
Longitudinal Effects of Early Parent Involvement on Student Post-School Intentions

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Fás Aníos in Éirinn
Growing Up in Ireland

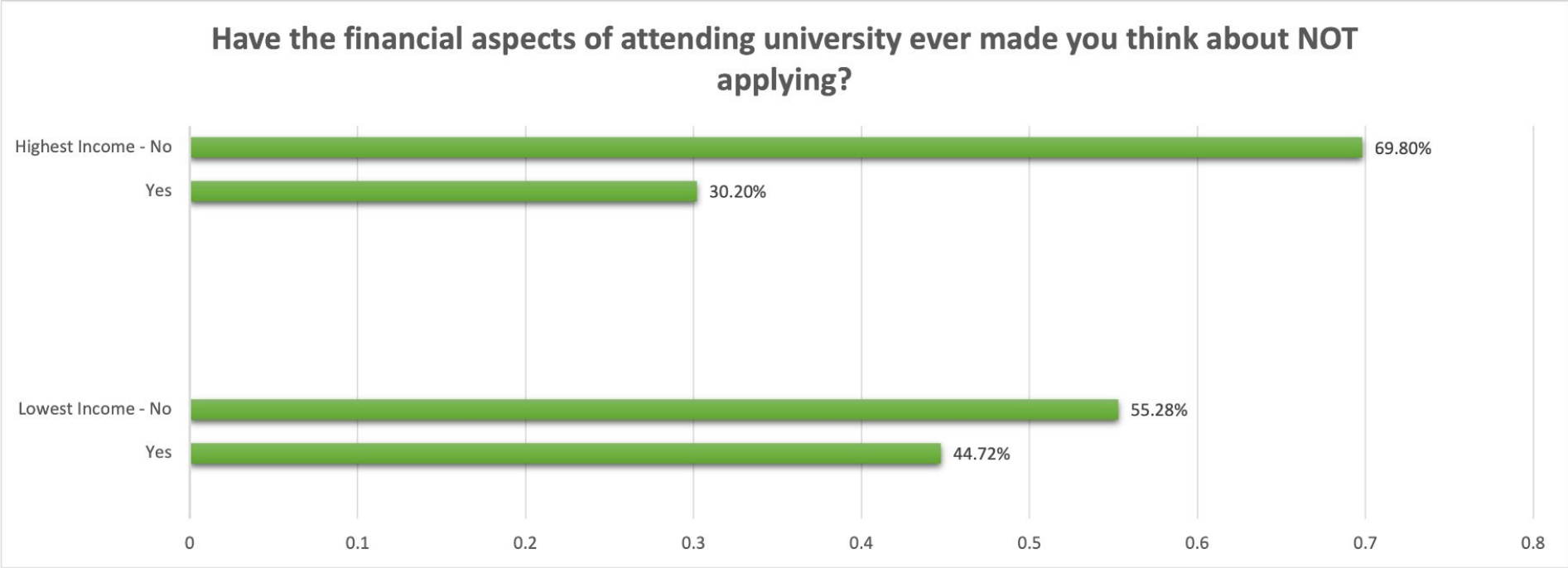


Introduction

- The elimination of undergraduate tuition fees was viewed as a push toward removing the “important financial and psychological barriers to [education] participation at the third level” (Department of Education and Science, 1995, p. 106)
- Despite this, there is still an underrepresentation of socioeconomically disadvantaged students in higher education spaces in Ireland (Central Statistics Office, 2022)
- Some suggest that low-income students lost their only significant advantage while wealthier students earned a “windfall gain” (Denny, 2014, p. 32)



Among Students Who Have No Intention for Higher Education





Student Motivation

- **Expectancy Value Theory** (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000)
 - **Perceived competence:** Am I good at this?
 - **Subjective task value:** Do I want to do this?
 - **Intrinsic value:** Do I like this?
 - **Attainment value:** Is it important to my identity?
 - **Utility value:** Is it useful?
 - **Cost:** What do I have to give up to do this? (i.e., financial costs)



Parent Involvement

- Identified by the Educational Disadvantage Committee as a salient factor for addressing disadvantage (Education Act, Section 32, 1998).
- Students benefit most when parents maintain consistent participation across the school years (Weir et al., 2017).
- Examining the parent-child relationship is important for understanding post-secondary education decisions (Smyth, 2020).
- One way of measuring what parent involvement and how they might encourage them to pursue higher education is parental expectations for attainment.



