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The Upward Trajectory: How Education Shapes Employment and Social Class

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ABSTRACT: This study investigates the critical relationship between educational attainment, employment, and social strata to impact the upward trajectory. This henceforth employs data mining techniques across the continents of the world in gathering the data to derive data-driven conclusions. The findings reveal that there is an interplay between employment and educational attainment to grasp an upward trajectory and uplift the social strata of an individual. Moreover, it discovers the inequalities in access to both educational and employment opportunities. Recommendations and suggestions on how to address the challenge are presented to make education a genuine vessel of equality to foster the upward trajectory of social mobility.

KEYWORDS: upward trajectory, social mobility, educational attainment, employment, data mining technique

I. INTRODUCTION

Education, employment, and social mobility the interconnected in these three things is complex, stressing how educational background shapes trajectories of career and social classification (Kim et al., 2023; Pfeffer et al, 2015; Panakaje et al., 2024; Inceoglu et al., 2019). The movement between social strata or social mobility, and the theory of human capital, which suggests that educational attainment increases the potential of productivity and earnings, are the central concepts (Leoni, 2023; Kokkinopoulou et al., 2025). The study critically examines how educational attainment garners employment results, considering education type, labor market conditions, and individual traits. Henceforth, existing studies did not elaborately explain the complex link among education, employment, and social classification. A focus on the totality of correlations hinders to grasp of the thorough pathways connecting specific educational investments to successful employment. Related factors, like labor market conditions and systemic biases and discrimination, remain in an unknown picture (Lutfiu et. al, 2024; Munir et al., 2023; APA, 2016). This research openly responds to these critical gaps by an in-depth exploration of the clear tracks connecting education to employment and social strata. It incorporates both individual backgrounds and wider societal influences, fostering a more wide-ranging viewpoint.

A deep understanding of the connection between education, employment, and social strata is urgent (Traini, 2021; Nweke et al., 2023). While a connection exists, the exact mechanisms are still elusive, deterring effective policy solutions (Bateman et al., 2024). Numerous studies were not able to expound on the complex connection between diverse educational tracks, precise career trajectories, and social class upliftment. This demands a thorough analysis of existing studies, running beyond simple summarization (Spiel et. al., 2018; Troiano et al., 2023). The final insights will be vital for crafting an effective approach to augment social mobility and lessen disparity. This henceforth targets on giving a clear picture of how education boosts and limits social mobility, displaying the tracks connected to education, employment, and social stratification. This analysis will thoroughly assess methodologies, picture limitations, and recognize biases in prior research and studies. In all, this critical investigation will cover the way to an in-depth understanding of the impact of education on employment and social strata that impact the upward trajectory in this aspect.

II. OBJECTIVES

This research aims to:

- analyze the connections between education, employment, and social mobility, concentrating on how backgrounds of education impact career trajectories and social classification.
- Discover the mechanisms by which educational achievements affect social mobility, focusing on clarifying how they can both augment and limit opportunities for increased social standing
- offer doable insights and recommendations aimed at improving social mobility to reduce inequalities
- The objectives above allow findings on how education shapes employment and social class for an upward trajectory.



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III. METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a data mining technique to investigate the complex relationship between employment, education, and social mobility. Further, using the technique enables a large-scale set of data comprising information on attainment in an educational aspect, employment history, income, and socio-economic status (Ching-Chieh Kiu, 2018; Zhang et al., 2021). A focus on detecting statistical connections between the educational variables and the measures of social mobility, such as career trajectory and socioeconomic status variations, and to account for potential perplexing elements and to discover fundamental pathways. Moreover, data collected from existing related literature on educational backgrounds and social strata affecting the trajectory of career, and the mechanism by which educational background influences social strata.

