The Social Support and Its Relationship to the College Students' Burnout Amidst the Online Learning Modality

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The Social Support and Its Relationship to the College Students' Burnout Amidst the Online Learning Modality

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Abstract

The pandemic has clearly affected higher education institutions through the transition of its learning modality to online. Furthermore, this study investigates the relationship between social support and burnout among college students amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Utilizing descriptive-correlational design, the result of the statistical analysis indicated that social support and academic burnout has a significant relationship (r=0.158). Implications of the study were discussed and recommendations for future research were suggested.

Keywords: Burnout, Social Support, College Students, Philippines, COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

The government and schools have taken a number of steps to help pupils cope with the pandemic, including giving living supplies, raising student subsidies, and providing psychological therapy. Students are receiving an increasing amount of attention recently, and students may be affected by burnout. When the pandemic arrived, we were locked down in our homes. We've been required to study in our room, far from what we've used to do. According to Saefudin, Sriwiyanti, and Muhamad (2020), there have been a lot of changes in the government ever since.

Furthermore, Yingping, Wu, and Huang (2021) stated that billions of students have been at risk due to school closures that the government has implemented because of COVID-19. To keep the students educated, several countries administer a program to support their education system. However, many students across the world, particularly from lower-status, do not have access to the internet, computers, televisions, or even radios at home, which makes the situation even worse. Unfortunately, students who do not have access to the equipment necessary for online learning are hindered with their learning capability. Hence, many students decided to never go back to school which may result in ruining the educational achievement of the countries around the world. COVID-19 pandemic has clearly impacted higher education institutions, having a negative effect on college students' mental health. This statement was supported by the study of Dela- Fuente et al. (2021), it was revealed in the results of their survey that there is a stressful effect on the learning and teaching process which has been caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, they concluded that

the pandemic had no general effect on the whole academic year, instead, there was an increase of stress factors when teaching and learning.

Some factors are presented in the study of Jia-Yu, Tao, Ming, and Zhan- Chun (2021); grades, family status, and social support around them, was found to be an important contributor to learning burnout. However, on the contrary, the study of Oyoo and Mutua (2019), states that there was no predictor of burnout found in the study, regardless of their school type, age, or sex. Nonetheless, there is a substantial positive association between all three social support sources (teachers, classmates, and friends).

Previous studies on college students' social support have mostly focused on demographic features of students as well as the influence of social support on a person's mental health problems, according to the study of Elmer, Mapham, and Stadfield (2020). This study was supported by Liu et al. (2020), they mentioned that male students receive much more social support than female students, and social support's mental health impacts are strongly linked to the supported person's personality features, meanwhile, burnout students are caused by cognitive or emotional effort, work that requires long-term and continual physical effort is what burnout impacts to a student (Gewin, 2021).

According to Gungor (2019), it was revealed that social support was a significant component connected with school burnout, implying that support for kids should come from both teachers and families. It is also essential to establish an environment in which students may offer and receive support from their classmates, instructors, and even the management itself.

Moreover, this study investigates the relationship between social support and burnout among college students to provide action and prevent the risk of burnout. In addition, this study will help students to improve their quality of life and protect themselves against negative life occurrences.

Research question

This study investigates the relationship between social support and burnout amidst the online learning modality. Specifically, it sought to answer the following question:

1. Is there a significant relationship between social support and burnout among college students amidst the online learning modality?

Literature Review

Social Support

The physical and emotional consolation individuals receive from their family, friends, coworkers, and others are known as social support. It's understanding that we're a member of a community of individuals who love, care, appreciate and respect an individual (Ali et al., 2018). Basically, a social network's support has proven to be beneficial to our health. Having emotional support, being a part of a social community, appreciation, practical assistance, and knowledge and advice appear to be the main components of social support (Drageset, 2021).

According to Joonmo (2021), an informal social resource that supports older individuals in living a healthy and productive life is what defines social support. It lowers the risk of death and slows the decrease in physical, functional, and mental health. As per the studies, perceived and emotional support from close relationships is associated with better health outcomes in older adults.

Also, in the current study of Ruisito, Ramirez, Garcia, Costa, Vaca, and Suarez (2021), it was found that across all burnout measures, men had significantly greater rates of burnout than women. However, the researchers concluded that there were no gender differences regardless of sources of social support. The study emphasized that social support was found to be a moderator between the potential harms of burnout on health among medical professionals and was proven that it played a significant role.

Meanwhile, Billaudeau, Temam, and Vercambre (2019), concluded that teachers who had social support at home and work were positively related to each other. The findings also revealed that the estimated effect of social support on burnout varied depending on the source or kind of social support which was studied through a survey. Participants claim that the social support from their supervisors was more important than their coworkers' social support.

