SOCIAL SUPPORT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT BOARDERS

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ABSTRACT

Many practical studies are carried out to investigate factors affecting students' academic performance. Social support is one important protective factor in dealing with life's difficulties and is considered one of the factors affecting student academic performance. Hence, the study aimed to look into the relationship between social support and academic performance among Louisian student boarders. As a result, the level of social support among student boarders is relatively high and revealed that there is a significant difference on the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to their profile variables in terms of their sex, department, rental fees, and academic status The findings also showed that social support and academic performance is significantly related with each other in terms of family support, peer support and school/community support. It could be inferred that staying away from home affects motivation and focus; thus, social support plays a vital role to the well-being of students.

Keywords: *Social Support, Academic Performance, Student Boarders, Family Support, Peer Support, and School/Community Support*

INTRODUCTION

Social support is a multidimensional concept that includes support received from friends, family, strangers, and even from the animals (Dumont and Provost, 2009). This support can be further classified into information, emotion and instrument. Colarossi (2001) showed that social support is multifaceted construct. Colarossi explained that such construct includes disaggregation and specification across structural and functional dimensions. Farmer and Farmer (2006) contented that social support is a process of social change that contributes to the development of a person for his/her values, behavioral pattern and social cognitive. Social support is the perception that one is actually being cared of, has assistance from other people and has a supportive resource. It can be emotional (nurturance), tangible (financial assistance), informational (advice), or companionship (sense of belonging) and intangible (personal advice), (Gurung, 2006). In sum, social support can be viewed as care, value and guidance provided from family, peer and community members (Dollete, Steese, Philips, & Matthews, 2006). Social support served as a protective factor to people's vulnerability on the effects of stress and considered as one of the factors affecting student's academic performance in schools (Lewis, 2002).

Student boarders are the ones who were staying away from their home and surrounded by creative, inspired and like-minded individuals in just same boat. But being in a boarding house might take adolescents some time to getting used of it. This will be the time in which you will learn to become more independent and work harder to grow into a well-rounded individual – a characteristic that will put you on the road to success (Bath, 2016)

Social support is an important protective factor in dealing with life's difficulties. Social support can actually make a person more able to cope with problems. Interpersonal relationships are indispensable in helping adolescents cope with stress (American Psychological Association, 2015). Social support plays a vital role on the life of adolescents in connection to their academic performance in school in order to elucidate what strategies could be employed to support adolescents during this vulnerable stage (Reilly, 2004). Social support creates motivation for adolescents to achieve. It builds confidence and a sense of self that make academic success seem attainable. It also provides a sense of trust, confidence and psychological safety that allows adolescents to take risks, admit errors, ask for help and experience failure along the way to higher levels of learning (Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 2011).

Students struggle to get out of their own way to achieve academic goals. Poor study habits, lack of motivation and poor preparation negatively impact student performance. However, students also face more indirect conflicts with academic performance achievement from areas like financial and social support (Neil, 2007).

Tuguegarao City, Northern Philippines has become a nest for top performing universities in the Cagayan Valley Region. It caters and provides academically equipped students. Because of this, students all over the region were highly encouraged to enroll in these different prestigious schools. One among the said institutions is the University of Saint Louis (USL) which has been one of top performing schools in Cagayan since its early beginning. Due to increasing number of incoming students from other places that move from secondary to tertiary schooling, they experience considerable stress due to diverse changes in their surroundings. Moreover, changes brought by these have a direct impact on their overall well-being; thus, affecting their academic performance.

This study was carried out to investigate factors affecting students' academic performance specifically social support from their family, peers and school/community in order to elucidate possible strategies for coping students during this vulnerable stage.

Research Questions

The study aimed to determine the relationship between level of social support and academic performance among Louisian student boarders. It specifically sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
   a. Sex
   b. Department
   c. Living Conditions
   d. Rental Fees
   e. Academic Status
2. What is the level of social support of the respondents along the following:
   a. Family Support
   b. Peer Support
   c. School/Community Support
3. What is the academic performance of the respondents?
4. Is there a significant difference on the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to their profile variables and their academic performance?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the level of social support of the respondents and their academic performance?

