

The Role of Social Support in Promoting Adolescents' Resilience during a Pandemic: Insights from Region XII, Philippines

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Social Support, Adolescent Resilience, COVID-19 Pandemic, Regression, Philippines

Received : 13, May

Revised : 17, June

Accepted: 25, July

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the role of social support in promoting the resilience of 400 adolescents in Region XII, Philippines, during the COVID-19 pandemic. In analyzing the data, mean, standard deviation, Pearson product-moment correlation, and regression analysis were used. Results revealed that the level of social support indicated by emotional support and instrumental support is very high. The level of adolescent resilience is also very high, as indicated by novelty seeking, emotional regulation, and positive future orientation. Social support helped promote the resilience of adolescents during the COVID-19 pandemic. Family, friends, and other significant individuals' support is essential for alleviating distress and can be a vital component for fortifying interpersonal connections and relationships in order to build individuals' capacity to tolerate suffering and build resilience to cope with challenges and strains during the pandemic—a strong foundation for well-being throughout life.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected adolescents' development and wellbeing including their physical, social, economic, educational, health-related, and general well-being (Bartlett & Vivrette, 2020; Cluver et al., 2020; Verguet & Jamison, 2017). Further, amidst the covid-19 pandemic, a lot of young people and adolescents are at risk (International Children's Emergency Fund, 2020).

The Asian Population and Development Association (2021) reported that Filipino adolescents are more threatened by teenage pregnancy, violence, disrupted education and learning, being excluded, and being mentally stressed during the pandemic. According to Malaluan, Razal, Velasco, and Tantengco (2022), Filipino adolescents may also fall prey to neglect and exploitation. Fortunately, resilience can be essential help for these adolescents overcome the threats of the pandemic (Center on Developing Child, 2020). According to studies, adolescents who are resilient are less prone to the threats of pressure and distress and can still accomplish their goals despite the struggles they faced and the negative things they endure (Fischer et al., 2019; Ollmann et al., 2021; Hjemdal et al., 2011; Hendriani, 2018).

Social support can influence resilience according to studies. The level of social support received by adolescents is essential for the promotion of resiliency since it provides a protective factor by being able to feel loved and secure (Camara & Padilla, 2017; Li, Luo, Mu, et al., 2020; Ozbay, Johnson, Dimoulas, Morgan, Charney, & Southwick, 2007). Consequently, the level of social support given to adolescents can help decrease stress, and mental drain and strengthening these are important (Ioannou, Kassianos, & Symeou, 2019; Khatiwada, Muzembo, Wada, & Ikeda, 2021).

In relation to the above context that this research was conducted. According to Rome, Dinardo, and Issac (2020), more research on the problems of adolescents and the factors that enhance their resilience must be conducted. Further, limited studies on adolescents' resilience amidst the Covid-19 pandemic in Region XII was conducted. The study bridged these gaps as it further aims to add to the pool of new knowledge and promote the aim of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (2003), to safeguard respect for the rights of adolescents to health and development, considering both individual and environmental considerations to help them overcome vulnerability and help them grow and live happily in a free and harmonious society.

Specifically, the study sought to determine the role of social support to the resilience of adolescents during a pandemic. It assessed the level of social support as indicated by emotional and instrumental support. It determined the level of resilience as indicated by novelty seeking, emotional regulation, and positive future orientation. It also defined the relationship between social support and personal resilience and the significant influence of social support in the resilience of adolescents during a pandemic.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Social Support Theory

The social support theory recognized how social support and welfare are associated (Armstrong, Bernie-Lefcovitch & Ungar, 2005). According to Ahmed et al. (2010), it can support quality life if given adequately and can incur negative effects when neglected influencing the adaptive/ maladaptive motivations of individuals which can influence resilience in the future.

H1: There is no significant relationship between social support and the resilience of adolescents during a pandemic in Region XII, Philippines.

