improved access to higher education, working to level the playing field for students from lower SES backgrounds.

1.2 Research Aims & Objectives

I decided to examine the relationship between SES and educational and career outcomes to see how a family's background affects a child's academic journey and long-term financial prospects. Many variables may influence a child's academic attainment, such as, household income, parental education and occupation. However, I wanted to investigate whether there was any significant correlation between these factors and key educational milestones, such as GCSE performance, university attendance, and eventually future earnings. This study was prompted by the theory that parents with higher levels of education are more likely to have children who are also highly educated (Elliott and Bachman, 2018). The reasoning behind this is that well-educated parents typically earn higher incomes, providing them with the resources to support their children's education. Moreover, their financial stability may allow them to work fewer hours, giving them more time to assist with homework, arrange private tutoring, and support extracurricular activities (Fischer, Barnes and Kilpatrick, 2017). Nevertheless, it is important to recognise that the relationship between SES and academic success is complex and influenced by multiple factors. While higher SES is generally associated with better academic outcomes, there are exceptions. Research has shown that some students from low-income backgrounds excel in school despite facing significant social and economic challenges (Munir, Faiza and Daud, 2023). These cases highlight the need to examine additional factors that may influence or alter the connection between SES and academic achievement (Lee and Burkam, 2002; Stephens, Hamedani and Destin, 2014). This involves exploring whether the relationship between SES and educational and career outcomes has changed over time, by comparing previous literature with the findings of this study, particularly in light of policy reforms and increased student support. (Berumen, Zerquera and Smith, 2015). Ultimately, it will be crucial to determine whether the SES gap has narrowed or if it still plays a significant role in shaping student success.

1.3 Importance of the Study

Understanding the impact of SES on academic and career achievement is essential for identifying and addressing the barriers that certain groups of students face throughout their education and into their future careers. Students from lower SES backgrounds often encounter challenges, such as, limited access to resources, lower levels of parental involvement, and poorer school quality, all of which can negatively influence academic outcomes and long-term financial prospects (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003). Recognising these challenges is crucial in promoting equity and social mobility, as it enables policymakers and educators to implement

targeted strategies that aim to reduce educational disparities and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed (Munir, Faiza, and Daud, 2023). In addition to promoting equity, addressing these educational inequalities allows schools and teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the diverse challenges faced by students from different SES backgrounds. With this understanding, instructional methods can be adapted, curricula can be adjusted, and additional support systems can be introduced to meet the individual needs of disadvantaged students, ultimately improving their educational outcomes (Munir, Faiza, and Daud, 2023). Without such measures, students from lower-income families may continue to face limited access to higher education and fewer long-term financial opportunities, further widening the achievement gap.

Reducing these disparities is crucial for fostering a more inclusive education system, ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of their SES. Several interventions and policies have already been introduced to minimise educational inequalities by improving access to resources and support services for disadvantaged students. (Dietrichson et al., 2017). However, to effectively narrow the gap, it is important for policymakers and educators to understand how SES influences academic achievement and identify the key factors driving these inequalities. With this knowledge, targeted strategies can be developed to promote fairness in education and create a learning environment where every student has the chance to reach their full potential.

1.4 Structure of Dissertation

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: Chapter two presents the literature review, discussing relevant studies to provide context and guidance. Chapter three focuses on the data, detailing the data sources, collection process, and key variables. Chapter four outlines the methodology, including a brief overview of the binary logit regression, the process of constructing the regressions, variable transformations, data merging, and a brief discussion on robustness checks. Chapter five analyses the results and offers a discussion of the findings. Finally, Chapter six concludes the study by summarising key insights.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This literature review examines studies that explore the impact of SES on GCSE performance, university access, and future earnings expectations, the three key themes guiding this analysis. Through a detailed review, a growing body of research has investigated these relationships, providing valuable insights that have shaped my approach. However, gaps in the literature

remain, particularly the limited research on the link between SES and future earnings expectations, as well as a pattern of studies focusing on individual aspects, without considering their broader interconnected effects. Despite these limitations, the existing research provides a strong foundation for this study and highlights the importance of further contributions to this critical field.

2.1 Theme one: Socioeconomic background & GCSE performance

The first theme explores how SES affects students in secondary schools, specifically those sitting their GCSEs. A unifying element across these studies is how SES shapes academic achievement and access to opportunities, whether through attainment gaps, structural barriers, or intervention effectiveness. Stopforth (2020) examines how SES influences GCSE attainment, highlighting persistent educational inequalities. Meanwhile, Abrahams (2018) investigates school-level factors like timetabling and subject choice restrictions that limit opportunities for disadvantaged students. Lastly, Dietrichson et al. (2017) shift focus to the effectiveness of academic interventions, assessing strategies that mitigate the impact of low-SES on student achievement. Collectively, these studies underscore how SES shapes students' experiences and access to post-secondary opportunities.

Stopforth (2020) examines the enduring impact of parental SES on GCSE attainment in England. Stopforth (2020) builds on two decades of research highlighting SES disparities in school performance, driven by ongoing educational inequalities. Using large-scale, nationally representative datasets, such as, the British Household Panel Survey and the UK Household Longitudinal Study, Stopforth (2020) applies statistical modelling techniques, including path analysis and sensitivity analyses, to assess the extent to which prior attainment, cultural capital, and educational aspirations explain these disparities. The findings indicate that SES inequalities in GCSE attainment persist even after controlling for prior achievement, suggesting that parental education and occupational background have both direct and indirect effects on student outcomes. A key strength of the research lies in its detailed measures of SES, which go beyond commonly used proxies like eligibility for free school meals. However, limitations remain, including challenges in accounting for unobserved factors, such as, motivation and school-specific interventions. Stopforth (2020) underscores the importance of early interventions to mitigate disparities before they widen throughout secondary education.

Abrahams (2018) adds to the growing research on educational inequalities in England by examining the role of GCSE and A-Level subject choices in shaping university access. While

much of the literature highlights how SES drives disparities in academic achievement and access to elite universities, this study takes a different approach by exploring structural issues, including school timetabling and subject availability, which restrict choices and opportunities available for disadvantaged pupils. Using qualitative methods, including surveys and interviews conducted across three schools with different SES contexts, Abrahams (2018) identifies stark contrasts in practices. Privileged schools foster "institutional concerted cultivation," actively expanding subject choices for their students, whereas disadvantaged schools exhibit "constrained cultivation," limiting access to high-value subjects. A key strength of the study is its detailed exploration of these structural barriers and how they shape opportunities for different SES groups. However, its focus on a small sample of three schools limits the generalisability of its findings, making it harder to draw conclusions about broader systemic trends. Abrahams (2018) concludes by advocating for contextualised admission policies in higher education to address disparities in subject availability and institutional support.

