

Social Support and Academic Motivation of Students at Risk of Dropping Out

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ABSTRACT. Numerous students in a high school in Negros Occidental are at risk of dropping out. However, literature linking their social support and academic motivation is scarce. This descriptive-correlational research investigated the degree of social support and academic motivation of 336 students at risk of dropping out (SARDO) using the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support and Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-HS 28) High School Version and the relationship between these variables. Demographic variables included sex, year level, family monthly income, family structure, and SARDO category. Results revealed a high degree of social support and academic motivation and a nonsignificant relationship between the demographics and the two variables. However, social support and academic motivation correlated significantly. The results served as the basis for the proposed intervention program aimed to cater to the SARDO's needs.

1.0. Introduction

Drop-out rates in high school have become one of the most leading educational problems in society (Fan & Wolters, 2014). Globally, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 2018) reports that the number of out-of-school children among lower secondary schools from 2000 to 2015 shrank from 97 million to 62 million, although it has slowed down since 2007 (2018). The United States of America (USA) faces drop-out crises, with 1.1 million high school students not earning a diploma (Rumberger, 2013).

In the Philippines, the population of school-going age individuals who are out-of-school children and youth in 2017 was 3.6 million or 9.1 percent of the 39.2 million Filipinos aged 6 to 24 years old (Bersales, 2018). Additionally, based on the Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), more boys failed to complete education than girls nationwide from 2013-2015, at a drop-out rate of 8.90 percent in 2015 (Chua, 2016).

In the selected high school alone, performance indicators showed only 89.48 percent survival rate for the school year 2017-18 and a 50 percent drop-out rate. Out of 1,350 students, only 1,208 finished secondary education. The remaining 142 are either retained or dropped from school. The junior high school population of the subject for the school year 2018-2019 is 5,631. Based on the FICS (family, individual, community, and school) analysis survey conducted by the guidance department, the number of students at risk of dropping out from junior high school has alarmingly risen to 2,537 (45.05%). Proper intervention programs for these students are a must.

Researchers have begun to consider student motivation to understand better why students drop out of school, a decision that is a function of their motivation for school rather than an achievement issue (Hardre & Reeve, 2003). Academic motivation to succeed is fundamental to education, while its absence can hamper productivity (Legault et al., 2006). Today, lack of motivation is one of the academic problems high school students face. However, higher drop-out rates could also result from parents' lack of involvement in their children's school activities, especially with high school students (Tucker, 2019).

Usher and Morris (2012) define academic motivation as the behaviors related to academic functioning and achievement. The individual's source of motivation may be intrinsic (internal processes) and/or extrinsic (external forces). Although some studies did not show that social support and the education cycle are predictors of extrinsic motivation (Costa-Lobo et al., 2017); however the possibility of dropping out is credited to both social and academic risk factors (McKee & Caldarella, 2016). A positive correlation has been revealed amongst the levels of external motivation, internal motivation, and motivation for the subject value of the individuals who

received adequate social support from their surroundings (Tezci et al., 2015). The peer group is also an integral part of the student's learning environment, fostering learning and promoting academic motivation (Kindermann, 2016).

Despite the many programs conducted by the DepED addressing the drop-out rates and the DSWD-DepEd "No child will be left behind" policy, there has been no record of extensive studies on social support and academic motivation, specifically intended for the SARDO. The rising numbers of referrals and concerns brought to the guidance office on absenteeism, very irregular attendance, failing grades, and eventually dropping out of school are probable indicators of low social support and students' low academic motivation. These data and the dearth in the local literature encouraged the researcher to conduct this study. The results served as the basis for the proposed intervention program that would cater to the needs of SARDO.

2.0. Framework of the Study

This study focused on the social support and academic performance of students at risk of dropping out. It theorized that their demographic characteristics, namely, sex, year level, family monthly income, family structure, and SARDO category, could influence their degree of social support and academic performance. It further theorized that high social support correlated with high academic performance. The study's results were used as the basis for the proposed intervention program for the students at risk of dropping out (SARDO) of the selected high school.

Supported by the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) developed by Deci and Ryan (2004), it incorporates the interrelationships among the constructs under investigation. It centrally concerns the social conditions that facilitate or hinder human development, examining how the social, biological, or cultural condition hampers or flourishes the inherent human capacities for psychological growth and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2017). This theory of motivation specifies three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. It differentiates autonomous and controlled motivations as well as intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations. Autonomous motivation leads to excellent behaviors and experience, while intrinsic aspirations are linked to greater performance and better well-being. Thus, this theory can explain students' behaviors which can be intrinsically and extrinsically motivated or amotivated (Areepattamannil et al., 2011).