H2: Social support has no significant influence on the resilience of adolescents during a pandemic in Region XII, Philippines.

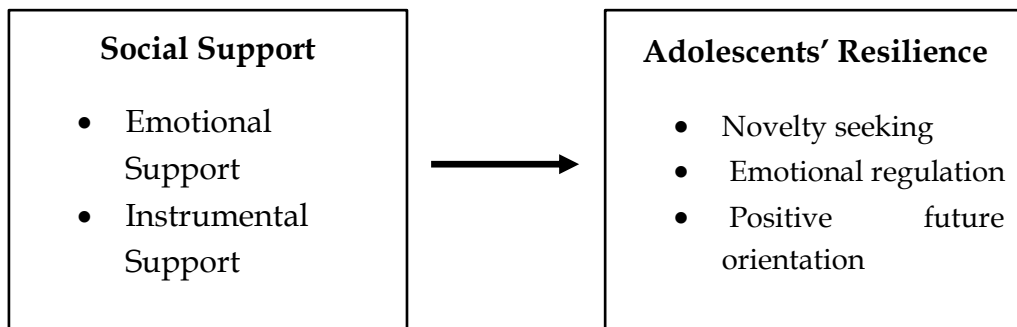


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The quantitative non-experimental design using descriptive and correlational techniques were used in this study. This research was conducted among 400 adolescents, who were selected using random sampling, in Region 12, Philippines, specifically in the City of Tacurong in the Province of Sultan Kudarat, Koronadal City in the province of South Cotabato, General Santos City, and Kidapawan City in the Province of North Cotabato. Data accumulated through the questionnaires were subjected to tallying and treatment with the use of the following tools on statistics:

The mean was utilized to identify the degree of social support and resilience of adolescents. The Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the correlations of the variables. And the regression analysis was used to identify the influence of social support to adolescent resilience.

The variables in the study were adapted from Schwarzer & Schulz (2013) for the social support and Oshio et al. (2003) for the adolescent resilience. The questions/ statements as measures were made and improved by the researcher getting ideas from the mentioned authors. The questionnaire was then validated and its Cronbach Alpha were taken into account. The running alpha coefficient for social support is .920 and for personal resilience is .807.

Table 1. Range of Mean

Range of Means	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	Very High	The measures on social support and adolescent resilience are always observed/ manifested.
3.40 - 4.19	High	The measures on social support and adolescent resilience are often observed/ manifested.
2.60 - 3.39	Moderate	The measures of social support and adolescent resilience are sometimes observed/ manifested.
1.80 - 2.59	Low	The measures of social support and adolescent resilience rarely observed/ manifested.
1.00 - 1.79	Very Low	The measures on social support and adolescent resilience are never observed/ manifested.

RESULTS

Table 2. Level of Social Support of Adolescents in terms of Emotional Support

Item	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
There are some people who truly like me.	0.67	4.31	Very High
I am not worried because there is someone who helps me.	0.74	4.32	Very High
There are people who cheer me up whenever I am sad.	0.68	4.39	Very High
There is always someone there for me when I need comfort.	0.68	4.39	Very High
There is someone I can share my sentiments when I'm lonely, nervous, anxious, or angry.	0.72	4.18	High
Section Mean	0.51	4.32	Very High

The table above shows that the highest mean rating of 4.39 was received by item 3 and 4, both with a standard deviation of 0.68, described as "Very High". The lowest mean rating of 4.18 was received by item 5 with a standard deviation of 0.72, described as "High". The section mean is 4.32 with a standard deviation of 0.52, described as "Very High".

