

THE IMPACT OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT ON INDIVIDUAL EARNING AND SOCIAL CLASS MOBILITY

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ABSTRACT: *Demand for schooling had dramatically increased and there are overwhelming number of graduate and new entrants admitting particular level of colleges and universities degree to receive the full rewards associated with educational qualification. therefore, this paper had examined the interlinkage between educational attainment, individual earning and social class movement with individual qualification once employed, a quantitative design were deployed and data were gathered via scholarly article review and actual observation records thus the result indicated that the higher the educational attainment is, the higher the individual earnings, buying power, income level and standard of living is, which also results into a hierarchically upward mobility to the next social class with considerable degree of status and influence.*

KEYWORDS: educational attainment, individual earning, social class, mobility

INTRODUCTION

Education is seen as one of the major contributing factors of social movement such as quality of schooling on the supplied side and willingness for schooling on the demand side with which people invest education for future earning and obtain higher qualification that allow them open competition in the labor market (Altonji, J., 2005). In this regard positive or welcoming social status, better working condition and job attainment are directly dependent on past achievement, educational qualification and parental property loop of heritage. The multi-dimensional movement of social units such families, individuals, groups etc. between position of varying advantage is often known as social stratification which is also a determining factor of social mobility.

Whereas the term social class mobility is the fluctuation or movement by individuals, families and groups within the social hierarchy due to change in wealth, social status, literacy rate, educational qualification, occupation as well as earnings among individuals in the society. People invest education even with higher price due to expected return after schooling and social pride along with qualification as education is valued universally (Ashenfelter, Orley, and Alan Krueger 199).

Social class mobility is referred to a vertical movement from one socio-economic level to another due to change in jobs or career, marriage as well as individuals status, affiliation and esteem in the society. It can also be defined as a horizontal mobility or movements where individual changes his/her affiliation without changing the job position or occupational status. Social mobility can simply be an intergenerational when the new generation or the offspring attain either higher or lower social status than their parents held.

It can be an intra-generational where a person changes his/her social esteem and status within their life time, social mobility can be absolute which is the overall observed phenomenon or movement of people between social classes or a relative mobility which is also an estimated possibility of movement amongst individuals from one social class in comparison to another social class.

Statement of the purpose

Advocates of human capital theory believes that the higher the education attainments of the individual is the higher he/she would earn, the human capital theorist associate the individual income with the level of educational attainments. However, this view of direct relationship has been criticized by many scholars including those who advocate signalling theory. Therefore the paper had investigated how educational attainment and individual earnings are interlinked and weather this could impacts social movements among various social class by incorporating various secondary data drawn from scholarly articles and documented research literature.

Objective of the study

The main objective of this paper is to explain the impact of educational attainment on individual earning and social class mobility in consideration to the existing argument in the current literature.

Scope of the study

This study was delimited to a mere quantitative review of scholarly related articles along with a documented body of existing literature through which result was drawn and concluded into a usable manner. The main focus of the paper lies on the interlinkage between educational attainments, earning and social class mobility.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of education on social class mobility

he relationship between education attainment and Individuals earning has taken a various form in various situation and this is due to certain intervening factors that determine the trend of income and social status, education were supposed as one of the best example in relation to individual income growth and increased social status. Educational attainments are directly correspondent to better employments opportunities and improved living condition thus workers with low level of educational attainments are usually suited to manual labour jobs where as those with high level of education qualifications (Barron, John, Dan Black, and Mark Loewenstein, 1989) therefore with a level of qualification people may exposed a kind specialized jobs with higher degree of performance complexity.

Therefore, the level of educational attainments and experience are associated with high wages along with better working condition, one additional year of educational attainment increases the individual earning and the average income level which in turn increase the possibility to move from one social class to another of higher status. The level of educational attainments is directly proportional to an improved wage and social status.

Education is seen as a mean of skilled workforce provision for economic growth and social equality, moreover, considerable research finding indicate that there is an apparent subsequent

of high educational attainment and employment opportunities. A well-educated and highly skilled workforce is vital for stronger economic base and quality of life while vis-visa is true as well.