Lastly, Dietrichson et al. (2017) build on existing research by examining the effectiveness of academic interventions for low-SES students in elementary and middle school. This study is motivated by the persistent achievement gap and the need to identify evidence-based strategies to close it. Using a meta-analysis of 101 studies, 76% of which are randomised controlled trials, Dietrichson et al. (2017) assess the impact of interventions on standardised test scores in mathematics and reading. The findings highlight tutoring (ES = 0.36), feedback and progress monitoring (ES = 0.32), and cooperative learning (ES = 0.22) as the most effective strategies. A key strength of the study is its reliance on robust statistical methods to consolidate findings across diverse educational settings. However, variations in effect sizes suggest that unobserved variables, such as, student motivation and differences in intervention implementation may not be accounted for. Ultimately, Dietrichson et al. (2017) emphasise the importance of targeted interventions to support low-SES students and reduce educational inequalities.

2.2 Theme two: Socioeconomic background & university access

The second theme explores how SES affects university access. A unifying element across these studies is how SES shapes university access, whether through early-life circumstances, parental involvement, or parental engagement. Fergusson and Woodward (2000) examine how family SES at birth shapes university participation in New Zealand, considering the role of cognitive ability and school performance. Meanwhile, Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) highlight the significant role of parental involvement in academic achievement, particularly for students

from low-SES backgrounds, stressing the importance of targeted interventions to support disadvantaged families. Lastly, Fischer et al. (2017) examine the role of parental engagement in shaping higher education aspirations, highlighting how access to information and social capital can help students from low-SES backgrounds navigate the university application process. Together, these studies highlight how SES influences university access, emphasising the need for policies that address barriers throughout the educational journey.

Fergusson and Woodward (2000) examine the impact of family SES at birth on university participation in New Zealand. This study is driven by concerns about how early-life SES influences long-term outcomes. Using longitudinal data from the Christchurch Health and Development Study, Fergusson and Woodward (2000) apply logistic regression analysis to determine whether socio-demographic factors, cognitive ability, and school performance mediate this relationship. Fergusson and Woodward (2000) reveal that students from professional/managerial backgrounds are significantly more likely to attend university than those from semi-skilled or unskilled families, even after controlling for prior attainment. This suggests that disparities in university participation extend beyond academic ability to include socialisation experiences and financial barriers. A key strength of the study is its longitudinal design, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of early-life influences on higher education. However, it is limited in its ability to capture unobserved factors, such as, aspirations, parental support, and perceptions of financial risk. Fergusson and Woodward (2000) conclude by addressing the need for targeted policies to address both academic and structural barriers to university participation.

Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) contribute to the growing research by examining how parental involvement influences pupil achievement and long-term educational outcomes. This study is motivated by evidence that while parental engagement benefits academic success, its impact varies by SES. Higher-SES parents are more likely to provide academic support, encouragement, and a positive learning environment. Using a comprehensive literature review, Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) analyse how different forms of parental involvement shape student performance. Their findings highlight that at-home engagement has a significant positive effect, reinforcing the importance of early parental support. A key strength of the study is its focus on the broader social and economic context, emphasising the need for targeted interventions to assist disadvantaged families. However, it is limited in accounting for unobserved factors, such as, parental motivation and school-led engagement strategies. Ultimately, Desforges and Abouchaar (2003) stress the importance of fostering parental

involvement beyond school activities to ensure all students receive the necessary support to succeed.

Finally, Fischer et al. (2017) adds to the growing research by examining how parental engagement influences higher education aspirations among students from low SES. This study is motivated by evidence suggesting that while parents across all backgrounds aspire for their children to succeed, those from low-SES households often lack the "educational cultural capital" needed to navigate higher education pathways. Parents with higher levels of education often provide greater academic support, stronger encouragement, and increased access to resources, all of which enhance their child's chances of progressing to university. Using a combination of literature review, stakeholder workshops, and case studies, Fischer et al. (2017) develop a design and evaluation tool to improve parental engagement programs. Their findings suggest that outreach initiatives promoting parental social capital and access to information can significantly enhance students' participation in higher education. A key strength of the study is its practical focus, offering a structured framework for evaluating and refining parent engagement strategies. However, limitations exist, including challenges in measuring the long-term impact of these programs on actual university enrolment. Ultimately, Fischer et al. (2017) highlight the importance of equipping parents with the resources and knowledge necessary to support their children's educational aspirations.

2.3 Theme three: Socioeconomic background & future earnings expectations

The final theme explores how SES influences students' expectations about their future earnings. Eliophotou and Pashourtidou (2017) examine earnings expectations among university students in Cyprus, focusing on anticipated salaries at entry-level, mid-career, and long-term stages. There is limited research on this relationship, highlighting a gap where further exploration is needed to understand how SES shapes financial expectations and career decisions.

Eliophotou and Pashourtidou (2017) examine how SES influences students' earnings expectations after university in Cyprus. This study is driven by the need to explore how students from different SES backgrounds perceive their future earnings. Using survey data from third- and fourth-year students at the University of Cyprus, Eliophotou and Pashourtidou (2017) analyse expected salaries at three career stages: entry-level, mid-career, and long-term earnings. Eliophotou and Pashourtidou (2017) find that low-SES students anticipate lower lifetime earnings than their high-SES peers, even when controlling for academic performance.

A key strength of the research is its focus on long-term earnings expectations, shedding light on how SES shapes financial outlooks. However, the study is limited by its reliance on self-reported data, which may not fully capture students' actual career prospects or labour market conditions. Ultimately, Eliophotou and Pashourtidou (2017) emphasise the role of SES in shaping students' financial expectations, underscoring the need for targeted policies to ensure equitable career opportunities.

The studies reviewed above introduced a range of key concepts and theories that have significantly influenced the focus of my research. Examining the literature revealed two key gaps in the field: a lack of research on the relationship between SES and future earnings expectations, and a pattern of studies focusing on individual aspects, such as, secondary education, university, or employment, without integrating these elements into a broader analysis. This narrow approach fails to capture the interconnected nature of these factors, limiting our understanding. To address these gaps, my research takes a more comprehensive approach by examining how SES influences not just academic achievement but also career outcomes. By considering these factors as part of a broader, interconnected framework, my study aims to provide deeper insights that can inform policies and support systems designed to improve opportunities for students from diverse SES backgrounds.

Chapter 3: Data

The data for this analysis was sourced from the UK Data Service, specifically the Millennium Cohort Study (MCS) dataset. The MCS is a longitudinal study that tracks approximately 11,000 young people across the UK, collecting data on their physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural development over time. It also provides valuable insights into their daily lives, experiences, and behaviours, along with detailed information about their parents, economic circumstances, parenting styles, family life, and relationships.