Table 3. Level of Social Support of Adolescents in terms of Instrumental Support

Item	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
I can rely on people I know.	0.80	4.24	Very High
There is someone I can turn to for advice about handling problems with my family.	0.86	4.21	Very High
People are willing to help whenever I need it.	0.86	4.16	High
When things got uncontrolled, people are there to assist me.	0.81	4.29	Very High
There is someone I can turn to, when needed, to assist me in completing an unfinished work	0.89	4.12	High
Someone is ready to help with my financial difficulty	0.91	4.07	High
Someone trains me to improve my work	0.94	4.26	Very High
Section Mean	0.61	4.19	High

The table shows that item 4 got the highest mean rating of 4.29 with a standard deviation of 0.81, described as "Very High". The lowest mean rating was received by item 6 with 4.07 and a standard deviation of 0.91, described as "High". The section mean is 4.19 with a standard deviation of 0.61, described as "High".

Table 4. Level of Personal Resilience of Adolescents in terms of Novelty Seeking

Item	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
I seek new challenges for myself.	0.86	4.14	High
I love doing new things and I I'm curious.	0.75	4.22	Very High
I like to experiment new and intriguing things.	0.85	4.01	High
I like to find out more about things around me.	0.72	4.32	Very High
I think difficulty is part of life's valuable	0.71	4.44	Very High

experience.

I am less optimistic in my personal assessment of success, so I am not worried	1.04	3.81	High
I have clear objectives for the future	0.67	4.42	Very High
Section Mean	0.57	4.19	High

The table shows that item 5 got the highest mean rating of 4.44 with a standard deviation of 0.71, described as “Very High”. The lowest mean rating was received by item 6 with 3.81 and a standard deviation of 1.04, described as “High”. The section mean is 4.19 with a standard deviation of 0.57, described as “High”.

Table 5. Level of Personal Resilience of Adolescents in terms of Emotional Regulation

Item	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
I can still manage my emotions.	0.90	4.20	Very High
I make a conscious effort to stay calm in tough situations.	0.77	4.27	Very High
I have nurtured the value of perseverance in me.	0.79	4.24	Very High
I have endured every adversity that came into my life.	0.69	4.45	Very High
Section Mean	0.65	4.29	Very High

The table shows that all of the items got a description of “Very High”. Item 4 got the highest mean rating of 4.45 with a standard deviation of 0.79. The lowest mean rating was received by item 1 with 4.20 and a standard deviation of 0.90. The section mean is 4.29 with a standard deviation of 0.65, described as “Very High”.

Table 6. Level of Personal Resilience of Adolescents in terms of Positive Future Orientation

Item	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Despite difficulties I experienced, good things can still happen.	0.59	4.61	Very High
There is always a happy future that awaits me and everyone.	0.52	4.69	Very High
I still feel positive about life and my future.	0.56	4.66	Very High
I have put in mind on my dreams and future goals.	0.58	4.60	Very High
I never stop pursuing my goals in life.	0.51	4.74	Very High
Section Mean	0.44	4.66	Very High

The table shows that all of the items got a description of “Very High”. Item 5 got the highest mean rating of 4.74 with a standard deviation of 0.51. The lowest mean rating was received by item 4 with 4.60 and a standard deviation of 0.58. The section mean is 4.66 with a standard deviation of 0.44, described as “Very High”.

Table 7. Significance on the Relationship between Social Support and Resilience of Adolescents during a Pandemic

Social Support	Personal Resilience			Overall
	Novelty Seeking	Emotional Regulation	Positive Future Orientation	
Emotional Support	.248**	.206**	.287**	.302**
Instrumental Support	.436**	.390**	.337**	.490**
Overall	.408**	.357**	.366**	.471**
	.000	.000	.000	.000

*p<.05

The table above displays the results of the test of the relationship between social support and resilience of adolescents during a pandemic. The overall r-value is 0.471. The p-value is higher than 0.05, thus, the null hypothesis of no significant relationship is rejected.

Furthermore, when correlated to novelty seeking, *emotional support* and *instrumental support* as variables of *social support* got an overall r-value of 0.408 with $p < 0.05$, which is *significant*. When *social support* indicators are correlated

with *emotional regulation*, the r-value is 0.357 with $p < 0.05$, *significant*. Moreover, when the *social support* indicators are correlated with *positive future orientation*, the overall r-value is 0.366 with $p < 0.05$, which is *significant*.

