Impact Of Social Support And Perceived Stress On Academic Motivation Among University Students

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Chapter 1

Although university life is frequently portrayed as an exciting period of exploration and intellectual development, it often comes with emotional and psychological strain for many students. Students frequently experience increased levels of perceived stress as they juggle multiple responsibilities, including academic performance, social relationships, financial concerns, and planning for the future. This stress can significantly influence their academic motivation, affecting their ability to remain focused, persistent, and enthusiastic about their academic goals. Conversely, social support typically serves as a buffer against these difficulties, assisting pupils in stress management and maintaining focus.

Perceived stress

A person's subjective assessment of stress in their life—the extent to which they believe circumstances are erratic, unmanageable, and overwhelming—is known as perceived stress. Unlike objective stressors, which are external and measurable (such as exams or deadlines), perceived stress is rooted in personal interpretation and emotional experience. According to Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein (1983), it reflects how individuals emotionally and cognitively evaluate their challenges. As a result, two students in the same academic setting may experience very different levels of stress.

Perceived stress is not solely defined by the presence of stressors, but by how one evaluates those stressors in relation to their own coping resources. Because of its subjective nature, it is particularly relevant to psychological research because it connects internal responses to external events. Students may face similar academic workloads at universities, but their levels of perceived stress can vary depending on personal characteristics, coping strategies, previous experiences, and social context. According to Misra & McKean (2000; Pritchard, Wilson, & Yamnitz, 2007), There is a clear correlation between high levels of perceived stress and negative effects such as anxiety, burnout, poor academic performance, and diminished motivation.It also often impacts executive processes that are critical for academic functioning, such as attention, memory, and decision-making.Students under chronic perceived stress might feel emotionally overwhelmed, depressed, or disconnected from their social and academic environment.

"Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Transactional Model of Stress and Coping"

This implies that people's activity in their environment leads them to experience stress. The two key stages in this process are primary assessment, which establishes how risky or challenging an incident is, and

secondary evaluation, which establishes whether one believes they have the resources to cope. Stress is perceived when demands are seen as exceeding one's resources. This model helps explain individual differences in perceived stress—why one student might thrive under pressure while another feel defeated by it.

Cognitive Appraisal Theory

The mental assessments that people make when confronting stressors are the primary focus of this theory, which is incorporated into the transactional model. It argues that the stress response is not determined by the event itself but rather by how it is perceived—as a threat, loss, or challenge. A tight deadline may be viewed as a challenge by some university students, motivating them, or as a threat by others, demotivating them.

Model of the Diathesis-Stress (Ingram & Luxton, 2005)

This model posits that stress does not act alone but interacts with an individual's vulnerabilities (diatheses), such as genetic, psychological, or social predispositions. Under this model, perceived stress can trigger latent mental health difficulties in vulnerable students, explaining why similar environments can have vastly different effects across individuals.

Perceived stress in academic contexts is often caused by a lack of time, competitiveness, unclear expectations, pressure to achieve, and fear of failing (Lee & Larson, 2000). Managing these stressors without adequate coping mechanisms or support networks causes chronic psychological strain for many university students, particularly those adjusting to adulthood. Research suggests that high perceived stress correlates with reduced academic self-efficacy, poor task engagement, and a decline in intrinsic motivation—factors that are all crucial to sustained academic success (Schiffrin et al., 2012).

Additionally, procrastination, avoidance behaviors, and emotional dysregulation are more common in students with high perceived stress. These not only hinder academic performance but also perpetuate a cycle of stress and failure. According to Ryan & Deci (2000), students' motivation may shift from intrinsic (driven by learning and curiosity) to extrinsic (driven by fear, pressure, or obligation), which adversely affects the calibre and profundity of learning

Social Support

The sense of being liked, respected, and a part of a caring social network that helps when one needs it is known as social support. It comprises the instrumental and emotional resources that individuals receive from their social environment, which consist of classmates, teachers, institutions, family, and friends (House, 1981). Social support is especially important for university students because they often face social barriers, academic expectations, and developmental changes that might impact their mental health and academic performance.