SDT proposes that motivation can be classified into different types on a continuum: amotivation, which means not feeling obligated to act; intrinsic motivation, which means acting to achieve personal satisfaction or sense of satisfaction and enjoyment; and, extrinsic motivation which is acting to gain support and agreement from others (Brooks & Young, 2011). Applied to education, it is primarily concerned with promoting students' interest in learning and confidence in their capacities and attributes that manifest intrinsic motivation. Despite the human tendencies for intrinsic motivational tendencies, they can be readily disrupted by non-supportive conditions. The enhancement of intrinsic motivation requires a supportive environment (Deci et al., 1991).

Another psychological need within the scope of SDT is competence which refers to perceived opportunities influencing a situation, being effective, and having the sense of "confidence and effectiveness in action" (Deci & Ryan, 2004).

Moreover, relatedness concerns the need to feel related to one's desire to be cared for by others and be socially connected. Through connections and communications with others, people can foster well-being and personal growth. Across the realms of peoples' lives, a person is more optimally motivated to perform better if his basic psychological needs are satisfied. Social support is the key (Deci & Ryan, 2015); social connectivity is a major component of SDT. Strong social relationships can cultivate motivation and well-being, while poor relationships can add to weak motivation and poor sense. The theory delivers a manner to reflect both human tendencies and social atmospheres. SDT claims that people are more likely to be motivated when their necessities for competence and relatedness are achieved (Cherry, 2016).

A large amount of empirical evidence on SDT suggests the benefits of intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation to engagement and learning in the teaching and learning contexts. The support of teachers to students' basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness aids students' autonomous self-regulation for academic performance, learning, and well-being (Niemic & Ryan, 2009). Jenö et al. (2018) stated that need-supportive teachers and students' intrinsic goals negatively predict drop-out intentions but positively predict academic achievement via autonomous motivation and perceived competence. Moreover, high motivation predicted the fulfillment of

autonomy, competence, and relatedness theory of SDT. However, adolescents typically exhibit a noticeable drop in intrinsic academic motivation all through their school journey.

As a concern, insufficient need fulfillment might explain the waning of intrinsic academic motivation throughout the adolescence stage. Testing this hypothesis, Gnams and Hanfstingl (2016) revealed students' weakening intrinsic motivation during adolescence and the varying need satisfaction that manifested the decrease in motivations. These results supported the SDT concept that an adequate satisfaction of three basic psychological needs is crucial for conserving intrinsic academic motivation among the youth. From the viewpoint of SDT, students' learning and development are linked with support for the three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. SDT further explains that learning activities supporting these psychological needs develop students' autonomous motivation, associated with a range of positive motivation and learning outcomes, such as cognitive engagement, persistence, and increased determination.

3.0. Methods

This study used the descriptive-correlational research design to describe the relationship among variables (Lappe, 2000). The design was used to determine the significant relationship between the degrees of social support and academic motivation of the junior high school SARDO from the selected public high school in the province of Negros Occidental for the school year 2018-2019. The design was also used to determine the role of demographic characteristics in these constructs. The study used stratified random sampling, using Yamane's formula to obtain the sample size.

Two standardized questionnaires were used to assess the constructs under investigation, the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet et al., 1998) and Academic Motivation Scale (AMS-HS 28) High School Version (Vallerand et al., 1992). Reliability testing was conducted on 30 junior high school respondents identified as SARDO from the same school. All scales demonstrated adequate reliability: MPSS ($r=0.73$) and AMS 28 HS version ($r=0.85$). The MSPSS internal consistency is .91 and the AMS has satisfactory levels of internal consistency (mean alpha value = .81) and temporal stability over a one-month period (mean test-retest correlation = .79). The mean scores for both social support and academic motivation were interpreted as follows: 1:00 – 2:00 (low degree); 2.01 – 3:00 (moderate degree); and 3.01 – 4.00 (high degree).

To gather data, permission from the School's Division Superintendent of the division of Negros Occidental was sought. The letter was then presented to the principal and the department heads of the selected high school. An orientation among the respondents was conducted to inform them of the nature and purpose of the study. Then, the researcher administered the instruments giving clear instructions at the start. Accomplished questionnaires were retrieved right after. The researcher organized the gathered data and submitted the files to the statistician for analysis.

The descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted using appropriate statistical tools. To determine the degrees of social support and academic motivation of SARDO when taken as a whole and when grouped according to sex, year level, family's monthly income, family structure, and category of SARDO, mean was used. To determine the significant differences in the degrees of social support and academic motivation of SARDO when grouped according to sex, a t-test for independent samples was used. Moreover, when grouped according to grade level, family monthly income, family structure, and SARDO category, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used. Lastly, to determine if there is a significant relationship between social support and demographics and the degree of academic motivation and demographics, Pearson r was used.

To ensure ethical research, the researcher solicited informed consent from the respondents and parental assent from the student respondents' parents. Through informed consent, the participants were oriented to the nature of the study. They were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that they have the right to withdraw if they feel inconvenienced along the process. Also, confidentiality was assured among the participants, and the anonymity of the respondents was strictly observed. Finally, questionnaires that contained the raw information about the participants were shredded after the data processing.

4.0. Results and Discussion

Profile of the respondents

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents. The 336 identified junior high school students of the selected high school who were at risk, at high risk, and at very high risk of dropping out for the school year, 2018-2019, were the study respondents.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents

Variable	n	%	Variable	n	%
Sex			Monthly income		
Male	153	45.5	Low	242	72.0
Female	183	54.5	Middle	87	25.9
Total	336	100.0	Total	336	100.0
Grade			High	7	2.1
Grade 7	91	27.1	Category of SARDO		
Grade 8	93	27.7	At-Risk	222	66.1
Grade 9	74	22.0	At High Risk	83	24.7
Grade 10	78	23.2	At Very High Risk	31	9.2
Total	336	100.0	Total	336	100.0
Family structure					
Living with both parents	215	64.0			
Living with solo parent/relative	121	36.0			
Total	336	100.0			

In terms of sex, the majority of the respondents were females, while the remaining 45.5% (n=153) were male. Regarding year level, the majority of the respondents were Grade 8 (n=93; 27.7%); the rest consists of 27.1% (n=91) from Grade 7; 23.2% (n=43) from Grade 10, and 22% (n=74) from Grade 9. In terms of family structure, most respondents lived with both parents (64%; n=215), while 36% (n=121) were living with a solo parent or a relative. About monthly income, 72% (n=242) belonged to low monthly income, 29.9% (n=87) to middle income, and 2.1% (n=7) to high income. In terms of category of SARDO, 66.1% (n=222) belonged to at-risk category, 24.7% (n=83) to at-high risks, and 9.2% (n= 31) to at-very high risks category.

Degree of social support

Table 2 shows the high degree of social support of students at risk of dropping out (SARDO) of the selected high schools as a whole (M=3.23, SD=0.40) and across all variables of sex, year level, family structure, family monthly income, and category of SARDO. When grouped by sex, both males (M=3.23, SD=0.39) and females (M=3.23, SD=0.42) SARDO have similar mean scores indicating a high degree of social support. Regarding grade level, Grade 10 (M=3.34, SD=0.42) got the highest while Grade 9 (M=3.15, SD=0.40) got the lowest mean score, but all year levels had a high degree of social support. Concerning family structure, students living with single parent/relative (M=3.25, SD=0.40) obtained a higher mean score than those living with both parents (M=3.21, SD=0.41). In terms of family income, students from the high-income category (M=3.51, SD=0.45) got the highest mean score, followed by the low-income category (M=3.24, SD=0.40), indicating a high degree of social support. When grouped according to the category of SARDO, students who are at risk (M=3.25, SD=0.42), at high risk (M=3.20, SD=0.40), and very high risk (M=3.19, SD=0.26) have a high degree of social support.

