

Level of Academic Stress and Extent of Perceived Social Support of the College Students During the COVID Pandemic in Caraga State University, Butuan City, Philippines

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Abstract- The study's primary goal was to identify the students' level of academic stress during the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to academic expectations, academic work and examinations, academic self-perceptions, and the extent of perceived social support from friends, family, and significant others. The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design where the frequency and percentages, weighted mean, One-Way ANOVA, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the collected data from 98 students. Online-generated survey questions were utilized for the data analysis. The results reveal that the students' level of academic stress related to academic expectation, work and examination, and academic self-perception is moderately extensive. Moreover, the extent of perceived social support from friends, family, and significant others tells the same results. No significant relationship was found between the level of academic stress and the extent of perceived social support. It was concluded that students' concerns about academic stresses and taking action with social support are crucial for nourishing and improving mental health.

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is a bodily reaction to the external environment that generates it. It was also known as eustress or distress. The distinction between the two is that eustress is a stimulus in which the body responds positively to the external environment, whereas distress is the polar opposite (Sharma, 2018).

National Crime Records Bureau reported that one student every hour commits suicide. The bureau revealed that 1.8% of students committed suicide because of flanking from the exams and an 80% rise in suicide rates during a one-year time frame (Saha, 2017). A 2012 Lancet Report revealed that the 15-29 age group bracket in India has topped the suicide cases in the world (as cited in "India has the Highest Suicide Rate", n.d.) and these rates show no sign of declining (Reddy et.al, 2018).

Family, friends, coworkers, and others provide physical and emotional assistance in the form of social support. To measure the relationship between social support and academic performance of 272 Madonna University students, correlation analysis was used and the results revealed that the relationship between social support and academic performance is positively significant (Ogbeide & Ugwu, 2016). In other words, the higher the extent of social support availed and accessed, the higher the quality of academic performance delivered. (Ogbeide & Ugwu, 2016). In other words, the higher the extent of social support availed and accessed, the higher the quality of academic performance delivered.

In COVID-19 pandemic time, using the blended learning mode is important to the students' learning process. In the study conducted in Monkayo College of Arts, Sciences and Technology located in Monkayo, Davao de Oro, Philippines, it revealed that the factors that trigger academic stress are limited weekly internet allotment, more hours spent on modular learning as well as low monthly family income. Furthermore, students also struggle with fear of failure, lack of learning tools, personal inadequacy, and interpersonal conflicts with professors (Licayan et al., 2021).

Alipio (2020) stated that students benefit from adequate social support in assisting and supporting them in their shift from high school to college, as well as adjusting to the additional expectations, tasks, obligations, and needs of higher education life. In the Filipino context, social support can take several forms. It is as simple as spending time together, which is known as companionship support, or it can be directly tied to the topic at hand. Filipino youths cherish the wisdom they gain from their parents, teachers, and mentors. These forms of assistance differ from those seen in westernized countries, which place a greater emphasis on autonomy or independence, but in the Philippines, group harmony is cherished more (Reyes et al., 2020).

Acknowledging the Mental Health Awareness Month celebrated every October, the University has discussed the mental health and academic stress of the students and how to adequate social support in this challenging time. Despite the challenges faced, Dr. Anthony M. Penaso,

the president of Caraga State University (CSU), emphasized that aside from conducting online classes, flexible learning schemes is effective for college students (Lopez, 2020).

Acknowledging the fact that Bachelor of Elementary college students struggle on reaching university's learning standard causing them to feel stressed and unmotivated, the researchers are prompted to determine the student's level of the academic stress of Caraga State University and the extent of perceived social support they receive from their family, friends and loved ones.

The study is aimed to identify the level of academic stress of Caraga State University Bachelor in Elementary Education college students as basis in proposing intervention material that determined their current status and how the student's perceive social support when dealing academic stress.

Methods

The research design, research locale, participants, sampling design, instrumentation, validity and reliability of the instrument, data gathering procedure, scoring and quantification of data and statistical treatment of data are presented below.

1.1 Research Design

This research used a descriptive-correlational research design. It described the variables and the relationships on the level of academic stress in terms of academic expectation, work and examination, students' academic self-perception, and the extent of perceived social support received by the BEEd students from their family, friends and significant others.