For this study, I selected the age 17 sweep dataset, as it is the most relevant to my research. This sweep was chosen because it includes GCSE qualification data, making it possible to analyse and quantitatively measure educational attainment. In the UK, most students complete their GCSEs by age 17, making this dataset ideal for capturing key academic outcomes. Earlier sweeps, which track younger cohorts, are less suitable for evaluating educational achievement, as GCSEs are the first and only compulsory qualifications in the UK. The MCS offered a varied range of household information gathered through various interviews and surveys, all serving different purposes.

For this analysis, data was collected and drawn from three key sources: the young person online questionnaire, the young person interview and the parent online questionnaire, as these sources contained the necessary information for the econometric model. While numerous variables were considered and analysed, only those most relevant to my research question and with sufficient observations for data reliability were selected for inclusion. This process involved several changes and reflections to refine and consolidate the selected variables. Regarding the young person online questionnaire, this presented information concerning the cohort's academic performance, specifically the grades received at GCSE and subjects taken. For the young person interview, this displayed details about their likelihood of attending university and their predicted earnings by the age of 30. Finally the parent online questionnaire, gathered information about the cohort's parents, including their ethnic background, marital status, highest level of education, employment status, home ownership status, involvement in their child's education, and their perception of the likelihood of their child attending university. To maintain the focus of the analysis, I removed any variables which contributed little to no information to the relationships being studied.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
GCSE pass	57,284	0.857	0.350	0	1
Categorical GCSE grades	57,284	157.401	14.044	100	180
Likelihood of university (50)	5,256	0.723	0.448	0	1
Likelihood of university (75)	5,256	0.538	0.499	0	1
Likelihood of university (scale)	5,256	63.364	35.557	0	100
Achieve high	5,256	0.446	0.497	0	1
Parental- school involvement	123,760	0.915	0.280	0	1
Parental-university likelihood	134,440	0.714	0.452	0	1
Parental education	133,720	0.083	0.276	0	1
White ethnicity	154,880	0.868	0.339	0	1
Homeownership	159,900	0.741	0.438	0	1
GCSE subjects	57,853	129.452	69.157	2	261
Marital status	162,340	2.800	1.347	1	9
Employment status	160,860	1.716	1.545	1	11

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the variables used in this study. These statistics were obtained using the summarize function in Stata. It is important to provide context for these figures, as many responses were collected using a scale from the MCS, which must be considered when interpreting the results. The mean values provide insight into the educational, career, and SES characteristics of the sample, while the standard deviations reflect the consistency of responses across these variables.

When examining educational outcomes, the data shows that 85.7% of students passed their GCSEs. In terms of performance distribution, the categorical GCSE grades have a mean of 157.4012, suggesting that most students fall within a range where a score of 150 corresponds to a grade C and 160 to a grade B. Turning to university expectations, there is a declining trend in the likelihood of attending university as the threshold increases. Specifically, 72.3% of students reported at least a 50% chance of attending university, which drops to 53.8% when the threshold is raised to 75%. This indicates that as the threshold increases, fewer students feel confident about attending university. Furthermore, the scale measure of university likelihood (ranging from 0 to 100) has a mean of 63.364, suggesting that, on average, students perceive themselves as having a moderately high chance of attending university. In addition, 44.6% of students expect to achieve high future earnings, indicating a moderate level of financial optimism within the sample.

The data also captures parental influence, showing that 91.5% of parents are actively involved in their child's education, while 71.4% are likely to encourage university attendance. However, when considering educational background, only 8.3% of students come from households where both parents hold a degree. This suggests that most students lack direct exposure to higher education at home, which may in turn influence their academic aspirations. Other SES factors show that 86.8% of respondents identify as white, and 74.1% of households either own their home outright or have a mortgage, suggesting a relatively high level of housing stability within the sample.

The final three variables provide additional SES context. To begin with, GCSE subjects are numerically coded from 2 to 261 to capture the broad range of subjects studied within the sample. The mean value of 129.452 places the average subject between German and Health and Social Care. In terms of family structure, marital status has a mean of 2.800, where 2 indicates married (first and only marriage) and 3 indicates married (second or later marriage), suggesting greater family stability among the cohort. Regarding employment, employment

status has a mean of 1.716, where 1 indicates employed and 2 indicates self-employed, which may reflect higher household income.

The standard deviation across all variables reflects the degree of variation in responses, indicating differences in educational attainment, career outcomes and SES characteristics within the sample.

More broadly, the data reveals significant disparities across these areas, suggesting that SES may heavily influence students' educational pathways and long-term financial outcomes, emphasising the need for targeted support to reduce barriers to education, university access, and future earnings potential for disadvantaged groups.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The MCS questionnaires and surveys were divided into five datasets, requiring the creation of five do-files to extract relevant variables and generate dummy variables, before merging into a single, final dataset.

Building on Fergusson and Woodward (2000), which examines the impact of SES on university participation using a logit regression, this paper extends the analysis to explore how these factors influence academic performance and career prospects, providing a broader perspective on the effects of SES. Logit regressions are nonlinear models used to examine the relationship between a binary dependent variable and one or more independent variables (Hilbe, 2009). In this approach, the dependent variable has two possible outcomes, 0 (failure) or 1 (success), while the independent variables estimate the probability of the outcome being 1. This model allows for an effective assessment of how SES influences the likelihood of these achievements.

This empirical project will have three logit regressions, each with a distinct binary dependent variable. The first regression analyses the likelihood of passing GCSEs, the second examines the probability of attending university, and the third investigates whether an individual has high earnings by age 30. These binary dependent variables are positioned on the left-hand side of the econometric model equation. On the right-hand side, the independent variables include various SES factors, such as, parental involvement in education, parental view on university, parental education, ethnicity and home ownership status.

