

Article The Influences of Socioeconomic Status on Parental Educational Expectations: Mediating and Moderating Effects

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Abstract: Previous research found positive correlations among family socioeconomic status, parental educational expectations, and children's academic performance. However, more research is needed to validate the mediation effects of teacher–parent communication on family socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations. Employing multilevel path analysis of SPSS, the present study aims to examine the mediating and moderating mechanisms between socioeconomic status, educational expectations by establishing a framework incorporating socioeconomic status, educational expectations, teacher–parent communication, and coronavirus anxiety. We create a large sample of K-12 school students' parents from southeastern China (N = 4403). The findings show that socioeconomic status positively influences parental educational expectations, socioeconomic status anxiety moderates the effect of socioeconomic status on teacher–parent communication. This research highlights how teacher–parent communication reflects the relationship between socioeconomic status and educational expectations in Chinese families in the post-COVID-19 era. The practical implications of these findings for parents, teachers, and schools are discussed.

Keywords: socioeconomic status; parental educational expectations; teacher–parent communication; coronavirus anxiety

1. Introduction

Education equality is the gatekeeper of social equality, and student's socioeconomic status and family process are two potential mechanisms to explain how to promote child development and education equality. The extant research elucidated the positive impact of high socioeconomic status on parental educational expectations [1]. Parental educational expectations emphasize what parents regard as their child's potential for academic success, especially grades and academic credentials, and a frequent metric is the expected final grade of the child [2]. The intergenerational transmission of social inequality significantly depends on how parental educational expectations impact a student's academic performance [3]. Parents with higher educational expectations tend to have children with better academic achievement and a higher likelihood of college completion. Different parental educational expectations can accurately forecast how differently children acquire knowledge and help to understand the mechanics underlying educational inequality [4]. Parental educational expectations are deeply rooted in family socioeconomic status. The literature about socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations usually employs samples of parents from East Asian countries where the traditional culture strongly values parental responsibilities in children's education under the influence of Confucian culture [5]. The current study focuses on Chinese parental educational expectations when high parental educational expectations led to ubiquitous education anxiety in urban areas, while education in rural areas was marked as "hopeless" with the influence of socioeconomic status and parental involvement [6]. The COVID-19 pandemic made online schooling mushroom, and



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Copyright: © 2023 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (https:// creativecommons.org/licenses/by/ 4.0/). students' academic performance relied more deeply on parental educational involvement. Evidence proved that the pandemic accelerated educational inequality, and students' learning gaps can be compensated for by parents or teachers who provide adequate support for students [7]. Although volumes of research discussed the antecedents and the impact of parental educational expectations on academic performance, little research focused on the variables that shape parental education expectations [8–10], especially in the post-pandemic era when school education is being reshaped by online courses.

High parental educational expectations are partially supported by socioeconomic status and lead to frequent parental educational involvement [4]. The educational expectations of adolescents with a low family socioeconomic status mediated the relationship between family socioeconomic status and academic achievement [11–13]. The widespread recognition of the significance of parental educational expectations regarding academic performance causes unreasonably high parental educational expectations, which result in the learning stress of students and parental anxiety. Chen et al. revealed that the greater the expectation gap was, the higher the educational anxiety of parents in China [14]. Homebased parental educational involvement, including tutoring and homework supervision, is associated with students' educational attainment, which, in turn, improves parental educational expectations [15]. While agreement exists about the importance of constructive teacher–parent communication in home-based and school-based parental involvement [8], few studies examine how teacher-parent communication affects parental educational expectations. Teacher–parent communication plays an important role in improving student performance and developing students' cognitive capability by increasing parental educational engagement [16]. Appropriate and accurate home-school communication benefits students' academic attainment and parental educational expectations, especially for students with a disadvantaged socioeconomic background [17].