METHODS

This study utilized a descriptive correlational method in which it described the characteristics of the population needed and its relationship between the level of social support and academic performance among the said respondents. Second Year (17 years old) student boarders of USL were the subjects needed for this research as they were qualified in the criterion of adjusting to a new environment.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile Variables	Frequency (N=150)	Percentage (%=100.00)
Gender		
Male	54	36.00
Female	96	64.00
Department		
School of Accountancy, Business and Hospitality	50	33.30
School of Engineering, Architecture, Interior Design, and Information Technology Education	50	33.30
School of Education Arts and Sciences	25	16.70
School of Health and Allied Sciences	25	16.70
Living Conditions		
Bed Spacer	112	74.70
Apartment	35	23.30
Board and Lodging	3	2.00
Rental Fees		
500-1000	70	46.70
1001-2000	60	40.00
2001-3000	11	7.30
3001 and above	9	6.00
Academic Status		
Regular	129	86.00
Irregular	21	14.00
TOTAL	150	100.00

Purposive Random Sampling was used in which the population sample covered Second Year student boarders of USL who were currently under living accommodation of bed spacing, apartment and board and lodging with the use of set of questionnaires needed for them to answer as regards of the level of social support received and the assessment of the academic performance of the students.

The researchers utilized 15 item self-made questionnaires which measured the level of social support from their parents, peers and from the community or school. Content Validity Index was conducted before the conduct of the study. The CVI value is 0.81 which means that the questionnaire is accepted for the conduct of the study. Further, reliability test was also conducted to determine whether the questionnaire is suited for the respondents. The result presented the following reliability values: Family Support (0.922), Peer Support (0.895), and Community Support (0.882). All the different indicators of social support had high reliability results. Hence, the questionnaire is suited for the study.

To describe the profile of the respondents, frequency and percentage were used. Meanwhile, to determine the level of social support and academic performance of the respondents, frequency, percentage and mode were used. To determine if there is a significant difference on the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to their profile variables and their academic performance, Independent Sample T-Test and One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used. And finally, to determine if there is a significant relationship between the level of social support of the respondents and their academic performance, Pearson R was used.

RESULTS

Table 1. Level of Social Support of the Respondents

Social Support	Frequency	Percentage	Mode	Qualitative Description
Family Support	134	89.33	4	Very High
Peer Support	114	76.00	4	Very High
School/ Community Support	126	84.00	4	Very High
Overall	124	82.67	4	Very High

Table 1 exhibits the level of social support among all respondents described as high in family support, peer support and school/community support. Specifically under family support, it was the superior among others. Along the indicators, care and guidance by the respondent's parent acquire the highest assess by the respondents. In addition, under peer support and along the said indicators they are with me in my best and worst points have the highest assessment by the respondents. Lastly, under school/community support and along the said indicators, the school having proper and adequate sources of different tools needed in learning, obtained the highest assessment by the respondents.

Table 2.A. Level of Social Support of the Respondents When Grouped According to Sex

Social Support	Sex	Mean	Df	F-Value	P-Value
Family Support	Male	3.53	148	-1.381	0.169
	Female	3.62			
Peer Support	Male	3.39	148	0.557	0.579
	Female	3.34			
School / Community Support	Male	3.20			
	Female	3.75	148	-0.380	0.001*

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 2.A shows the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to sex. Results revealed that there is no significant difference on family and peer support with the probability values of 0.169 and 0.579, respectively. Meanwhile, there is a significant difference in the school/community support when grouped according to sex with the probability value of 0.001 lower than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2.B. Level of Social Support of the Respondents When Grouped According to their Department

Social Support	Department	Mean	df	F-Value	P-Value
Family Support	SABH	3.65	3	1.117	0.344
	SEADITE	3.52			
	SEAS	3.55			
	SHAS	3.62			
Peer Support	SABH	3.34	3	5.694	0.001*
	SEADITE	3.52			
	SEAS	3.35			
	SHAS	3.05			
School / Community Support	SABH	3.61	3	8.466	0.000*
	SEADITE	3.29			
	SEAS	3.69			
	SHAS	3.72			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 2.B shows the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to department. Results revealed that there is no significant difference on family support with the probability value of 0.344. However, there is a significant difference in the peer and school/community support when grouped according to department with the probability values of 0.001 and 0.000 lower which must be than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2.C. Level of Social Support of the Respondents When Grouped According to their Living Conditions