Research Questions

1. Do early parent expectations predict a student's decision to apply to third-level education at age 17?
2. Is student motivation a better predictor of parent expectations at age 17 above and beyond socioeconomic status?
3. Do motivational beliefs help explain why lower income students continue to have lower expectations for higher education even in the absence of a significant financial barrier (i.e., undergraduate tuition fees)?



Data

- **GUI Child Cohort**
 - N = 5020
- **Wave 1 (Age 9)**
 - Study Child Questionnaires
 - Primary Parent Questionnaires
- **Wave 3 (Age 17)**
 - Young Person Questionnaires
 - Primary Parent Questionnaires
- **Socioeconomic Status (Wave 3)**
 - Equivalized Household Annual Income (Quintiles)
 - Primary Parent Education



Methodology

- Multiple regression of parent expectations at age 17
- Multiple regression of outcomes at age 17

Parent expectations at age 17 - Base model: control only for SES (income + parent education)

Add student competence variables

Add student value variables

Final model: Add interactions between SES and student motivation variables

Student intentions at age 17 - Control only for SES

Add parent expectations at age 9

Add parent expectations at age 17



Student Motivation Measures (Age 17)

Self-efficacy (Perceived Competence)

- A) Compared to other people your age, how well would you say you do/did in tests in exams in Irish/Gaeilge?
- B) Compared to other people your age, how well would you say you do/did in tests in exams in English?
- C) Compared to other people your age, how well would you say you do/did in tests in exams in Mathematics?
- D) What do you think you are most likely to do when you leave school?

Subjective task value

- A) Agree or not - I dislike(d) being at school (**Intrinsic**)
- B) Agree or not - People like me don't go to University/Institutes of Technology (**Attainment**)
- C) Agree or not - I don't need to have a University/Institutes of Technology degree to get the kind of job I want to do (**Utility**)

higher values are indicative of stronger agreement with these statements



Parent & Student Outcome Measures

Parent Outcome

- Parent expectations for higher education:
 - A) At age 9
 - B) At age 17

Response categories - “Up to Leaving Certificate”; “Diploma/certificate, apprenticeship or trade”; “Degree or higher”

higher values are indicative of a higher level of education

Student Outcome

- Applied / will apply for a place in further / higher education in Ireland and/or elsewhere?

Response categories - “No”; “Yes”

RQ1. Do early parent expectations predict a student's decision to apply to third-level education at age 17?

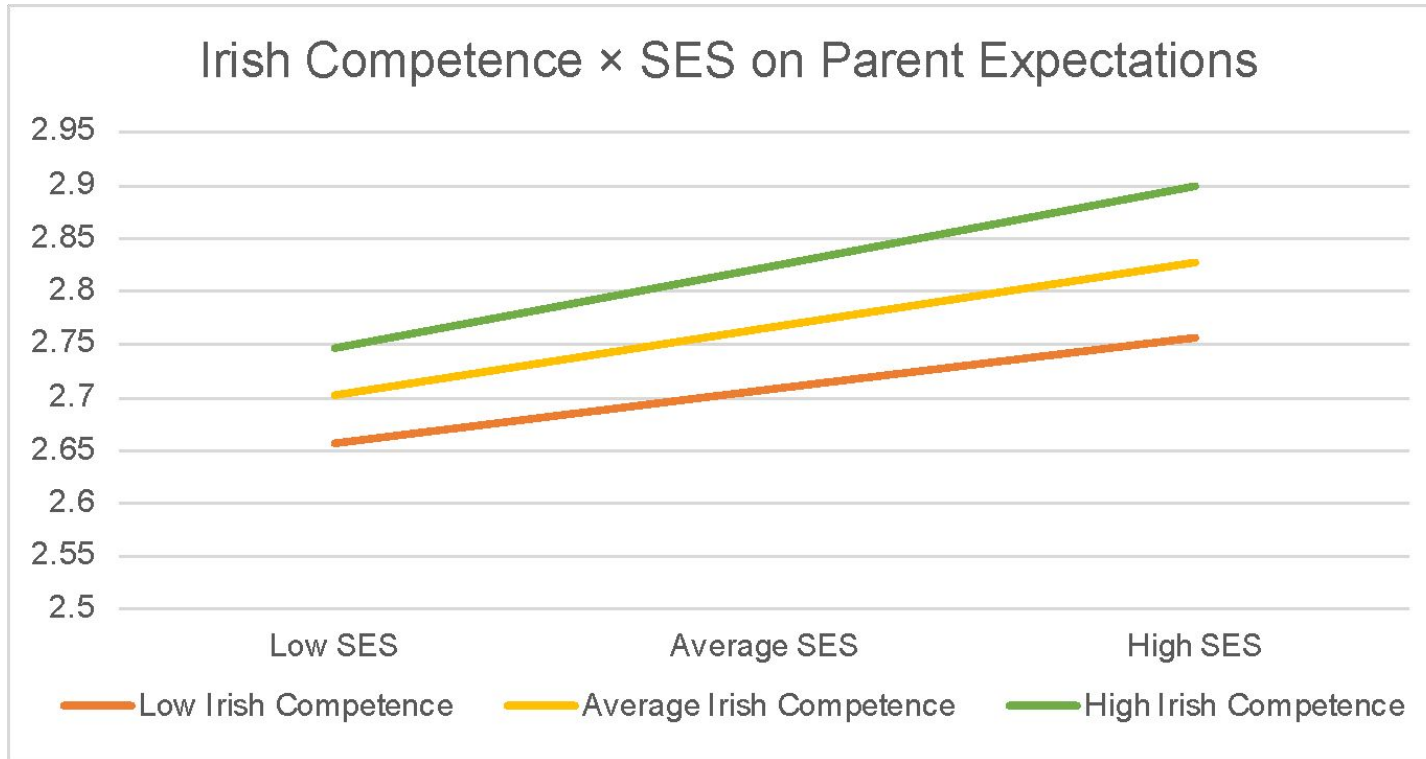
(Constant)	1.311**
Parent Expectation at 9	0.020*
Parent Expectation at 17	0.090*
Combined SES	-0.014
N	5020
Adjusted R2	0.008

