



The Effect of Parental Support on Academic Performance among Students at Asia-Pacific International University

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ABSTRACT

Literature indicates that parental support influences better academic achievement and helps college level students undergo personal and social development. Parents support includes helping the child plan for higher education, choosing types of college to attend, financing a college education, and providing emotional and social support. This study aimed at investigating whether parents support of their college children results in better academic outcomes. Using stratified sampling, 60 undergraduate students aged between 17 years to 25 years old from five Asia-Pacific International University (AIU) dormitories were selected to participate in this study. A survey instrument for data collection consisted of a demographic questionnaire and a Likert-scale questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows, Version 21. An independent samples t-test was used to determine the differences between Thai and International students on parental support. Spearman rho correlation coefficients between parental involvement variables and cumulative grade point averages (CGPA) were reported. Results: Findings of this study showed that although there is positive influence on the family relationship between the parents and students at the college level, it does not adequately explain academic performance among students. In addition, the level of support received by the Thai students was higher than that received by international students. There are a variety of factors that influence academic success. Therefore, parental support alone cannot by itself explain students' academic achievement. As for the level of support received by Thai students, the proximity of Thai students to their parents may be a factor for the level of support they receive. The findings do show that administrators should look into how parents support their college students and establish strategies for encouraging adequate emotional and social parental support even for international college students. Future research should use mixed methods research design to focus on the impact of little or no parental support on students' well-being and academic outcomes.

Keywords: Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA), Helicopter parents, Parents/guardian Parental Involvement, Parental support.

INTRODUCTION

Many studies show that parental support does not end even when the child goes to college (Edelman, 2013; Ratelle, Larose, Guay & Sénécal; 2005; Savage, 2009; Winegard, 2010). Cheng, Ickes, and Verhofstadt, 2012 suggest that parental support influences better academic achievement, and helps students undergo personal and social development. Besides, parental involvement plays a role in students' well-being and translates into the students' ability to develop critical thinking useful for academic achievement at the college level (Román, Cuestas & Fenollar, 2008).

Parental involvement at the college level begins before the children graduate from high school. In most cases, parents talk about their aspirations for their children (Ceja, 2004; Irwin & Elley, 2013). In some cultures, parents help their children to consider higher education (Smith & Fleming, 2006). Sometimes parents engage in college planning (Borders et al., 2011) and prepare their children for high school and college transition (Edelman, 2013). Some parents assist their children to choose college to attend (Ma, 2009). This is specifically true for Christian parents (Shaw, 2005) who want their children to embrace Christian morals. Unfortunately, higher education is costly, and students find it difficult to cope and have to rely on their parents for financial support (Jack, 2003; Savage, 2009) to fund college tuition and fees (Johnstone, 2005).

The transition from high school to college leads to a whole new experience, which can be exciting as students encounter familiar and unfamiliar regulations and situations, and at the same time challenging as students begin to consider and understand college high academic expectations and the different social environments (Astin, 1968, Bozick, 2007). They become surprised by the freedom and pressures of college life. Academic demands and social life become intertwined and difficult (Cheng, Icke, & Verhofstadt, 2012). Making new friends becomes tricky when it requires breaking into already existing groups and cliques (Littleton, 2002). However, students have to learn to self-regulate to participate in their own learning and take responsibility of their academic achievement (Astin, 1968, Chickering, 1993).

Parents' relationship with their college students become significant during these struggles, especially if there is a connection between child and parents. Edelman (2013) suggests that in recent years, parents have been involved in their children's education, and therefore, they continue supporting their college children. During this transition and throughout the four years of college, parents find themselves offering emotional support (Sax & Weintraub, 2014). Often parents have engaged to socialize their children, providing them an avenue for discussing their

positive and negative college experiences (Weidman, 2014) and seek advice (Edelman, 2013). These relationships also encourage students to continue in courses they have difficulties with (Ratelle, Larose, Guay & Sene'cal, 2005) and ultimately parents' support helps the children to persist in college (Perna & Thomas, 2008; Tinto, 1993).

Coleman (1988) suggests that parents provide social capital to their children when they have a relationship with the school and mutually share goals for the students' wellbeing which helps the students to adjust to college life.