Social Support	Living Conditions	Mean	df	F-Value	P-Value
Family Support	Bed Space	3.57	2	2.761	0.067
	Apartment	3.66			
	Board & Lodging	3.13			
Peer Support	Bed Space	3.34	2	2.296	0.104
	Apartment	3.37			
	Board & Lodging	3.93			
School / Community Support	Bed Space	3.46	2	0.658	0.519
	Apartment	3.55			
	Board & Lodging	3.53			

*significant at 0.05 level

Table 2.C shows the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to their living conditions. Results revealed that there is no significant difference on family support, peer support and even school/community support with the probability values of 0.067, 0.104, and 0.519, respectively.

Table 2.D. Level of Social Support of the Respondents When Grouped According to their Rental Fees

Social Support	Rental Fees	Mean	df	F-Value	P-Value
Family Support	500-1000	3.54			
	1001-2000	3.65			
	2001-3000	3.62	3	1.209	0.308
	3001 & above	3.44			
Peer Support	500-1000	3.58			
	1001-2000	3.33			
	2001-3000	3.38	3	0.369	0.001*
	3001 & above	3.11			
School / Community Support	500-1000	3.47			
	1001-2000	3.48			
	2001-3000	3.56	3	0.0147	0.932
	3001 & above	3.47			

significant at 0.05 level

Table 2.D shows the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to their rental fees. Results revealed that there is no significant difference on family support and community/support with the probability values of 0.308 and 0.932, respectively. However, there is a significant difference in the peer support when grouped according to their rental fees with the probability value of 0.001 which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2.E. Level of Social Support of the Respondents When Grouped According to their Academic Status

Social Support	Academic Status	Mean	df	F-Value	P-Value
Family Support	Regular	3.59	148	0.524	0.601
	Irregular	3.54			
Peer Support	Regular	3.57	148	-1.139	0.001
	Irregular	3.04			
School / Community Support	Regular	3.48			
	Irregular	3.47	148	0.163	0.871

significant at 0.05 level

Table 2.E shows the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to their academic status. Results revealed that there is no significant difference on family support and community/support with the probability values of 0.601 and 0.871, respectively. However, there is a significant difference in the peer support when grouped according to their academic status with the probability value of 0.001 lower than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3. Academic Performance of the Students

GPA	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
97-100	0	0.00
94-96	0	0.00
91-93	1	0.70
88-90	20	13.30
85-87	47	31.30
82-84	67	44.70
79-81	15	10.00
75-78	0	0.00

Table 3 shows the academic performance of the students. However, students with the GPA of 82-84 got the highest number of respondents with 44.7% of the population, followed by GPA of 85-87 with 31.3%, 88-90 with 13.3%, and other follows.

Table 4. Relationship between Level of Social Support and Grade Point Average of the Respondents

Social Support and GPA	Pearson R	P-Value
Family Support GPA	0.456	0.000
Peer Support GPA	0.053	0.521
School/Community Support GPA	-0.036	0.658

significant at 0.05 level

Table 4 shows the relationship between the level of social support and academic performance (GPA) of the respondents. Results revealed that there is no significant difference in the family peer and school/community support with the probability values of 0.521 and 0.658, respectively. However, there is a significant difference in the family support of the respondents with the probability value of 0.000 lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

This study focused on the different social support specifically the family, peer and community/school support that every student needed in the development of his well-being. First, family support obtained very high on the assessment of students this is because parents are the first educators of their children. The support they provide affects their child's learning and development and linked to subsequent educational outcomes (Hill & Tyson, 2009). On the other hand, peer support gotvery high on the assessment of students. This supports the study of Steinberg (2001), which claimes that closeness and intimacy are enhanced in adolescence; that's why peer support is merely contributing to the daily well-being of adolescent in terms of their academic status in school. And lastly, school support acquired very high on the assessment of students. Schools are frequently identified as one of the important factors that should provide help and better support for those students who were in distress so as to improve knowledge and skills and understanding as regards coping with difficulties knowing when and how to seek help that usefully be addressed within the context of their academics (Kidger, Danovan & Campbell, 2009).