Kinds and Aspects of Social Assistance The concept of social support has multiple dimensions. It is usually divided into the following major categories by scholars: (Scott Elizabeth)

Emotional support comes from showing love, compassion, trust, and empathy. During stressful academic times, students may receive encouragement from parents, peers, or mentors. Instrumental Support is tangible help such as financial aid, help with assignments, or access to resources.

Informational support is advice, direction, or feedback that assists individuals in resolving issues or making decisions (such as peer mentoring or academic counseling)

Appraisal Support is constructive feedback that aids individuals in accurately assessing both themselves and their circumstances. According to Thoits (2011), psychological outcomes are strongly influenced by support's perceived availability, rather than its actual frequency. Support can be formally structured (such as university services) or informal (such as from friends).

Buffering Hypothesis (Cohen & Wills, 1985):

According to this view, social support provides as a safeguard through the negative consequences of stress. People who have a powerful sense of social support say that in stressful situations, they are less prone to psychological symptoms, have better adaptive coping skills, and are more emotionally resilient. The buffer works by either making the stressor seem less bad or making it easier for the person to deal with it.

The Sociocultural Theory of Vygotsky (1978)

Vygotsky's theories, which were originally developmental theories, ponder upon the significance of social connection for learning and cognitive development. Peers, mentors, and teachers all help students reach their full learning potential in academic settings by scaffolding their learning until they are able to work on their own. This highlights how social support is not just a stress-relief mechanism but a motivational and developmental resource.

"Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985)"

According to SDT, relatedness, or feeling connected to others, is a basic psychological need required for psychological well-being and intrinsic drive. By making students feel understood, supported, and psychologically secure, social support increases academic motivation by fostering a sense of relatedness.

Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969)

According to this notion, people who have stable attachment styles are more inclined to ask for and gain from help, particularly during trying times. In the face of academic challenges, university students who have secure emotional relationships with family or peers are better able to control their emotions and maintain motivation. Social Support in the Academic Context

The emotional health and academic motivation of university students are influenced by social support. Stress, anxiety, and depression are reported to be lower among those who feel supported by their social network (Rueger et al., 2010).For university students, social support can influence both emotional well-being and academic motivation. According to Rueger et al. (2010), individuals report lower levels of anxiety, stress, and depression when they feel supported by their social network. Emotional and academic challenges become more manageable when students feel that someone understands their struggles and believes in their ability to succeed.

Academic engagement and self-efficacy are increased by social support. Students are frequently kept motivated by peer or instructor encouragement, particularly when they are struggling academically or lack confidence. For instance, a supportive peer group may provide not only reassurance but also help with revision strategies or clarify difficult content. Support from family, particularly in collectivist cultures like India, also plays a central role in sustaining students' educational efforts (Chao, 2012).

Importantly, a lack of social support can increase students' vulnerability to stress. Those who feel isolated or unsupported are more likely to internalise academic failure, disengage from coursework, and exhibit symptoms of burnout. In these situations, the lack of a buffering mechanism intensifies the detrimental effects of perceived stress, impairing wellbeing and motivation.

Conversely, students who perceive their environment as supportive tend to respond to stress more constructively, using problem-focused coping strategies rather than emotion-focused avoidance (Wilcox et al., 2005). Social support enhances academic perseverance and accomplishment in addition to reducing the negative consequences of stress.

Academic Motivation

Academic motivation refers to the internal drive or external encouragement that influences a student's desire to engage with learning tasks, persist through academic challenges, and strive towards educational goals. According to Pintrich & Schunk (2002), it is not a single quality but rather a dynamic and multifaceted construct that is shaped by personal values, emotional states, cognitive beliefs, and social contexts. Academic motivation is a key factor in determining students' learning outcomes, overall health, and long-term academic persistence in university settings.

Academic Motivation: Its Types and Dimensions Academic motivation is often classified into dissimilar categories, depending on its source (Hannah Hawthorne)

Intrinsic Motivation – Refers to engaging in learning for its own sake—due to curiosity, interest, or the inherent satisfaction of mastering a subject (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Intrinsically motivated students typically exhibit deep learning approaches and long-term commitment to their studies.

Motivation from outside sources, such as grades, family expectations, scholarships, or future employment opportunities, is known as extrinsic motivation. It rarely lasts unless internalised, but it may be useful in the short term.