To ensure consistency in the dataset, dummy variables were created for the binary dependent variables representing key educational and career outcomes. In preparing the first logit regression, it was necessary to account for the 2018 GCSE grading system change, where

students received either letter grades (A* to U) or numerical grades (9 to 1), which do not have a direct one-to-one correspondence. To address this issue, grades were grouped into two categories: Tier One, comprising failing grades (U to D and 1 to 3), and Tier Two, comprising passing grades and above (C to A* and 4 to 9). As a result, the variable p_GCSE_H was created, where 1 indicates a pass and 0 indicates a fail. For the second logit regression, L_uni_50_H and L_uni_75_H, were created to capture students' perceived likelihood of attending university. The first variable, L_uni_50_H, classifies students as "likely to attend" (coded as 1) if they reported a likelihood score between 50 and 100, and as "unlikely to attend" (coded as 0) if their score fell between 0 and 49. The second variable, L_uni_75_H, uses a stricter threshold, categorising students as "likely to attend" (coded as 1) only if their score was between 75 and 100, and as "unlikely to attend" (coded as 0) if their score was between 0 and 74. Finally, in the third logit regression, achieve_high_H was created to measure career aspirations. This variable indicated whether an individual aimed to earn a high income by the age of 30, with responses coded as 1 (yes) and 0 (no)

For the independent variables, dummy variables were created to capture key SES factors. To represent parental involvement (l_school_parent_H), responses were grouped into two categories: responses of "very involved" or "fairly involved" were coded as 1 (involved), while those who selected "not very involved" or "not at all involved" were coded as 0 (not involved). Similarly, parental perceptions of a child's likelihood of attending university (L_uni_parent_H) were also classified into two groups: responses of "very likely" and "fairly likely" were coded as 1 (likely), whereas those indicating "not very likely" or "not at all likely" were assigned a 0 (not likely). Parental education, represented by parent_uni_two_H, was coded as 1 if two family members held a degree, while those with only one or no degree-holding family members were coded as 0. Regarding homeownership, shown by h_owner_H, individuals who reported "own outright" or "own with a mortgage" were categorised as homeowners (1), while all other housing situations were classified as non-homeowners (0). Finally ethnicity, captured by w_ethn_H, was also grouped into two categories: individuals identifying as white were coded as 1, while all other ethnicities were combined into a single category and coded as 0.

The model also includes several exogenous control variables: subjects selected (i.GC_L_GCSB_NAME_R40_H), marital status (i.GPFCIN00_H), and employment status (i.GPCOM100_H). These variables are included to assess whether they have any influence on the key independent variables. Each is treated as a categorical variable, as indicated by the prefix i. before the variable.

Several key data processing steps were undertaken to organise the final dataset and prepare it for merging. First, the data was sorted to ensure that MCSID (the household identifier) and GC_ROWID (the row number for looped variables) were the first two columns. Next, multiple family responses were consolidated into a single cohort member record. This process collapsed the dataset so that each MCSID appeared only once, eliminating multiple entries for different family members. Since the original MCS data allowed multiple family members to respond to the same questions, it resulted in multiple records per cohort member. To accurately reflect whether any family member provided a yes (1) response, the data was aggregated by MCSID. If at least one family member answered 1, the final dataset retained a single 1; otherwise, a 0 was recorded. This method efficiently streamlined the dataset, removing any duplications and facilitating the merging process. Once all do-files were finalised, the five datasets were merged into a single, final dataset, ready for regression analysis.

The three main regression models were specified as follows:

GCSE pass:

$$P(P\_GCSE\_H_i = 1) = F(B_0 + B_1 I\_school\_parent\_H_i + B_2 L\_uni\_parent\_H_i + B_3 parent\_uni\_two\_H_i + B_4 w\_ethn\_H_i + B_5 h\_owner\_H_i)$$

Likelihood of attending university:

$$P(L\_uni\_H_i = 1) = F(B_0 + B_1 I\_school\_parent\_H_i + B_2 L\_uni\_parent\_H_i + B_3 parent\_uni\_two\_H_i + B_4 w\_ethn\_H_i + B_5 h\_owner\_H_i)$$

Likelihood of achieving high earnings by 30:

$$P(achieve\_high\_H_i = 1) = F(B_0 + B_1 I\_school\_parent\_H_i + B_2 L\_uni\_parent\_H_i + B_3 parent\_uni\_two\_H_i + B_4 w\_ethn\_H_i + B_5 h\_owner\_H_i)$$

Whereby on the left-hand side $p\_GCSE\_H_i$, $L\_uni\_H_i$ and $achieve\_high\_H_i$ represent the probabilities of the binary dependent variables equalling 1. These correspond to the GCSE pass rate, likelihood of attending university, and expectations of achieving high earnings by age 30, all measured at the individual level (i). On the right-hand side, the key independent variables include $I\_school\_parent_i$ (parental involvement in schooling), $L\_uni\_parent\_H_i$, (parental university likelihood), $parent\_uni\_two\_H_i$ (parental education), $w\_ethn\_H_i$ (white ethnicity), and finally $h\_owner\_H_i$ (homeownership status). The model estimates the relationship between these variables using a logistic regression, where outcomes are modelled

as a function of the cumulative distribution function (CDF) of the logistic distribution. The logit model selects the coefficients that maximise the likelihood of the objective function.

After constructing this model and preparing the cross-sectional dataset from the MCS, the data was analysed in Stata. This involved running logit regressions, estimating coefficients, and assessing the statistical significance of each variable. These results will offer insights into the overall impact of SES on educational and career outcomes. To ensure the robustness of these findings, an ordered logit regression will be conducted for the GCSE attainment model, while an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression will be used for the likelihood of attending university model, as well as the inclusion of controlled exogenous variables to ensure consistency across model specifications. The combination of models strengthens the analysis: the binary logit regression identifies the key determinants of the dependent variable, the ordered logit regression examines the probability of achieving a higher outcome of the dependent variable, and the OLS regression analyses the determinants of the subjectively reported probability of the dependent variable.

To achieve this, the dependent variable for passing GCSEs will be structured on a scale ranging from 100 (the lowest grade) to 180 (the highest grade), as an ordered logit regression requires the dependent variable to be organised on a ranked scale (Wooldridge, 2010). In contrast, for the OLS regression, the dependent variable is a continuous variable defined within the interval [0, 100], allowing it to be directly included in the regression without transformation. This will help confirm that the relationships identified between SES and educational and career outcomes are consistent across different models. Additionally, the margins command will be used to assess the practical significance of the significant variables. By doing so, it will provide a clearer understanding of the effect sizes, showing the magnitude of influence each variable has on the dependent variable.

Chapter 5: Estimation results & discussion

This section displays the findings generated from Stata, detailing the results of the logit, ordered logit and OLS regression analysis.