Some studies, however, show that parental involvement has negative effect and does not affect college achievement (Kiyama, & Harper, 2015; Kwon, Yoo & Bingham, 2016; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011; Schifffrin et al., 2014; Spain, 2008). Findings show that overly controlling helicopter parents negatively affect students' wellbeing. A study done at a Korean University discovered that students' locus of control was affected and did not develop resilience or stability because of their helicopter parents (Kwon, Yoo, & Bingham, 2016; Suizzo, & Soon, 2006).

It is safe to conclude that research results show lack agreement about the effect of parental support on academic outcome. The benefits depend on the student and the type of support he receives. Nevertheless, Savage (2009) summarizes parents roles as "Parents are children's first support system, emotionally and financially, and that does not change just because a student starts college" (Savage, 2009, p. 2) even if the parents' involvement affects the students negatively.

Problem Statement

Most of the studies on parental involvement at the college level point to financial support, emotional support, and social support. These types of support provide stability, which in turn, help the students to adjust to college life and to concentrate on their academics. On the other hand, parental involvement can be detrimental to some students and can result in poor educational outcomes (Kwon, Yoo & Bingham, 2016; LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011). The discussion above seems to confirm the argument by Cheng, Icke, & Verhofstadt, (2012) that findings regarding parents' role in university students' academic lives and academic achievement are inconsistent. Therefore, the present study explored the effect of parental involvement on college academic achievement at Asia Pacific International University (AIU).

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine whether a correlation exists between parent support and student academic performance of Thai and International students at Asia-Pacific

International University. The study has three objectives: a) to discover the nature of support parents provide; b) to determine the effect of parents' support on children's academics and c) to find out the differences between Thai students and international students

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parental Involvement at the College Level

At the college level, parental support becomes more indirect because the student begins to take greater responsibility for his social life. Chickering and Reisser (1993) theorized that a key step for college students is learning to function independently without constant reassurance or approval, and that step begins with separation from family. The students begin to make their own decisions (Tugend, 2014).

Even though there is a need for autonomy, many college students today continue to have a relationship with their parents (Harper, Sax, & Wolf, 2012). Parents who have good relationships with their children spend time socializing with them. Academic socialization is the preferred mode of involvement (Ratelle, Larose, Guay & Sene´cal, 2005). This involves interaction with the student about their college experiences—routines, interest and academic performance and challenges regarding their social life. Also, parents encourage their children to persist in college. A study conducted by Ratelle, Larose, Guay, and Sene´cal (2005) shows that parents spent time encouraging their college children to persist in a Science curriculum.

Academic Performance

Academic performance is defined as how a student does well in school. The student's achievement is measured by a student's performance using a variety of assessments which are cumulatively reflected in the Grade Point Average (GPA). There are a variety of factors that affect student academic performance. Some of these factors include a) classroom environment factors, such as teachers' effectiveness in the classroom (Wayne, Garet, Wellington, & Chiang, 2008), and teacher and student relationship; b) students' factors such as, student academic interaction and study habits (Rabia, Mubarak, Tallat, & Nasir, 2017; Arshad, Shahzadi, & Mahmood, 2016; Shahzadi & Ahmad, 2011); c) peer relationship (Brunello & De Paola, 2010; Wentzel, & Caldwell, 2006, Scoppa and De Paola 2010); and d) home environment which includes parental support.

Parental Support and Academic Performance

Several studies that have investigated the influence of family support on college students' academic performance (Edelman 2013; Ratelle, Larose, Guay & Sene´cal; 2005; Savage, 2009;

Spain, 2008; Winegard, 2010). However, very few parents provide academic support. What literature shows is that parental academic support at the college level takes on different forms but does not include direct academic support. Parents feel less capable of assisting academically because the college curriculum is more advanced. In fact, parents are unable to provide much counsel in social issues as the college student no longer seek permission for their actions (Tugend, 2014; Jeynes, 2007).