RQ2. Is student motivation a better predictor of parent expectations at age 17 compared to socioeconomic status?

	Model 1	Model 2
(Constant)	2.758**	2.765**
Irish/Gaeilge Competence	0.134*	0.139*
English Competence	0.067*	0.070*
Math Competence	0.112*	0.118*
Intrinsic Value for School	0.100*	0.098*
Combined SES	0.193*	0.230*
Irish/Gaeilge x SES		0.055*
English x SES		0.028
Math x SES		0.056*
Intrinsic Value x SES		0.016
N	5020	5020
Adjusted R2	0.12	0.13

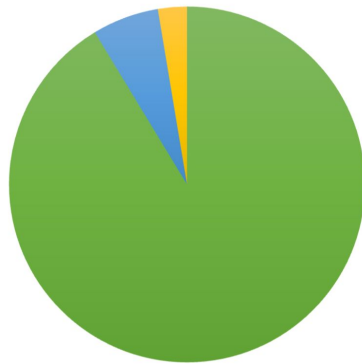


Interaction Between Competence and SES



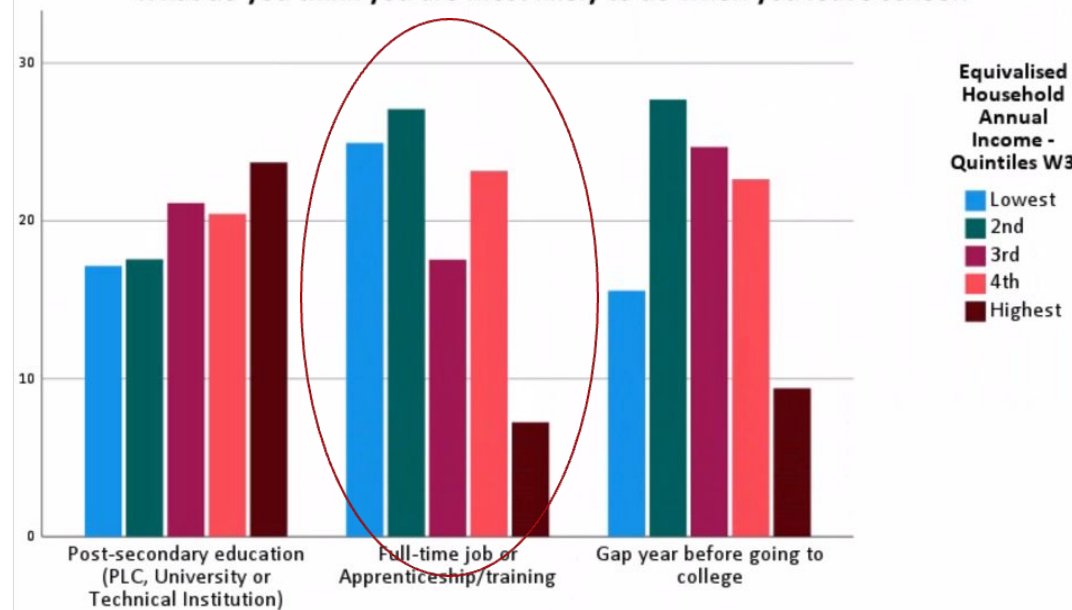
RQ3. Do motivational beliefs help explain why lower income students have lower expectations for higher education?