On the other hand, results regarding the level of social support of the respondents when grouped according to sex would show that male respondents received less support from the school/community than female respondents. The result supported the findings of previous studies which revealed that, females tend to receive more social support from the community than males (Bogard (2005), Furman & Buhrmester (2006). This is likely due to gender differences in the way that females approach relationships; females tend to form a few close, empathetic relationships high in mutual disclosure; whereas boys tend to have larger, more extended friendship groups focused on task, competition and conflict (De Goede, Branje & Meeus, 2009).

Also, the results regarding the level of social support when grouped according to department would show that SHAS Department which is dominated by female respondents are less to receive support from their peers compared to SEAID Department which is dominated by male respondents. The findings supported the study of Hirst and Dubois (2001) which found that male adolescents perceived higher level of social support from their peers than female adolescents because male adolescents are more satisfied with the friendship support than other sources of support. For school/community support, SEAID Department are in contrast to receive less support from the school/community compared to SHAS Department that garnered the highest level of school/community support. This is associated with the findings obtained from the study of Dumont and Provost (2000) that provided an explanation that female adolescents are generally having better social networks and are more open in socializing with the community. This was because female adolescents were more involved in nurturing, communality and affiliation. Hence, this enabled them to establish new support more easily from outside the family context. Wilcox, Winn & Fyvie-Gauld (2005) stated that social support networks are greatly disrupted for students who move away from their parental home. It seems likely that students who move away from their parental home will experience decrease in their level of social support they receive from their families, peers and also the community (Fan& Chen, 2001). Students who live with a higher cost of living tend to have less support than those who live with a low cost of living (Worswick, 2001). This is stated by Glick (2003) who claimed that students who tend to stay and live with the low cost of living arrangement are likely to have more peers that surround them because nowadays cheaper boarding houses tend to have more boarders who live or stay in it.

Persistence occurs when students successfully integrate themselves both socially and academically. Academic integration refers to the attachment to the intellectual life of the students while social integration refers to the connections the student makes with his/her classmates and peers (Tinto, 2005). Those with higher levels of academic and social integration had higher levels of persistence. In other words, students with access to social support were more likely to be retained. In connection with the findings of this study, irregular students having different set of classmates have lower level of social integration resulting to less access in social support especially peer support as compared to regular students having the same sets of classmates have higher level of social integration resulting to more access in their social support.

A significant difference was found with the level of social support and academic performance. Family support was more likely to be superior on all other supports (peer and community support). This means that students with higher level of social support from family, peer, and community can perform better in academic life and it really plays a vital role in the betterment and development of students in their academics (Stainberg & Darling, 2004). This is because the existence of social support was found to increase the perception and belief of the students that necessary resources, such as advice and encouragement are there to assist them in their academic life (Cutrona, 2004). Also, students with high social support were better adjusted compared to those with lower level of social support, thus leading to high academic achievement (Holahan et al., 2005). Based on these, social support can be regarded as one of the indicators of academic achievement, whereby students with high level of social support will perform better.

Based on the results of this study, it confirmed that while experiencing life's difficulties, social support received from family, peer and even from the community helps in the development of student in their

academics. It has been pointed out by stress buffering hypothesis that perception of support from others in social networks lessen stress, anxiety and worries experienced by students in their academic life. Hence, it is important to consider that social support influences the academic performance of students.

CONCLUSION

The social support received by the students especially from the family and/or friends can contribute to the academic performance of the university students. It is indeed important to realize that students' excellence in academic life is determined not only by academic-related matters but also by the social support they get from people around them. In other words, when facing troubles, adolescents with greater support will be less likely to become depressed than those with lower support with which they can perform and do well in their academics.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Future researchers may look into the other effects of social support to the well-being of students. Comparative studies between the academic performance of students with enough social support and those who receive less may also be conducted to prove the validity of results from this study. Furthermore, a bigger population should be covered to check the consistency of results and also to check the number of male and female per department depending on their population. Other factor that also needs to be considered is to conduct same study to non-student boarders. It would also be great to conduct same study in other private universities or state universities in the region. And, other factor which can be included is the spiritual support of the school. Lastly, future studies might also see the other contributing factors on which the university might give help to the students who have difficulty in adjusting to their new environment and see to it that it will not affect academic performance of every adolescent.

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