Societal transformation is one of the antecedents of a family's socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations [18]. The landscape of education has been transformed by the trajectories of educational development and training systems caused by the coronavirus pandemic in China. Online teaching and learning have spread widely, with a dramatic increase in home-based parents' educational involvement. This study explores the underlying relationship between family socioeconomic status and parental expectations by examining the variations in educational expectations in the post-pandemic era, with the specific aim of investigating the mediating effects of teacher–parent communication on socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations as well as the moderating effects of coronavirus anxiety in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Goal-setting and personal needs are closely interconnected. High-socioeconomicstatus parents usually associate with stronger parental involvement and parental aspiration. Communication between a teacher and parents with high socioeconomic status is more frequent [19]. Drawing on expectation theory, this study aims to examine parental educational expectations by investigating the mechanism of how socioeconomic status derives educational expectations from the mediation of teacher–parent communication. The boundary condition of the COVID-19 era further enhances the significance of the research. Moreover, this study contributes to the empirical body of knowledge on the consequences of parental educational expectations.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Socioeconomic Status and Parental Educational Expectations

Socioeconomic status (SES) is often defined as a social stratification system formed from access to various resources and has been reflected in education as family social class and income [12]. Parents' level of education, occupation, and income typically act as the key indicator of socioeconomic status. According to earlier research, students from high-economic-status families are more likely to bear higher parental educational expectations [20]. Parents from a high socioeconomic status tend to emphasize the value of education as being significant to families and the local community. Families with a low economic status focusing on their children's education will help low-income families improve their long-term financial situation as well as their children's academic achievement [8]. Academic progress and future professional growth of children will be subpar if parents do not pay enough attention to their children's academic performance [4].

Socioeconomic status significantly impacts parental educational expectations and adolescent cognitive development [21]. Family educational investment and cultural capital are the leading effective approaches for parents to encourage their children's academic achievements. Parents from lower socioeconomic levels were less capable of dealing with their children's schooling [22]. High-income families can afford more educational expenditure, which benefits children's academic achievement and raises parental educational expectations [23]. According to Kim et al., 86.5% of parents with the highest income and 49.9% of parents with the lowest income wanted their children to attend college [12]. What is more, families' financial difficulties limit parental aspirations for their children's education and cause them to wait longer than expected to begin attending institutions that grant bachelor's degrees [20]. A wealthy family can significantly improve a student's academic performance since they can provide them with the ideal role models, educational opportunities, financial assistance, and cultural resources. However, families with limited resources endure adverse experiences, such as underinvestment in education, undesirable housing conditions, and fewer community services [24]. These viewpoints imply that the parents' educational expectations are significantly influenced by the family's economic status, which leads to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Socioeconomic status positively predicts parental educational expectations.

2.2. Socioeconomic Status and Teacher-Parent Communication

Parental involvement, consisting of parental participation, supervision, and expectation, is the word used to describe the acts taken by parents at home and school to assist their children's physical and mental development [25]. Parent engagement varies by family economic level, with middle-class parents being more interested in their children's learning activities than working-class parents [22]. The theoretical models of home-based involvement, school-based involvement, and teacher–parent communication all specifically focus on parental involvement and have demonstrated the association between family income and parental involvement [8,9]. Yet, the subject of how family income influences parental involvement, particularly how family income affects teacher–parent communication, needs further exploration.

Teacher-parent communication has received a lot of attention as the fundamental component of parental involvement in education [26]. The current study fills this need by concentrating on the effects of teacher-parent communication, specifically the relationship between economic status and educational expectations. The influence of teacher-parent communication on students' education is interactively overlaid, and such cooperation is essential for children's academic achievement [27]. Schools are the most significant agents of educational information for families, particularly low-income households. The interchange of information between parents and teachers has considerable consequences on the family educational environment and parents' education decisions. Anthony and Ogg indicated that higher-income households have more active teacher-parent communication, and effective teacher-parent communication can improve children's academic performance [15]. Parents from high-income households have adequate time and resources to communicate with teachers in a variety of ways, including face-to-face and email. These types of participation are consistent with the association between socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations. According to Barg, low-income parents do not actively encourage their kids' academic endeavors [28]. Students from low socioeconomic status families heavily depend on schools for their education, and they tend to lack confidence and parental educational expectations. While parents who possess more financial resources

are more likely to participate in their children's learning activities [25], and they have better teacher–parent communication [29]. Therefore, we proposed the second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Socioeconomic status positively predicts teacher–parent communication.