What do you think you are most likely to do when you leave school?



- Post-secondary education (PLC, University or Technical Institution)
- Full-time job or Apprenticeship/training
- Gap year before going to college

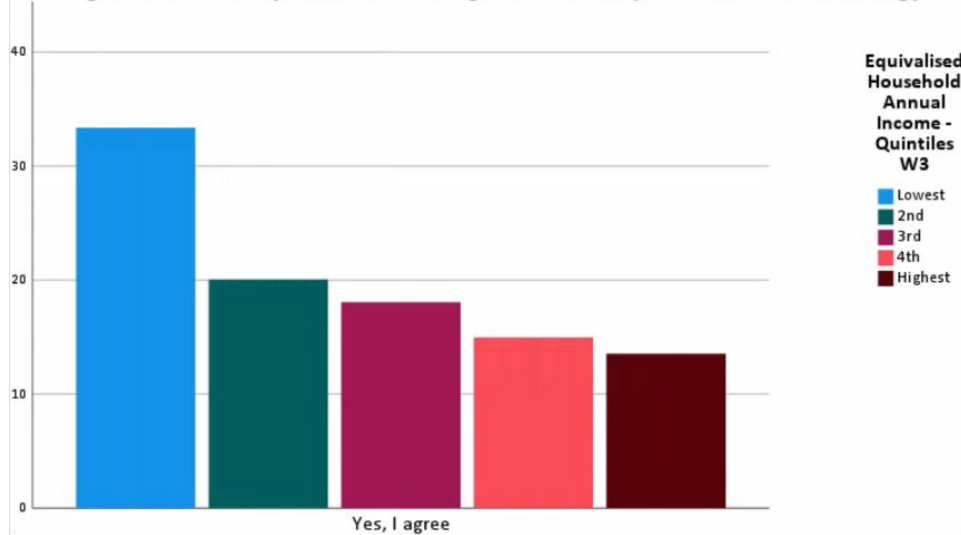
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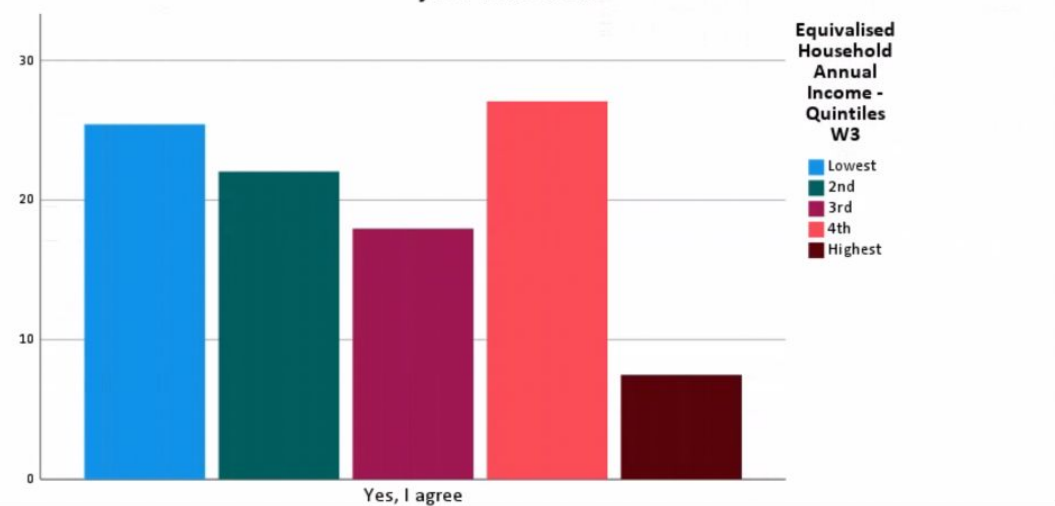


Among Students Who Have No Intention for Higher Education

Agree or not - People like me don't go to University/Institutes of Technology



Agree or not - I don't need to have a University/Institute of Technology degree to get the kind of job I want to do





Conclusion

- Parent expectations are a significant predictor of whether a student will decide to apply to higher education in the final year of secondary school above and beyond the SES, which did not predict student intention.
- Student self-efficacy (perception of competence) is a significant predictor of parent expectations at age 17.
- Student perceived competence positively interacts with SES to influence parent expectations.
- Student motivation and parent expectations can help us understand why low SES students are still facing psychological barriers to pursuing higher education even in the absence of a significant financial barrier.



Thank you for listening!
Comments/questions are welcome!