The attachment theory proposed by Kek, Darmawan, and Chen (2007) shows the indirect ways parental involvement affects academic performance. Kek, Darmawan, and Chen (2007) argue that growing up in a secure, supportive family environment tends to foster high levels of self-efficacy which includes academic self-efficacy and therefore facilitates a range of usefully adaptive behaviors. The relationship parents have with their children promotes lifelong lessons in critical thinking and helps to develop the children's self-efficacy. When parents demonstrate close involvement in their children's education and provide academic and emotional encouragement, the children value their support and leads to student wellbeing (Arnett, 2000; Harper, Sax & Wolf, 2012; Román, Cuestas & Fenollar; 2008).

Parental Social Support

Parental social support satisfies children's fundamental needs for acceptance, belonging, and love. These needs cannot be satisfied with economic security alone (Wintre et al., 2011). Parental social support is defined as a perception of how much the family cares about, values, and encourages the students' efforts to succeed in college (Leonard. 2013). Parents can promote the development of dependability, perseverance, and a work ethic. Parents achieve this by cooperating with others who have similar goals for the student Coleman's (1988).

Parental Emotional Support

Adjusting to college life is a major transition that college students face in their first year. For many, the transition includes moving out of the family home for the first time, making new friends, and facing increased academic demands. However, a higher rate of parent and student interaction can sometimes be positive, resulting in the child's better adjustment to university life (Turner, Chandler & Heffer, 2009). Family support and intervention helps the student to cope and have a positive adjustment. Wintre et al. (2011) found that academia-related stress levels are high in university students, and students frequently seek support from their family, but not from friends (Flowers III, 2015). In addition, Flowers reports that most university students contact their parents when they are in their early academic years. In another study,

William (2005) found that students' level of family support were related to their confidence in their parents' capacity to deal with challenging experiences.

Parental Financial Support

Parental financial support is also important as a distinct aspect of parental involvement. Parental financial support refers to the material support that the child receives from his or her family in their education. The rising cost of education cause students who do no hold jobs to seek sponsorship for their education (Arnett, 2000; Leonard, 2013; Schoeni & Ross, 2004). In assisting students, parents pay for school supplies, food, accommodation, transportation, or fees for sports. Students in the developed world are offered scholarships. However, private universities that depend on students' tuition to survive, often do not have scholarships for students (Arnett, 2000). Fan & Chen (2001) noted that the lack of financial support could impair individuals' ability to become adults and take up their roles as adults successfully. In other words, parental financial helps student to avoid negative financial impacts.

Conceptual Framework

Research demonstrates that parental involvement is an interactive process between the child and parents that provides a path to student success in their academic performance. Although there are many theories regarding parental support at the college level, in this parental study, involvement is defined in terms of social support, emotional support, and financial support (Figure 1). These variables have been indicated in the literature to lead to better academic college performance of students.

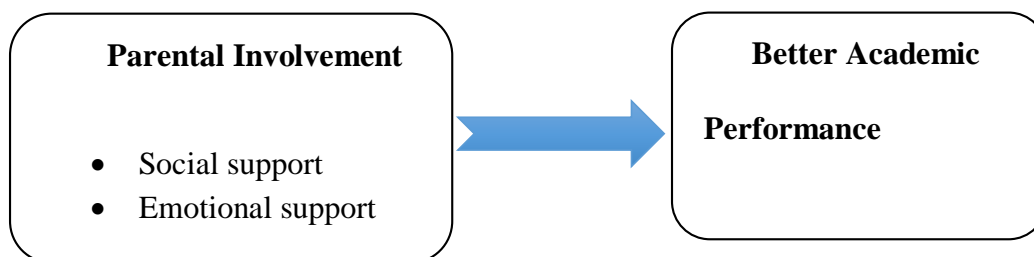


Figure 1. **Conceptual Framework for the study**

METHODS

A cross-sectional survey design was used for this quantitative research. Creswell (2003) posited that survey research design could be used in quantitative research to capture the attitude, opinions, or characteristics of the population. This data gathering method from respondents

enables the researcher to assess attitudes, viewpoints, traits, and practices. Creswell also emphasized that utilizing survey research design allows testing of research hypotheses, and the using participants' responses can be statistically analyzed. Thus, the survey research design was most applicable to this study since it was aimed at capturing the participants' perceptions and attitudes.