2.3. Teacher–Parent Communication and Parental Educational Expectations

Goodall and Montgomery highlighted that effective teacher–parent communication was a crucial parental educational participation component [30]. Research has demonstrated a beneficial correlation between parental educational expectations and teacher–parent communication [31]. Parents have higher educational expectations when parents and teachers communicate more positively [15]. Frequent communication between parents and teachers can enhance student academic performance as well as parent and teacher morale [16]. The theory of expectation shows that the relative value and probability of success of various options are key determinants of choice; accordingly, parental educational expectations are raised when there is sufficient and accurate parent–teacher communication [32].

Parents' opinions of their children's academic performance, chances for advancement, and excellent behavior at school are all positively correlated with teacher–parent contact [17]. Students are more motivated to learn when their parents are involved in their education [33]. Parental involvement is the most significant indicator of communication between parents and teachers [34]. Effective teacher–parent communication provides parents with accurate assessments of their children's abilities in addition to information on their learning and growth [35]. You et al. addressed that parental participation and supervision significantly influence adolescent academic achievement compared to parental expectations [25]. Thus, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3: Teacher–parent communication positively predicts parental educational expectations.

Hypothesis 4: *The relationship between socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations was mediated by teacher–parent communication.*

2.4. Coronavirus Anxiety and Teacher–Parent Communication

The outbreak of COVID-19 has reshaped education by schools closing and the implementation of numerous online courses. With the enormous growth of online education in the post-pandemic and digital eras, teacher–parent online communication prevails. The function of teacher-parent communication has drawn widespread interest in promoting parental engagement [36]. However, it is difficult for teachers to provide parents with the necessary educational guidance for remote learning during the pandemic [37]. Studies indicated that inconsistent teacher-parent communication is one of the predicting factors of parent anxiety during the pandemic, parents face an unprecedented amount of stress, causing them to be less willing to communicate with teachers, especially parents of disadvantaged socioeconomic status [37,38]. According to risk awareness theory, strong risk perception motivates people to pay more attention to risk information, and people will take the required precautions to avoid risk. The public's behavior will become extremely sensitive to diverse dangerous information, potentially causing public anxiety and panic when risk awareness exceeds public tolerance [39]. COVID-19 is expected to influence teacherparent communication. Students attend school remotely, and parents are forced to take part in primary or secondary teaching at home. Remote learning places new burdens on parents and caregivers, who become at-home educators while juggling other family demands and their work challenges and taking the risk of employment loss and financial strain [38]. The socioeconomic issues brought on by COVID-19 have exacerbated parental anxiety and uncertainty for families with low socioeconomic status. The role of teacher-parent communication is extremely important in improving students' online learning quality and easing parental educational anxiety. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Coronavirus anxiety has a moderating effect on the relationship between socioeconomic status and teacher–parent communication.

In the current paper, we conducted two studies with parents of students studying at K–12 schools. In study 1, we examined the connection between parents' socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations, especially the role teacher–parent communication plays between them. In study 2, we explored how coronavirus anxiety influences the relationship between socioeconomic status and teacher–parent communication. Based on the literature review, we predicted that teacher–parent communication connected greatly with parents' socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations. In terms of coronavirus anxiety, we predicted that greater coronavirus anxiety would be connected with less teacher–parent communication. Figure 1 below shows the conceptual framework which contains all the five proposed hypotheses. It displays the study hypotheses with the mediation of teacher–parent communication between socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations, and the moderation of coronavirus anxiety between socioeconomic status and teacher–parent communication.



Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Procedure

We focused on parental educational involvement both at home and at school in the post-pandemic era in this study. To examine the underlying relationships between socioeconomic status, parental educational expectation, teacher-parent communication, and coronavirus, we invited parents who have children studying at primary and secondary schools. The study was approved by the Ethics Committee of Jing Hengyi School of Education, Hangzhou Normal University. The data were collected in June 2022, when schooling was impacted by the pandemic very much all over the world. Due to COVID-19 quarantine policy reasons, online questionnaires and random sampling were employed in data collection. We first advertised the investigation on the Internet while delivering a questionnaire link to the parents' pool through a convenience sampling method simultaneously. Most of the participants in this study come from Hangzhou, the capital city of Zhejiang province, one of the major metropolises in China. All participants were primary school students and secondary school students' parents. They were informed of the purpose of the study before the survey, with informed consent forms obtained from each participant online. All participants have signed the informed consent form. Participation was voluntary, and all participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. The data collection process strictly adhered to the survey's principles of anonymity, independence, and confidentiality, with an emphasis that the data were exclusively used for academic study. We applied several procedures to ensure the reliability of the survey. The questionnaire items were counterbalanced to reduce common method variance. The most widely used online

questionnaire platform in China, Wenjuanxing, was employed to collect data through questionnaires. It took an average of 15–20 min for a participant to complete the questionnaire. The final sample included 5936 participants. The final dataset contains 4403 responses, resulting in a 74.17% response rate after eliminating missing values.

3.2. Participants

3.2.1. Sample

Table 1 illustrates the demographic background of all 4403 participants in this study. No missing values were present for the samples. The age groups of the participants were distributed as follows: 5 (0.10%) participants were under 25 years old; 1022 (23.2%) participants were between 25–35 years old; 3112 (70.70%) participants are between 36–45 years old; 251 (5.70%) participants are between 46–55 years old; and 13 (0.30%) participants are over 55 years old. For gender, there are 1903 (43.22%) male participants and 2500 (56.78%) female participants. A total of 2224 participants (50.50%) reported holding a bachelor's degree, 395 participants (9.00%) held a master's degree or above, and 1784 participants (40.50%) had completed higher vocational college and below in terms of education. Next, 2363 (53.67%) participants had only one child, and 2040 (46.33%) participants had more than one child. There were 2255 (51.22%) parents who had children in grades 1–2, 1064 (24.12%) parents who had children in grades 3–4, and 1083 (24.66%) parents who had children in grades 5–6.

Demographics	Items	Number	Percentage of Respondents
Gender	Male	2500	56.78%
	remale	1905	43.2276
	Under 25	5	0.10%
	25–35	1022	23.20%
Age	36–45	3112	70.70%
	46–55	251	5.70%
	Over 55	13	0.30%
	Bachelor's degree	2224	50.50%
Education background	Master's degree or above	395	9.00%
	Higher vocational college and below education	1784	40.40%
	Only one child	2363	53.67%
Child	More than one child	2040	46.33%
	Grades 1–2	2255	51.22%
Child's grade	Grades 3–4	1065	24.12%
	Grades 5–6	1083	24.66%

Table 1. Demographic statistics (N = 4403).

3.2.2. Normal Distribution Test

It was difficult to achieve a completely random sample due to the constraints of COVID-19 quarantine policy restrictions. We conducted a normal distribution test on the questionnaire data in line with statistical requirements to ensure the data distribution bias is within a reasonable range. Common methods of testing normal distribution included the statistical graphical method and the statistical indicator method. This study employed the joint test of skewness kurtosis (Jarque–Bera test) data normality in statistical indicator test results. It is generally accepted that when the absolute value of skewness is less than 3 and the absolute value of kurtosis is less than 10, it means the sample matches normal distribution [40]. As shown in Table 2, the absolute values of skewness for the survey data of each question item ranged from 0.03–1.55, and the absolute values of kurtosis ranged from 0.2–3.36, which met the requirement of normal distribution of the data. Therefore, the data matched a normal distribution.

Items	Skew	Kurtosis
Educational expectation	-0.03	-0.20
Socioeconomic status	-0.39	0.38
TPC1	0.23	-0.76
TPC2	0.47	-0.37
TPC3	0.44	-0.42
TPC4	0.53	-0.36
TPC5	0.38	-0.40
TPC6	0.51	-0.25
TPC7	0.53	-0.40
CA1	1.30	2.17
CA2	1.30	2.43
CA3	1.53	3.02
CA4	1.47	2.95
CA5	1.55	3.36

Table 2. Normal distribution test statistics (N = 4403).

TPC = teacher–parent communication, CA = coronavirus anxiety.