This offers rich contextual evidence to clarify the actual experiences of individuals inside the landscape of the education-employment-social mobility relationship. Analysis of gathered data fosters the identification of frequent patterns and perceptions that counter and contextualize the findings (Naeem et al., 2023; Bowen, 2023). Data mining technique allows for an in-depth understanding of the multifaceted relationship between career trajectories, educational attainment, and social mobility. This facilitates a strong and in-depth understanding of the center of this research- how educational attainment affects career trajectory and social mobility (Papadogiannis et al., 2024; Maqsood, 2023). A comprehensive overview of the statistical associations between variables fosters a deep insight into the actual experiences and individual accounts that shape social mobility. The perspective generates a solid foundation for recommendations from an evidence-based policy that points to promoting bigger opportunities, which remains grounded in equity.

IV. RESULTS

PRESENTATION OF DATA, INTERPRETATION, AND ANALYSIS

This part reflects the result of the intricate connection between education towards employment and social strata. This highlights the factors affecting the hiring of employees for a certain job position relative to their educational background. Further, the study underlines how educational attainment fosters the upward trajectory of social strata. Data gathered across the continents supplies the results needed to enable analysis, discussion, and interpretation that are necessary to derive a conclusion on how education shapes both variables, namely, employment and social status.

Variable 1. Educational attainment shaping employment

The mentioned variable assesses how education outlines employment concentrating on career trajectory and classification of a social strata of an individual. Across-continental data gathered in this study foster interpretation and analysis to derive conclusion based on related literature, studies, and research.

CONTINENT	REASON	SOURCE
United States of America	There is a strong relationship between employment and educational attainment. Individuals with higher educational levels as having doctorate and a master's degree, receive higher salaries as compared to those who only have the minimum attainment in education. Individuals with higher educational backgrounds have higher salaries. Alongside, unemployment lessens with amplified education, representing better job security to those individuals with higher degrees. This validates that the attainment in an educational aspect is a strong indicator of both employment stability and income.	US-Education pays, Earnings, and employment rates by educational attainment.
Asia (India)	Jammu and Kashmir exposes a complex association between employment and educational attainment. While there is a lessening in inactivity in higher education, it also connects with larger unemployment, accenting a mismatch of skills in the labor market. This mismatch is rooted in an inequality between the acquired skills through education and the job opportunities available, specifically in the public service sectors, where individuals with high educational attainment manage to focus, while less-educated individuals lead the agricultural part. To address this gap, it requires	Iqbal, Z., Impact of Educational Attainment on Employment Outcomes in Jammu and Kashmir (2025)



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	policy interventions focusing on educational programs to be aligned with the demands in the market.	
Africa (Sub-Saharan Countries)	There is a necessity for a policy intervention to aid young women in looking for a satisfactory and permanent job. It is still a concern labelling as a big issue that even the highly educated women were more likely an unemployed as compared to men. To address this, there a need for complementary for sectoral policies and macroeconomic measure appropriate for the demand to guarantee sufficient jobs which is accessible to all.	ILOSTAT, African youth face pressing challenges in the transition from school to work (2023)
(Ghana)	Ghana discovered across the sectors of employment that there is a strong connection between an individual's salary and their father's educational attainment level. Children coming from parents who received less education earned less compared to the children whose fathers attained higher education. Moreover, suggested policy recommendations like enhancing the level of educational attainment with a reduced parental influence approach on acquiring a job and reforming the labor market of Ghana to amplify educational returns.	AduBoahen et al., Returns to education in Ghana: The role of education of one's father
Australia	The strategic approach employed by the universities of Australian in 2018 displays a prevalent and slight focus on the GE, graduate employability as an extremely individualistic, achievement in skills based. The authors argue that this overriding neoliberal model oversees wider societal elements affecting employment and is unfavorable to students in higher education. A holistic and creative approach to GE is suggested, recognizing the challenge but signifying alternative models that can be helpful to foster a more inclusive vision of the role of the university for graduates.	Baron et al., Employable me: Australian higher education and the employability agenda. (2024)
Latin America (Colombia)	Utilizing several statistical methods in gathering data from 2,250 young adults, the study reveals that postgraduate education essentially decreases unemployment. Further, the monthly experience of work additionally lessens the challenge of unemployment, and lower socio-economic standing relates to complex unemployment. Employing a Random Forest model determines ideal experience and provides opportunities to those individuals who attain a higher educational level. It recommends policies that include well-planned programs for augmenting work experience, intensive educational support which is intensive, and collective educational and work opportunities for youth who belong to low-income families.	de la Puente et al., Determinants of youth unemployment in Barranquilla, Colombia: a multi-method analysis of education, work experience, and socioeconomic factors
Europe (Netherlands)	This review assesses human capital theory's slight focus on the productivity of labor, arguing that it disregards the essential role of education in personal development and to reduction of poverty, and its effect on safeguarding better positions in employment. A more rounded and multi-dimensional approach, integrating the capability method, is promoted for a deeper understanding of the value of education in outlining employment results.	Leoni, A Historical Review of the Role of Education: From Human Capital to Human Capabilities (2023)