Participants and Sampling Method

Participants of this study were 253 undergraduate students at Asia-Pacific International University (AIU) aged between 17 years old to 25 years old. Stratified sampling was used to select subgroups from 5 dormitories. These subgroups included gender segregation, nationality, department, and age.

Instrument

The survey consisted of a demographic questionnaire and a Likert-scale survey instrument. The questionnaire included a series of self-report questions in the English language for international students. In addition, the questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first part included the demographics (gender, age group, and nationality, number of siblings, departments, and CGPA grades) and the second part consisted of 13 statements about parental involvement. Each statement was measured along a 5-point Likert Scale from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree. The 13 statements were designed to measure four aspects of parental involvement: family relationship, economic support, social support, and emotional support.

Validity and Reliability

The 13-item parental involvement questionnaire was developed by the researcher and was designed to measure four aspects of parental involvement: family relationship, economic support, social support, and emotional support. Family relationship and social support items were generated from the works of Román, Cuestas, and Fenollar (2008). Items for economic support and emotional support were adapted from Cheng, Ickes, and Verhofstadt (2012). An expert in quantitative research, Dr. Octavian Mantiri, was asked to examine the appropriateness and adequacy of the item assessing parental involvement. He judged that the items were indeed reasonable measures of parental involvement. The internal consistency reliability, Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951) of the 13-item parental involvement survey was .914 for the pilot study and .88 for the final data. Nunnally (1978) considers reliability estimates of .7 as adequate for non-cognitive scales. Thus, the instrument used in this study is internally consistent.

Pilot Testing

For pilot testing, the questionnaire was distributed to 20 students sampled through convenience sampling methods. The purpose of pilot testing provided better information for the researcher on whether the questionnaire was suitable and effective in fulfilling the purpose of the study. Care was taken to ensure the participants were selected to represent the various dimensions that are important to the study in terms of age, gender, and academic year.

Procedures

A research assistant administered the questionnaire to 300 students in AIU. Using stratified sampling methods, 60 participants from each dormitory on campus participated. This was done through the assignment of numbers from a name list which had been provided. These respondents had an equal probability of being chosen regardless of their nationality, age, or cross-section of class. The respondents were then put in groups according to gender, age, department and nationality. During data collection, participants were first given a cover page which contained information about the study and sentences that required the participant to read and to provide consent for participating in the study. The respondents were not forced to participate. They were asked to fill in the survey during their free time. Upon completion, the questionnaire was returned to the researcher's assistant. The completed questionnaires were sent by post to the researcher. Upon receipt, each completed questionnaire was coded to avoid duplication. The data were keyed into the computer and then analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Data Analysis

Demographic data from the instrument were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented using tables. Indicators included the number of participants by gender, age group, marital status, nationality, number of siblings, department, CGPA result, etc. An independent samples t-test was used to determine the differences between Thai and International students on parental support. Spearman rho correlation coefficients between parental involvement variables and cumulative grade point averages (CGPA) were reported. Data analysis was done independently by the researcher using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows, Version 21. Before analyzing the data, the entire data set was screened for missing data and data entry mistakes.

RESULTS

Participants characteristics

In this study, there were 253 participants comprising 150 females (59.3%) and 103 males (40.7%) in this group. The age of the participants ranged from 15 to 30 years old. Majority of the group aged within 21 – 23 years old (41.5%).

As shown in Table 1, most of the participants were International students comprising of 182 students (71.9%) whereas only 71 (28.1%) were Thai students. Participants were categorized as Thai and international.

Students who had citizenships from other countries were grouped as international students. These participants came from five different majors, which were Arts & Humanity (28.5%), Education & Psychology (18.2%), Business Administration (27.3%), Science (8.7%), Religious Studies (9.5%), Nursing (5.5%), and ESL (2.4%). There were fifty-two (20.6%) participants have more than five siblings.