The concept of Human capital theory VS. Signalling theory

According to Human capital theorist education and employment are two inseparable concepts that it's due to a certain degree of knowledge and skills attained by the individual through formal schooling which contributes to his/her productivity. Therefore, the advocates of human capital theory argues that education impart skills to perform complex activities at workplace which also leads to better earning. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012) suggests that education positively affects earnings through enhanced productivity. Accordingly, an increased level of educational acquirement could lead to a greater chance of employment opportunities which also leads to better earnings (Mejia, D. and M. St-Pierre, 2008, Moriguchi & Saez, 2008).

Whereas the signalling theory states that education by self may not result efficiency on individual earning aspect, but only communicate the individual abilities and performance skill to the prospective employer thus the role of education is only to convey or signal the individual's ability than to merely increased individual productivity, students may choose a very lengthy of schooling to signal or advertise their educational qualification to the potential employer while employer may need a minimum level of schooling. However, in application there are numbers of factors unobservable in character that need to be screened and sorted to ensure employee productivity in return to his/her qualification.

The concept of social mobility

The social mobility was first introduced by Pitirim Sorokin, A Russian born American sociologist in his book "Social and cultural mobility" stressing the idea that societies are not completely closed neither it is open completely like what he called caste system in India. Therefore, the speed, magnitude, nature and frequency of mobility are different from society to society that there is no equal social mobility among various societies. Due to different factors and various social interaction individuals change their status, prestige, reputation and esteem in the society, likewise, this may portray the opposite down to the ladder while losing their esteem and social acceptance.

As a result of ever existing gap between the rich and the poor such as inequality of wealth, educational opportunities and income difference, members of the society are susceptibly moving from one social class to another (C. and L. Paterson 2005). Open class mobility occur when there are free competition among individuals and it is mostly dependent on personal effort and his/her determination for achievement, which is known as achievement-based economic system of social mobility. On the other hand closed class system is when there is no free movement or mobility due to caste or negative social ascription by birth. people under this class neither wealth nor educational attainment or occupation are important for personal prestige and esteem in the society they were rather confined to their ancestral occupation and their social status has mostly been prescribed by birth, ascribed status is an innate social position that is beyond one's control like ancestral background including individual race as well as gender.

Apparently, there are certain factors that contribute to the issue of social class formation and differing social status within the society such as inequality of wages and salaries, skilled and

unskilled, technological change, institutional policy reforms, globalization, racism, gender issues, educational accessibility, culture, ancestral ascription labelling etc.

Types of Social Mobility

Social mobility is subject to varieties of forms and stages that people could experience throughout their life span, the types of mobility often overlaps; however, are independent in functions and nature of mobility occurrence.

Horizontal mobility

Horizontal mobility is when the mobility trend or the movement procedure is inter-institutional with same occupational grade level and stratum without changing the social status, esteem or hierarchical job grade. Under horizontal mobility changes of movement occur only on personal affiliation and sometimes on geographical location as well. This may relate to educational qualification based where employer restructure the organization in a way that right person to the right position (Barron, John, and Mark, 1985).

For example, when the regional education bureau transfer the werada education office head from his current werada headship to another werada as a wareda education office head the process of appoint as well as social mobility made here is known as horizontal mobility. In this case the job position remains the same, but there is change in affiliation to new a social group and job location.

According to Sorokin, horizontal mobility refers to change in religious affiliation, political party, family and occupation without any noticeable change in vertical or hierarchical social position of the individuals. There is no change in social stratification rather an increase of territorial influx among individuals could take place without changing their job position or job search pathway. According to Kumar S.Yadav, individuals are no more attached to their places of birth while there is no obvious change in status and positional prestige.

Vertical mobility

Unlike horizontal mobility, vertical mobility is hierarchical movement either down or up to ladder, here change occur on individual status due to change in job position, religious status educational qualification and even political merit (Ulph, D. 1977, Speciale, B. 2007). Vertical mobility can either be ascending or descending, whenever, individual move from one particular social group with lower social status in terms of economic level, political or religious affiliation, job position etc to higher social group with better socio-economic level, political and religious affiliation is known ascending social mobility. Descending social mobility is when individuals lose or didn't access any prestigious social position that makes him/her remain lower social class.