1.2 Research Locale

The study is conducted in the College of Education (CEd) department particularly in the Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd) program designated in Caraga State University which is located in Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, Caraga Region, Philippines. Caraga State University is situated along the Phil-Japan Friendship Highway which traverses Butuan City, Surigao City, Bayugan City, Cabadbaran City and the provinces of Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte and Surigao del Sur, northeastern of Mindanao, south of the Philippines. The Metropolitan Manila, the Philippines' business, political and industrial capital, is just one hour and twenty-five-minute-ride via plan to the City of Butuan. Caraga State University Campus is nestled in a 232-hectares area, thirty-two (32) hectares of which is allocated for academic buildings and support facilities including a Gymnasium, while the remaining two-hundred (200) hectares of land are for production, research and extension projects of the University.

1.3 Participants of the Study

This study involved the 98 Caraga State University College of Education students from Bachelor of Elementary Education as research participants. The number of the participants is showed in the table below.

1.4 Sampling Design

The researchers used a probability sampling specifically simple random sampling where the researchers select a smaller group from a larger group of the total number of the population. For economic and administrative considerations, the number of participants in the study is 30% of the total population of each year

level of the Bachelor of Elementary Education students in Caraga State University.

1.5 Research Instrument

The researchers used Google Forms to create an online-generated survey questionnaire. The first section of the questionnaire focused on the demographic profile of students by year level, economic status, and love-life status. The second section of the questionnaire focused on the students' level of academic stress. The researchers used the PAS (Perception of Academic Scale) questionnaire — a psychometrically instrument crafted to assess the academic stress among the university students developed by Bedewy and Gabriel (2015). There are 15 statements in the second section. The third section of the questionnaire focused on the extent of perceived social support received by BEEd students. The researchers used the MSPSS (Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support) questionnaire which was designed to measure an individual's perception of support from 3 sources: family, friends and significant others (Zimet et al., 2019) There are 15 statements in the third section.

1.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

The researchers used the PAS (Perception of Academic Scale) questionnaire adopted from a study's output "Examining Perceptions of Academic Stress and Its Sources among University Students", which goal is to developed a scale to measure perceived sources of academic stress among university students and MSPSS (Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support) questionnaire adopted from a study's output about "The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support", which goal is used to measure an individual's perception of support from 3 sources: family, friends and significant others. The instrument is thoroughly checked and verified by the experts and immediately piloted to twenty (30) Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Science and Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Mathematics students in the College of Education department in Caraga State University, Ampayon, Butuan City. The responses of the participants gathered in the pilot test were statistically treated through Cronbach's Alpha reliability test. The alpha coefficient for the thirty (30) items is .945; which means that the items have relatively high internal consistency, hence yielding high reliability score.

1.7 Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers sent two (2) separate letters addressed to the Dean of College of Education through the BSED chairperson and BEED Chairperson to ask permission to allow the researchers to conduct the pilot test for the survey questionnaires. Upon the approval, the researchers distributed the survey questionnaires through Google form link to the participants' social media accounts specifically Facebook Messenger or active Gmail accounts that reduced participants' inconvenience. Subsequently, the data analyzed in percentage which was automatically generated by Google. It assured that the conduct of the survey upholds the confidentiality and privacy of the people involved.

1.8 Scoring and Quantification of Data

The answers of the participants on the level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support of BEEd students from their family, friends, and significant others are classified respectively with the use of the following scale of statistical mean, range, value, and its

descriptive equivalent. The responses, scale, range, and interpretation assigned for each item on the level of academic stress are shown below:

Responses	Scale	Range	Interpretation
Strongly Agree	5	4.50-5.00	The level of academic stress is very extensive.
Agree	4	3.50-4.49	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.
Neutral	3	2.50-3.49	The level of academic stress is fair.
Disagree	2	1.50-2.49	The level of academic stress is low.
Strongly Disagree	1	1.00-1.49	The level of academic stress is very <u>low.</u>

The responses, scale, range, and interpretation assigned for each item on the extent of perceived social support of BEEed students from their family, friends, and significant others are shown below:

Responses	Scale	Range	Interpretation
Strongly agree	5	4.50-5.00	The extent of perceived social support is very extensive.
Agree	4	3.50-4.49	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
Neutral	3	2.50-3.49	The extent of perceived social support is fair.
Disagree	2	1.50-2.49	The extent of perceived social support is low.
Strongly Disagree	1	1.00-1.49	The extent of perceived social support is very low.

1.9 Statistical Treatment

The data is treated in using the following statistical tools: **Frequency Counts and Percentages.** This was utilized in describing the population of the participants.

Weighted Mean. This was used to get the measurement of student's level of academic stress.