A-motivation -A state of no intention to act or the belief that one's actions have no effect on outcomes is known as a-motivation. According to Deci & Ryan (1985), students who suffer from chronic academic stress or lack support are more likely to lose motivation. The social environment, individual traits, and perceived stress levels all play a role in these dimensions, which can either encourage or discourage academic engagement. Psychological Theories Explaining Academic Motivation

Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

One of the most often used frameworks, SDT, claims that meeting three fundamental psychological requirements has an impact on motivation: Relatedness (the sense of being connected to others)), competence (confidence in one's efficacy), and autonomy (control over one's activities).

Students tend to be more intrinsically motivated when these needs are met. For instance, self-determination and motivation are more likely among students who have strong social support (relatedness) and low perceived stress (higher sense of control).

Expectancy-Value Theory Eccles & Wigfield (2002)

According to this view, motivation is influenced by two factors: the task's value and the expectation that one can succeed. University students who believe in their academic capabilities and perceive the value of their degree tend to demonstrate stronger academic motivation. However, these views can be distorted by high amounts of stress, which lowers value and anticipation.

Goal Orientation Theory Dweck & Leggett (1988):

Students can choose between performance objectives, which are centred on outperforming others, and mastery goals, which are centred on learning and growth. While performance objectives might be more associated with extrinsic motivation and stress vulnerability, mastery goals are associated with resilience and internal motivation. Supportive learning environments encourage mastery orientation, while competitive, high-pressure settings can increase stress and reduce motivation quality.

Weiner's Attribution Theory (1985)

This theory is primarily concerned with how individuals interpret success or failure. Students are more likely to stay motivated if they credit internal, manageable factors, such as their effort, for their academic success. Although, those who attribute success to external or stable factors, such as inherent skill or luck,

are more prone to give up, particularly when they are under stress and lack social support. Academic Drive in the Framework of College Life

For persistent effort, profound involvement, and perseverance in the face of academic pressure in a university setting, academic motivation is crucial. According to Richardson, Abraham, and Bond (2012), motivated students are more likely to attend classes on a regular basis, ask for assistance when necessary, and use active learning techniques including time management, note-taking, and critical thinking.

However, motivation is not spontaneous. It is significantly influenced by the student's social environment and emotional state. According to Schunk et al. (2014), burnout, self-doubt, and disinterest all of which directly impair motivation can result from high perceived levels of stress, particularly when students experience feelings of overwhelm or lack of support. However, by increasing students' self-confidence, lowering stress levels, and creating a sense of community, strong social support increases both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.Students with academic motivation are not necessarily those who experience no stress, but rather those who are equipped to manage stress effectively, interpret challenges as growth opportunities, and draw strength from their social networks. Thus, motivation serves as both an outcome and a mediator in the connection between academic success and perceived stress. Together, these three variables form a dynamic system. Motivation suffers when support is lacking, and stress levels are high. Conversely, when students feel supported, they are better equipped to manage stress and maintain academic drive. In order to investigate how perceived stress and social support interact to influence college students' academic motivation, this thematic review seeks to synthesise the results of 25 peer-reviewed studies. Mental health professionals and educators can better design interventions that boost motivation, alleviate academic stress, and create supportive learning environments by comprehending these relationships. The self-determination theory (SDT) of Deci and Ryan. This theory holds that the existence of human motivation depends on three basic psychological requirements: relatedness, competence, and autonomy.Individuals are more likely to act in ways that are self-determined and intrinsically driven when these conditions are met, which is important for learning, wellbeing, and personal development. On the other hand, motivation can change to extrinsic or a-motivational states when these demands are not met, which lowers performance and satisfaction.

In the context of college students, the idea of social support is closely associated with relatedness, or the need to feel connected to others. Students who receive support from friends, family, or mentors feel more encouraged, validated, and like they belong, all of which increase their motivation to complete academic assignments. For example, students are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation for learning when they perceive their efforts as meaningful and valued when they feel understood and supported by their social network

Competence is the second requirement, and it describes how someone feels about their ability to overcome challenges and accomplish goals. Stress perception has a direct effect on competence; when students perceive stress as manageable, it can improve their resilience and problem-solving skills, giving them a sense of success and inspiring them to keep going.

