

# **AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE IMPACT OF PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS ON THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF GRADE NINE STUDENTS**

Kaung Myat Mon<sup>1</sup> and San Win<sup>2</sup>

## **Abstract**

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of psychosocial factors on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students. A total of 900 students (408 males and 492 females) from Yangon Region, Bago Region and Rakhine State participated. For quantitative study, four research instruments: Life Orientation Test Revised (LOT-R), Perceived Social Support Scale (PSS), Adolescents' Psychosocial Functioning Inventory (APFI) and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) were utilized. The results showed that the scores of perceived social support from friend (PSS-FR) were significantly correlated with academic achievement of students ( $r = .128, p < 0.01$ ). Besides, the scores of perceived social support from family (PSS-FA) were significantly positively correlated with academic achievement of students ( $r = .128, p < 0.01$ ) and the scores of adolescents' psychosocial functioning were also significantly correlated with the academic achievement of Grade Nine students ( $r = .086, p < 0.05$ ). Stepwise regression analysis also confirmed that the perceived social support from friend and family had a significant impact on the academic achievement of students. For qualitative study, the instruments were Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS) and Coping Response Interview Form. Qualitative results confirmed that perceived social support was a significant indicator in determining the academic achievement of students. Therefore, the results of this study revealed that if the social support is higher, the academic achievement of students will be higher. In conclusion, the findings of this study will contribute to educators, principles, teachers and even parents by recognizing the importance of social support in improving the academic achievement of students.

**Keyword:** Psychosocial Factors, Academic Achievement

## **Introduction**

Education provides people with the skills and knowledge that enable them to lead fulfilling lives and to contribute to building the nation's wealth and better communities, which will support and enhance the unique identity, culture and values of organizations. It is important to do well in school because this lays the foundation for their many accomplishments in life, such as furthering their education. The true goals of education are to prepare individuals to lead more productive lives and contribute to the greater good in an ever changing society. For decades, education has been acknowledged as being the driving force behind successful organizations, communities, and nations (Hewitt, 2008).

As the world has changed and become a more globalized community, education has become an even more critical aspect of a thriving nation. All, regardless of race or class or economic status, are entitled to a fair chance and to the tools for developing their individual powers of mind and spirit to the utmost. This promise means that all children by virtue of their own efforts, competently guided, can hope to attain the mature and informed judgment needed to secure gainful employment, and to manage their own lives, thereby serving not only their own interests but also the progress of society itself. Our schools, therefore, must be able to increase academic achievement and produce students who can compete globally. This purpose was to create higher levels of success within the educational systems (Hewitt, 2008).

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<sup>1</sup> Dr, Assistant Lecturer, Department of Educational Psychology, Thingangyun Education College

<sup>2</sup> Dr, Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Yangon University of Education

The education system has grown and developed rapidly to cater to the demands and needs of the developing nation. Although the education system has developed across the time, the aim of the national education remains the same that is to produce high quality and professionally well-trained students. The students are equipped with a wholesome personality and strong leadership qualities so that they are capable of dealing with current and future challenges. To achieve this objective, various aspects of the students should be taken into consideration including their social life.

When considering academic achievement, it is imperative to determine the factors that are both related to and influence student performance. As educational leaders are being held more responsible for academic growth, there is a necessity to adequately identify those factors and them in order to increase acquisition of knowledge within the educational systems. Therefore, this study was conducted to measure the impact of psychosocial factors on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students.

### **Purposes of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of psychosocial factors on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students. The specific objectives were as follows:

- (1) To investigate the psychosocial factors of Grade Nine students
- (2) To explore the academic achievement of Grade Nine students
- (3) To explore gender differences for psychosocial factors and academic achievement of Grade Nine students
- (4) To find the relationship between the psychosocial factors and the academic achievement of Grade Nine students
- (5) To explore the impact of psychosocial factors on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students

### **Review of Related Literature**

Education competence in the present world is interwoven with the progress of every society. As the world has become a more global community, the importance of acquiring a strong education has become even more imperative. Academic achievement of students especially at the elementary school level is not only a pointer to the effectiveness or otherwise of schools but a major determinant of the future of youths in particular and the nation in general. Academic achievement of a student may greatly be influenced by several psychological and sociological correlates such as his or her life orientation, perceived social support from his or her home and school environment.

The academic achievement of society's youth is a central focal point for society due to the idea that ensuring an education for a child helps promote a more successful future (e.g., job opportunities, financial compensation) for that individual compared to their counterparts. So, there are a variety of factors affecting the academic achievement of students. In this study, the influence of some psychosocial factors such as life orientation of students (optimism), perceived social support and psychosocial well-being on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students was examined.