For example, when a state of bankruptcy is subjected to individual enterprise that forced him/her move to a lower social stratum is known as ascending social mobility. Educational attainment had the major role in class fluctuation and social interest which in turn lead the individual to acquire very sophisticated and higher degree of performance as a result of his/her qualification (Ryan, C., & Siebens, J. 2012). According to SK. Nazimudin, vertical mobility is the transitions made by the individuals from one social stratum to another while considerable changes are taking place among stratus due to educational attainment or increased wealth which

results in a better social esteem and affiliation. This kind of mobility individuals move upward in the social hierarchy in term of status, for example, when a university lecturer became a president of the university this is said to be he/she is vertically moved and the vise-versa.

Up-ward social mobility (ascending mobility) is social fluctuation based on class parameter where the individual ascertain a kind of progress from one lower stratum to a higher one with a degree of prestige and status (Hendricks, 2007). However, such a move is not easy that it involves one's struggle to adopt the new social class environment

DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL MOBILITY

Migration

People migrate from one particular area to another due to either pull or push factors (conflict, social pressure, insecurity, political incompatibility, ecological push, unemployment, low wage etc). Pull factors such as high wage, pleasant working condition, job stability and possibility for advancement may attract skilled worker with unsatisfactory job environments to migrate from their country of origin to a country of destination (Harris-Todaro 1970). It has been shown that within the production structure of the developing countries skilled labour migration raises by cross bordering to western world due to unemployment or low pay Chaudhuri (2001). As a result people with considerable level of educational attainment tend to migrate to improve their living and get equivalent employments.

Urbanization

Individuals' educational qualification and need for better living condition after schooling push him/her migrate to urban centres where there are possibility of decent employment, access to social security, water supply and sanitation hygiene. Due to Unsatisfactory wage with unpleasant working environments at small cities in the periphery skilled labour migrate though rural-urban migration in search decent living condition at bigger cities (Marjit, Broil and Sengupta 2000). With this regard education is the primary drive of particular skilled individual migration from semi-rural area to bigger urban centre in search of employment and luxurious living condition.

Modernization

Modernization brings scientific way of doing and technology orientation to move from traditional way of engaging life to a more sophisticated life style, this may also result a kind both immigration and emigration based on skill different. For example while government campaigning to implements certain mega projects, it may cause people dwelling the area migrate either internally or externally, yet some others are being attracted by governments itself due to their skills for employments. Developmental endeavours by the state is likely to have both positive and negative consequences for nationals of that particular state and such activities is challenging for people to cape with (Lipton, 1980). Therefore, Social transformation and development activities are profound cause of forced displacements and unwillingly resettlements in the developing countries where thousands of individuals flee from their home.