3.3. Measurements

We employed the established instruments which have been extensively used and validated in the existing literature. The reliability and validity of these scales have been well proven.

3.3.1. Socioeconomic Status

Subjective social status is more sensitive and inclusive than objective social status since it reflects the overall impact of SES, life events, and social hierarchy [41]. The socioe-conomic status MacArthur SSS scale of subjective socioeconomic status was created by Adler et al. [42]. This study employed the SSS scale to determine the family's economic position. Individuals estimate their SES by marking the rung on the 10-rung graphical ladder where they situate themselves to others or a particular social group or community. The rungs reflect rising positions based on income, educational attainment, and occupation. In terms of wealth, education, and respectable employment, those at the top are the best, and those at the bottom are the worst. The higher the ranking, the greater the status, which was reviewed on a scale of 1 to 10. The SES ladder rankings have been proven to have sufficient test–retest reliability and to be highly linked with objective measures of income, education, and employment [43,44].

3.3.2. Educational Expectation

Parental educational expectations, a dependent variable in this study, include five categories: 1–5 refers to high schools or secondary vocational schools, higher vocational colleges, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees, respectively. The expectations for their children's education increase with rising scores.

3.3.3. Teacher–Parent Communication

Teacher–parent communication was measured by the Chinese version of the family involvement scale. It was revised from the original English version developed by Fantuzzo et al. [45] and has been widely used by Chinese parents with good reliability and valid-ity [46]. The scale consists of 7 items. Sample items are "I talked with the teacher about the children's performance" and "I talked with the teacher about the difficulties confronted by my children at school". Participants were asked to choose between 4 mutually exclusive options, with 1 reflecting poor teacher–parent communication and 4 reflecting good teacher–parent communication. Mean total scores were used to indicate the level of teacher–parent study, the items demonstrated good reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.95$).

3.3.4. Coronavirus Anxiety

We used the Coronavirus Anxiety Scale to assess participants' coronavirus anxiety, including the four dimensions—cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and physiological—of coronavirus anxiety [47]. The scale consists of 5 items (e.g., "I felt dizzy or weak when I read or listened to the news about the coronavirus" and "I felt numb or stiff when I thought or was exposed to information about the coronavirus"), each item was rated on a 4-point scale to reflect the frequency of the symptom, ranging from 0 (not at all) to 3 (nearly every day) over the preceding 2 weeks. Higher scores reflect more serious coronavirus anxiety. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for coronavirus anxiety was 0.839.

3.3.5. Control Variable

To enhance the validity of the results, confounding variables were controlled, including parents' gender, age, education level, job, and children's grade.

3.4. Data Analysis

The current research employed a quantitative research design, utilized a deductive approach for theory development, and collected data through a survey strategy. Quantitative research mainly focuses on and answers questions about the whole, relatively macro and relatively universal, and focuses on objective facts, especially about the relationship between variables. Preliminary data analysis and descriptive and moderated mediation mechanism were calculated by using SPSS Macro. First, this macro estimates the conditional indirect effects of teacher-parent communication between socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations using bootstrapping methods. Second, it predicted the moderated effects of coronavirus anxiety between socioeconomic status and teacher-parent communication. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS 26.0. Since self-reported data were collected for the current study, the Harman single-factor test was conducted to test the potential common method biases before data processing [48]. A total of 14 items of four variables were tested (e.g., "When I read or listen to the news about the coronavirus, I feel dizzy or weak", "I talk with the teacher about how children get along with their peers at school"). The results showed that three factors had eigenvalues greater than 1. These factors contributed 76.8% of the total variance. The first factor explained 39.5% of the total variance, which did not reach the critical criterion of 40%, indicating no significant method bias in the present study.