One-way ANOVA. This was applied to determine the significant difference between the participants' profile and the student's level of academic stress and their perceived social support.

Pearson Product Moment Correlation. This was applied to determine the relationship between the participants' level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support of the participants.

II. FINDINGS

This chapter discussed the findings of research results and their implications. Consequently, similar literature is added to demonstrate the strong stand of the claim derived from the findings.

Problem 1. The Demographic Profile of the Participants in terms of Year Level, Economic Status, and Love Life Status

The participants' demographic profile in terms of the year level is shown in figure 1.

1.1 year level

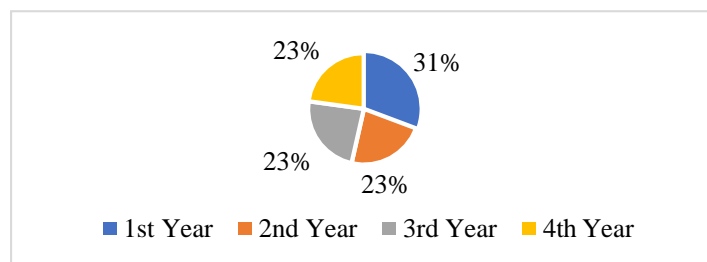


Figure 1. Graphical Representation of the Participants' Year Level

It can be gleaned on the figure that thirty-nine (39) or thirty-one percent (31%) of the participants were first (1st) year BEEed students, twenty-nine (29) or twenty-three percent (23%) of them were second (2nd) year BEEed students, thirty (30) or twenty-three percent (23%) of them were third (3rd) year BEEed students and twenty-nine (29) or twenty-three (23%) of them were fourth (4th) year BEEed students. This revealed that the majority of the participants were from first (1st) year BEEed students.

The participants' demographic profile in terms of the economic status is shown in figure 2.

1.2 economic status

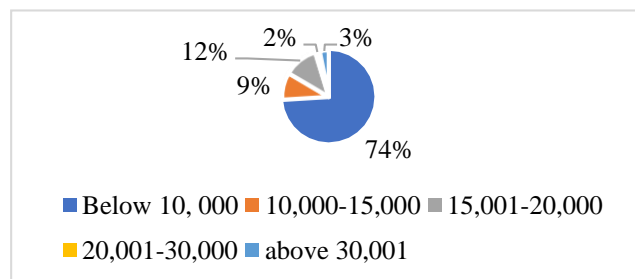


Figure 2. Graphical Representation of Participants' Economic Status

The distribution entails that two (2) participants or 2 percent (2%) of overall participants had 20,001- 30,000 monthly income, four (4) participants or three percent (3%) had above 30,001 monthly income, twelve (12) participants or nine percent (9%) had 10,001-15,000 monthly income, fifteen (15) participants or twelve percent (12%) had 15,001- 20,000 monthly income and ninety-four (94) participants or seventy-four percent (74%) had below 10,000 monthly income. It means that most of the participants had below 10,000 monthly incomes.

The participants' demographic profile in terms of love-life status is shown in figure 3.

1.3 Love-Life Status

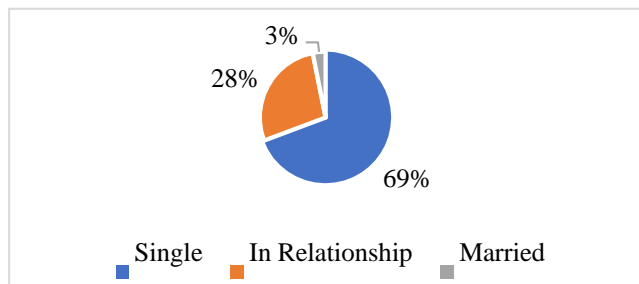


Figure 3. Graphical Representation of Participants' Love-Life Status

It reveals that four (4) or three percent (3%) of the participants were married, thirty-five (35) or twenty-eight percent (28%) were in a relationship, and eighty-eight (88) or sixty-nine percent (69%) were single. This denotes that out of 127 participants, majorities of them were single.

Problem 2. Levels of Academic Stress of the Participants in terms of Stresses Related to Academic Expectations, Stresses Related to Work and Examinations, and Stresses Related to Academic Self-Perceptions

2.1 Levels of Academic Stress of the Participants in terms of Stresses Related to Academic Expectations

Table 1 presents the academic stress related to academic expectations among the participants.