Table 2: Logit regression – Pass GCSEs

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parental-school involvement	-0.055 [0.335]	-0.061 [0.294]	-0.061 [0.289]	-0.043 [0.469]
Parental-university likelihood	0.117 [0.001]	0.115 [0.001]	0.124 [0.001]	0.110 [0.003]
Parental education	0.134 [0.019]	0.132 [0.023]	0.131 [0.024]	0.118 [0.044]
White ethnicity	-0.020 [0.651]	-0.021 [0.647]	-0.029 [0.532]	-0.061 [0.198]
Homeownership	0.161 [0.000]	0.162 [0.000]	0.184 [0.000]	0.152 [0.000]
GCSE subjects	no	yes	yes	yes
Marital status	no	no	yes	yes
Employment status	no	no	no	yes

Table 3: Ordered logit regression – Pass GCSEs

	(4)
Parental-school involvement	0.052 [0.161]
Parental-university likelihood	0.131 [0.000]
Parental education	0.089 [0.013]
White ethnicity	-0.112 [0.000]
Homeownership	0.052 [0.063]
GCSE subjects	yes
Marital status	yes
Employment status	yes

The results from the logit regression reveal three significant variables linking GCSE pass rates to SES. Firstly, parental expectations for university attendance show a strong association with a child's likelihood of passing their GCSEs. This suggests that children are heavily influenced by their parents' educational aspirations and encouragement, which can shape their motivation and engagement in school. When parents clearly express their desire for their child to pursue higher education, it may instil a stronger sense of purpose, encouraging students to work harder in school with the understanding that achieving GCSE qualifications is a necessary step toward reaching their long-term goals. The marginal effect of 0.0150832 indicates that as parental expectations for university attendance increase, the probability of the student passing their GCSEs rises by 1.5%. To build on this relationship, policymakers could implement strategies aimed at increasing parental understanding of university pathways through school-led university visits, resource packs, and career guidance sessions (Sirin, 2005). Increasing parental knowledge and confidence in advocating for higher education may improve overall GCSE attainment rates, particularly among students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Sirin, 2005).

Secondly, there is a significant association between parental education levels and a child's likelihood of passing their GCSEs. This finding aligns with the intergenerational transmission of education theory, which suggests that parents with higher levels of education are more likely to have children who achieve strong academic outcomes (Elliott and Bachman, 2018). Parents who have obtained university degrees often possess a greater understanding of the education system, allowing them to provide academic support, monitor progress, and set higher expectations for their children's academic success (Dietrichson et al., 2017). The marginal effect of 0.0173805 indicates that as parental education levels increase, the probability of a student passing their GCSEs improves by 1.7%. To strengthen this relationship, targeted policies and support programs for students whose parents do not hold degrees can help bridge the educational attainment gap. Providing additional academic support, tutoring, mentoring, and counselling services for students from low SES backgrounds could reduce disparities in academic success (Dietrichson et al., 2017).

Thirdly, there is a strong association between home ownership and a child's likelihood of passing their GCSEs, emphasising the role of financial stability in educational attainment. Home ownership is often a key indicator of wealth and economic stability, allowing parents to dedicate more time and resources to supporting their child's education (Dietrichson et al., 2017). This support may include providing academic assistance, arranging private tutoring, or encouraging participation in extracurricular activities (Munir, Faiza, and Daud, 2023). The

marginal effect of 0.0208346 suggests that as home ownership increases, the probability of a student passing their GCSEs rises by 2.1%. However, it is important to note that the significance level of 0 suggests a possibility of omitted variable bias, as home ownership may also capture broader SES advantages not directly controlled for in the model. To address this, policymakers could prioritise expanding access to affordable housing, promoting financial stability, and fostering inclusive communities (Desmond and Gershenson, 2016; Galster, 2013). By ensuring families have stable living conditions, educational outcomes for disadvantaged students may improve, ultimately reducing academic inequalities (Desmond and Gershenson, 2016; Galster, 2013).

For the non-significant variables, interestingly parental involvement in schooling did not show a significant association with GCSE attainment. This may be explained by differences in parental education levels, as parents with lower educational backgrounds may struggle to provide effective academic support (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003). Simply increasing parental involvement without addressing these knowledge gaps may therefore have limited impact. Instead, schools could focus on equipping parents with tools and resources to better support their child's education, particularly in disadvantaged households (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003).

Similarly, the lack of significance between ethnicity and GCSE attainment suggests that recent educational reforms may have helped reduce ethnic disparities in academic performance. This implies that policy changes promoting inclusivity, equal opportunities, and targeted support for underrepresented groups have been effective in narrowing achievement gaps (Tomlinson *, 2005).

A robustness check was conducted to assess the consistency of results across different model specifications, confirming that the estimated relationships remain stable despite the inclusion of additional exogenous control variables. The stability of key coefficients, such as, parental-university likelihood, parental education, and homeownership, suggests that these factors have a significant and lasting impact on passing GCSEs, even when controlling for other influences. This reduces the likelihood that omitted variable bias is driving the results, further reinforcing confidence in the validity of the findings.

Similarly, to strengthen these findings, an ordered logit regression was used to assess the likelihood of achieving a higher grade in GCSE exams. The coefficient signs and significance levels remained largely consistent with those from the logit model, demonstrating a clear

pattern for the key independent variables. However, an exception was observed for parental-school involvement, which had a reversed sign, possibly due to omitted variable bias. This overall consistency reinforces the reliability of the estimates and suggests that the key factors influencing GCSE attainment are well captured. Notably, while some variables were not significant in the logit model for passing GCSEs, they played a role in determining higher grades. Specifically, white ethnicity was not a significant factor in passing GCSEs but did influence the likelihood of achieving higher grades, highlighting the role of ethnicity in academic performance beyond the basic pass threshold.

Table 4: Logit regression – Likelihood of university (50)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parental-school involvement	0.330 [0.018]	0.321 [0.040]	0.321 [0.041]	0.318 [0.045]
Parental-university likelihood	0.109 [0.243]	0.099 [0.337]	0.089 [0.390]	0.115 [0.272]
Parental education	0.177 [0.239]	0.132 [0.424]	0.136 [0.410]	0.151 [0.368]
White ethnicity	0.011 [0.928]	-0.017 [0.901]	-0.005 [0.970]	-0.006 [0.968]
Homeownership	0.011 [0.915]	-0.034 [0.757]	-0.091 [0.444]	-0.066 [0.598]
GCSE subjects	no	yes	yes	yes
Marital status	no	no	yes	yes
Employment status	no	no	no	yes

Table 5: Logit regression – Likelihood of university (75)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parental-school involvement	0.023 [0.861]	-0.032 [0.829]	-0.033 [0.826]	-0.037 [0.805]
Parental-university likelihood	0.127 [0.132]	0.146 [0.118]	0.128 [0.172]	0.149 [0.118]
Parental education	0.277 [0.037]	0.193 [0.183]	0.201 [0.168]	0.193 [0.192]
White ethnicity	0.012 [0.915]	0.057 [0.639]	0.071 [0.564]	0.049 [0.700]
Homeownership	0.011 [0.904]	-0.060 [0.544]	-0.126 [0.236]	-0.134 [0.233]
GCSE subjects	no	yes	yes	yes
Marital status	no	no	yes	yes
Employment status	no	no	no	yes

