The relationship between Perception of Support of Family, Teachers, Friends and Self-efficacy Beliefs with Academic Achievement

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Abstract

The present study attempted to investigate the relationship between the perception of support of family, teachers, friends, self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement by high school students. Accordingly, 560 students were selected using multi-level cluster sampling. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the perception of support of family, teachers and friends and academic achievement, with the perception of support of family as the most important factor. Also, there is a significant relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement. In addition, compared to male students, female ones gain more perception of support of family both information ally and emotionally.

Key Words: *Perception of Support of Family, Teachers & Friends, Self-efficacy Beliefs, Academic Achievement.*

1. Introduction

Beliefs individuals hold affect all their behavioural mechanisms so that they behave differently in similar conditions, therefore, one may claim different behaviour patterns stem from beliefs. Most theories of achievement motivation hold that beliefs are the most important factor of achievement. In fact, in theory, individual expectation of success and perception of undertaking different tasks play a crucial role in motivation and behaviour (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Dweck (1999) claims that it is our beliefs that provide us with a perception of the world and our experience and creates our behavioural system, a part of which is self-efficacy beliefs.

Social support is defined as received affection, sympathy and attention of family, friends and others and includes a) emotional support, that is, understanding, sympathy and full proper consideration of the needs of a spouse, b) respect, that is, positive feelings, about a spouse and recognizing their abilities, c) informational support, that is, receiving counselling for problems, d) instrumental support, that is, supporting a spouse I housework and education of children (Katherine et al, 1999). Social support creates a sense of attention, connection, love and self-esteem in an individual. A number of studies have shown the positive role of social contacts in individual psychological adaptation and health while most of these studies report that perceived support causes a rise in physical or psychological health or in psychological adaptation, some of them report no such an effect, and none of them show a negative role of the perceived support.

Bandura self-efficacy theory suggests that compared to those with self-doubt, individuals with a strong belief in their own abilities show more persistence, and therefore, deliver more impressive performance on tasks. In one study, Mortazavi (2005) shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between self-efficacy and perception of support

and the support an individual receives from family, teachers and friends is indicative of their own self-efficacy.

The most important factor of the success of education system regarding attaining objectives is academic achievement. Having a sense of academic achievement, pupils are accepted by their parents, teachers and peers and their self-esteem rises, but having a sense of academic failure, they will raise their own self-doubt (Tavakoli, 1998). A number of studies have been undertaken on the relationship of each of the variables above and academic achievement, but the relationship between perception of social support and self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement has not been fully studied. Here, the question is "is there a relationship between perception of support of family, teachers, friends and self-efficacy beliefs"?

2. Methodology

The research methodology here is of a descriptive correlational type because correlation research aims at exploring the relationship between variables using correlation coefficient and comparing the limits of one or some variables with that of other variables (Delavar, 1994). The statistical population of the present study includes all students in second and third grades of high school (about 33500) in Kurdistan province during the academic year 2010-11. A sample of 560 was selected based on Cochran-Cox formula and multi-level cluster method was used for sampling. Also, two questionnaires and students' grade point average (GPA) were used as a criterion for academic achievement:

   a. Quizzes on support of parents, teachers and friends. This quiz comprises of 3 similar sections each of which has 12 statements, half showing "emotional" support and half indicating "informational" support,
   b. self-efficacy questionnaire: in the present study, self-efficacy questionnaire was used to investigate students' self-efficacy beliefs,
   c. use of students' GPA as an index of academic achievement

3. Findings Based on Hypothesis 1

There is a relationship between the perception of support of family, teachers and friends and self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement. Multivariate regression model was used to predict academic achievement with regard to the perception of social support and self-efficacy.

Table1. Step-by-step Regression Analysis of Academic Achievement in Terms of Support, Self-efficacy& Age

Criterion variable	Model	R	R²	Regulated R²	SE
Academic achievement	1	0.354	0.125	0.120	1.83

Predictor variable: perception of support of family

Table2. Step-by-step Regression Analysis of Academic Achievement in Terms of Self-efficacy Beliefs, Perception of Support & Age

Model	Source of Variation	SS	DF	MS	F	P
Social	Regression	91.415	1	91.415	27.164	0.000

support of family	Remainder	639.402	559	3.365

Dependent variable: academic achievement predictor variable: social support of family

Table3. Regression Coefficient for the Only Predictor Variable in Step-by-step Regression Analysis of Academic Achievement

Predictor variables	B	SE	Beta Coefficient	T	
Constant value	11.278	0.749		15.058	
Perception of support by family	0.672	0.129	0.354	5.212	0.000

Dependent variable: academic achievement

There is no significance rise in the sum R as a result of including variables of age, perception of support of teachers and friends, general perception and self-efficacy beliefs, and therefore, the variables are removed from the final equation. Based on table 3, T-values and level of significance are indicative of a significant regression coefficient, and perception of support of family factor (with a coefficient of determination of 125%) is of overriding importance as far as the prediction of academic achievement is concerned, and therefore, it predicts 12.5% of total variance for academic achievement on its own. F, the result of including this variable ($p<0.001$, F $(1.559) =27.164$) is significant.