As shown in the table, indicator number three (3) states that "I feel pressured when my instructors give too many requirements" attained the highest mean of 4.14. This means that participants agreed that they have moderately extensive stress along this line. In contrast, indicator number two (2) which indicates that "I feel down when my instructor comment about my academic performance" obtained the lowest mean of 3.33. This means that participants' level of stress is neutral and defined as fair. The overall weighted mean on the stresses related to academic expectations is 3.90 or agree which is described as moderately extensive.

Table 1

Mean Distribution of the level of academic stress of the participants in terms of stresses related to academic expectations

Indicators	AcademicLevel of	Stress	Academic	Interpretation		
					Description	
					Mean	
1	I feel like I have let my parents down when my academic performance is poor.	3.86	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.		
2	I feel down when my instructors comment about my academic performance.	3.33	Neutral	The level of academic stress is fair.		
3	I feel pressured when my instructors give too many requirements.	4.14	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.		
4	I feel stressed because of the tight deadlines of academic-related activities.	4.11	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.		
5	I feel anxious about maintaining my grades in each course.	4.06	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.		
Overall Weighted Mean		3.90	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.		

Range of means: 4.50-5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50-4.49 Agree; 2.50-3.49 Neutral; 1.50-2.49 Disagree; 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree

This implies that students may experience academic stress over academic expectations set for them by others. This could be as a result of the unhealthy and unrealistic competition and expectations that exist in the classroom. It suggests that students may maintain healthy and realistic academic routines despite problems that they encounter including the amount of time given to the students to accomplish their requirements. According to Delavande (2014), setting expectations is a common human practice which affects many domains, such as education, economics, health, income, etc. Education is important as it equips learners with values, attitudes, skills and knowledge to adjust to their social

environment. Academic expectations play a significant role in the quality of student adaptation and academic success.

The study conducted by Krammer et al in 1970 that was cited by Casanova et al in the year 2019 found out that in combining cognition and motivation, academic expectations reflect student aspirations or what they intend to achieve in attending HE, and how they can overcome the challenges posed by the HE experiences.

As stated by Krammer et al., (2016), positive and realistic expectations reinforce the use of coping strategies when faced with initial adaptation difficulties. When the initial expectations of students are too high or unrealistic, they are more likely to fail to realize them. In this situation, students experience frustration and reduce their investment in acquiring new skills to deal with the challenges of HE (Kreig, 2013).

2.2 Levels of Academic Stress of the Participants in terms of Stresses Related to Work and Examinations

Table 2 projects the level of academic stress related to academic work and examinations among the participants.

The data exposes that indicator number two (2) articulating that there are too many deadlines in their tasks garnered the highest mean of 4.21 described as agree and conveyed that the level of the academic stress is moderately extensive. However, indicator number one (1) which express that the time allocated to classes and work is enough earned the lowest mean of 3.43 described as agree and interpreted that the level of academic stress is moderately extensive.

This attention is more and more important when students enter university with different academic competencies and motivations, as well as different vocational or career projects, or when they are first- generation students with a lack of sufficient and objective information concerning campus life (Braxton et al., 1995; Briggs et al., 2012). Therefore, these students are often somewhat idealistic in terms of what they can accomplish and frustration can emerge in the first weeks of college life (Credé & Niehorster, 2012).

Table 2
Mean Distribution of the level of academic stress of the participants in terms of stresses related to academic work and examinations

Indicators Academic Work and Examinations	Level of	Academic	Interpretation
	Stress		
	Mean	Description	
1 The time allocated to classes and academic work is enough.	3.43	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.
2 I feel that there are too many deadlines in my work.	4.21	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.
3 I believe that the amount of work assignment is too much.	3.80	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.
4 The questions on the exams are frequently challenging.	4.13	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.
5 The amount of time available to finish the answers on the exam is limited.	3.80	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.
Overall Weighted Mean	3.87	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive.

Range of means: 4.50-5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50-4.49 Agree; 2.50-3.49 Neutral; 1.50-2.49 Disagree; 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree

The collective weighted mean is 3.87, which indicates an “agree” overall response. It represents that the level of academic stress related to academic work and exams among BEEed students in CSU is moderately extensive.

This implies that academic workloads among CSU BEEed students is one of the factors that contributed in the academic stress among other factors. This implies that academic workloads among CSU BEEed students is one of the factors that contributed in the academic stress among other factors. Students may be given various activities by their instructors of the different courses which makes it difficult for them to manage their time for completing and catching up the deadlines. This includes the difficulty of the exams. Students are also being pressured due to the difficult questions given in their examinations or lessons that were not tackled in their class. Students may exercise adequate time management when undertaking classwork or tasks in order to avoid being overburdened with work and to complete projects efficiently, resulting in less stress.