Participants were asked to report on their Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) result. About two-thirds (65.6%) had CGPA between 2.6 and 3.5. Forty-two students (16.6%) had CGPA of 3.6-4.0. Most of the participants were in their freshman year (40.7%). There were also participants who were in their sophomore year (24.9%), senior year (20.9%), and junior year (13.4%). Majority of the participants were staying in the university dormitory (84.6%), whereas 15.4% of the participants were either staying on their own, with their parents or with relatives. There were 154 (60.9%) of the participants' parents are working, and 99 (39.1%) participants reported only one of their parents are working.

Demographic Characteristics

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Participants (*n* = 253)

Characteristics of group		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	103	40.7
	Female	150	59.3
	Total	253	100.0
Age	15 – 17 years old	5	2.0
	18- 20 years old	87	34.4
	21 – 23 years old	105	41.5
	24 – 26 years old	39	15.4
	27 – 29 years old	9	3.6
	30 and above years old	8	3.2
	Total	253	100.0
Nationality	Thai	71	28.1
	International	182	71.9
	Total	253	100.0

Siblings	None	25	9.9
	1	54	21.3
	2	48	19.0
	3	37	14.6
	4	37	14.6
	5 and above	52	20.6
	Total	253	100.0
Department	Arts & Humanity	72	28.5
	Education & Psychology	46	18.2
	Business Administration	69	27.3
	Science	22	8.7
	Religious Studies	24	9.5
	Nursing	14	5.5
	ESL	6	2.4
	Total	253	100.0
CGPA	Below 2.0	6	2.4
	1.1– 2.5	39	15.4
	2.6 – 3.0	85	33.6
	3.1 – 3.5	81	32.0
	3.6 – 4.0	42	16.6
	Total	253	100.0
Academic Year	Freshman	103	40.7
	Sophomore	63	24.9
	Junior	34	13.4
	Senior	53	20.9
	Total	253	100.0
Staying with	By myself	15	5.9
	In the university dormitory	214	84.6
	My parents	22	8.7
	Relatives	2	.8
	Total	253	100.0
Working parents	Both parents are working	154	60.9
	Only one of the parents Is working	99	39.1
	Total	253	100.0

Nature of Parental Involvement

Descriptive statistics and reliability estimates for measures of parental involvement are reported in Table 2. Internal consistency reliability estimates for family relationship, social support, and emotional support are acceptable (all are greater than .7). The reliability estimates for Q5 (provide financial assistance) and Q6 (must work/pay for my education) as measures of economic support was quite low (.35) and therefore reported separately.

Overall, measures of parental involvement are positive. The participants ‘agree’ that family relationship is positive ($M=3.96$, $SD=0.72$), and that there is strong social ($M=3.88$, $SD=0.72$) and emotional ($M=4.06$, $SD=0.89$). They also agree ($M=4.06$, $SD=1.09$) that their parents

provide financial assistance; thus, only some must work to pay for their education (M=2.98, SD=1.29).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Parental Involvement (n=253)

Cronbach's Variable	M	SD	skewness	#items	alpha
Family relationship	3.96	0.72	0.86	4	0.82
Economic support					
Q5 provide financial assistance	4.06	1.09	-1.13		
Q6 Have to work/pay for my own education	2.98	1.29	0.11		
Social support	3.88	0.72	-0.95	5	0.78
Emotional support	4.06	0.89	-1.10	2	0.79

Table 3. Family relationship descriptive statistics

	N	M	SD	%
Close relationship with family	253	4.26	0.82	84.2
Often contact family	253	3.88	0.90	66.8
Family is my role model	253	3.87	0.95	70.4
Communicate openly with family	253	3.84	0.93	70.3

^aPercent 'agree' and 'strongly agree.'

Table 3 describes the opinion of students about the family relationship. The participants appear to have a close relationship with their family (M=4.26, SD=0.83); are often in contact with them (M=3.88, SD=0.90); agree that their family is their role model (M=3.87, SD=0.95); and communicate openly with their family (M=3.84, SD=0.93). Percentage of participants who 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the questions describing family relationship range from 67% (often contact family) to 84% (close relationship with family).

Table 4. Economic support descriptive statistics

	N	M	SD	%
Family provide financial assistance	253	4.06	1.09	74.7
I must work/pay for my education	253	2.98	1.29	34.0

Table 4 describes the opinion of students about their financial assistance. The participants appear to receive financial assistance from their family (M=4.06, SD=0.83) and must work to pay for their education (M=2.98, SD=1.26).