4. Findings Based on Hypothesis 2
There is a relationship between the perception of general support and academic achievement. Pearson's correlation test was used and hypothesis 2 was proved based on the data in table 4.

Table4. Correlation Coefficient for Perception of Support of Family, Teachers& Friends, and Self-efficacy Beliefs and Academic Achievement

variables	Perception of support of family	Perception of support of teachers	Perception of support of friends	Perception of general support	Self-efficacy beliefs
Academic achievement	0.354**	0.176*	0.172*	0.304**	0.312**

*P≤ 0.05   **P≤ 0.01

5. Findings Based on Hypothesis 3
There is a relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and academic achievement. Pearson's correlation test was used and hypothesis 3 was proved (see table 4).

6. Findings Based on Hypothesis4

There is a difference about the perception of support of family and teachers and friends as far as gender are concerned. Accordingly, two-way variance analysis test was used.

Table5. Variance Analysis of Within group Factor of Social Support & Mutual Effect of Social Support & Gender

	Type 111 SS	DF	MS	F	P
Social support	717.489	3.339	214.858	150.135	0.000
Social support, gender	30.829	3.339	9.233	6.451	0.000
Error (social support)	908.005	643.480	1.431		

As shown in Table 5, there is a significant difference between means of social support factor. Also, mutual effect of social support and gender higher than 0.01 is significant. In other words, there is a significant difference between the available means.

Table6. Variance Analysis of within group Factor of Gender

	Type 111 SS	DF	MS	F	P
Intercept	31785.666	1	31785.666	7804.883	0.000
gender	5.531	1	5.531	1.358	0.245
error	773.782	560	4.073		

Table 6 shows that only mental effect of perception of support and gender at the level of 0.01 is significant. In the present study, also T-test was used to investigate the difference of perception of support for boys and girls from emotional and informational angles the results of which have been presented in table 7.

Perception of support	groups	sum	mean	SD	Standard error of the mean (SEM)	T-value	Significance level of both ranges
Parents' emotional support	Boys	290	5.5101	1.11	0.11 8.367	-3.553	0.000
	girls	270	6.0125	0.80			
Parents' informational support	Boys	290	6.2677	1.35	0.135 0.14	-3.217	0.002
	girls	270	6.9032	1.38			
Teachers' emotional support	Boys	290	4.2121	1.39	0.14 0.12	0.991	0.323
	girls	270	4.0233	1.23			

Teachers' informational support	Boys	290	5.2104	1.16	0.11 0.12	0.762	0.447
	girls	270	5.0824	1.15			
Friends' emotional support	boys	290	5.2022	1.09	0.10 0.12	-0.978	0.329
	girls	270	5.3853	1.22			
Friends' informational support	boys	290	4.6936	1.23	0.12 0.13	0.836	0.404
	girls	270	4.5412	1.28			

Table7. Independent T-test for Boys& Girls' Responses to 3 indices of Support of Family & Teachers & Friends

Table 7 shows that girls' description of emotional support of family is more significant than that of boys'; however, there is no significant difference between boys and girls in the rest of the indices.

7. Discussion& Conclusion

Based on the results, one can claim that among self-efficacy beliefs and perception of social support, only perception of support of family is involved in predicting academic achievement and it can predict 12.5% of total variance for academic achievement on its own. The rest of the variables are removed from equation due to having no significance. Despite the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and perception of support of teachers and friends and academic achievement, one can claim that the relationship is not significant enough to be able to predict in regression analysis. The only predictor variable of academic achievement is perception of support of family. As for why perception of support of friends and teachers is not a predictor variable, one can conclude that due to its closeness to the child since birth and its more emotional support, family has a more significant correlation than that of other two factors. In addition, the results of the present study are similar to the results of previously carried out studies including Mayr& Kim (1997), Yoon Jina S (2002), Ghaith (2002) and Mortazavi (1995).

The results also show that girls' description of emotional and informational support of family has more significance than that of boys'. Also, there is a difference between means of the rest of indices (emotional and informational support of teachers and friends), however, it is insignificant.

The results of the present study are different from those of the study by Katherine et al (1999). Katherine et al claim that compared to men, women gain more support of teachers and friends. One may interpret such a difference by referring to the cultural difference between family foundation of our country and that of the population of the study by Katherine et al in which girls enjoy more independence and freedom in their relationships with teachers, friends and family.

Also, based on the results of the present study, one can claim that academic achievement is affected by the perception of support of family, friends and teachers and self-efficacy beliefs, therefore, increasing family efficacy in proper support of children and raising their perception level of support can lead to more significant academic achievement. In addition, it is necessary to seriously consider teachers' needs and academic situation by offering in-service training and so on. Also, families should educate children regarding making friendships and increase their self-efficacy through proper support to prepare the ground for future success.

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