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INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

The data revealed that educational attainment impacts the employment position of an individual. This complex relationship displays significance across diverse contexts and regions. In the United States, a solid positive connection exists between employment outcomes and educational attainment. Higher attainment at educational levels translates to higher rates and lower unemployment, evidently indicating the worth of education in safeguarding healthier employment positions and better stability in an economic aspect. This forthright relationship, nevertheless, sharply disproportion with the complexities which are observed elsewhere.

The condition in Jammu and Kashmir, India, demonstrates a substantial mismatch of skills in the labor market. While higher education decreases inactivity, it inconsistently upsurges unemployment, demonstrating a disconnection between the acquired skills and the job opportunities available. This proposes a necessity for interventions of policy that are aligned to educational curricula with the demands of industry, hypothetically through training and skill development in vocational programs. The awareness of individuals who belong to a highly educated group in saturated sectors of both the public and private sectors further aggravates this issue, stressing the necessity for opportunities for diverse employment. This condition underlines the limitations of a merely quantitative method to understanding the connection between employment and education; qualitative factors like the dynamics of the job market and imbalances of sectors must be reflected.

In Ghana, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the effect of the education of parents on the income of their children is a serious factor. The solid interconnection between a child's wage and a father's educational attainment underlines the transmission of intergenerational socioeconomic advantages and difficulties. This highlights the critical role of policies that not solely augment access to education but also dynamically address the insistent influence of parental background on employment scenarios. Additionally, the uneven unemployment among women in many Sub-Saharan countries who are highly educated stresses targeted interventions of policies to augment gender awareness in the labor market. The policies should incorporate both sector-specific strategies and the larger macroeconomic measures to maintain accessible and sufficient job opportunities for all.

Australia presents a different challenge, concentrating on the graduate employability conceptualization within universities. The neoliberal model, stressing individuality of skills and responsibility, oversees the larger societal elements affecting successful employment. This slight focus risks overlooking the critical role universities play in making graduates ready for the complex and ever-changing job market. A better holistic approach, that considers economic and social contexts, is required to guarantee that higher educational attainment efficiently prepares graduates for successful employment. This necessitates a modification from a merely performative model to a more in-depth understanding of the role of the university in societal welfare.

Lastly, the Colombian study, using statistical modeling which considered sophisticated, proposes a more distinct understanding of the interaction between work experience, unemployment, and education among young adults. The recognition of exact threshold effects for both work experience and education offers valuable insights for the makers of policies. The findings feature the essentials for interventions, such as programs related to work experiences tailored to exact durations, thorough educational support to help completion, and combined initiatives incorporating work opportunities and education specifically for youth who belong to a low-income family. Henceforth, this data-driven method delivers an influential framework for crafting operative policies to address youth unemployment. In all, in the global landscape wherein higher educational attainment usually progresses employment results and fosters an upward trajectory of career, the exact connection is multilayered and highly context-dependent, necessitating tailored policy interventions to address diverse and unique regional challenges and safeguard equity of access to opportunities for all.

Variable 2. Educational attainment affects an individual's social strata

This section reveals how educational attainment affects individual strata. This further discovers other affecting aspects with regards to educational attainment. Henceforth, suggested and recommended strategies and approaches gathered from across continents are identified as springboard for reform to achieve social and educational equity.