Table 2. Degree of social support of SARDO

Variables	Social Support			Family			Friends			Significant Others		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex												
Male	3.23	0.39	HDS	3.23	0.60	HDS	3.35	0.49	HDS	3.09	0.51	HDS
Female	3.23	0.42	HDS	3.26	0.63	HDS	3.19	0.60	HDS	3.25	0.50	HDS
Grade												
Grade 7	3.25	0.34	HDS	3.26	0.62	HDS	3.39	0.46	HDS	3.11	0.48	HDS
Grade 8	3.18	0.44	HDS	3.18	0.60	HDS	3.22	0.55	HDS	3.15	0.53	HDS
Grade 9	3.15	0.40	HDS	3.19	0.65	HDS	3.08	0.59	HDS	3.17	0.53	HDS
Grade 10	3.34	0.42	HDS	3.37	0.61	HDS	3.34	0.59	HDS	3.31	0.49	HDS
Structure												
Living with both parents	3.22	0.41	HDS	3.26	0.60	HDS	3.27	0.53	HDS	3.13	0.53	HDS
Living with solo parent	3.25	0.40	HDS	3.23	0.66	HDS	3.25	0.60	HDS	3.26	0.47	HDS
Income												
Low	3.24	0.40	HDS	3.27	0.59	HDS	3.28	0.52	HDS	3.18	0.51	HDS
Middle	3.18	0.41	HDS	3.17	0.70	HDS	3.20	0.63	HDS	3.17	0.49	HDS
High	3.51	0.45	HDS	3.61	0.45	HDS	3.54	0.71	HDS	3.39	0.64	HDS
SARDO												
At Risk	3.25	0.42	HDS	3.28	0.60	HDS	3.29	0.53	HDS	3.17	0.53	HDS
At High Risk	3.20	0.40	HDS	3.20	0.68	HDS	3.18	0.63	HDS	3.23	0.47	HDS
At Very High Risk	3.19	0.26	HDS	3.11	0.60	HDS	3.32	0.51	HDS	3.12	0.47	HDS
As a Whole	3.23	0.40	HDS	3.25	0.62	HDS	3.26	0.56	HDS	3.18	0.51	HDS

Note: HDS=High Degree of Social Support

The high degree of social support generally indicates the SARDOs' great deal of self-confidence and strong will. They do not easily falter when problems arise. The strong bond of social support from their environment may have helped them adjust academically. Social support is perceived as an important predictor of academic success (Tam & Lim, 2009); thus, those with high social support have greater comfort and physical health and were less affected by stressful circumstances (Hobfoll, 2001).

The equally high degree of social support for both sexes finds an underpinning in the study showing that sex has not been found to directly impact students' social support (Tam & Lim, 2009). Regarding grade level, Grade 10's high degree of social support has positive implications because, at this crucial stage, students with difficulties or problems require attention and support to prepare themselves for the successful transition process (Anderson et al., 2000). Regarding the family structure, the close family ties among Filipinos may explain the high degree of social support because extended families provide a comprehensive source of social support, especially when parents are absent. Supportive family and the school environment develop belongingness and security (Saito et al., 2010; Sheldon & Vorbeck, 2019).

Furthermore, the high degree of social support of all income groups reflects how family income motivates the parents to provide resources to support their children's education (Brewer & McEwan, 2010). On the category of SARDO, although the degrees of social support for all categories are all high, the mean scores decreased as the risk increased, implying that the lower social support, the higher and the risk of dropping out. Literature suggests that a combination of the risk factors has the most substantial effect on the student's academic career (Lamm et al., 2005), for the absence of parents' support (Perez, 2015) and neglect and rejection of children put them at high risk for dropping out of school (Beck & Malley, 2003).

Degree of academic motivation

Table 3 shows that the degree of academic motivation as a whole (M=3.25, SD=0.27) and across all variables is high. When grouped according to sex, the females (M=3.28, SD=0.26) obtained a higher mean score than the males (M=3.22, SD=0.28); both mean a high degree of academic motivation. Regarding grade level, grade 7 (M=3.30, SD=0.23), grade 8 (M=3.27, SD=0.26), grade 9 (M=3.16, SD=0.28), and grade 10 (M=3.27, SD=0.29) similarly have high degree of academic motivation. Concerning family structure, students living with both parents (M=3.23, SD=0.26) and single parents (M=3.29, SD=0.27) have a high degree of academic motivation. In terms of family income, all groups

from low (M=3.25, SD=0.27), middle (M=3.26, SD=0.26), and high income (M=3.38, SD=0.42) have a high degree of academic motivation. When grouped according to the category of SARDO, students who are at risk (M=3.25, SD=0.27), at high risk (M=3.26, SD=0.28), and at very high risk (M=3.24, SD=0.26) have a high degree of academic motivation.