Table 5. Social support descriptive statistics

	N	M	SD	%
Family proud when I get good grades	253	4.38	0.81	86.5
Family encouraged me to get good grades	253	4.17	0.85	78.7
Family support extra-curricular activities	253	3.72	0.96	65.3
I report/discuss academic results	253	3.71	1.08	63.2
Family and I discussed what programs I take	253	3.40	1.20	54.6

Table 5 describes the opinion of students about their social support. The participants appear that their family are proud when they get good grades (M=4.38, SD=0.81); family encourage them to get good grades (M=4.17, SD=0.85); family support extra-curricular activities (M=3.72, SD=0.96); students report or discuss their academic results with their family (M=3.71, SD=1.08); and students discuss with their family on what programs to take (M=3.40, SD=1.20).

Table 6. Emotional support descriptive statistics

	N	M	SD	%
Family concern with my well being	253	4.11	0.94	78.2
Family give guidance when needed	253	4.01	1.03	74.3

Table 6 describes the opinion of students about their emotional support. The participants appear that their family concerned with their well-being (M=4.11, SD=0.94) and their family provide them guidance (M=4.01, SD=1.03).

Academic performance

Table 7. Distribution of cumulative grade point averages

CGPA	n	%
0.0 ≤ 2.0	6	2.4
2.1 – 2.5	39	15.4
2.6 – 3.0	85	33.6
3.1 – 3.5	81	32.0
3.6 – 4.0	42	16.6

Table 7 shows the distribution of cumulative grade point averages of the students in this study. Result shows 33.6% (n=85) of the respondent’s CGPA were within 2.6 to 3.0, followed by 32% (n=81) with CGPA between 3.1 and 3.5. Thirty-two percent (n=42) reported CGPA between 3.6 and 4.0. About 18% (n=45) had CGPA of 2.5 or lower.

Differences in parental support between Thai and International Students

Independent samples t-test results for comparing Thai and International students on five measures of parental support are reported in Table 8. Effect sizes are also reported. The analysis showed no significant differences for the family providing financial assistance, social support, and emotional support. Thai students reported significantly higher levels of family relationship (M=4.15, SD=0.56) than international students (M=3.89, SD=0.77). However, they are significantly more likely to have to work/pay for their education (M=3.55, SD=1.24) than International students (M=2.75, SD=1.24). The magnitude of the differences between these two areas between Thai and International students are medium (ES=.43 and 0.64). Overall, it appears Thai students receive higher parental support than international students.

Table 8. Independent samples t-test results comparing Thai and International students.

Variable	Nationality	N	M	SD	t	df	p	ES(d)
Family Relationship	Thai	71	4.15	0.56	3.065	174.62	.003	0.43
	International	182	3.89	0.77				
Provide financial assistance	Thai	71	4.24	0.87	1.824	169.17	.070	0.26
	International	182	4.00	1.16				
Work/pay for own education	Thai	71	3.55	1.24	4.594	251.00	<.001	0.64
	International	182	2.75	1.24				
Social Support	Thai	71	3.96	0.53	1.437	186.21	.152	0.20
	International	182	3.84	0.78				
Emotional Support	Thai	71	4.13	0.65	0.860	189.00	.391	0.12
	International	182	4.04	0.97				

Parental Support and Academic Performance

Spearman rho correlation coefficients between parental involvement variables and cumulative grade point averages (CGPA) are reported in Table 9. Correlation among parental involvement variables range from negligible (r=-.06, p>.05) between family providing financial assistance

and having to work/pay for education to large ($r=.71, p \leq .01$) between social support and emotional support. Correlation between CGPA and family relationship variables are negligibly ranging from .01 to -.15. Correlation between family relationship and CGPA ($r= -.15$) is negative and negligible, though statistically significant ($p \leq .05$). Only about 2% ($r^2=.0225$) of the variance in CGPA can be explained by family relationship. The correlation between ‘work/pay for my education’ and CGPA ($r= -.13$) is also negative and negligible, though statistically significant ($p \leq .05$). Less than 2% ($r^2=.0169$) of the variance in CGPA can be explained by ‘work/pay for my education.’ CGPA is not related to family providing financial assistance, social and emotional support. These results suggest that CGPA cannot be adequately explained by parental involvement.