Lastly, social and environmental circumstances also have an impact on autonomy, or the urge to be in control of one's actions and decisions. In a social setting that respects their autonomy, students can be given the confidence to take charge of their education and establish worthwhile academic objectives, which will boost their intrinsic motivation. This study can investigate how students' academic experiences are influenced by social support, perceived stress, and academic motivation through the lens of SDT. It demonstrates specifically how addressing the basic psychological needs of relatedness, competence, and autonomy may boost motivation while ignoring these needs and experiencing low academic accomplishment as a result of a lack of support and elevated stress may have the opposite effect.

Chapter 2
Review of literature

Theme 1: Social Support as a Catalyst for Academic Motivation

These studies show that academic motivation is influenced by both extrinsic and internal factors, including perceived social support from professors, family, and classmates.

Ren, Zhang, and Yin (2024)

This study analysed data from 567 master's students to evaluate how different forms of social support (family, institutional, supervisor) influence academic success. All three types of support were found to significantly predict academic achievement, with positive academic emotions acting as a mediator. It highlighted how emotional support enhances students' motivation and performance.

Martínez-López et al. (2024)

This study used structural equation modeling to show that students' academic performance improved as a result of teacher and family support significantly improving students' metacognitive strategies and knowledge. Mastery self-talk, positively predicted by social support, directly enhanced achievement.

Chen, Bian, & Zhu (2023)

The researchers established a chain mediation where social support enhanced academic motivation, which then increased engagement. Showing that positive emotional states influenced by support maintain motivation and engagement, life satisfaction served as a mediator. 4. Shaheb, Mokaberian, and Dehghanpouri Academic motivation and perceived social support were found to be clearly correlated in this study, which involved 210 students. According to emotional intelligence, which acted as a mediator, students who have supporting networks are better able to control their emotions, which in turn increases their motivation for learning.

Datu (2021)

This study demonstrated, via the lens of positive psychology, that social support significantly influenced academic motivation and life satisfaction. Students who felt more supported showed greater academic persistence and emotional control.

Molla & Molla (2021)

Focusing on the source of support, this study showed that perceived peer and family support enhanced intrinsic academic motivation and self-confidence. It found that students with supportive environments pursued academic goals with more consistency.

Krok & Zarzycka (2020)

The study found a strong connection between students' ability to find meaning in their studies and academic motivation, which could only be sustained in the presence of social support. It highlights how support fosters long-term academic goals and perseverance.

Watson &Karaman (2017)

Social support moderated academic stress's effect on motivation, according to this study. Emotional support helped reduce stress levels, leading to higher academic motivation.

Theme 2: Social Support's Protective Role Against Stress

In order to maintain or enhance academic motivation, these studies concentrate on the protective function of social support in reducing academic stress.

Chen, Zhu, & Xiao (2025)

This study showed how students' academic self-efficacy increased as a result of social support, which enhanced their sense of security.A moderate association was indicated by the fact that students from households with more culturally varied backgrounds benefited even more.

Pontes et al (2024)

This study found a correlation between students' enhanced self-management and decreased stress and anxiety levels. According to this theory, social support indirectly lowers stress by improving time management and self-regulation, two skills that are essential for academic motivation.

Moirangthem (2023)

Postgraduate students reported feeling less anxious when they had a lot of social support, especially from family and significant others. Women reported higher levels of stress and felt more supported, indicating a gender difference.

Ullah, Akhter, & Aziz (2023)

In this COVID-19 study, social support was found to be a significant mediator of the relationship between emotional intelligence and academic stress. It was determined that pupils who had improved emotional control and outside assistance underwent less stress during crisis situations.

Litwic-Kaminska & Błachnio (2023)

The study, which used cross-national data, discovered that perceived support, positivity, and resilience were important factors in lowering stress. Emotional well-being was regulated by social support in every country that was examined.

Rathakrishnan, Singh, & Yahaya (2022)

This COVID-19-based study observed that children with more social support had decreased levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. During times of academic stress, emotional support served as a buffer.

Hall and Maymon (2021)

The study examined first-year university students and found that perceived social support from multiple sources helped them adjust better to the academic environment by reducing stress levels and aiding in emotional coping.