The high degree of academic motivation indicates that the SARDO in the selected high school exhibit a strong interest in pursuing academic endeavors. A high degree of motivation also demonstrates a great deal of interest in participating in different school engagements or activities and makes way to academic adjustment when problems arise. This result likewise implies that the SARDOs can excel academically. Supporting literature shows that individual differences, classroom perceptions, and goals predicted motivation for learning and achievement (Hardre et al., 2006). Moreover, academic self-concept and academic attributes are crucial in developing educational motivations and models (Veas et al., 2019).

Regarding sex, the high degree of academic motivation for both males and females finds support in Perez (2015), who found academic engagement not dependent on the variable sex. Likewise, Campos and Madrigal (2020) also found no significant difference in the level of academic motivation of high school students when categorized according to sex, academic level, and family monthly income. Van Hoek et al. (2019) did not confirm the known factors of academic outcomes such as gender. Concerning grade level, despite the SARDO's high degree of motivation, it does not exempt them from being at risk, especially in retention in the lower levels (Meyer, 2010). Related literature cited the need to give them attention since the grade-level transition is critical but often neglected (Lan & Lanthier, 2003).

Furthermore, academic motivation is high regardless of the family structure, indicating the impact of the home environment on the SARDO's academic motivation (Rumberger & Lim, 2008; Soares et al., 2015) and the crucial role of parental involvement, especially for students at risk (Krane & Klevan, 2019). Moreover, the higher mean scores of those with solo parents over those with both parents suggest that single parents further inspire their children to engage academically. Additionally, in the study of Hukom and Madrigal (2020), Filipino high school students with single-parents successfully coped with academic stress indicating that they were motivated to make conscious efforts to manage their problems by looking at the brighter side to change the stressful conditions.

Table 3. Degree of academic motivation of SARDO

Variable	Academic Motivation			Intrinsic			Extrinsic			Amotivation		
	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int	M	SD	Int
Sex												
Male	3.22	0.28	HDA	3.26	0.35	HDA	3.45	0.33	HDA	2.44	0.66	MDA
Female	3.28	0.26	HDA	3.28	0.31	HDA	3.47	0.31	HDA	2.70	0.62	MDA
Grade												
Grade 7	3.30	0.23	HDA	3.32	0.28	HDA	3.49	0.29	HDA	2.66	0.64	MDA
Grade 8	3.27	0.26	HDA	3.31	0.32	HDA	3.47	0.33	HDA	2.51	0.59	MDA
Grade 9	3.16	0.28	HDA	3.18	0.35	HDA	3.40	0.33	HDA	2.39	0.68	MDA
Grade 10	3.27	0.29	HDA	3.25	0.36	HDA	3.46	0.33	HDA	2.76	0.66	MDA
Structure												
Living with both parents	3.23	0.26	HDA	3.26	0.32	HDA	3.44	0.32	HDA	2.54	0.62	MDA
Living with solo parent	3.29	0.27	HDA	3.29	0.33	HDA	3.50	0.31	HDA	2.66	0.69	MDA
Income												
Low	3.25	0.27	HDA	3.27	0.33	HDA	3.45	0.30	HDA	2.57	0.65	MDA
Middle	3.26	0.26	HDA	3.26	0.30	HDA	3.47	0.34	HDA	2.64	0.67	MDA
High	3.38	0.42	HDA	3.44	0.49	HDA	3.65	0.43	HDA	2.39	0.56	MDA
SARDO												
At risk	3.25	0.27	HDA	3.28	0.32	HDA	3.46	0.32	HDA	2.54	0.65	MDA
At high risk	3.26	0.28	HDA	3.24	0.35	HDA	3.46	0.33	HDA	2.74	0.66	MDA
At very high risk	3.24	0.26	HDA	3.25	0.31	HDA	3.46	0.30	HDA	2.51	0.56	MDA
As a Whole	3.25	0.27	HDA	3.27	0.33	HDA	3.46	0.32	HDA	2.58	0.65	MDA

Note: HDA=High Degree of Academic Motivation, MDA=Moderate Degree of Academic Motivation

In terms of family income, the results imply that regardless of the family income, the will to continue schooling is evident, contrasting existing literature that children of poverty or lower-income families lack the motivation to academically succeed (Amerson et al., 2019). In terms of the category of SARDO, the results suggest that the factors beyond the at-risk status or category of SARDO do not support the idea that motivation guarantees academic success. Academic motivation may be attributed to some significant factors like school engagement, poor attendance, lack of effort, and low commitment to school (Horton, 2015). Furthermore, results imply focus, goal setting, and prioritization might be the problem, making students at risk of dropping despite the inherent motivation.