Table 9. Relationship between parental support and academic performance (n=253)

Variables	Spearman rho				
	2	3	4	5	6
Family relationship	.29**	.22**	.54**	.54**	-.15*
Family provide financial assistance		-.06	.42**	.36**	.02
I must work/pay for my education		.19**	.10	-.13*	
Social support				.71**	.02
Emotional support					.01
Academic performance (CGPA)					

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .01$

Tables 10 and 11 are cross-tabulations between family relationship and CGPA, and between work/pay for education and CGPA respectively. In Table 10, the percentage of participants who reported high CGPA (3.1-4.0) is 61.6% for those with a negative family relationship, 59% for those with the neutral relationship, and 44.6% for those with positive relationships. This result explains why there is a negative correlation ($r=-.15$) between family relationship and CGPA, as reported in Table 9. However, in this analysis, the Chi-square result indicates that the relationship between family relationship and CGPA is not statistically significant ($\chi^2=6.94, df=8, p=.54$).

Table 10. Family relationship and CGPA

Family Relationship	CGPA				
	0.0 ≤ 2.0	2.1-2.5	2.6-3.0	3.1-3.5	3.6-4.0
Negative		1(7.7)	4(30.8)	4(30.8)	4(30.8)
Neutral	1(1.8)	7(12.5)	15(26.8)	24(42.9)	9(16.1)
Positive	5(2.7)	31(16.8)	66(35.9)	53(28.8)	29(15.8)

$\chi^2=6.94$, $df=8$, $p=.54$ Cramer's $V=.12$

In Table 11, the percentage of participants who reported high CGPA (3.1-4.0) is 53.1% for those who disagreed that they work/pay for their education and 44.2% for those who agreed that they work/pay for their education. About 48% of those who were not sure had high CGPA. This result explains the negative correlation between work/pay for education and CGPA, as reported in Table 11. However, in this analysis, the Chi-square result indicates that work/pay for education and CGPA is not statistically significant ($\chi^2=8.17$, $df=8$, $p=.42$).

Table 11. Work/pay for education and CGPA

Work/Pay Education	CGPA				
	0.0 ≤ 2.0	2.1-2.5	2.6-3.0	3.1-3.5	3.6-4.0
Negative (1-2.5)	2(2.0)	12(1.2)	32(32.7)	28(28.6)	24(24.5)
Neutral (2.6-3.5)	2(2.9)	11(15.9)	23(33.3)	25(36.2)	8(11.6)
Positive (3.51-4.0)	2(2.3)	16(18.6)	30(34.9)	28(32.6)	10(11.6)

$\chi^2=8.17$, $df=8$, $p=.42$ Cramer's $V=.13$

DISCUSSION

Nature of Parental support

Parental support, in this study, consisted of having social relationships with their college children. This means that the child received economic, social, and emotional support comfortably. The findings in this study indicated that the internal consistency reliability estimates for family relationship, social support, and emotional support are acceptable. Overall, measures of parental supports are positive where the participants agree that family relationship is positive, and there is strong social and emotional support. The participants also agreed that their parents provided financial assistance. However, there are some who worked to pay for their education. Percentage of participants who 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' to the questions

describing family relationship range from 67% (often contact family) to 84% (close relationship with family).

In recent years parents have been more involved in the education of their college students. Barker & Roberts (2015) attribute this parent involvement with this age group to excessive college tuition. Many college students do not have adequate funding to support themselves in college. This finding supports previous literature that points out the consequences of rising educational costs (Jack, 2003; Johnstone, 2005; Savage, 2009) Adjusting to college life has been marked as an important step in the psychosocial development of individuals. As students attempt to develop a consistent identity, they depend largely on psychological set-up developed under the influence of parents (Leonard, 2013). It could be said that this phase of life, although integrated with parental support, has little effect on the student academic performance. As the student matures, he or she develops an certain level of maturity, which could include financial and emotional stability. Parental support is shown to be significant during childhood when the child has not developed emotional and mental security (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2001).