As stated by Rodriguez (2020), challenge success polled almost 20,000 students from difficult, college- focused institutions. The biggest sources of stress for these students were "grades, tests, quizzes, finals, or other assessments," "total workload and assignments," and "college and their future," according to their responses.

Examination questions must undergo keen item analysis as we indulge in this new time. Assessing student performance will help teachers design or make changes with regards to creating exam items and likely help them evaluate if some questions are serving their function and are suitable to be modified or eliminated, that is according to Kadakia and Bradshaw (2020) as agreed in their article.

2.3 Levels of Academic Stress of the Participants in terms of Stresses Related to Academic Self- Perceptions among the Participants

Table 3 illustrates the stresses related to students' self-perception among the BEEEd freshmen students in CSU.

As shown in the table, indicator number one (1) which states that "I became anxious when I feel unprepared for my academic journey" has the highest mean of 4.24 described as agree and conveyed that the level of academic stress is moderately extensive along this line. However, indicator number four (4) which indicates that "I feel that I will fail some courses this semester" got the lowest mean of 3.00 which tells as neutral and participants' level of academic stress is fair. The overall weighted mean on the stresses related to students' self-perceptions is

3.66 and obtained agreed response which is described as the level of academic stress is moderately extensive.

This implies that the student's future career goals and academic self-belief are causing them stress and this is possibly due to the fact that they are just in their college journey, where they are already thinking about future uncertainties and are concerned academically due to the pressure they felt from expectations and other factors. This means that while still in college, students may focus on managing their scholastic demands rather than worrying about their personal impressions of their future job. On the other hand, it may cause confusion and educational disruption, affecting their ability to enroll in or stay engaged.

Table 3
Mean Distribution of the level of academic stress of the participants in terms of stresses related to academic self-perception

Indicators of Academic Self-Perception	Level of Stress Mean	of Academic Description	Interpretation
1 I become anxious when I feel unprepared for my academic journey.	4.24	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive
2 I am not confident about succeeding in my goal.	3.35	Neutral	The level of academic stress is fair
3 I become stressed when I had to make academic decisions (e.g. procrastinating or studying well).	3.72	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive
4 I feel that I will fail some courses this semester.	3.00	Neutral	The level of academic stress is fair
5 I am worried about getting a job even if I pass my exams.	3.96	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive
Overall Weighted Mean	3.66	Agree	The level of academic stress is moderately extensive

Range of means: 4.50-5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50-4.49 Agree; 2.50-3.49 Neutral; 1.50-2.49 Disagree; 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree

As claimed by Johnson (2020), forty-four percent of those who have experienced some kinds of educational disruption are concerned that it will affect their or their family's ability to enroll in or remain enrolled in college. Sawchuk (2020) stated that students' regular report cards and performance reviews are generating a large rise in the amount of failing or near-failing grades from coast to coast in schools that have primarily served students by distance education.

Putwain and Aveyard (2018) observed that the cognitive aspect of test anxiety (worry) has long been shown to be negatively linked to exam results. Academic buoyancy, perceived power, test competence, and cognitive test anxiety were all self-reported and matched to exam grades in English, Science, and Mathematics. Worry and perceived power had an interaction, according to the findings. At low levels of worry, students who felt more in charge performed better. Examination output was unaffected by high levels of worry regulation. Worry-reduction interventions do not actually increase exam performance unless they also target better control.

Problem 3. Extent of Perceived Social Support Received by the Participants in terms of Friends, Family and Significant Others

3.1 Extent of Perceived Social Support Received by the Participants in terms of Friends

Table 4 presents the extent of perceived social support among the BEEEd students of CSU in terms of friends.

Table 4
Mean Distribution of the extent of perceived social support of the participants in terms of friends

Indicators	Extent of Perceived Social Support		Interpretation
	<u>Description</u>		
Friends	<u>Mean</u>		
1 I know my friends really try their best to help me.	4.19	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
2 I know I can rely on my friends when things go wrong.	3.94	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
3 I have friends with whom I can share my joys and sorrow.	4.05	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
4 I can talk about my problems with my friends.	3.81	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
5 I get the usual advice about important things in life.	4.05	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
Overall Weighted Mean	4.01	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.