Table 6: OLS regression - Likelihood of university (scale)

	(4)
Parental-school involvement	2.084 [0.428]
Parental-university likelihood	2.234 [0.181]
Parental education	2.076 [0.419]
White ethnicity	-0.260 [0.906]
Homeownership	-1.482 [0.448]
GCSE subjects	yes
Marital status	yes
Employment status	yes

The results from the logit regression at the 50% threshold emphasise parental involvement as a key factor connecting SES and university attendance. This indicates that greater parental support with university applications, along with academic encouragement and guidance, increases the likelihood of a child attending university (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003). The marginal effect of 0.0657549, suggests as parental involvement increases , the probability of a student attending university increases by 6.6%. To strengthen this relationship, targeted policies

should promote parental engagement across all SES backgrounds, fostering stronger connections between schools and families. Offering opportunities for parents to participate in school activities, attend workshops, and contribute to decision-making processes can enhance their role in their child's education (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003). Establishing effective communication channels between schools and parents is crucial in bridging SES gaps and fostering a supportive learning environment (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003).

Next, the results at the 75% threshold highlight parental education as a significant factor connecting SES and university attendance. Parents with higher levels of education often provide greater academic support, stronger encouragement, and increased access to resources, all of which enhance their child's chances of progressing to university (Fischer, Barnes and Kilpatrick, 2017). This is supported by Fergusson and Woodward (2000), who found that students from professional and managerial family backgrounds are significantly more likely to attend university than those from semi-skilled or unskilled households, even when prior attainment is accounted for. The marginal effect of 0.0686249, suggest as parental education increases, the probability of a student attending university rises by 6.9%. To address this disparity, targeted policies and support programs should be introduced for students whose parents do not hold degrees. Initiatives, such as, additional academic support, tutoring, mentoring, and counselling services can offer the guidance and resources needed to help these students overcome barriers to higher education (Reardon, 2018; Sirin, 2005). Implementing such measures could help reduce university application gaps among students from lower SES backgrounds, ensuring they receive the necessary support to access higher education (Fischer, Barnes and Kilpatrick, 2017).

In contrast, the linear regression results, which treat university attendance likelihood as a continuous variable on a 0 to 100 scale reveal no significant relationship between SES and university expectations while controlling for additional exogenous factors. This suggests that small variations in a student’s perceived likelihood of attending university are not strongly shaped by SES. However, when the likelihood is categorised using thresholds of 50% and 75%, SES becomes a significant predictor. This implies that while SES has little influence on incremental increases, it plays a much greater role in determining whether a student crosses a higher threshold. In other words, SES becomes increasingly influential as university attendance shifts from a distant possibility to a likely or expected outcome.

For the non-significant variables, many SES factors appear to have little impact on university attendance. This suggests that SES has a more limited role in accessing higher education than it does in earlier academic stages. One possible explanation is the effectiveness of policies designed to reduce barriers for disadvantaged students. Financial aid programs, university outreach initiatives, and transition support services may have helped bridge the gap, making university more accessible regardless of SES (Berumen, Zerquera and Smith, 2015).

Table 7: Logit regression – Likelihood of university (50) ≠ 50

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parental-school involvement	0.252 [0.076]	0.242 [0.129]	0.244 [0.127]	0.246 [0.128]
Parental-university likelihood	0.119 [0.210]	0.100 [0.346]	0.084 [0.431]	0.105 [0.329]
Parental education	0.216 [0.157]	0.139 [0.406]	0.146 [0.387]	0.157 [0.359]
White ethnicity	0.011 [0.928]	0.008 [0.957]	0.021 [0.881]	0.024 [0.870]
Homeownership	0.044 [0.664]	-0.004 [0.972]	-0.072 [0.551]	-0.056 [0.660]
GCSE subjects	no	yes	yes	yes
Marital status	no	no	yes	yes
Employment status	no	no	no	yes

Table 8: Logit regression - Likelihood of university (75) ≠ 50

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parental-school involvement	0.169 [0.216]	0.124 [0.421]	0.125 [0.418]	0.109 [0.487]
Parental-university likelihood	0.138 [0.127]	0.162 [0.106]	0.151 [0.136]	0.178 [0.083]
Parental education	0.264 [0.065]	0.182 [0.247]	0.190 [0.231]	0.184 [0.253]
White ethnicity	0.014 [0.905]	0.060 [0.648]	0.070 [0.601]	0.034 [0.806]
Homeownership	-0.041 [0.673]	-0.121 [0.262]	-0.166 [0.150]	-0.165 [0.173]
GCSE subjects	no	yes	yes	yes
Marital status	no	no	yes	yes
Employment status	no	no	no	yes

Table 9: OLS regression - Likelihood of university (scale) ≠ 50

	(4)
Parental-school involvement	3.055 [0.284]
Parental-university likelihood	2.399 [0.196]
Parental education	1.789 [0.528]
White ethnicity	-0.207 [0.933]
Homeownership	-1.625 [0.451]
GCSE subjects	yes
Marital status	yes
Employment status	yes

A robustness check was conducted to evaluate the consistency of results across different model specifications, confirming that the estimated relationships remain stable even with the inclusion of additional exogenous control variables. While most variables remain robust, some key coefficients show reduced stability. Specifically, parental-school involvement at the 50% threshold and parental education at the 75% threshold lose significance across different model specifications, suggesting potential sensitivity to model changes. Additionally, white ethnicity and homeownership exhibit sign changes at the 50% threshold, while parental-school involvement and homeownership show similar shifts at the 75% threshold. These inconsistencies may be attributed to omitted variable bias, indicating that unaccounted-for factors could be influencing the result.

Similarly, to strengthen these findings, a robustness check was conducted using logit and OLS regressions, excluding responses where the variables are equal to 50. This is due to research on self-assessed probabilities suggesting that individuals often report 50% when uncertain about their chances. Therefore, removing these cases helps improve the reliability of the estimates. While the coefficient signs and significance levels remained largely consistent with those from the original logit and OLS models, demonstrating a clear pattern for the key independent

variables. There were exceptions observed for white ethnicity at the 50% threshold, as well as, parental-school involvement and homeownership at the 75% threshold, which displayed reversed signs, potentially due to omitted variable bias. Despite these variations, the overall consistency of the results strengthens the reliability of the estimates and suggests that the key factors influencing the likelihood of attending university are well captured.