Students reported reduced levels of school burnout when they received more social support from their family, friends, and teachers. As a result, social support appears to be a variable that can help middle school children avoid burnout. Thus, to help children deal with school burnout, family and teachers should be more helpful, and surroundings should be modified to allow students to provide and receive peer support (Gungor, 2019).

Burnout

Burnout is a psychological state that occurs as the result of a consistent reaction to work-related stressful events (Maslach & Later, 2016). According to Leiter, Maslach, and Frame (2015), burnout is a word that describes an individual's emotional fatigue or lack of motivation that can occur due to pressure from work. Based on their Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), it has three dimensions; exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy.

The study of Lindqvist, Weurlander, Wernerson, and Thornberg (2021), cited that burnout has been highlighted as an issue in the field of education in previous studies and has been examined and proved by Aloe et al. (2014) and Bermejo-Toro et al. (2016). Burnout and attrition are key difficulties connected to teacher shortages in some of the western countries (Lindqvist et al., 2014), which shall be addressed in the next studies for the teacher's education. Because of the expected teacher shortage and since student teachers hear about burnout, there is an obvious need to understand how student teachers consider and prepare to behave to avoid burnout.

Jia-Yu, Tao, Ming, and Zhan- Chun (2021), evaluated that there was a significant variation in academic burnout between higher and lower grade students. It was also found that students from economically developed places, such as municipalities/provincial capitals, showed less inappropriate conduct and poor personal achievement than students from less developed locations. This means that the analysis in their households predicted their burnout.

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The study by Ali et al. (2018), the findings of study where female medical students reported more burnout and significantly more female students reported exhaustion which was correlated with the study of Dogan, Lacin, and Tutal (2015), both studies mentioned that there their academic burnout has no relationship to their gender.

Burnout amongst medical graduates has been thoroughly studied throughout the world. According to the findings of the current study of Zarobkiewicz, Sławiński, Woźniakowski, and Gawda (2018), there is a substantial level of burnout among medical students. For these reasons, they suggested that an improvement in the quality of education and creative teaching strategies may be able to prevent excessive burnout.

Daghash (2022), found out in their statistical analysis that the participants' demographic profiles such as gender, job, and company position have no relationship to identifying their level of burnout. A lack of organizational support was also found to be a factor of burnout syndrome. The study is built on prior research indicating that strong social networks may reduce the nurses' sense of loneliness and assist them in being stronger during a pandemic.

Social Support and Burnout

Gungor (2019), revealed that social support was a significant component connected with academic burnout, implying that support for kids should come from both teachers and families. Gungor mentioned that social support gives the student hope that can lessen the risk of burnout. Social support is found to be essential to their learning environment.

A cross-sectional online survey was conducted by Jia-Yu, Tao, Ming, and Zhan-Chun (2021), and revealed that there was an association between social support and burnout. The findings demonstrated that whether or not the students had learning burnout, social support was reduced if they displayed the relevant symptoms of learning burnout. This result has been proven in previous studies, therefore, giving social support and the use of proper subjective support may have a preventive effect against stress experienced by medical students, lowering the chance of them experiencing learning burnout.

Furthermore, in the study of Karimia, Bashirpur, Yusef, Khabbaz, and Hedayati, (2014), it was found that friends, family, or peers tend to give much more social support to students who experience less academic burnout than those who had higher academic burnout. This was supported by Mutua and Oyoo (2019) who concluded that aside from the fact that the findings of this study demonstrated a connection between social support and academic burnout, both studies showed that most students received social support who had less burnout.

Meanwhile, Ali, Liaqat, Sethi, and Irfan (2018), concluded that about two-thirds of students suffered burnout, which is higher than the half of medical students in a survey conducted in the United States. Even though half of the students had a low degree of social support, there was no relationship between burnout and social support. The researchers say that they found the same results in Hendrix et al. (1988), who found no significant relationship between burnout and social support.

According to Tornuk and Gunes (2020), it was discovered that preschool teachers' burnout levels and their perceptions of professional social support had a statistically significant, moderately negative relationship with one another. As a result of the regression analysis that was conducted with the school principal's cooperation, preschool teachers' burnout is reduced through assistance, effective educational support, and overall professional social support.

Kahriman, Polat, and Gurol (2019), stated that having a disabled child brings extra challenges, as it requires duties such as child care, health, education, and social relationships which can cause an argument between a couple and can result in burnout. In their study, during their data gathering procedure, mothers with an extended family type at home scored higher on the social support scale, which can be explained why mothers received more help with home responsibilities, even though it was their obligation. This finding suggests that these mothers' relationships were influenced by their perceptions of social support from their families.

