

Types of Support Among College Students

Mayuri S. Patel

Faculty Mentor: Dr. Christopher Raye

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore Santa Fe College students' typical interaction with their family and others. The survey also examined the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on student's interaction with others. 130 students took the online survey on types of support. The results reported that most students feel supported by their family- economically and socially. Students tend to rely more on their classmates and professors for academic help. It was found that students' communication increased by 37.9% with their family due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Introduction

- Types of support that college students receives from their family and college are vital in their success.

Previous Studies:

- Having a supportive classroom environment can help promote a sense of belonging as well as boost student motivation, academic achievement, and retention (Gosnell, 2019).
- Relationships built between students within a classroom can influence student participation and feelings of connection (Gosnell, 2019).
- Teacher support helps students set appropriate and achievable goals, strategies to achieve goals, and find the motivation to implement those strategies (Luo, Yang, Gong, Lu, 2019)
- When dealing with academic challenges, students report their families to be their number-one source of support (Cheng, Ickes, Verhofstadt, 2012).
- Students whose families take better care of their financial needs are freer to concentrate on their studies and are therefore able to be academically successful (Cheng et al., 2012).

Purpose and Hypothesis:

- The purpose of the survey was to explore the types of support that college students experience in their academic and personal life. It was hypothesized that students would rely more on their professors for academic help and would be more dependent on their families for personal challenges.

Methods

- Procedure: Students from Santa Fe College completed an online survey consisting of 32 items in the following areas: demographics, belongingness, academic support, teacher support, peer support, family social support, family economic support, support from others, and about the recent coronavirus pandemic. Students were recruited through social media and professor help.
- Demographics: 130 college students at Santa Fe College (50 males and 78 females; 57.1% Caucasian, Hispanic 19%, Asian 9.5%, African American 5.6%, and 8.7% other) took the survey. The age range was between 17-54 years old. Most of the students were freshmen (39.5%) and sophomore (41.1%).

Results

Academic and Belongingness:

- Results indicates that 85.4% of students feel belonged at the college.
- Students tend to rely more on their classmates (68%) and professors (62.5%) for academic support. They also rely on their professors/advisors (82.2%) for academic advice and believe that professors (85.3%) want them to be successful.

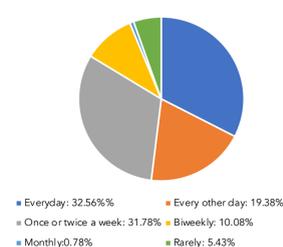
Family- Social and Economical:

- 81.5% of students feels encouraged and motivated by their family
- Students tend to rely on their family for economic support (68.4%).
- Students communicate more with their family through text (55.8%) rather than call (32.6%).
- They tend to hang out rarely with their family due to living separately (57.4%).

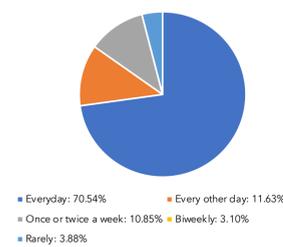
Coronavirus Pandemic:

- Students reported the coronavirus pandemic has influenced their interaction with their friends (29.4%), professors (28.6%), family (12.7%), and significant other (7.1%).
- Compared to students' typical interaction/communication with their families versus corona pandemic students' interaction/communication with their family has increased by 37.9%.

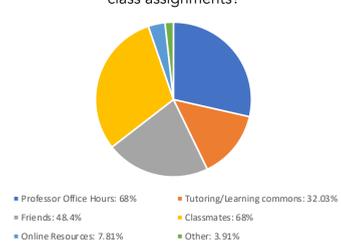
How often do you communicate with your family on PHONE/CALL?



Due to the recent coronavirus pandemic, how often do you communicate (Phone, Text, Social media, Call) with your family?



How do you find help in your classes and class assignments?



Discussion

Significance/Application:

- The survey found that Santa Fe College students feel belonged at college and feel supported by their professors. Being able to feel belonged and supported can positively influence students' success by making them perceive classes as a challenge that they could conquer (Gosnell, 2019). Professors should keep providing support to their students because studies have shown that students interact a great deal with faculty during their college career and the salience of faculty-student relationships to the academic success and persistence of students (Zumbrunn et al., 2014).
- The survey also found that students feel supported by their families- socially and economically. Receiving higher support in either family social support or family economic support can stabilize students' GPAs. Studies have shown that if their family is unable to provide economic support, providing social support can give students encouragement, motivation, and reassurance that help students focus on their studies (Cheng et al., 2012).
- The survey also showed that students rely more on others for the means of support during stressful times like coronavirus pandemic.

Limitations/Future Directions:

- The limitation of the study was that the data was collected during the transition of classes due to the coronavirus pandemic. The data was only collected from one college. Intention was to collect data from India as well; however, no data was collected. Future surveys could try to study how support systems varies in different countries and different colleges. Future studies could also survey types of support across ethnicity. The future survey could also measure how types of support vary across the states.

References:

- Cheng, W., Ickes, W., & Verhofstadt, L. (2012). How is family support related to students' GPA scores? A longitudinal study. *Higher Education, 64*(3), 399-420. Retrieved April 7, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/23256471
- Gosnell, C. L. (2019). Receiving quality positive event support from peers may enhance student connection and the learning environment. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*. <https://doi-org.db25.linccweb.org/10.1037/stl0000178>
- Yi-Fang Luo, Shu-Ching Yang, Rueywei Gong, & Chia-Mei Lu. (2019). Learning performance of university students from the perspective of positive psychology. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal, 47*(3), 1-10. <https://doi-org.db25.linccweb.org/10.2224/sbp.7595>
- Zumbrunn, S., McKim, C., Buhs, E. et al. Support, belonging, motivation, and engagement in the college classroom: a mixed method study. *Instr Sci 42*, 661-684 (2014). <https://doi-org.db25.linccweb.org/10.1007/s11251-014-9310-0>