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CONTINENT	REASON	SOURCE
Europe (Belgium)	A Belgian study examining 13,803 individuals crossways four birth cohorts reflects a U-shaped inclination in societal inequality concerning education at the tertiary level. Inequality reduced for cohorts in the prior years before 1975, but enlarged afterward. This, moreover, insinuates that a pattern is only visible when employing a multidimensional assessment of social origins, which includes societal strata of parents and resources. This focuses on the transformed importance of reflecting both parental educational level and social classification for understanding educational attainment in later cohorts.	Kruithof et al., The U-turn in educational inequality. Why a multidimensional approach matters for measuring social inequalities in tertiary educational attainment (2024)
United States of America	Non-Hispanic Black youths in the United States remain at high risk of attending schools at all levels of SES, from the reduced returns of their parents' attainment in educational level. Such reduced returns of educational attainment of parents, the outcome displayed worse than anticipated educational and behavioral profile of non-Hispanic Black youths with high parental education.	Boyce et al., Parental Educational Attainment and Social Environment of Urban Public Schools in the U.S.: Blacks' Diminished Returns. (2020)
Latin America	This study displays that despite achievements in the educational aspect, Latinos face important barriers in environmental and societal in augmenting employment and marital status, affecting their food security. Solving this necessitates well-planned interventions past simply growing access to education to systemically address difficulties that hinder Latinos from realizing the profits of their education attainment.	Assari S. Latinos' diminished returns of educational attainment on reducing food insecurity: the role of ethnic disparities in family structure and employment (2024)
Asia (Philippines)	A study from PIDS cautions that biased access to high-quality education for Filipinos who belong to the low-income group aggravates inequality in the aspect of socioeconomic terms. Children from families with high income have a greater chance of accessing quality education, impeding the potential of education as a social balance. Furthermore, the study recommends refining access to a quality secondary and basic education for students coming from low-income families to raise their chances of enrolling in college and degree attainment.	Handel et al., Chapter 3 - US school finance: Resources and outcomes (2023)
Australia	Despite the well-structured policy interventions, there remains a landscape of persistent disparities in socioeconomic status in the level of participation in higher education. An Australian study employing models in multilevel analysis discovered that the influence of social status on university enrolment is strongest among students having mid-range academic performance who have less income and from parents who have low educational levels. This henceforth shows that parental education has a big impact on university participation. This suggests policies intended to grow access for students from low socioeconomic status.	Tomaszewski et al., Socio-economic status, school performance, and university participation: evidence from linked administrative and survey data from Australia (2025)



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South Africa	South African education inequality review exposes persistent socioeconomic and racial differences despite the implementation of apartheid reforms. The policies targeted by the government in solving the challenge of parental support, resource distribution, and rural education are vital, along with intersectional inequalities to be addressed, specifically for pregnant students. Urgent reforms for the policy are needed to realize equity in education and wider social transformation.	Chitsauko et al., Inequalities and education in South Africa: A scoping review (2025)
Canada	The research points out the need to reevaluate how "educational attainment" is given definition, due to some post-secondary education may not garner the projected benefits. In addition, discovering the intergenerational connections between educational levels in household and mental wellness of the children could suggest programs across health, education, and social support systems to boost mental health positively and diminish inequalities.	Thomson et al., Associations between household educational attainment and adolescent positive mental health in Canada (2017)

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

The landscape of equity across continents in the aspect of education presents a multipart landscape, varying meaningfully across varied contexts and regions. While some areas reveal a comparatively straightforward, impactful connection between improved socioeconomic outcomes and educational attainment, others reveal more in-depth and insistent inequalities despite substantial planned interventions. In the United States, research mostly depicts an impactful interconnection between offspring's educational and parental levels of education and social outcomes, although this interconnection is unequal crossways to racial clusters, with Non-Hispanic Black youth encountering uneven challenges. This stresses the limits of a merely quantitative approach and underlines the crucial need to reflect qualitative elements such as historical inequities and systemic racism. In contrast, the Belgian study divulges a U-shaped trend in the tertiary level education with inequality situation across varied birth cohorts. While previous generations encountered a decrease in inequality, current cohorts observed an upsurge, accenting the active and evolving setting of educational inequalities. This outline, only noticeable when utilizing a multidimensional assessment of social origins, highlights the critical role of both social class and parental education in outlining educational attainment. The findings underline the necessity for well-designed policy interventions that solve the complex relationship of the elements impacting inequality in an educational aspect, rather than relying on basic, one-size-fits-all solutions.