After common method bias evaluation, we carried out the following data processing steps. Firstly, we employed descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis to examine the means, standard deviations, and bivariate associations of the variables in the study. Secondly, it is needed for this study to verify whether teacher-parent communication plays a mediating role between family socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations, the mediated model is tested by the structural equation model. Finally, the SPSS macro-PROCESS (Model 7) Version 3.32 suggested by Hayes was used to test the moderated mediation model [49]. The tools have been applied to test mediating models, showing higher statistical test ability. Model 7 was the proposed moderated mediation model, testing the influence of a moderator on a mediation model, with the moderation occurring on the first half of the indirect path (the relationship between the independent variable and the mediator) of the mediation model. Specifically, we used Model 7 to test whether coronavirus anxiety moderates the effect of socioeconomic status on teacherparent communication. Bootstrap confidence intervals (95% CIs) were applied to determine whether the regression coefficients in Model 7 were significant from 5000 random samples. CIs excluding zero indicated significant effects. Furthermore, simple slope analyses were performed to decompose all the potential significant interaction effects [50].

4. Results

4.1. Preliminary Analyses

Table 3 presents the means, standard deviations, and correlations for all observed variables. The mean, standard deviation, and correlations were within the acceptable range for all the variables. As hypothesized, socioeconomic status was positively correlated with both educational expectations (r = 0.15, p < 0.01) and teacher–parent communication (r = 0.21, p < 0.01), and negatively correlated with coronavirus anxiety (r = -0.10, p < 0.01). Teacher–parent communications (r = 0.15, p < 0.01). The data are free of multicollinearity issues, as specified in our bivariate correlation results.

	М	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Parents' gender	1.75	0.43	1								
2. Parents' age	2.83	0.53	-0.17	1							
3. Parents' job	5.65	3.25	0.14	-0.07	1						
4. Parents' educational background	3.47	0.98	-0.01	0.07	-0.13	1					
5. Children's grade	5.73	0.83	-0.04	0.21	-0.02	-0.16	1				
6. Socioeconomic status	5.48	1.71	0.08	0.02	-0.06	0.23	-0.02	1			
7. Parental educational expectation	3.80	0.71	0.03	0.01	-0.06	0.20	-0.02	0.15 **	1		
8. Coronavirus anxiety	1.50	0.61	-0.05	0.01	-0.02	-0.14	0.02	-0.10 **	-0.03	1	
9. Teacher–parent communication	2.18	0.77	0.03	0.01	0.06	0.13	-0.02	0.21 **	0.15 **	-0.03	1

Table 3. Descriptive statistics and interrelations.

N = 4403. ** p < 0.01.

4.2. Testing for the Proposed Mediated Model

As shown in Table 4, this study examined the relationship between family socioeconomic status, teacher–parent communication, and parental educational expectations through a mediating role test step. It was found that when teacher–parent communication significantly and positively predicted educational expectations, family socioeconomic status still exhibited a significant positive prediction of educational expectations. The results indicated that teacher–parent communication acted as a mediating role between family socioeconomic status and educational expectations.

Table 4. Mediated model effects (N = 4403).

	Effect	SE	t	р	LLCI	ULCI
Total effect	0.05	0.01	7.40	0.00	0.03	0.06
Direct effect	0.04	0.01	5.98	0.00	0.03	0.05
Indirect effect	0.01	0.00			0.01	0.01

4.3. Testing for the Proposed Moderated Mediation Model

Hayes's macro-PROCESS (Model 7) was adopted to examine the proposed moderated mediation model [49].

We used structural equation modeling to conduct path analysis. The results were presented in Table 5 and Figure 2. The regression coefficient for socioeconomic status and educational expectations was 0.04 (p < 0.001), which means that socioeconomic status had a statistically significant positive effect on educational expectations. With a 1-unit increase in socioeconomic status, educational expectations increased by 0.04 units. We hypothesized that group-level socioeconomic status positively related to educational expectations, and, thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Similarly, we also found a statistically significant positive impact of socioeconomic status on teacher–parent communication (0.10, p < 0.001) and this supported our Hypothesis 2. Teacher–parent communication was also positively and significantly (0.10, p < 0.001) related to educational expectations. Hypothesis 3 was supported. To examine Hypothesis 4 and Hypothesis 5, an interaction effect was also analyzed with macro-PROCESS (Model 7) by Hayes [49]. In the final hypothesis, this research proposed that coronavirus anxiety moderates the indirect effect of socioeconomic status on educational expectations through the mediation of teacher–parent communication. We found the interaction of socioeconomic status and coronavirus anxiety was positively and significantly (-0.03, p < 0.01) related to teacher–parent communication. The results of all of the path coefficients are shown in Figure 2. Therefore, Hypothesises 1–5 were all supported.