Social support and demographics relationship

Table 4 shows that there was no significant relationship between social support and sex [r(334)=0.009, p=0.863], grade level [r(334)=-0.058, p=0.287], family structure [r(334)=0.029, p=0.598], family monthly income [r(334)=0.076, p=0.162], and category of SARDO [r(334)=-0.055, p=0.315]. However, these findings disagree with the existing literature that demographics directly correlate with social support. Frostad et al. (2015) emphasized that there is no direct cause of dropping out, but demographics seem to be a factor. Also, the gender difference was not significant in students' academic achievement (Tastan et al., 2018).

Table 4. Relationship between social support and demographic profile

Variable	r	df	p
Sex	0.009	334	0.863
Grade	0.058	334	0.287
Structure	0.029	334	0.598
Income	0.076	334	0.162
SARDO	-0.055	334	0.315

Note: the correlation is significant when $p \leq 0.05$

Academic motivation and demographics relationship

Table 5 shows that there was no significant relationship between academic motivation and sex [r(334)=0.103, p=0.259], grade level [r(334)=-0.083, p=0.130], family structure [r(334)=0.102, p=0.062], monthly income [r(334)=0.082, p=0.133], and category of SARDO. [r(334)=-0.009, p=0.869]. Similarly, the results revealed that demographics do not directly affect the academic motivation of the SARDOs of the selected school. These suggest other factors, unknown, and yet to be explored by future researchers.

Oppositely, some related literature supports the significance of academic motivation to the demographics presented in this study. The home environment significantly impacts the student's academic motivation, parent involvement, family income, and resources (Rumberger & Lim, 2008; Soares et al., 2015). Also, educational success and failures are associated with gender, racial, and cultural disparities (Peguero et al., 2019). Moreover, Burrus and Roberts (2012) stated that identifying students most at risk of dropping out is essential to retain students in school.

Table 5. Relationship between Academic Motivation and Demographic Profile

Variable	r	df	p
Sex	0.103	334	0.059
Grade	-0.083	334	0.130
Structure	0.102	334	0.062
Income	0.082	334	0.133
SARDO	-0.009	334	0.869

Note: the correlation is significant when $p \leq 0.05$

Social support and academic motivation relationships

Table 6 shows the significant relationship between social support and academic motivation [$r(334) = 0.389, p=0.000$] of the SARDO of the selected school for the school year 2018-2019, clearly suggesting that social support and academic motivation significantly influenced each other.

In support of these findings, studies have shown that parental support predicts higher academic achievement than any other kind of support (Song et al., 2015). Protective factors like family support, teachers' motivation, and a nurturing school environment affect SARDOs' learning and academic engagement (Perez, 2015). As advanced by the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2004), the students' social environment, both home and school, generally impacts the SARDOs' academic motivation, implying the importance of the relationship between the two variables to the students' academic journey.

However, how and why the SARDOs have high social support and high academic motivation despite being at risk supports the idea of other contributing factors that hinder their innate motivation to succeed. Among the factors are the teacher (Kiuru et al., 2015; Tastan et al., 2018) school environment and the perception of school and education; and friends or peers who are important socializing agents for academic attitudes and behaviors during adolescence (Kindermann, 2015; Wang et al., 2018).

Table 6. Relationship between social support and academic motivation

Variable	r	df	p
Social Support x Academic Motivation	0.389*	334	0.000

Note: *the correlation is significant when $p \leq 0.05$

5.0. Conclusion

Social support from their family, friends, and significant others is certainly highly available to the SARDO in the selected school. The supportive environment has developed their sense of confidence and ability to face life's challenges, and the will to succeed despite failures. Consequently, they can confidently formulate desirable life goals, contributing to their engagement and motivation to succeed in life.

However, the study has confirmed that the respondents are identified as students at risk of dropping, and thus, need to be motivated further towards achieving autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the context of some studies' implications that retention of these students could be a factor that would compel them to drop out.

It is also concluded that the SARDO's degree of academic motivation provides evidence of their capability to do well in school and desire to finish their studies regardless of their present circumstances. The self-determination theory supports this study's implication that the relationship between the two variables is very important in the students' academic journey. Guiding them to achieve confidence and a sense of success with the help of a supportive social environment could motivate them to engage more in their education. Thus, it can be further concluded that they are capable of achieving academic success.

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