**Optimism:** Optimism has been considered in a variety of ways within research frameworks. Rabiaga and Cannon (2001) concurred with the expectation of a positive outcome but expand the parameters of optimism to include future events. Carver and Scheier (2003)

contended that optimism is a generalized and diffuse sense of confidence. Two main constructs of optimism are discussed in the literature: the explanatory or attributional style and the dispositional view. The explanatory style of optimism uses past experiences to predict future outcomes. There are three main factors which comprise the explanatory or attributional style. Seligman (1991) described an explanatory style which has three facets: permanence, pervasiveness and personalization.

The first factor is permanence or stability. This refers to the belief that the reasons behind the negative events are permanent. Individuals displaying this factor think in terms of always and never when they consider the likelihood of bad events. Pervasiveness or globality, the second factor, looks at whether the individual considers the negative or positive event as specific or universal. The optimist believes that bad events have specific causes, while good events will enhance everything he does; the pessimist believes that bad events have universal causes and that good events are caused by specific factors (Seligman, 1991). The final factor informing the explanatory or attributional style is personalization or locus of causality. Events can be attributed to either internal or external causes. Individuals can blame themselves for the bad events (an internal cause); or can attribute other people or circumstances as the external causes of the bad event. The other primary construct of optimism, the dispositional view, considers the direct beliefs individuals have about future life events without taking into account past experiences. It evaluates disposition or temperament.

**Social Support:** Social support refers to the experience being valued, respected, cared about, and loved by others who are present in one's life (Gurung, 2006). It may come from different sources such as family, friends, teachers, community, or any social groups to which one is affiliated. Social support can come in the form of tangible assistance provided by others when needed which includes appraisal of different situations, effective coping strategies, and emotional support. Social support is an element that can help individuals to reduce the amount of stress experienced as well as to help individuals cope better in dealing with stressful situations. To date, the literature has supported the existence of four main types of social support: emotional, instrumental/tangible, informational, and personal feedback/appraisal (Wills, Blechman, & McNamara, 1996). Emotional support is what people most often think of when they talk about social support; it is characterized by perceptions of care and warmth. Instrumental (i.e., tangible) support refers to concrete "helping behaviours" such as giving advice, loaning money, or sacrificing one's time. Finally, informational support involves "the accessibility of advice and/or guidance that is helpful in handling one's personal problems", while appraisal support alludes to non-critical personal feedback which the recipient values as honest and helpful.

**Parent/family support:** Parental support refers to "gestures or acts of caring, acceptance, and assistance that are expressed by a parent toward a child" (Shaw, Krause, Chatters, Connell, & Ingersoll-Dayton, 2004.). Support from parents received during childhood is thought to have significant and lasting health implications because the parent-child relationship serves as the context within which important health-enhancing social and psychological development takes place. For instance, if parents provide children with a caring and supportive environment, then children may generalize this learning experience. As they age, they may seek out environments in which social support is readily available.

**Peer/classmate support:** For young children, the family (parents, in particular) is typically their most important and influential source of support (Hall & Brassard, 2008). As individuals move from early childhood into later childhood and adolescence, however, they spend increasingly more time outside of the home interacting and developing relationships with others, including classmates and/or peers. Research has demonstrated the beneficial effects that peer support (i.e., the provision and reception of help and support characterized by empathy, mutual respect, shared responsibility, and agreement of what is considered to be helpful) can have on the outcomes of children and adolescents (Mead, Hilton, & Curtis, 2001). For instance, children who begin kindergarten with familiar classmates are more likely to develop stable, positive attitudes toward school than children with fewer such acquaintances (Ladd & Price, 1987).

**Teacher support:** Researchers have defined teacher support as “the degree to which students feel supported, respected, and valued by their teacher” (Doll, Zucker, & Brehm, 2004). The literature has consistently shown positive, supportive teacher-student relationships to be fundamental to fostering desirable socio-emotional, behavioral, and academic outcomes (Hamre & Pianta, 2006). For instance, positive teacher-student relationships serve as a resource for children at risk for school failure, while conflicting, negative relationships exacerbate that risk (Ladd & Burgess, 2001).

