

The Impact of Friendship Quality and Peer Attachment on Adolescents' Academic Achievement

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to explore the impact of friendship quality and peer attachment on adolescents' academic achievement. A total of 622 Grade 9 students participated in this study. The participants were selected from eight high schools in Yangon and Bago Regions by using random sampling technique. Grade 9 students' perceived friendship quality was examined by using the Friendship Quality Questionnaire (Parker & Asher, 1993) and the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment: Part III-Peer Attachment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987) was used to explore students' peer attachment. The subscales of friendship quality questionnaire were validation and caring, help and guidance, companionship and recreation, intimate exchange, conflict resolution, and conflict and betrayal. Peer attachment questionnaire included three subscales, namely, communication, trust, and alienation. In general, the results revealed that Grade 9 students in this study were somewhat satisfied with their friendships. The results of t test pointed out that girls showed significantly higher level of friendship quality and peer attachment, as well, especially in positive aspects. Again, the results of t test revealed that there was significant region difference in both friendship quality and peer attachment. However, the difference was more significant in negative aspects as students from Bago Region reported higher levels of conflict and betrayal, and alienation than those from Yangon.

Again, Pearson correlation showed that overall friendship quality and peer attachment were positively significantly correlated with academic achievement. Then, stepwise multiple regression analyses revealed that three factors of friendship quality (intimate exchange, conflict resolution, and conflict and betrayal) and two peer attachment factors (trust and alienation) were the significant predictors of academic achievement. Lastly, the process macro bootstrap method of Hayes (2013) was conducted to reveal the mediator effect of peer attachment on academic achievement. The results pointed out that the relationship between friendship quality and academic achievement was partially mediated by peer attachment. It is hoped that the findings of this study will be useful to teachers, educators and parents to gain more insight into the friendship factors that affect students' academic performance and therefore help improve their academic performance.

Key words: Friendship quality, Peer attachment, Academic achievement

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