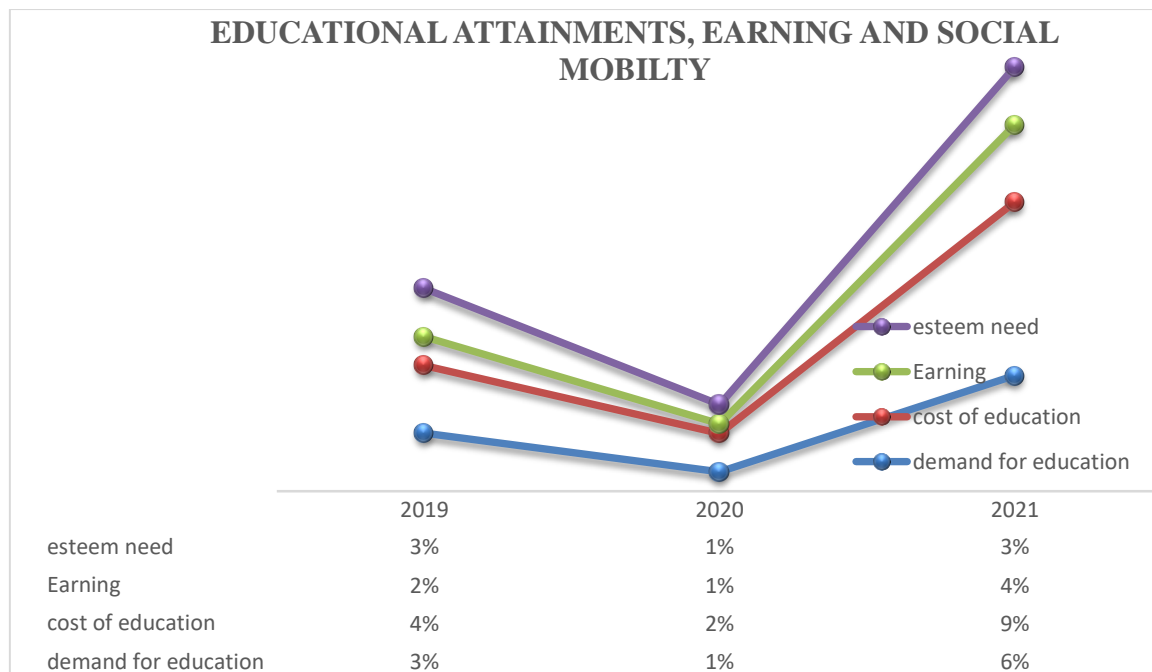
METHODOLOGY

A qualitative design was the deployed for this study, to explore and further elaborate the existing relationship of educational attainment and individual income as well as how this could affect the individual class mobility in his/her respective society, accordingly a body of peer literature and scholarly articles were reviewed and concluded into a usable result.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

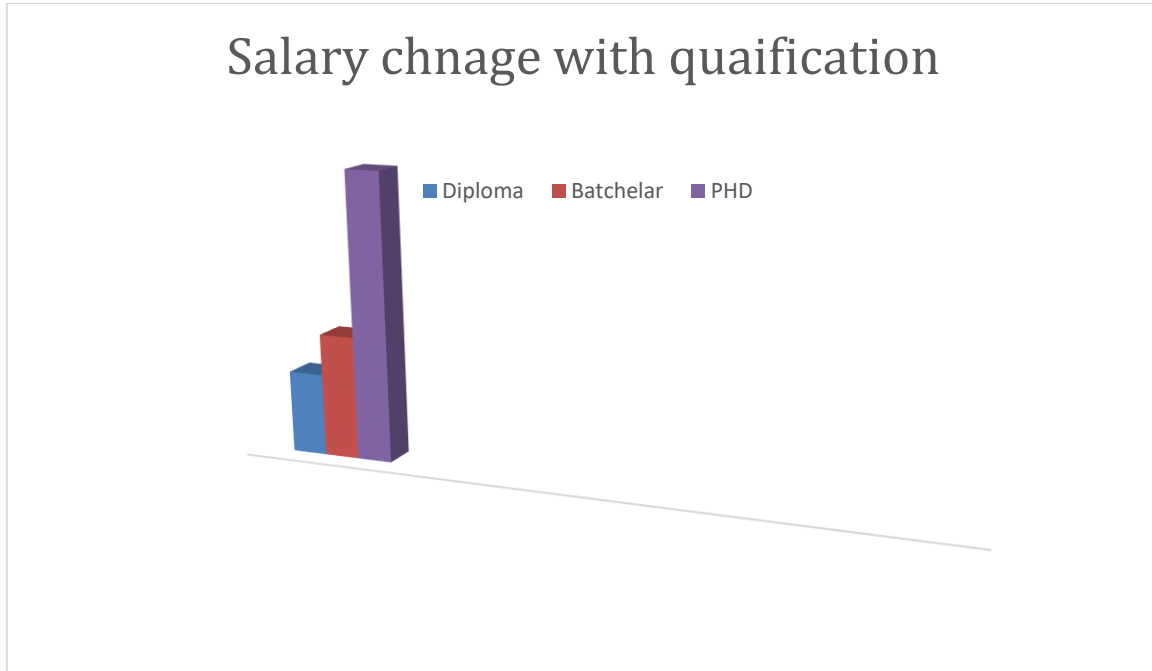
Education opens a door for peoples earn and contribute to the larger community, end extreme poverty and lead healthy life, better educational attainment is a strong indicator of financial stability and upward social mobility. It's one of the SGD goals and worldwide concern for all people get the required level of education to enhance better living and eradicate extreme poverty in 2030. According to UNESCO in accessibility of formal education is the one of the major predicator of passing poverty from one generation to another, in this regard a particular level of educational attainment and employment opportunity for better earning are directly related.