Kim et al. (2017) concluded that students who study excessively and get emotionally exhausted are more likely to develop burnout syndrome. Overall, the findings show that there is a relation between their burnout and their perceived social support. Teachers, school nurses, school physicians, guidance counselors, educational psychologists, and educational welfare authorities were among those who provided more primary assistance to the students with burnout issues. They added that support from a professional may be a lot more helpful for students rather than strong peer connections or parental care.

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Methodology

Research Design

To be able to identify the existing relationship between social support and burnout among college students, the study used a descriptive-correlational design. It is utilized to produce static images of circumstances as well as establish the relationship between distinct variables. The design is ideal for the previous studies since the researcher will be required to collect data based on the participants' behavior or attitudes while performing the study (McBurney & White, 2009).

Respondents

The respondents of this study were 177 college students who are currently enrolled in any private or public school, and residing in the Philippines. Since the Philippines are still amidst the COVID 19 pandemic, the researchers employed convenience sampling techniques with the use of Google forms. The convenience sampling technique is the best fit for the study because it is easily accessible to participants and meets the researchers' needs, especially given this pandemic, it is impossible to make contact with the other person (Fabian et al., 2021).

Instruments of the study

This research used a survey as an instrument in gathering data for the study. The researchers allotted questions that should be answered by the respondents; Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS).

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), was used to calculate the level of burnout of students. The questionnaire contains a 15-item scale that is composed of three dimensions; exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy. Once all the data were submitted, they were organized to evaluate the level of burnout of students.

On the other hand, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) demonstrated that it is a psychometrically sound instrument according to Zimet et al., (1988). The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) is a 12-items questionnaire to recognize an individual's sufficiency of social help from three main sources: family, companions, and mate.

Procedures

This study was given with the participant's permission. Given their informed consent, the respondents voluntarily participated in this study. The questionnaire was given to them in private, and there was no need for them to write their demographic profiles. Moreover, their profiles will be kept privately according to the rule under the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (RA 10173). The participants were also given time to respond to the questions for the researchers need to consider a participant's privacy. They might reveal motivations the researchers didn't expect and behaviors and issues researchers were unaware of. The data gathered in this study will undergo in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for measuring that will serve as the basis of the interpretation and analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Given the COVID 19 pandemic circumstances, the survey questionnaire was presented via Google Form. The researchers implemented ethical considerations to ensure the privacy of the participants and the research professor. Furthermore, online platforms were used to implement the ethical norms. The survey questionnaire that is created through Google Forms was publicized on Facebook, Messenger, and other social media platforms. Under the supervision of the research professor, the data collection was guided accordingly and approved. The questionnaire was written in English so that the respondents could readily comprehend it. As a result, ethical considerations were applied explicitly.

Result

This section reveals the study findings through the use of research questions. Furthermore, utilizing SPSS, the Pearson correlation coefficient was computed. With this, comparing and specifying the mean and the relationship between variables was concluded.

Relationship between Social Support and Burnout

This study primarily focuses on the relationship between social support and burnout. Results of the statistical analysis in Table 1 reveal that social support and burnout have a significant relationship. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

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Table 1

Relationship between Social Support and Burnout

CORRELATION

	Social Support	Burnout
Social Support	-	.158*
Burnout	.158*	-

Thus, Abaid, Tariq, & Xuqun (2020), stated that social support appears to have a substantial role in the relationship between burnout and subjective well-being, according to their findings. Indeed, the connection between burnout and psychological well-being was significantly highlighted by the chain mediating model of social support and learning motivation. These studies suggest that increasing social support at a school minimizes the consequences of burnout and improves psychological well-being.

Discussion

The data gathered in this study provided factual evidence how the two variables are correlated with one another. The responses of 177 students were evaluated and became the basis of the results about social support and burnout. Through this analysis it was found that social support has a relationship with burnout. Therefore, this study indicates that the pandemic might affected the level of burnout among student due to the new learning modality.

Conclusion

The existing online learning environment in the middle of the pandemic has impacted students' self-efficacy, resulting in perceived academic burnout. Specifically, the higher their level of social support, the lower their level of burnout. According to the findings, there is a substantial association between social support and academic burnout.

Therefore, this study suggests that the individual's burnout should be considered by schools, friends, and especially family members. In addition, studying with high monitoring and guidance should be prioritized to improve their quality of life and prevent their burnout. To conclude, even in the thick of the pandemic, if online education provides a pleasant environment, students will establish excellent connections and awareness of themselves.

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