

Student success more dependent on school funding than socioeconomic status

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Students who attend good, well-funded schools have the best chance of academic success, regardless of the socioeconomic status of their home suburb, a new report shows.

Researchers from Monash University also found that supporting early aspirations in students was critical to their progress through school and beyond.

The researchers studied education and training outcomes for students

living in areas of social advantage and compared them with those from neighbourhoods with low [socioeconomic status](#).

Their report focused on four neighbourhood characteristics' – socioeconomic status, residential stability, household type and ethnic diversity – effect on outcomes for 15, 17 and 19-year-olds.

Associate Professor Chandra Shah from the Centre for Economics of Education and Training said the study found these neighbourhood characteristics had little impact on how students progressed once effects of schools that these students attended were taken into account.

"This means that resourcing of schools and other aspects such as class size, quality of the school leadership and teacher quality are important determinants of student outcomes," Associate Professor Shah said.

Associate Professor Shah noted that good schools, with high levels of students going on to further study or training, were usually located in suburbs of higher socioeconomic status.

"The analysis shows that two students attending the same school, with similar individual characteristics and parental background, but living in different neighbourhoods are unlikely to have different outcomes – therefore it was the school that made the difference," Associate Professor Shah said.

He said that students' attitude to schooling, application to school work and aspiration for further study when they were 15 years of age are important predictors of their progress through [school](#) and career.

"Mentoring efforts that help shape the aspirations of young people at an early age could have a high pay-off," Associate Professor Shah said.

However, this finding only reinforced the need for better funding for schools, he said.

"Poorly funded schools are unable to provide such things as mentoring programs that encourage students to undertake further education or training."

The research, funded by NCVET, can be downloaded from their website.

Provided by Monash University

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