Education has a positive relationship with the buying power of the individuals, as indicated by a study conducted in United State in 1991-2010 on income and educational attainments was concluded to a positive implication among the two, this was to examine a perceived value of pursuing higher education that intrigued millions of the population in United State. Education impacts individual living standards and income sustainability which in turn initiate individual mobility to the next social class of higher social prestige.

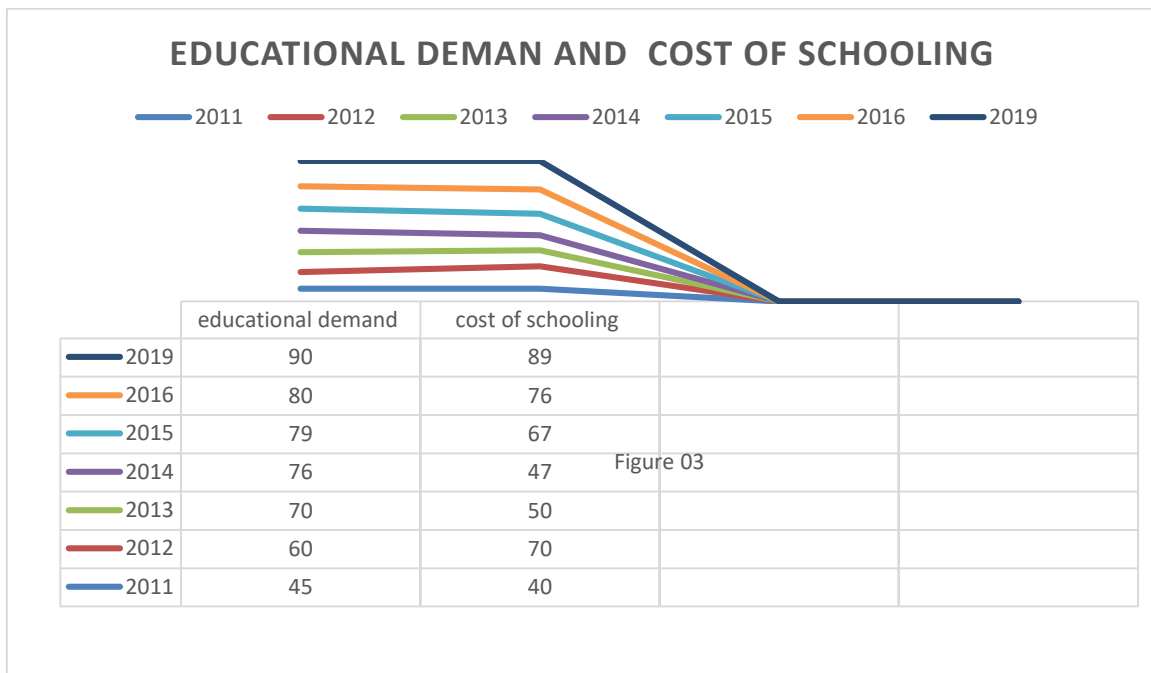


According to a study in Japan as indicated the figure 01 there is a direct relationship among the four variables, as one increase the other one increase as well and vis-versa. In 2019 the esteem need was 3% percent where by in 2020 it falls down to 1% percent with all other variables also decreasing, similarly in 2021 there an increasing trend shown by all variables. Therefore, the