Range of means: 4.50-5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50-4.49 Agree; 2.50-3.49 Neutral; 1.50-2.49 Disagree; 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree

As shown in the table, indicator number one (1) states that “I know my friends really try their best to help me” attained the highest mean of 4.19. This means that participants agreed that they have moderately extensive social support along this line. In contrast, indicator number four (4) which indicates that “I can talk about my problems with my friends” obtained the lowest mean of

3.81 which means that the participant’s extent of perceived support is agree and defined as moderately extensive.

The overall weighted mean on the extent of perceived social support in terms of friends is 4.01 or agree which is described that the extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive. This implies that students receive good amount of social support from their friends which is important as it helps them to be motivated despite the tasks that trigger their stress including given many school works. Their friends are there by their side to extend their support in times of need. It suggests that students may preserve the trait of sociability and the ability to communicate their feelings to someone they trust.

3.2 Extent of Perceived Social Support Received by the Participants in terms of Family

Table 5 presents the extent of perceived social support among the BEEEd students of CSU in terms of family.

Table 5
Mean Distribution of the extent of perceived social support of the participants in terms of family

Indicators	Extent of Perceived Social Support		Interpretation
	<u>Description</u>		
Family	<u>Mean</u>		
1 I get the emotional help and support I needed from my family.	3.95	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
2 I can talk about my problem with my family.	3.54	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
3 I feel delighted when my family helps me in making decisions.	4.09	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
4 I am grateful when my family makes every effort to help me.	4.31	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
5 I feel blessed when my family is considerate of my time when I'm attending any class work.	4.35	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.
Overall Weighted Mean	4.05	Agree	The extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive.

Range of means: 4.50-5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50-4.49 Agree; 2.50-

3.49 Neutral; 1.50-2.49 Disagree; 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree

The data exposes that indicator number five (5) articulating that “I feel blessed when my family is considerate of my time when I’m attending any class work.” garnered the highest mean of 4.35 described as agree and conveyed that the extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive. However, indicator number two (2) which expressed that “I can talk about my problem with my family earned the lowest mean of 3.54 described as agree and interpreted as having a moderately extensive extent of perceived social support. The collective weighted mean is 4.05, which indicates an agree overall response. It suggests that the extent of perceived social support in terms of family among BEEd students in CSU is moderately extensive.

As stated by Dubow and Ullman (1989) as cited by Permatasari et., al (2021) there are three aspects of perceived social support when it comes to sources of social support, like a family support, which is perceived social support that comes from family— such as feelings of respect, being loved, caring, and the family's availability to provide assistance and input when people are experiencing problems.

As believed by Hadi (2020), the family plays a significant role and is one of the most important social resources that influence the online learning experience of the students. This is because, during the current pandemic, one of the social components that interact with pupils directly is the family. Parents serve as motivators by encouraging and supporting their children to be enthusiastic about the online learning experience.

3.3 Extent of Perceived Social Support Received by the Participants in terms of Significant Others

Table 6 presents the extent of perceived social support received by the participants in terms of significant others among the BEEd students of CSU.

As shown in the table, indicator number five (5) states that participants got the chances to talk to someone they trust on their personal and academic problems attained the highest mean of 3.84. This means that participants agreed that they have moderately extensive extent of perceived social support.

In contrast, indicator number four (4) which indicates that students have special person in their lives that cares about their feelings obtained the lowest mean of 3.57. This means that the extent of perceived social support of student received from significant others are moderately extensive. The overall weighted mean on the extent of perceived social support in terms of significant other is 3.67 or agree which is described that the extent of perceived social support is moderately extensive. This implies that students obtained social support from their significant others which is substantial because they have someone whom they can share their feelings and emotions regarding their academic experiences including stress and pressures. It suggests that students may be open, socialize more and communicate well with someone they can rely or trust.

Table 6
Mean Distribution of the extent of perceived social support of the participants in terms of significant others

Indicators	Extent of Perceived Social Support	Interpretation
Significant Others	Description	
	Mean	
1	I am lucky to have a special person who is around in times of need. 3.76	Agree
2	I can share my joys and sorrows with my special person. 3.60	Agree
3	I have a special person who is a real source of comfort to me. 3.59	Agree
4	I have a special person in my life that cares about my feelings. 3.57	Agree
5	I get chances to talk to someone I trust about my personal and academic problems. 3.84	Agree
Overall	Weighted Mean 3.67	Agree

Range of means: 4.50-5.00 Strongly Agree; 3.50-4.49 Agree; 2.50-3.49 Neutral; 1.50-2.49 Disagree; 1.00-1.49 Strongly Disagree

As stated by Kugbey (2015), significant others' social support has been found to have a positive impact on university students' mental health. Students who are more burned out on their studies are more likely to believe that their significant others are less supportive of them (Boram et. al., 2017). Even in the absence of family support and social support from peers, significant others play a vital protective function in hopelessness and anxiety (Li et. al., 2021).