Lin (2019)

Although this study focused on internet addiction, it found that emotional buffering reduced academic stress even for students who were extensively involved in online activities and had excellent social support networks.

Theme 3: Academic Motivation as an outcome

These studies show how academic motivation can either cause or moderate the relationship between stress and social support.

El-Sayed (2024)

This study of graduate nursing students found that intrinsic motivation was significantly impacted by social support and student participation. It was thought that peer cooperation and mentoring bolstered innate drive.

Talsma et al. (2021)

A meta-analysis found that social support lowers burnout and enhances academic engagement, a major motivator. Encourage perseverance by fostering a greater sense of confidence in one's academic aptitude.

Jhoselle Tus (2020)

According to this study, high school pupils had above-average motivation and ordinary levels of stress. It was discovered that motivation was linked to great academic achievement, even if there was not a direct correlation between the two.

Wilks & Spivey (2019)

According to this study, social support-cultivated resilience led to improved motivation and coping skills. When under stress, students who received a lot of assistance performed better academically.

Emadpoor et al (2016)

Path analysis indicates that psychological well-being and academic motivation are positively impacted by perceived social support. Gender-sensitive motivational pathways were revealed by the greater correlation among female pupils.

Theme 4: Moderators and Contextual Influences in the Support-Stress-Motivation Relationship

These studies show that contextual factors such as gender, self-efficacy, academic year, and sociocultural background influence how social support and stress impact motivation.

Priyadarshini & Simon (2023)

Social support decreased stress and improved personal growth initiative, which indirectly supported motivation and goal pursuit, according to a study done on young adults living away from home.

Masendi (2021)

This study from Makerere University found that male students' slightly higher levels of self-efficacy lessened the detrimental impact of stress on their performance. The reported levels of academic stress also varied with study duration.

Mohr and Sedlacek (2019)

This long-term study found that social support predicted academic success and that achievement increased perceived support. It demonstrates how the circle of success, inspiration, and support is dynamic and mutually reinforcing.

Rücker (2012)

The study found that stress reduced academic motivation and GPA using the Perceived Stress Scale. On the other hand, motivated pupils performed better. Stress reactions were influenced by native language and gender.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Aim

to investigate how college students view social support, academic motivation, and stress in connection to one another, with an emphasis on the function of social support in lowering stress and boosting motivation. to investigate how college students view social support, academic motivation, and stress in connection to one another, with an emphasis on the function of social support in lowering stress and boosting motivation.

Objectives
1. To evaluate the association between stress and social support as perceived by college students.
2. To investigate the relationship between academic motivation and perceived stress and social support.
3. To provide data that can direct efforts aimed at enhancing academic motivation through social support networks.

Hypothesis

•H1: Academic motivation is favourably connected with higher levels of perceived social support.
•H2: There is a negative correlation between academic motivation and higher reported stress.

Research Design

The present study employed a quantitative, correlational approach to examine the association among university students' social support, perceived stress, and academic motivation. A cross-sectional survey was used to collect data at a certain point in time.

Participants

Undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of academic fields participated in the study. • To achieve statistical power, a sample size of 200 individuals was required..

•Inclusion criteria: Currently enrolled university students aged 18 and above.

•Exclusion criteria: Students who are on academic leave or not actively engaged in coursework.

Sampling Method

Using a convenience sampling strategy, participants were gathered via notice boards, online student groups, and university emails.This method was used due to its practicality and efficiency in accessing university students, the target population for this study. Easy outreach and timely data collection were made possible by using university emails, online student groups, and notice boards for recruitment.

Variables
One of the independent variables is social support, as measured by the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support, or MSPSS.
Perceived stress is measured using the Perceived Stress Scale, or PSS.

The dependent variable is academic motivation as measured by the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS).

Description of tools

Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

Developer: Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet, and Farley (1988) The 12-point self-evaluation

The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) measures three types of perceived support: friends, family, and a significant other. There are four elements on the subscale. A seven-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "very strongly disagree" and 7 denoting "very strongly agree," is used to score responses. stronger scores on the three MSPSS subscales and the overall score indicate stronger felt social support. Due to its brevity and simplicity, it is widely used in a range of age ranges and cultural environments.