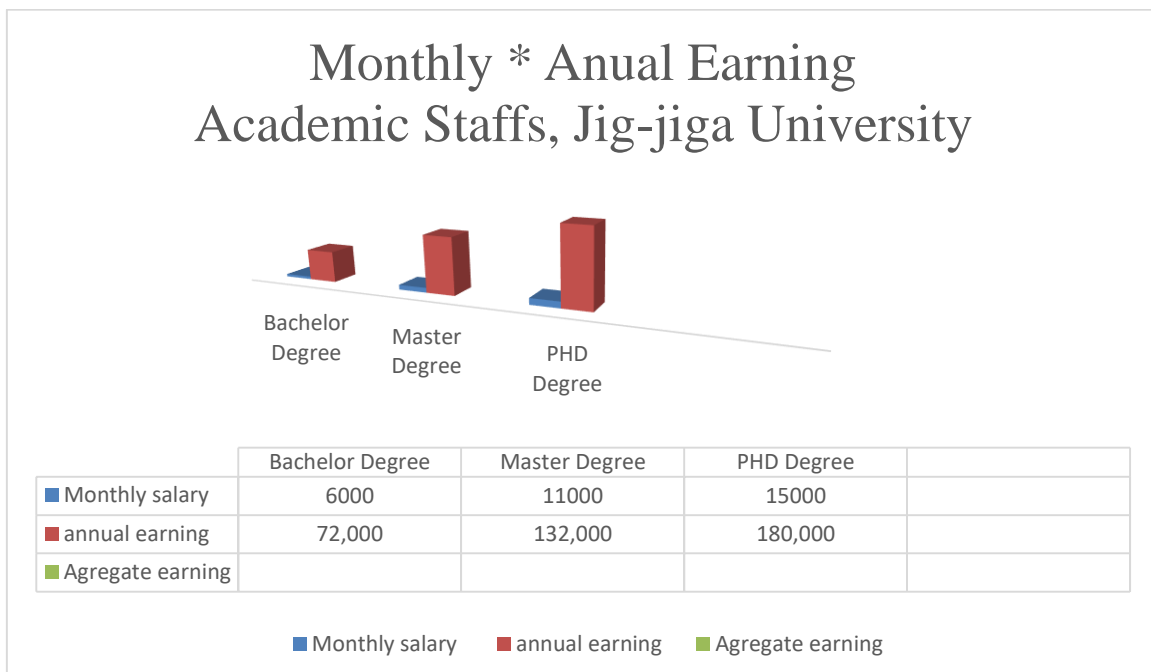
figure shows that there are strong and direct relationship between educational attainment, earning and social class mobility.



In a study conducted by Christopher at Indian river college as indicated in figure 02, illustrated that they are considerable change in salary with qualification that individual earning solidly increase with their educational attainments through upward hierarchy, despite the increase of earning with credential one could accumulate wealth for better living. With this in mind, an increasing individual earning could undoubtedly increasing his/her income which in turn initiate class fluctuation or movement up to the social ladder. In addition, to this it's an observed reality that an obvious higher level of educational attainment lead to higher prestige and esteem rank with a considerable degree of acceptance among the societies, or what is called referent power of influence De Fraja, G. (2002). Therefore, a degree of educational attainments leads to income stability and upward social class mobility.



As illustrated in 03 Figure, the demand for schooling is steadily increasing irrespective of an increase or decrease of cost of schooling where by the cost of schooling also increased continuously with demand from 2015 afterward. Therefore, with a solid momentum of demand for schooling with high cost, it is obvious that the expected rate of return after schooling is greater which in turn boost the individual income, living condition as well as his/her social class and status.



In Ethiopia a university bachelor degree is a high value and financially expensive in terms of population per capita income and the country's economic status; however, there are higher pools of candidates who dare and value to pursue their undergraduate through self-sponsorship. For example, in 2021 academic in take only Jig-jiga University there were 5000 post-graduate

applicant who sought admission through self-sponsorship, an average of a single postgraduate (M.A/MSc degree) tuition fee including dormitory and other boarding expense is estimated over Birr 50,000, while the private institution this will double with such a high cost with education. Competition on educational attainment is an over increasing phenomenon at both developing and developed countries due expected return and longevity (Maldonado, D. 2007), therefore, It is imperative to conclude that there are strong correlation between the cost of education and expected rate of return such salary, social respect, longevity and healthy life and lifetime wealth attainment

CONCLUSION

The educational attainments particularly at tertiary level leads to a better earning after employment with this an increased years of schooling results a degree of extra-earning with higher benefit, Moreover, this also leads to improved income level which in turn leads to better living condition and social mobility from one hierarchical living standard to another of higher prestige, status and a degree of social acceptance. Therefore, the underlying theory of this conclusive statement is that educational attainment, earning and social mobility are positively interlinked once the individual with certain degree of qualification get employments. This is not a situational constraint, but qualification constraint to earn more, accumulate income and improve one's' living condition after employment.

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