**Well-being** as a multifaceted concept is often thought of as one of the hallmarks of the liberal arts experience, resulting from educational encounters that both guide students in the search for meaning and direction in life and help them realize their true potential. Well-being is a multidimensional construct consisting of psychological, emotional and social aspects of functioning. According to the World Health Organization (2005), well-being can be subdivided into three aspects: psychological well-being, emotional well-being and social well-being. **Psychological well-being** is made up of several components at 6 dimensions: A person with a high level of psychological well-being strives for an aim in life (purpose in life), experiences continuously personal development (personal growth) and got the impression to be able to influence his environment (environmental mastery) (Ryff & Singer, 2006). Furthermore, people, scoring high on psychological well-being, have a positive view against oneself (self-acceptance), experience independency and self-determination regarding their thoughts and actions (autonomy) and have close relationships with others, based on mutual trust (positive interpersonal relationships). **Social well-being** consists of 4 components; social contacts, social participation, social attitude and society/community relatedness.

## **Method**

### **Design of the Study**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of psychosocial factors on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students. For quantitative study, four research instruments for psychosocial factors (89 items) and researcher made academic achievement test (75 items) were used in this study.

### **Sample of the Study**

A total of 900 students, 300 from 6 schools of Yangon Region, 300 from 6 schools of Bago Region and 300 from 6 schools of Rakhine State, participated in this study. According

to the survey research findings, 25 students from two different locations were selected with some norms for qualitative study. Qualitative study was carried out by using rating scale and interview questions.

### **Instrumentation**

This study was aimed at investigating the impact of psychosocial factors on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students. It consists of two parts. The first part was survey study and the latter, qualitative study. In survey study, psychosocial factors of Grade Nine students were examined by using 3-point Likert scale which were adapted from Life Orientation Test Revised (Scheier & Carver, 1992), Perceived Social Support Scale (Procidano & Heller, 1983), Adolescents' Psychosocial Functioning Inventory (Akpa et al., 2015) and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997). The Life Orientation Test Revised designed by Scheier and Carver (1992) measures optimism by assessing generalized outcome expectancies of individuals. The scale consists of 10 items and each item is scaled on 3-point Likert scale with responses ranging from disagree to strongly agree. Perceived Social Support is a 38-item self-report scale composed of two subscales Perceived Social Support for friend (PSS-Fr) and Perceived Social Support for family (PSS-Fa) having 19 items each. The 23-item APFI has three subscales: Optimism and Coping Strategy (OCS) (4 items), General Psychosocial Dysfunctions (GPD) (15-items) and Behaviour and Relationship Problems (BRP) (4-items). Items in the SDQ are rated on a 3-point Likert scale (Not True, Somewhat True, Certainly True) and are divided into four subscales (with five items each) assessing different aspects of adolescents' psychosocial issues: Conduct problems Scale (CPS), Hyperactivity Scale (HAS), Peer Problems Scale (PPS) and Prosocial Scale (PSS).

Firstly, LOT-R, PSS, APFI and SDQ were adapted to Myanmar Language. After preparing the measuring scale, expert review was conducted for face validity and content validity by 10 experts in the field of Educational Psychology from Yangon University of Education. Next, revisions in item length and the wording of the items were adapted according to the suggestions from the experts. Then, pilot study was done with a sample of 108 Grade Nine students from B.E.H.S. (4) Hlaing to check whether the wording of statements had clarity in Myanmar Language and was appropriate and relevant to Grade Nine students or not. Pilot study for psychosocial factors and academic achievement was conducted on the third and last week of October, 2017. From pilot results, the internal consistency (Cronbach  $\alpha$ ) of the whole scale for measuring psychosocial factors is 0.907.

To measure students' academic achievement, a researcher made test consisting of three subjects; English, Mathematics and Science, was used. This test is a 100 item-multiple choice test with five alternatives for each item. After preparing the test, expert review were conducted for the face validity and content validity. Achievement test was validated by 8 experts from Department of Educational Psychology and 7 experts from Department of Educational Methodology. Then, pilot testing was done with 108 Grade Nine students of B.E.H.S. (4) Hlaing on the last week of October, 2017. After that, some items were left, some were modified to the students' understanding level. Finally, 75 items acceptable for item-statistics were selected to be used in the test.