	Parental Educational Expectations			Teacher–Parent Communication		
	β	t	SE	β	t	SE
Socioeconomic status	0.04	6.00 ***	0.01	0.10	12.72 ***	0.01
Teacher-parent communication	0.10	7.11 ***	0.01			
Socioeconomic status \times coronavirus				-0.03	_3 10 **	0.01
anxiety				-0.05	-5.10	0.01
R		0.24			0.24	
\mathbb{R}^2		0.06			0.06	
F		39.68 ***			32.57 ***	
N = 4403.	** <i>p</i> < 0.01, and *	** <i>p</i> < 0.001.				

Table 5. Regression results for the conditional indirect effects (moderated mediation).



Figure 2. Moderated mediation analysis. ** p < 0.01, and *** p < 0.001.

Additionally, simple slope analyses were conducted to illustrate this significant interaction and explore whether slopes for the high coronavirus anxiety group (1 SD above the mean) were different from slopes for the low coronavirus anxiety group (1 SD below the mean) in the mediator variable model. The results were plotted in Figure 3.

As shown in Figure 3 and Table 6, the effect of socioeconomic status on teacher–parent communication was positive and significant for parents with high and low coronavirus anxiety ($\beta = 0.07$, t = 7.73, p < 0.001; $\beta = 0.10$, t = 11.59, p < 0.001). The results indicated that the indirect effect of teacher–parent communication in the relationship between socioeconomic status and educational expectations was stronger for parents with low coronavirus anxiety. Therefore, regardless of the levels of coronavirus anxiety, socioeconomic status could significantly predict teacher–parent communication among parents.



Figure 3. Coronavirus anxiety moderated the relationship between socioeconomic status and teacherparent communication.

Table 6. Moderation analysis.

	β	Boot SE	Boot LLCl	Boot ULCl
M - 1SD	0.10	0.01	0.09	0.12
М	0.09	0.01	0.07	0.10
M + 1SD	0.07	0.01	0.05	0.08

5. Discussion

Previous studies have found that higher family socioeconomic status is accompanied by higher educational expectations [20,21]. Parents from advantageous socioeconomic status behaved well and had effective family-school communication. Effective parentteacher communication appears to enhance parental involvement [31]. This study expanded the research by examining the moderate effect of teacher–parent communication on the relationship between family socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations. It found that family socioeconomic status influences parents' educational behaviors and their willingness to make educational investments for their children [11]. According to Bourdieu and Passeron, parental educational expectations were based on habit and represented the objective possibilities of subjective internalization and understanding [23]. Working-class parents were more likely to have low educational expectations than middle-class parents. Students' performance and ability are created dominantly through educational investment. A family's capacity to make such investments is strongly influenced by financial resources from the perspective of human capital theory [51]. Families with significant financial resources can not only give their children the materials they need, but they can also provide a suitable environment and devote more time to their children's education [52]. Contrarily, impoverished families lack financial support and spare time to participate in their children's education. Parents from lower-income and lower-social-class families have less frequent teacher-parent communication and have fewer expectations for their children [53,54]. This study contributed to the literature by highlighting the role of teacher– parent communication plays in improving the educational expectations of parents from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The indirect relationship between parental educational expectations and socioeconomic status was manifested, and Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 were validated. In line with the previous findings, this study proved that not only socioeconomic status positively predicted teacher–parent communication, but also that teacher–parent communication positively predicted educational expectations [29]. Communication between teacher and parent emphasized the importance of family and school participation in educational activities [55]. Improving teacher–parent communication could provide parents with a better understanding of what is expected of their children as students at school and give them more confidence in their ability to aid and support their children's learning. As Pomerantz et al. pointed out, proper parental involvement greatly improved children's academic achievement, mental health, emotional growth, and social development [56]. Therefore, it is imperative to pay closer attention to further strengthening teacher–student communication in light of the critical role of parents in educational involvement associated with their educational expectations.