Table 10: Logit regression – Achieve high earnings

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Parental-school involvement	0.032 [0.812]	-0.030 [0.842]	-0.021 [0.887]	0.016 [0.917]
Parental-university likelihood	0.015 [0.859]	0.102 [0.280]	0.091 [0.339]	0.088 [0.363]
Parental education	-0.036 [0.786]	-0.026 [0.857]	-0.006 [0.965]	-0.066 [0.657]
White ethnicity	0.271 [0.016]	0.297 [0.017]	0.284 [0.025]	0.228 [0.078]
Homeownership	0.025 [0.782]	0.060 [0.544]	0.077 [0.470]	0.049 [0.662]
GCSE subjects	no	yes	yes	yes
Marital status	no	no	yes	yes
Employment status	no	no	no	yes

The results from the logit regression identify white ethnicity as the only significant SES factor associated with achieving high future earnings. The marginal effect is 0.0665204, indicating that being of white ethnicity increases the probability of achieving high future earnings by 6.7%. This suggests that disparities in economic outcomes persist across different ethnic groups. Eliophotou and Pashourtidou (2017) support this, demonstrating that low-SES students tend to anticipate lower lifetime earnings than their high-SES peers, even when academic performance is accounted for. To address this disparity, policies aimed at supporting ethnic minority students could help bridge the gap by providing professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their cultural competence and instructional strategies (Munir, Faiza, and Daud, 2023). This could include training on inclusive teaching practices, differentiated instruction, and addressing implicit biases, ensuring that students from diverse SES backgrounds receive the academic and professional support needed to succeed (Munir, Faiza, and Daud, 2023).

For the non-significant variables, several SES factors seem to have little influence on achieving high future earnings. This suggests that SES may not be as strong a determinant in securing high-paying jobs as it is in earlier academic stages. One possible explanation is the impact of policies aimed at reducing barriers for disadvantaged students, such as increased access to university scholarships, expansion of apprenticeship programs, and initiatives promoting diverse hiring practices (Bhalla, 2019; Department for Education, 2025; Strifezzi Leal and Choi, 2022).

Finally, a robustness check was conducted to evaluate the consistency of results across different model specifications, confirming that the estimated relationships remain stable even with the inclusion of additional exogenous control variables. The coefficient signs and significance levels remained largely consistent, demonstrating a clear pattern for the key independent variables. Notably, white ethnicity remains statistically significant at the 10% level, even after accounting for further control variables. This suggests that it has a strong and persistent influence on achieving high future earnings. However an exception was observed for parental-school involvement, which exhibited a reversed sign, possibly due to omitted variable bias. Despite this, the overall consistency of the results reinforces the reliability of the estimates and indicates that the key factors influencing future earnings are well captured.

Since achieving high future earnings is a binary variable, a logit model is the most appropriate choice. Using OLS would yield similar coefficient estimates but incorrect standard errors due to heteroscedasticity. Additionally, since achieving high future earnings is not a categorical variable, an ordered logit model would not be suitable.

5.1 The strengths of this study

This study has several key strengths that enhance the validity and reliability of its findings. Firstly, the use of a large, nationally representative dataset from the age 17 sweep of the MCS allows for a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between SES and educational and career outcomes. By incorporating a diverse range of SES indicators, such as, parental education, homeownership, and ethnicity, the study provides a well-rounded perspective on the factors influencing academic achievement and earnings prospects.

Secondly, the study strengthens its findings through robustness checks, ensuring the stability and reliability of the results. One key approach is the use of multiple regression models, including binary logit, ordered logit, and linear regression, to capture different aspects of the relationship between SES and key educational milestones. By using multiple models, the study

mitigates potential biases and enhances confidence in its conclusions. Another approach, is the inclusion of controlled exogenous variables. This strengthens the study by accounting for external factors that could influence educational outcomes and career prospects, ensuring the results remain robust and not driven by unaccounted factors.

Lastly, this study contributes to the existing literature by examining multiple stages of educational and economic outcomes. While many previous studies focus on a singular aspect, this research provides a broader, interconnected analysis, offering valuable insights into the long-term effects of SES.

5.2 Improvements for this study

While this study has several strengths, the proposed improvements highlight areas where further refinement could enhance the analysis. One improvement for this study is the reliance on cross-sectional data from the age 17 sweep of the MCS, which prevents tracking changes over time. Without panel data, it is difficult to determine whether SES disparities in education and earnings have improved or worsened. A longitudinal approach would provide deeper insights, particularly into the effects of policy changes or external factors like COVID-19. If the age 23 sweep had been available, it could have allowed for direct comparisons to assess the pandemic's impact.

Another area for improvement lies in the study's methodological choices, which involve trade-offs. The logit model helps reduce subjective biases in self-assessed probabilities but sacrifices some variation in the data. On the other hand, linear regressions preserve all variation, but are more susceptible to measurement errors, through inaccurate reports. It is important to acknowledge that while no single regression model provides a complete answer, using models together offers a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship.

Finally, the distinction between predictor variables and measurable variables presents certain challenges. GCSE grades serve as the only measurable dependent variable in this study, offering a reliable and objective assessment of academic performance. In contrast, university attendance and high earnings expectations function as predictor dependent variables. While they provide valuable insights into long-term success, they rely on self-assessed likelihoods that may not accurately reflect actual outcomes. This reliance on subjective estimates introduces a degree of uncertainty, making these variables inherently less precise. Therefore, when interpreting the results, GCSE grades remain the strongest and most reliable measure for assessing the impact of SES.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper explored the relationship between SES and key educational and career outcomes, specifically GCSE attainment, university attendance, and future earnings expectations. Using logit, ordered logit, and linear regression models, the analysis assessed how SES factors influence success.

The findings indicate that SES significantly affects GCSE attainment, with higher SES students being more likely to achieve strong results. This aligns with existing research highlighting the advantages of financial stability, parental education, and parental aspirations in shaping educational outcomes. However, the results for university attendance were less conclusive, with many SES variables proving insignificant. This suggests that policies, such as, financial aid and outreach programs may have reduced the direct impact of SES on university participation. Similarly, while white ethnicity showed a significant relationship with future expected earnings, other SES factors were not strong predictors. This suggests that policies aimed at reducing barriers for disadvantaged students, such as, increased access to university scholarships, the expansion of apprenticeship programs, and initiatives promoting diverse hiring practices, have been effective.

These findings highlight the success of policies supporting lower SES students in later academic and economic stages but also emphasise the continued need for interventions at earlier academic phases, such as GCSE preparation. Targeted strategies like university awareness initiatives, academic support programs, and affordable housing policies could help address these disparities. Additionally, future research could benefit from longitudinal data to assess the long-term effectiveness of policies aimed at reducing SES-related inequalities.

Ultimately, while progress has been made in reducing SES disparities in later academic and career stages, this study underscores the need for continued intervention at earlier educational phases. Strengthening targeted support measures could help ensure that all students, regardless of background, have the resources and opportunities necessary to succeed.