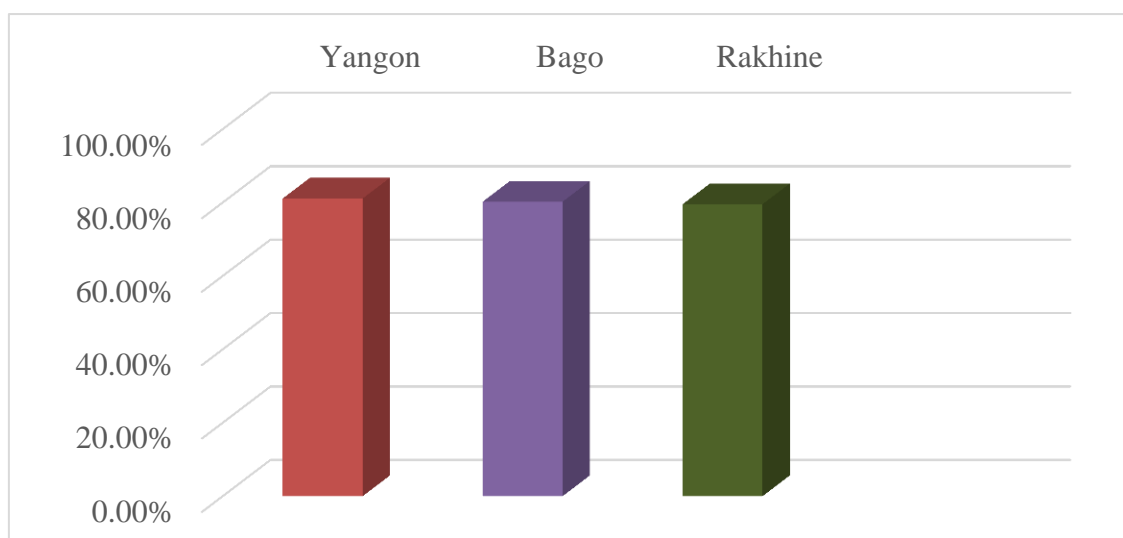
## Data Analysis and Results

### Findings of Psychosocial Factors

**Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Psychosocial Factors by Location**

Region/State	N	Mean	Mean %	SD	Min	Max
Yangon	300	206.78	81.1%	16.74	150	246
Bago	300	204.56	80.22%	15.10	143	247
Rakhine	300	202.78	79.52%	15.39	150	246
Total	900	204.71	80.25%	15.83	143	247

According to Table 1, the mean value of Yangon Region is 206.78, that of Bago Region is 204.56 and that of Rakhine State is 202.78 for psychosocial factors. From this result, it can be seen that the students from Yangon got higher scores for psychosocial factors than others.



**Figure 1** Comparison of Mean Percentage for Psychosocial Factors by Location

**Table 2 ANOVA Results for Psychosocial Factors by Location**

Psychosocial Factors	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Group	2401.396	2	1200.689	4.836	.008
Within Group	222718.750	897	248.293		
Total	225120.146	899			

The ANOVA results pointed out that significant differences among psychosocial factors by locations of schools at the 0.05 level (see Table 2) and to examine more detailed information for a particular group, Post-hoc Test by Tukey method was utilized(see Table 3).

**Table 3 Results of Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison for Psychosocial Factors by Location**

Variable	(I) Location	(J) Location	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
Psychosocial Factors	Yangon	Bago	2.213	.198
		Rakhine	<b>3.993**</b>	<b>.006</b>

\*\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.01 level.

The results of Table 3 revealed that students from Yangon Region were significantly different from Rakhine State and got higher scores in psychosocial factors than those from Rakhine State. But Bago Region did not show any significant differences with Yangon Region in psychosocial factors.

### Comparison of Psychosocial Factors by Gender

The mean and standard deviation of psychosocial factors by gender were described in Table 4. Based on descriptive analysis, the mean score of psychosocial factors for males was slightly lower than females.

**Table 4 Descriptive Statistics for Psychosocial Factors by Gender**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Mean %	SD
Optimism	Male	409	13.65	45.5%	1.98
	Female	491	13.55	45.12%	1.86
PSS-FR	Male	409	43.64	76.56%	6.43
	Female	491	44.63	78.30%	5.81
PSS-FA	Male	409	44.76	78.53%	6.04
	Female	491	44.91	78.79%	6.32
PSF	Male	409	54.40	86.35%	4.50
	Female	491	55.12	87.49%	4.06
PSW	Male	409	46.95	78.25%	4.39
	Female	491	47.42	79.03%	4.47
Total	Male	409	203.49	79.8%	16.09
	Female	491	205.72	80.67%	15.55

**Note:** PSS-FR = Perceived Social Support (Friend)

PSS-FA = Perceived Social Support (Family)