As stated by Malinauskas and Malinauskiene (2020), significant others also have an important role in improving the quality of life of university students in the social interactions domain. Female students reported much higher levels of social support from significant others than male students, according to the findings. The findings that women received less social support from a significant other is similar to a study that some women's relationships with significant others were strained during the pandemic (Sikar et. al., 2020).

Students who are more burned out on their studies are more likely to believe that their significant others are less supportive of them (Boram et. al., 2017). Even in the absence of family support, social support from

peers and significant others plays a vital protective function in hopelessness and anxiety (Li et. al., 2021).

Problem 4. Significant Difference on the Levels of Academic Stress and Extent of Perceived Social Support by the Participants when Grouped According to Profile

Table 7 shows the significant difference of the level of academic stress of the BEEEd freshmen students in CSU when the participants are grouped according to the year level.

Table 7
Significant Difference in the Levels of Academic Stress and Extent of Perceived Social Support by the Participants When Grouped According to Year Level

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.939	3	.313	2.049	.111
Within Groups	17.720	116	.153		
Total	18.659	119			

*tested at 0.05 level of significance

It can be inferred from the table that there is no significant difference in the level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support by the BEEEd students of CSU between and within groups having significant values which are higher than 0.05 levels of significance tested for analysis. It insinuates that the participants have a similar level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support regardless of the varied year level. However, Elias et.al (2011) reported that the final- year students were found to be the most stressful group among the undergraduate students, followed by the middle year(s) undergraduate students. The first-year undergraduate students scored the least. Both the middle(s) and final-year students faced moderate level of stress while the first-year students experienced low level of stress. As stated by the results of the study conducted by McLean et.al (2022), there was no significant difference found between older and younger students on measures of perceived social support.

Table 8 shows the significant difference of the level of academic stress of the BEEEd students and extent of perceived social support of CSU when the participants are grouped according to the economic status.

The table represents that there is no significant difference on the level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support between and within groups having significant values which are higher than 0.05 levels of significance tested for analysis. It insinuates that the participants have a similar level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support regardless of the varied economic status.

Table 8
Significant Difference on the Levels of Academic Stress and Extent of Perceived Social Support by the Participants When Grouped According to Economic Status

Table 9
Significant Difference on the Levels of Academic

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.891	4	.723	2.317	.060
Within Groups	45.232	145	.312		
Total	48.123	149			

*tested at 0.05 level of significance

However, according to the results of the study conducted by Deb et.al (2015), academic anxiety is reported to be the least in case of adolescents from high socio-economic status – which may be due to secured future in material aspects. The prevalence of anxiety disorders tends to decrease with upper socio- economic status. Another study has also revealed that social disadvantage is associated with increased stress among students.

Furthermore, according to the study conducted by Geckova et.al, (2003), significant socio-economic differences in social support unfavorable for lower SES (socio-economic status) groups were also confirmed using all five types of SES (socio- economic status) indicators. adolescents reporting low social support more frequently considered their health as only good, fairly good or bad in comparison with adolescents reporting high social support. They suffer from more health complaints. ‘Low social support adolescents’ reported worse psychological health, and they were also indicated as a ‘case’ more frequently in comparison with adolescents reporting high social support. In addition, they reported lower vitality and worse mental health than “high social support adolescents”. The influence of social support on health remains significant in all explored models. As a result, there is no significant differences in the effect of social support on health among gender and socioeconomic groups of adolescents were confirmed. The effect of social support on health is independent of gender or SES (socio-economic status).

Table 9 shows the significant difference of the level of academic stress of the BEEEd students and extent of perceived social support of CSU when the participants are grouped according to the love-life status.

Furthermore, as stated by Thomas et.al (2012), all of the students reported a marked increase in seriousness and focus towards their studies since getting married. Marriage and parenthood were reported as the motivating factor behind this change. Some reported an improvement in their academic performance: one student reported that after getting married and having her child her GPA improved.