The 12-point self-evaluation The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) evaluates three different types of perceived support: friends, family, and a significant other. The subscale has four components. Responses are recorded using a seven-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "very strongly disagree" and 7 represents "very strongly agree." Greater felt social support is indicated by higher scores on the three MSPSS subscales as well as the total score. It is widely used across a range of age groups and cultural situations because to its simplicity and conciseness.

The MSPSS has a good level of internal consistency, as evidenced by Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which often fall between 0.84 and 0.92 across different investigations. The scale has good construct validity because it has significant negative correlations with measures of depression and anxiety. These correlations show that lower levels of these symptoms are associated with higher levels of perceived social support.

"Perceived Stress Scale (PSS): Developer: Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelstein (1983)"

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), a self-report instrument consisting of ten items, is used to measure people's level of stress regarding their lives, particularly how much they feel that their circumstances are overwhelming, unexpected, and beyond their control. On a 5-point Likert scale, with 0 denoting "never" and 4 denoting "very frequently," respondents rate each topic. Four of the items (items 4, 5, 7, and 8) are reverse-scored, and the total score is calculated by adding up all of the responses. A higher level of felt tension is indicated by total scores.

The PSS-10 version's Cronbach's alpha coefficients are roughly 0.85, which suggests high internal consistency. Perceived stress is positively correlated with anxiety and depression levels, as seen by the positive correlations found between the PSS-10 and these measures. Furthermore, the PSS-10 exhibits strong concurrent validity.

Academic Motivation Scale (AMS)

Developer: Vallerand et al. (1992)

The 28-item Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) is based on the Self-Determination Theory. This tool measures seven distinct kinds of academic motivation, including Amotivation, Extrinsic Motivation (external regulation), and Intrinsic Motivation (to know, to accomplish, and to experience stimulation). On a Likert scale with seven points, each item is rated from 1 (does not correspond) to 7 (corresponds perfectly). A comprehensive profile of students' motivational orientation is provided by the scale's overall and subscale scores.

The AMS's subscales have Cronbach's alpha coefficients between 0.62 and 0.86, which indicates strong internal consistency. The AMS demonstrates good construct validity, with its seven-factor structure aligning with theoretical expectations of different motivation types (intrinsic, extrinsic, and amotivation).

Data Collection

•A Google Forms survey was created containing demographic questions (age, gender, year of study, discipline) and standardized scales (MSPSS, PSS, AMS).

•Participants were given an informed consent form before proceeding with the survey.

•Data collection was done over a period of time.

AnalysingData

•Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequencies) were employed to summarise scale scores and demographic information. The study used Pearson's correlation analysis to examine the strength and direction of relationships between social support, perceived stress, and academic motivation.

• Simple linear regression was used to assess the predicted association between academic motivation, felt stress, and social support.

• IBM SPSS software was used for all analyses.

Chapter 4

Results

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for AMS, PSS, and MSPSS

Variable	M	SD	N
AMS	28.36	1.96	200
PSS	21.33	11.36	200
MSPSS	47.15	22.19	200

Table 1 displays each study variable's descriptive statistics. With a relatively low standard deviation and a mean score of 28.36, academic motivation (AMS) showed consistent participant outcomes. Stress levels (PSS) had a mean of 21.33 and showed greater variability, while perceived social support (MSPSS) was moderate on average (M = 47.15)

Table 2
Correlations Between AMS, PSS, and MSPSS

	1. AMS	2. PSS	3. MSPSS
1. AMS	—	-.28**	.26**
2. PSS	-.28**	—	.11
3. MSPSS	.26**	.11	—

**p < .01 (1-tailed)*

Table 3
Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting AMS from PSS and MSPSS

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	28.295	.366		77.223	.000
PSS	-.054	.011	-.315	-4.796	.000
MSPSS	.026	.006	.293	4.472	.000

$R^2 = .164$, Adjusted $R^2 = .155$, $F(2, 197) = 19.30$, $p < .001$

Table 2 and 3 displays the correlation and regression results. A negative regression coefficient for PSS indicates that higher stress significantly predicts lower academic motivation. Conversely, higher perceived social support significantly predicts higher academic motivation. Both predictors contributed meaningfully to the model, accounting for 16.4% of the variance inAMS