PSF = Psychosocial Functioning

PSW = Psychosocial Well-being

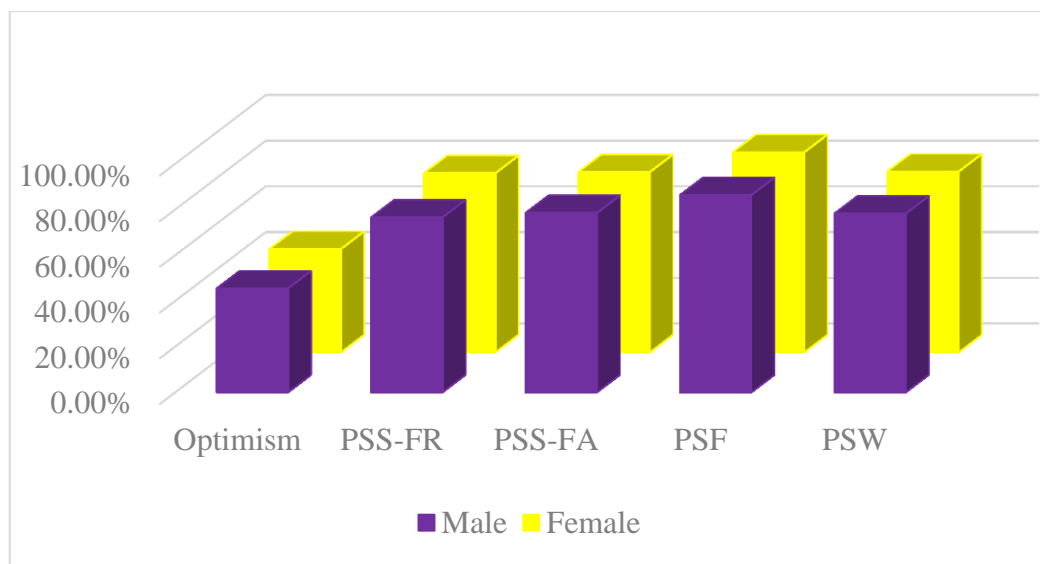
In order to find out whether there were significant differences between male and female students with regard to the subscales of psychosocial factors, the independent sample *t* test was computed (see Table 5).

**Table 5 Results of Independent Sample *t* test for Psychosocial Factors by Gender**

Variable	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Mean Difference
Optimism	.751	898	.453	.096
PSS-FR	-2.432*	898	<b>.015</b>	-.993
PSS-FA	-.346	898	.730	-.143
PSF	-2.552*	898	<b>.012</b>	-.720
PSW	-1.585	898	.113	-.470
Total	-2.104*	898	<b>.036</b>	-2.225

**Note:** \* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

The result of *t* test revealed that there were significant difference between male and female students for the subscales of perceived social support (friend) PSS-FR ( $p < 0.05$ ) and adolescents' psychosocial functioning (PSF) ( $p < 0.05$ ). In addition, female students showed higher score than male students for total scores of psychosocial factors as a whole ( $p < 0.05$ ).



**Figure 2** Comparison of Mean Percentage for Psychosocial Factors by Gender

### Findings of Academic Achievement

#### Comparison of Academic Achievement by Location

Descriptive statistics from Table 6 showed that there were some mean differences in academic achievement of students with respect to locations of schools. In order to find out significant differences in academic achievement of students by location, one way analysis of variance ANOVA was used and the results were presented in Table 6.

**Table 6** ANOVA Results for Academic Achievement by Location

Variable	N	Mean	SD	F	p
Yangon	300	46.22	12.33	111.617	.000
Bago	300	39.88	14.29		
Rakhine	300	31.00	10.74		

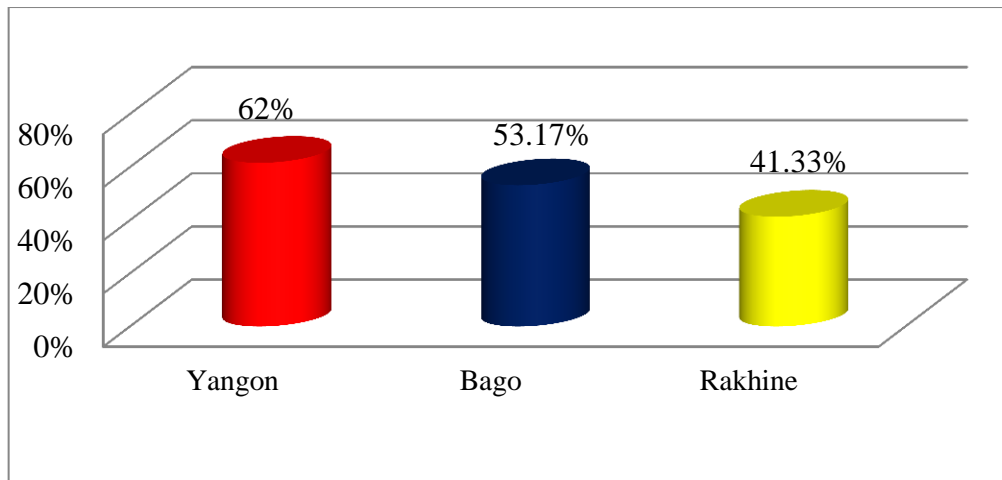
It was not surprising that the results indicated that students from Yangon Region did well in their subjects and they performed better than those from Bago Region and Rakhine State. This results also reveal that there are some differences in academic achievement of students depending on the location and it can be assumed that the results of academic achievement can vary and differ with different locations.