In addition, this study demonstrated that COVID-19 anxiety can regulate the relationship between socioeconomic status and teacher–parent communication. More specifically, it indicated that the impact of socioeconomic status on teacher–parent communication is more pronounced for parents with low pandemic anxiety compared to those with high pandemic anxiety. One possible reason is that public health events have a specific infectivity and incubation period, which might put impoverished families in economic and cultural dilemmas. Parents from low-income families are more likely to be too busy to participate in their children's education. The teacher–parent communication skills of parents varied in different degrees of coronavirus anxiety. The findings in this study indicated that parents of low economic status may have a high state of anxiety, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, coronavirus anxiety decreased teacher–parent communication and engagement. The cognitive dissonance of unexpected public health issues is another factor causing anxiety during the pandemic. Parents with high socioeconomic status can actively engage in teacher–parent communication when faced with negative emotions, while parents with low socioeconomic status are less able to do so because they have higher levels of anxiety.

Regarding the theoretical implications of this particular study, we concluded a positive relationship between socioeconomic status on educational expectation, highlighting the mediating role of teacher–parent communication. The findings revealed that the increment in teacher–parent communication for parents from disadvantaged families would improve their educational expectations and reduces educational inequality in the long run. This study verified the moderation role coronavirus anxiety played between socioeconomic status on teacher–parent communication and came up with the idea that relieving coronavirus anxiety could help parents from low socioeconomic status engage in educational teacher–parent communication. The above findings contributed to the study of parental socioeconomic status and educational expectations, especially on the roles of teacher–parent communication in the post-pandemic era.

6. Conclusions, Practical Implication, Limitations, and Future Research

According to the findings of this study, socioeconomic status positively influences educational expectations, socioeconomic status influences educational expectations through teacher–parent communication, and coronavirus anxiety moderates the effect of socioeconomic status on teacher–parent communication. Based on the findings, this study provided practical implications for improving teacher–parent communication and reducing parents' education anxiety in the post-pandemic era.

First, school administrators and psychologists were encouraged to spare no effort to improve teacher–parent communication, especially for families with low socioeconomic levels. To promote teacher–parent communication, further research programs and practice models that support parents and teachers working together to improve students' academic performance are required [57]. Additionally, appropriate platforms and communication mechanisms for teacher–parent communication should be created. Because family time and energy is a significant component that affects the level of involvement, sending informational SMS directly to family members may be a better use of family members' limited time. Thus, texting and text-based applications can be used as low-cost "nudges" to encourage increased teacher–parent communication [58]. Finally, the government and schools should pay closer attention to parents with high levels of coronavirus anxiety and help them deal

with the pandemic pressure, and show them more patience and care as they work to find effective teacher–parent communication methods.

Second, it is beneficial for parents to have appropriate educational expectations for their children. According to Hornby and Lafaele, parents who aspire to less than college will lower their children's academic achievement, inconsistent parental expectations could influence lower academic outcomes, and high parental expectations are good when coupled with children's realistic expectations. Parents should develop practical expectations matching their children's academic performance and actively discuss them with teachers. More practically, parents from better-off families do not have to have excessive expectations for their children, and parents from financially challenging families were encouraged to improve their educational expectations.

Third, home-based parental involvement is positively associated with academic performance, while school-based parental involvement is negatively associated with academic performance [8]. To have a better understanding of students' academic performance and to make recommendations for students' future career development, teachers should pay more attention to students from economic disadvantage families and actively engage with their parents about their academic performance.

Although the current study opened up a new strand of research in the educational psychological literature on socioeconomic status, parental educational expectation, and teacher–parent communication in the context of the post-pandemic era, it has limitations. First, the cross-sectional approach failed to deduce a causal explanation. Therefore, a future longitudinal study is required to elucidate the causal relationship between socioeconomic status and parental educational expectations. Second, the relationship between the variables was found to be significant in the data analysis, but the effect sizes were low. It is needed for us to reselect the samples to further validate the model in the future. Third, the present study did not consider other factors that may affect parental educational expectations, we recommend examining other related positive variables, for instance, parental educational background and parenting patterns, in future research.

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