Note. AMS = Academic Motivation Scale; PSS = Perceived Stress Scale; MSPSS = Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The study, which employed Pearson's correlation and linear regression, found that stress and social support significantly affect students' academic motivation. There was a moderate to significant negative correlation between academic motivation (AMS) and perceived stress (PSS) (r = -0.589, p 0.01), meaning that students who reported feeling more stressed were more likely to be less inspired by their academics. This supports other studies that found excessive stress can impair critical thinking, emotional regulation, and goal-focused concentration—all of which are critical components of academic success. Nonetheless, there was a positive correlation between academic motivation and perceived social support (MSPSS) (r = 0.460, p 0.01), indicating that students were more likely to maintain their motivation in their studies if they felt supported by their social circles, friends, family, and significant others. Furthermore, social support and stress levels were significantly inversely correlated (r = -0.644, p 0.01), supporting the buffering hypothesis, which holds that emotional and practical assistance can shield individuals from the detrimental psychological effects of stress. These correlational results were confirmed by regression analysis, which revealed that stress significantly lowered academic motivation (β = -0.054, t = -4.796, p < 0.001) while social support significantly increased it (β = 0.026, t = 4.472, p < 0.001). According to the model's predictive equation, AMS = 28.295 - 0.054(PSS) + 0.026(MSPSS), academic motivation decreases by 0.054 points for each unit of stress, whereas motivation increases by 0.026 points for each unit of social support, assuming that other factors do not change. These findings emphasise that students' academic motivation is significantly influenced by both perceived stress and social support.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to ascertain how university students' academic motivation was impacted by perceived stress and social support. More importantly, the findings also reveal that social support helps reduce stress, which in turn indirectly boosts academic motivation. These findings clearly demonstrate that these two factors have opposite effects: when students experience more stress, their motivation tends to decrease, whereas stronger social support is linked to higher levels of motivation. To put it another way, students benefit from peer, family, and friend support not only because it makes them feel better emotionally but also because it shields them from the negative effects of stress on their academic lives. These patterns were both statistically meaningful and practically relevant. They show that a student's intellectual development is greatly influenced by their emotional and social surroundings. This study supports the body of studies showing that students perform better when they feel less stressed and encouraged. Their mental health and the support systems that surround them are also important. It emphasizes how universities can assist students not only by enhancing the quality of their instruction but also by fostering a positive, low-stress, and supportive academic environment. Doing so can help students stay motivated, face challenges more confidently, and reach their full academic potential.

Recommendations

1.Introduce Stress Reduction Programs: Regular workshops and programs on stress management, such as mindfulness, time management, and emotional regulation, should be offered by educational establishments.

2.Strengthen your support networks: Universities should promote peer support groups, mentoring programs, and inclusive social events that encourage students to connect with others and seek help when needed.

3. Train Academic Staff in Student Well-being:Basic training in student mental health and emotional support can be given to faculty members, allowing them to quickly identify students who are struggling and offer assistance.

4.Increase Awareness of Mental Illness: Awareness campaigns can be conducted to reduce the stigma around mental health support and encourage students to utilise counselling services and reach out for help

Limitations

1.Limited Variety in the Sample: It's possible that the sample doesn't fully reflect the wide range of experiences that students have in a variety of educational settings, cultural contexts, and backgrounds.

2. Use of Self-Report Measures: Self-reported questionnaires were used to gather all responses, and they may have been skewed by social desirability, personal bias, or erroneous self-evaluation.

3. Cross-Sectional Research Design: It is impossible to make conclusions about the cause and effect of the variables because the data was collected all at once.

4. A Focused Variable's Range: Only felt stress and social support were examined in relation to academic motivation; personality, coping style, and academic environment were not considered as potential contributing factors.

Scope for Future Research

1. Using Longitudinal Research: Future researchers can track changes in students' stress, support levels, and motivation over time to better understand long-term effects.

2. Inclusion of Qualitative Insights:

Adding interviews or focus groups could provide deeper, more personal accounts of how students experience stress and support in academic settings.

3. Wider Sampling Across Institutions:

Future studies should include students from multiple universities or regions to improve generalisability and better capture diverse experiences.

4. Investigation of Other Psychological Factors: Future research could examine how other factors—like resilience, academic pressure, personality traits, or learning strategies—interact with motivation.

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