**Table 7** Results of Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison for Academic Achievement by Location

Variable	(I) Location	(J) Location	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
Academic Achievement	Yangon	Bago	6.347 <sup>***</sup>	.000
		Rakhine	15.227 <sup>***</sup>	.000

\*\*\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.001 level.





**Figure 3** Comparison of Mean Percentage for Academic Achievement by Location  
**Comparison of Academic Achievement by Gender**

According to descriptive analysis, slight differences in the participants was found concerning with academic achievement.

**Table 8** Results of Independent Sample *t* test for Academic Achievement by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
English	Male	408	11.12	6.68	-2.025	<b>.043</b>
	Female	492	11.98	6.41		
Mathematics	Male	408	12.12	5.55	-1.066	.287
	Female	492	12.48	5.33		
Science	Male	408	15.35	4.10	.679	.498
	Female	492	15.11	4.23		
Total	Male	408	38.51	14.23	-1.127	.260
	Female	492	39.47	13.80		

But, the result of *t* test showed that no significant difference was found in Mathematics and Science except English by gender. Therefore, it can be said that both male and female students performed equally in Mathematics and Science except in English and the results of academic scores were not influenced by gender differences except in English in this study (see Table 8).

**Comparison of Psychosocial Factors by School Groups**

According to table 9, schools within middle groups showed higher mean values than schools within high and low groups concerning psychosocial functioning and psychosocial well-being.

**Table 9 ANOVA Results for Psychosocial Factors by School Groups**

Variable	School Group	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Optimism	High	300	13.61	1.96	.027	.973
	Middle	300	13.58	1.79		
	Low	300	13.61	2.00		
PSS-FR	High	300	44.75	6.58	5.662	.004
	Middle	300	44.57	5.49		
	Low	300	43.22	6.14		
PSS-FA	High	300	45.39	6.44	2.234	.108
	Middle	300	44.84	6.20		
	Low	300	44.32	5.90		
PSF	High	300	54.67	4.19	4.890	.008
	Middle	300	55.38	3.65		
	Low	300	54.32	4.86		
PSW	High	300	47.01	4.52	.876	.419
	Middle	300	48.77	22.60		
	Low	300	47.14	4.83		
Total	High	300	205.52	16.71	4.357	.013
	Middle	300	206.07	14.37		
	Low	300	202.54	16.12		

In order to determine if there were significant differences for psychosocial factors among schools, ANOVA was computed.

According to ANOVA results, there exist significant differences at  $p < 0.05$  level in perceived social support (friend) PSS-FR, adolescents' psychosocial functioning, PSF and psychosocial factors total score within school groups.

To obtain more detailed information in which school groups performed better than others, the Post- Hoc analysis was applied. The Post- Hoc Test was executed by Tukey HSD method and the results were presented as follows.