Differences in Parental Support Between Thai and International Students

Independent samples t-test results revealed that there are no significant differences for the family providing financial assistance, social support, and emotional support. The data shows that Thai students reported significantly higher levels of family relationship ($M=4.15$, $SD=0.56$) than international students ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.77$). Moreover, they are significantly more likely to have to work/pay for their education ($M=3.55$, $SD=1.24$) than International students ($M=2.75$, $SD=1.24$). The magnitude of the differences between these two areas between Thai and International students are medium ($ES=.43$ and 0.64). Based on these findings, parental support for Thai students could be determined to be of a higher level compared to International students. This can be explained by the fact that Thai students live closer to their parents and have easier access to them for support when they need it.

In addition, the Thai culture promotes the respect of adults and therefore Thai student defer critical issues and decisions to their parents. Parents also regard their college-age students as children and push them to take on careers the parents think fit their children. Therefore, it is obvious that they would get involved in their children's decisions.

Parental Support and Academic Performance

The findings revealed that academic performance could not be adequately explained by parental support. Correlation among parental support variables ranges from negligible between

family providing financial assistance and having to work and pay for their education to large between social support and emotional support ($r=-.06$, $p>.05$). These can be explained where the correlation between family relationship and CGPA ($r= -.15$) is negative and negligible. Correlation between “work and pay for my education” and CGPA is also negative and negligible. Therefore, CGPA is not related to family providing financial assistance, social or emotional support. Participants in this study reported high parental support related to the family relationship, social support, and emotional support. Approximately half of the participants reported a CGPA of 3.1 to 4.0. About a third of the participants reported CGPA of 2.6 to 3.0. Thai students reported significantly higher levels of parental relationship and are more likely to have to work/pay for their education. Therefore, we can conclude that parental support cannot adequately explain academic performance among students in this study.

The research reveals that although parental support has a negligible influence on academic performance, there is still a positive influence on the family relationship between the parents and students in higher education level. According to literature reviews on the effects of parental support, literature state that parental support does impact the academic outcome and career prospects of the child in the future (Heffer, 2009). Some studies do show that there is an indirect correlation between parental involvement and academic performance, in that students who have financial and emotional support do better because they have the needed support. Harper, Sax & Wolf, 2012 indicate that emotional support provides stability. In addition, Kek, Darmawan, and Chen (2007) argue students who have supportive parents are secure and have self-efficacy, which helps them to concentrate on their studies.

It is likely that these results, from the cross-sectional survey, were unable to depict the varying levels of parental support throughout the livelihood of the student. This explains the differing conclusions which deemed parental support as necessary for the students’ academic excellence, during childhood rather than during college (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010). Students are also more independent in college, which may explain these study findings. However, students also desire to get psychological, financial assistance from their parents and consider parental support crucial for academic growth. Turner, Chandler, & Heffer (2009) illustrated that when barriers limit parents from becoming involved, the consequences might affect students’ academic performance.

DISCUSSION

Conclusion

The research reveals that although the family relationship between parents and children has a positive influence on college education, it does not adequately explain academic performance among students in this study. Both the multifaceted nature of parental support and different measurements of academic achievement have probably contributed to the inconsistencies. The students' perspective in this study is that students strongly favored the importance of parents' support at the university level. Majority of students had good communication with their parents about their university activities and well-being.

Recommendation

The findings show the importance of parental involvement and as such, it is recommended that parents build up a relationship of trust with their children from the beginning of their early childhood days to ensure that their children adopt better learning attitudes and processes. Although parents can provide emotional support, these forms of support may not translate into the end goal of academic success for their children. Instead, parents can invest in the institutions of higher learning that will promote the improvement of the students' academic achievement as an alternative form of ensuring the academic success of their college children.

The findings would help educators and parents to familiarize themselves with the best parental involvement approaches for college students. The Institutions should also consider developing policies and programs that educate parents in ways they can get involved in their children's education, even if they do not have a high level of education.

Future research should consider using mixed method research design including interviews for data collection in order to get in-depth understanding of parental support at the college level.

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