Problem 5. Significant Relationship Between the Level of Academic Stress and Extent of Perceived Social Support of the Participants

Table 10 shows the significant relationship between level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support of the BEEEd students.

Table 10
Correlation Analysis Between the Level of Academic Stress and Extent of Perceived Social Support of the

Variables	Mean	SD	R	Remarks
Sig. (2 – Tailed)				Decision

Stress and Extent of Perceived Social Support by the Participants When Grouped According to Love-Life Status

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.358	2	.179	.784	.460
Within Groups	19.874	87	.228		
Total	20.232	89			

*tested at 0.05 level of significance

Academic Stress	3.8087	.69944	0.045	0.617	Not Do not reject Ho
Perceived Social Support Students	3.9098	.80928	significant		

The table represents that there is no significant difference in the level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support by the BEEd students of CSU between and within groups having significant values which are higher than 0.05 levels of significance tested for analysis. It insinuates that the participants have a similar level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support regardless of the love-life status

However, in terms of marital status, Thomas et al. (2012) show that married undergraduates outperform their unmarried peers in various worldwide studies. For example, Smith and Naylor (2001) found that married students (both men and women) perform better than single students. Moreover, according to Al-Mutairi (2010), married students at the AOU outperform their unmarried colleagues and concluded that marital status has a major impact on student performance.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

This implies that there is no significant relationship between the level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support of the BEEd students. However, Talwar et.,al (2013) stated that several studies have highlighted the relationship between social support and stress among university students. 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. Social support may be described as, having a family and a network of close friends who provide social and emotional attachment, and the feeling of being able to depend on them for all physical and emotional needs.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Majority of the participants were from first year level. Most of the participants' families have below 10,000 monthly income. Meanwhile, out of 127 participants, majority of them are single. The BEEd

students' level of stress related to academic expectation is moderately extensive, this implies that students may experience stress over expectations set for them by the academe. This could be as a result of the unhealthy and unrealistic competition and expectations that exist in their studies.

Moreover, the freshmen's level of stress related to academic work and examination is moderately extensive which implies that academic workloads among CSU BEEd students is one of the factors that contributed in the academic stress among other factors. Moreover, students are being subjected to academic pressure as the survey revealed. Also, the students' level of academic stress related to academic self-perceptions is moderately extensive which suggests that the students' future career goals and academic self-belief are causing them stress and this is due to the fact that they are trying to survive their college journey of which they are already thinking about future uncertainties and are concerned academically due to the pressure they felt from expectations and other factors.

The extent of perceived social support among the BEEd students of CSU in terms of friends is moderately extensive. The students receive good amount of social support from their friends which is important as it helps them to be motivated despite the tasks that trigger their stress including given many school works. Their friends are there by their side to extend their support in times of need. Also, the extent of perceived social support among the BEEd students of CSU in terms of family as well as their support received from their loved ones are moderately extensive. This indicates that students obtained social support from their families and significant others which is vital especially in the new normal because these people are their confidantes and advisers who they can share their feelings with regarding their academic experiences including stress and pressures.

Generally, the level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support of the BEEd students is similar to each other when grouped according to year level, economic status, and love-life status. Furthermore, there is no significant relationship between the level of academic stress and extent of perceived social support of the BEEd students which means that the former is not, as found in this study, associated with the extent of students' perceived social support from their friends, families, and significant others. Perhaps there are other factors which may be associated with the academic stress but are not explored in this study.

IV. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. Students may maintain healthy and realistic academic routines despite problems that they encounter including the amount of time given to the students to accomplish their requirements. Moreover, students may exercise adequate time management when undertaking classwork or tasks in order to avoid being overburdened with work and to complete projects efficiently, resulting in less stress. Furthermore, students may focus on managing their scholastic demands rather than worrying about their personal impressions about their future job. On the other

hand, it may cause confusion and educational disruption, affecting their ability to enroll in or stay engaged.

2. Parents may continue understanding and supporting their children in their studies as parents' relationship towards their children plays a vital role in their academic performance.
3. Friends may encourage and uplift one another to alleviate their anxiety.
4. Significant others can learn patience, understanding, and empathy, which is important for character development.
6. This study's findings may differ from those of other schools. As a result, the researchers recommend to the future researchers working in the same variables to expand the scope of the study to include more universities and participants. Also, given the limitations of this study, it is proposed that future research look into students' coping methods, notably how they deal with academic stress, as well as their mental health strategies as preventive ways to fight stresses.

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