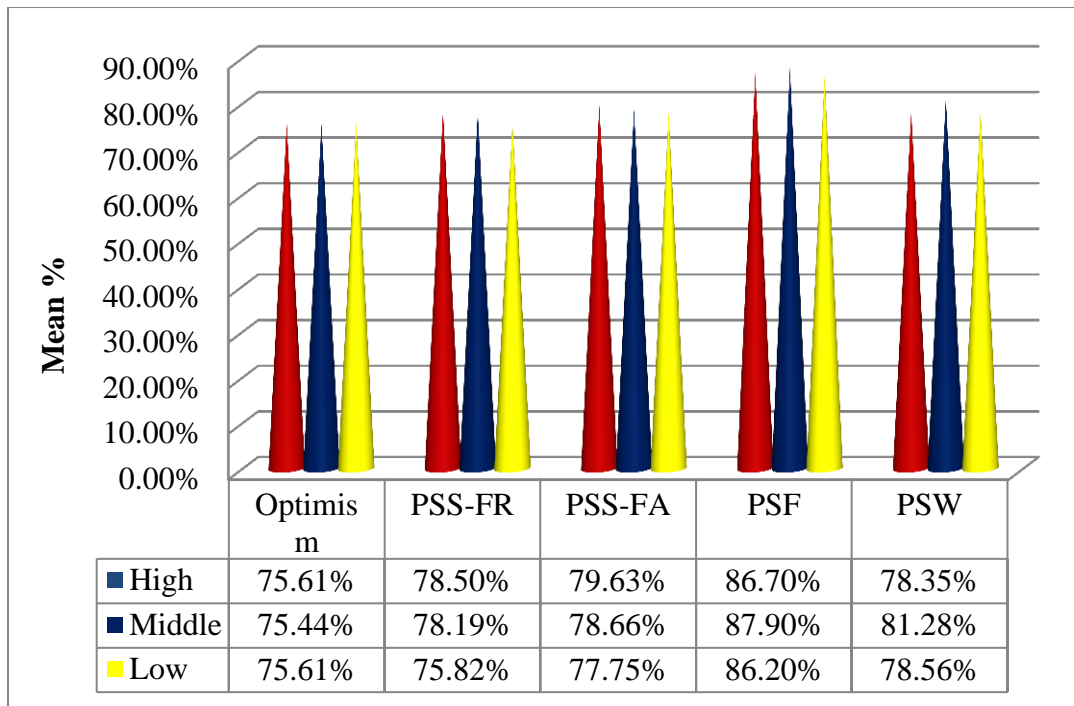
**Table 10 Results of Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison for Psychosocial Factors by School Groups**

Variable	(I) School Group	(J) School Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	p
PSS-FR	High	Middle	.173	.935
		Low	1.527**	<b>.006</b>
PSF	Middle	High	.717	.099
		Low	1.067**	<b>.006</b>
Total	Middle	High	.547	.054
		Low	3.530*	<b>.017</b>

\* The mean difference is significant at 0.05 level.

\*\* The mean difference is significant at 0.01 level.

Based on the results of Table 10, schools within high groups showed significant difference than schools within low groups for perceived social support (friend), PSS-FR. For adolescents' psychosocial functioning, PSF and psychosocial factors total score, schools within middle groups performed better than schools within low groups.



**Figure 5** Comparison of Mean Percentage for Psychosocial Factors by School Groups

**Correlations Between Psychosocial Factors and Total Scores of Academic Achievement**

In order to examine the relationship between the total scores of psychosocial factors and academic achievement of Grade Nine students, Pearson Product-moment correlation was also applied.

**Table 11** Correlations Between Psychosocial Factors and Total Scores of Academic Achievement

Variable	Academic Achievement
Optimism	.018
Perceived Social Support from Friend	.128**
Perceived Social Support from Family	.128**
Psychosocial Functioning	.086*
Psychosocial Well-being	.022
Total Scores of Psychosocial Factors	.124**

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

The results shown in Table 11 revealed that there was significant correlation between the subscales of psychosocial factors and total scores of academic achievement of Grade Nine students at  $p < 0.01$  level. Thus the findings stated that the psychosocial factors of students can affect their academic achievement to some extent and so the influence of psychosocial factors should be considered in promoting academic achievement of students.

**Stepwise Regression Analysis Between Psychosocial Factors and Academic Achievement**

To find out the significant predictor of academic achievement of Grade Nine students in terms of psychosocial factors; optimism (LOT-R), perceived social support from friend

and family (PSS-FR, PSS-FA), psychosocial functioning and psychosocial well-being (APFI, SDQ), stepwise regression analysis was conducted as shown in table 12.

**Table 12 Stepwise Regression Analysis for Psychosocial Factors and Academic Achievement**

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	20.342	4.038		5.037***	.000
PSS-FR	.211	.082	.092	2.573*	.010
PSS-FA	.209	.081	.093	2.590*	.010

Note: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

$$AA = 20.342 + 0.211PSS-FR + 0.209PSS-FA$$

According to the results of Table 12, it showed that perceived social support from friend (PSS-FR) and perceived social support from family (PSS-FA) were significantly correlated with academic achievement of students and they were significant predictors in positive direction. So, it can be interpreted that if the social support from either friends or family is greater, the academic achievement of students will become higher. Since R-squared value is 0.024, it indicated that approximately 2.4% of the variance in perceived social support of students can be explained for academic achievement.