The practice of South Africa further underlines the continuing influence of historical injustices on present educational results. Despite reform post-apartheid, insistent socioeconomic and racial disparities remain, stressing the deep-seated landscape of inequality and the boundaries of apparent policy interventions. The data highlights the essential need for comprehensive approaches that solve the cause of inequality, including parental support, resource allocation, and the exact challenges encountered by marginalized clusters, such as pregnant learners. This requires a holistic approach that drives beyond direct solutions and discusses the issues that prolong inequality. In the Philippines, unequal access to desirable quality education aggravates inequalities in the aspect of socioeconomic to learners from high-income families have better opportunities. This condition underlines the status of cultivating access to basic and secondary education of high quality for students from low-income families, as this is an essential requirement for realizing larger equity in the educational aspect. The study stresses the essentiality of initiatives and program interventions that not only raise access but also solve the primary issues that hinder opportunities for learners from financially challenged families. In addition, the scenario entails a complex approach that reflects both the demand and supply sides of education, encompassing matters such as physical structure, student support services, and teacher training programs and initiatives.

Australia, despite its well-industrialized education system and program interventions, still deals with persistent socioeconomic inequalities in participation in higher education. The findings discover the uneven effect of socioeconomic status on learners with mid-array performance in academic, signifying that policies meant to expand access for students with low socioeconomic status need to be cautiously planned and designed to answer the needs of this cluster. This underlines the necessity for a more crucial understanding of the elements that impact educational attainment and the



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advancement of strategies that solve the complex relationship of family, individual, and social factors. Lastly, the Latin American setting reveals the boundaries of concentrating solely on educational attainment as an assessment of social mobility. Despite the achievements in the aspect of education, Latinos continue to face substantial environmental and societal barriers to augmenting their marital status and employment, affecting their food security. This points to the necessity to solve systemic matters that hinder Latinos from grasping the complete benefits of their education. A strong and systematic intervention is essential in attaining equal access to education. Lastly, the impartiality in the educational setup requires approaches that reflect historical background, issues related to socioeconomic factors, and the explicit needs of the marginalized clusters. It reveals that educational attainment affects the social strata of an individual. Effective policies must go beyond solutions and address the main causes of inequality to ensure that education serves as an accurate engine of social mobility and lessens global disparities.

V. DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The complex connection between educational attainment and employment outcomes is intensely formed by contextual factors from diverse settings across varied districts. While the United States validates a largely positive relationship between higher education and improved employment prospects, this connection is affected by racial inequalities, highlighting the boundaries of merely quantitative analyses and the necessity to reflect systemic issues as racism. The U-shaped trend in the tertiary education of Belgium disparity crossways birth cohorts underlines the dynamic setting of these inequalities, challenging well-planned policy interventions. However, South Africa and the Philippines show the continuing effects of historical biases and socioeconomic issues, where non-doable policy reforms demonstrate insufficiency in addressing underlying inequalities. Holistic strategies are needed, addressing impartial resource distribution, support from parents, and the challenges encountered by the marginalized clusters. Also, the inequitable access to quality education for learners coming from low-income families worsens underlying disparities that demand an in-depth solution that augments both accessibility and quality. To finish, policies should go beyond. It should aim to increase access to high-quality education and proactively oppose barriers in the systemic setup to guarantee that education serves as a vessel for social mobility for all.

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while attainment in education at a higher level mostly adds to an upward career trajectory, the interconnection between the result of education and employment is unequal. Systemic disparities and historical issues critically impact the interconnection, which generates inequality in access to high-quality education, which remains unsolved. Proactive policies should address the main causes of these disparities, emphasizing impartial distribution of allocated resources and support for marginalized clusters to guarantee that education efficiently fosters upward mobility.

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