Bibliography

Abrahams, J. (2018). exploring inequalities in GCSE and A Level options in England. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, [online] 39(8), pp.1143–1159. doi:https://doi.org/10.2307/26785352.

Anders, J. (2017). The influence of socioeconomic status on changes in young people's expectations of applying to university. *Oxford Review of Education*, 43(4), pp.381–401. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2017.1329722.

Berumen, J.G., Zerquera, D.D. and Smith, J.S. (2015). More than Access: The Role of Support Services in the Transitional Experiences of Underrepresented Students in a Statewide Access Program. *Journal of Student Financial Aid*, 45(1). doi:https://doi.org/10.55504/0884-9153.1554.

Bhalla, N. (2019). Strategies to improve equity in faculty hiring. *Molecular Biology of the Cell*, [online] 30(22), pp.2744–2749. doi:https://doi.org/10.1091/mbc.E19-08-0476.

Crawford, C. (2014). *Socio-economic differences in university outcomes in the UK: drop-out, degree completion and degree class IFS Working Paper W14/31*. [online] Available at: https://ifs.org.uk/sites/default/files/output_url_files/WP201431.pdf.

Department for Education (2024). *Support with living costs: 2025 to 2026 academic year*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tuition-fees-and-student-support-2025-to-2026-academic-year/support-with-living-costs-2025-to-2026-academic-year.

Department for Education (2025). *10,000 more apprentices as Government slashes red tape to boost growth*. [online] GOV.UK. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/10000-more-apprentices-as-government-slashes-red-tape-to-boost-growth.

Desforges, C. and Abouchaar, A. (2003). *The Impact of Parental Involvement, Parental Support and Family Education on Pupil Achievements and Adjustment: A Literature Review Professor Charles Desforges with Alberto Abouchaar RESEARCH*. [online] Available at: https://library.bsl.org.au/jspui/bitstream/1/3644/1/Impact%20of%20Parental%20Involvement_Desforges.pdf.

Desmond, M. and Gershenson, C. (2016). Housing and Employment Insecurity among the Working Poor. *Social Problems*, [online] 63(1), pp.46–67. doi:https://doi.org/10.1093/socpro/spv025.

Dietrichson, J., Bøg, M., Filges, T. and Klint Jørgensen, A.-M. (2017). Academic Interventions for Elementary and Middle School Students With Low Socioeconomic Status.

Review of Educational Research, 87(2), pp.243–282. doi:https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316687036.

Eliophotou, M. (2017). Low Socioeconomic Status Students in Higher Education: Entry, Academic Attainment and Earnings Expectations. *Cyprus Economic Policy Review*, [online] 11(1), pp.15–40. Available at: https://ideas.repec.org/a/erc/cypepr/v11y2017i1p15-40.html [Accessed 17 Feb. 2025].

Elliott, L. and Bachman, H.J. (2018). Parents' educational beliefs and children's early academics: Examining the role of SES. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 91, pp.11–21. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.05.022.

Fergusson, D., Lianne, J., Woodward, C., Health, D. and Study (2000). Family Socioeconomic Status at Birth and Rates of University Participation. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, [online] 35(1), pp.25–36. Available at: https://www.otago.ac.nz/__data/assets/pdf_file/0033/329577/family-socioeconomic-status-at-birth-and-rates-of-university-participation-014783.pdf.

Fischer, S., Barnes, R.K. and Kilpatrick, S. (2017). Equipping parents to support their children's higher education aspirations: a design and evaluation tool. *Educational Review*, 71(2), pp.198–217. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2017.1379472.

Galster, G.C. (2013). *The Mechanism(s) of Neighbourhood Effects: Theory, Evidence, and Policy Implications*. [online] Research Gate. doi:https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-2309-2-2.

Hilbe, J.M. (2009). *Logistic Regression Models*. Chapman and Hall/CRC. doi:https://doi.org/10.1201/9781420075779.

Lee, V.E. and Burkam, D.T. (2002). *Inequality at the Starting Gate: Social Background Differences in Achievement as Children Begin School*. [online] *ERIC*. Economic Policy Institute, 1660 L Street, N. Available at: https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED470551.

Mistry, R.S., Benner, A.D., Biesanz, J.C., Clark, S.L. and Howes, C. (2010). Family and social risk, and parental investments during the early childhood years as predictors of low-income children's school readiness outcomes. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 25(4), pp.432–449. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2010.01.002.

Munir, J., Faiza, M. and Daud, S. (2023). *The Impact of Socio-economic Status on Academic Achievement*. [online] ResearchGate. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/371350334_The_Impact_of_Socio-economic_Status_on_Academic_Achievement.

OECD (2018). *PISA 2018 Results (Volume II)*. [online] OECD. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/pisa-2018-results-volume-ii_b5fd1b8f-en.html.

Putwain, D.W. (2008). Test anxiety and GCSE performance: the effect of gender and socio-economic background. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 24(4), pp.319–334. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/02667360802488765.

Reality Changers. (2024). *The Role of Socioeconomic Status in Educational Outcomes: Strategies for Equal Opportunities - Reality Changers*. [online] Available at: https://realitychangers.org/the-role-of-socioeconomic-status-in-educational-outcomes-strategies-for-equal-opportunities/.

Reardon, S.F. (2018). The Widening Academic Achievement Gap Between the Rich and the Poor. *Inequality in the 21st Century*, pp.177–189. doi:https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429499821-33.

Sirin, S.R. (2005). Socioeconomic Status and Academic Achievement: A Meta-Analytic Review of Research. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(3), pp.417–453. doi:https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543075003417.

Stephens, N.M., Hamedani, M.G. and Destin, M. (2014). Closing the Social-Class Achievement Gap. *Psychological Science*, [online] 25(4), pp.943–953. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797613518349.

Stopforth, S. (2020). Parental socio-economic background and children's school-level GCSE attainment. *era.ed.ac.uk*. [online] doi:https://doi.org/10.7488/era/40.

Strifezzi Leal, G. and Choi, Á. (2022). Income-based scholarships and access to higher education. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi:https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4099649.

Tomlinson *, S. (2005). Race, ethnicity and education under New Labour. *Oxford Review of Education*, 31(1), pp.153–171. doi:https://doi.org/10.1080/0305498042000337246.

UCAS (2014). *Undergraduate Tuition Fees and Student Loans*. [online] UCAS. Available at: https://www.ucas.com/money-and-student-life/money/student-finance/undergraduate-tuition-fees-and-student-loans.

Wooldridge, J.M. (2010). *Econometric Analysis of Cross Section and Panel Data*. [online] *JSTOR*. The MIT Press. Available at: https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt5hhcfr.