### Results of Rating Scale

**Table 13 Frequency Percentage of Students' Responses Concerning Their Parents' Support**

	My Parent(s)	Never	Sometimes	Always
1.	----- show they are proud of me.	3%	64%	33%
2.	----- understand me.	3%	45%	52%
3.	----- listen to me when I need to talk.	6%	33%	61%
4.	----- make suggestions when I don't know what to do.	3%	21%	76%
5.	----- give me good advice.	3%	36%	61%
6.	----- help me solve problems by giving me information.	3%	36%	61%
7.	----- tell me I did a good job when I do something well.	6%	40%	64%
8.	----- nicely tell me when I make mistakes.	6%	42%	52%
9.	----- reward me when I've done something well.	12%	52%	36%
10.	----- help me practice my activities.	10%	42%	48%
11.	----- take time to help me decide things.	12%	40%	48%
12.	----- get me many of the things I need.	0%	39%	61%

The results revealed that more than 50% of students had strong parental relationships and their parents gave all kinds of support for them. The parents also recognized their good action and sometimes rewarded them for doing some good jobs. They also took time to listen

to their children’s feelings and helped them solve problems by giving them necessary information and guidance.

However, 12% of students showed that they never get rewards from their parents although they have done something well. They were also never given time by their parents in helping them decide things. Though some parents gave their children the necessary support, they were unaware of providing rewards on them, verbally or giving other presents. Some parents were also busy with their work and they seldom set aside time to help their children decide what they should do or not.

**Table 14 Frequency Percentage of Students' Responses Concerning Their Teachers' Support**

	<b>My Teacher(s)</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Always</b>
1.	----- cares about me.	4%	48%	48%
2.	----- treats me fairly.	0%	18%	82%
3.	----- make it ok to ask questions.	0%	21%	79%
4.	----- explains things that I don't understand.	0%	24%	76%
5.	----- show me how to do things.	0%	40%	60%
6.	----- help me solve problems by giving me information.	6%	61%	33%
7.	----- tell me I did a good job when I do something well.	6%	70%	24%
8.	----- nicely tell me when I make mistakes.	3%	36%	61%
9.	----- tell me how well I do on tasks.	3%	76%	21%
10.	----- make sure I have what I need for school.	27%	42%	31%
11.	----- take time to help me learn to do something well.	12%	48%	40%
12.	----- spends time with me when I need help.	12%	52%	36%

About 31% of students agreed that they had enough teacher support for them while 27% of students expressed that their teachers never make sure they have what they need for school. Besides, 70% of students reveal that they are sometimes recognized by their teachers for doing something well. Moreover, 82% of students accepted that their teachers treat them fairly without any bias. This finding is favourable and this may be the reason of having strong teacher-pupil relationships.

However, 12% of students said that they are never given time by their teachers in helping them to learn something well. They also accept that their teachers never spend their time whenever they need help.

**Table 15 Frequency Percentage of Students' Responses Concerning Their Classmates' Support**

	<b>My Classmates</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Always</b>
1.	----- treat me nicely.	0%	27%	43%
2.	----- like most of my ideas and opinions.	15%	67%	18%
3.	----- pay attention to me.	18%	46%	36%
4.	----- give me ideas when I don't know what to do.	6%	52%	42%
5.	----- give me information so I can learn new things.	20%	40%	40%
6.	----- give me good advice.	3%	45%	52%
7.	----- tell me I did a good job when I do something well.	15%	58%	27%
8.	----- nicely tell me when I make mistakes.	18%	55%	27%
9.	----- notice when I have worked hard.	15%	58%	27%
10.	----- ask me to join activities.	12%	27%	61%
11.	----- spend time doing things with me.	10%	30%	60%
	----- help me with projects in class.	12%	27%	61%

About 60% of students always cooperate with their classmates and spend time doing their tasks together. Similarly, 59% of students accept that they are sometimes recognized and told them they did a good job by their classmates. In addition, 40% Of students always get ideas and information from their classmates when they do not know what to do or to learn new things. On the other hand, only 18% of students assume that their classmates never pay attention to them and they were never told nicely whenever they make mistakes.

From this study, it could be concluded that the presence of social support from family and friends could affect students' academic achievement. Supports provided by family and friend could enhance students' academic achievement. Student with high social support will have better academic achievement compared to those who have lower social support. The support received by the students could help them to perform well in academic life. By having knowledge on how social support could help students to excel in study and cope with any psychological disturbances, much information could be derived to enhance the amount of support provided.

### **Conclusion**

This study provides empirical evidence with regards to the impact of psychosocial factors on the academic achievement of Grade Nine students. Specifically the findings suggested that an increase in social support may lead to increase in academic achievement among students. By having knowledge and understanding on this area, it could help many parties, such as educators, counselors, and psychologist to design and develop proper ways of in upgrading the academic achievement of students. Information and ideas gained from this research could help them to face, manage, and handle the difficulties concerning academic achievement. Therefore, enhancing knowledge and strategies in providing proper supports among students may help to increase their academic achievement.

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