Table 8. Significance on the Influence of Social Support on the Resilience of Adolescents during a Pandemic

Personal Resilience				
	B	β	t	Sig.
Constant	.402		2.429	.016
Social Support	.050	.054	1.399	.163
R	.779			
R ²	.607			
ΔR	.604			
F	204.108			
ρ	.000			

Presented in the table above is the result of regression analysis showing the significant influence of social support, self-efficacy on the resilience of adolescents. The result shows that social support is a significant predictor of 1 resilience, with an F-value of 204.108 and a p-value of less than 0.05. The analysis reveals that when *social support* is regressed with *personal resilience*, it generates a computed R² value or coefficient of determination value of 0.607, meaning 60.70 percent of the variance of *personal resilience* is attributable to *social support*. The F-value of 204.108 ($p < 0.01$) revealed that *social support* influenced *personal resilience*. The null hypothesis is rejected since the result is significant.

DISCUSSION

The high level of *social support* is the outcome of the evaluation of the adolescents regarding the variable's measurement, namely *emotional support* and *instrumental support*, which garnered very high and high ratings, respectively. The result specifies that adolescents' evaluation of social support with all indicator measurement constructs is "always observed."

The result supports the study of Camara and Padilla (2017) that stated that social support can help as a protective element by guaranteeing that individuals can feel treasured and belong to their social groups. Consequently, significant individuals who provide social support, like family and friends, play a vital part in decreasing the perils of stress, increasing individual satisfaction, and is essential in expanding social relationships to lessen the effects of distress (Khatiwada, Muzembo, Wada, Ikeda, 2021).

The high personal resilience rating is the outcome of the variable measurements' rating, namely *novelty seeking*, *emotional regulation*, and *positive future orientation*. It indicates that personal resilience during a pandemic always manifests as respondents assess it. The result supports the study of Höltege et al. (2021) that resilience is an essential element in delimiting between risk and protection factors used to promote personal and contextual ways in ensuring

that individuals can be able to succeed in life. The research of Beames et al. (2021) also stipulated that adolescents with high levels of resiliency are more able to withstand unexpected events, including the covid-19 pandemic that negatively affected their over-all well-being and routines.

The variable relationship test indicated a significant relationship between social support and resilience which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The same with the regression analysis that stressed out the influence of social support to the resilience of adolescents during a pandemic. According to the Social Support theory, providing support can be a way to enhance resilience and alleviate the effects of distress (Kort-Butler, 2017). Further, this supports the study of Ozbay, Johnson, Dimoulas, Morgan, Charney, and Southwick (2017) and of Li, Luo, Mu, et al. (2020) that social support is a vital element in attaining good health (mental and physical) as it further promotes resilience. Further, this validates research findings of Ioannou, Kassianos, and Symeou (2019) and Khatiwada, Muzembo, Wada, Ikeda (2021) that family, friends, and other significant influences' support can help eliminate distress. It can also fortify relational connections as it also build individuals' ability to endure travails in life. Consequently, when adolescents feel adequate positive social support is given constantly, they can be resilient and be able manage trials and strains in life and be able to be successful as they grow.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The level of adolescents' resilience together with its predictor, social support, is very high, indicating that these variables are observed and manifested by adolescents during the pandemic in Region XII, Philippines. There is a significant correlation between social support and adolescent resilience. When regressed, social support influenced the resilience of adolescent during a pandemic in Region XII, Philippines.

Consequently, positive and constant support should be given sufficiently to adolescents. This could be supported by love ones- family, friends, relatives, and the whole community. This can be a protective factor that can promote resilience and succeed despite adversities.

FURTHER STUDY

Further studies can be conducted to explore other predictors that influence the resilience of adolescents during a pandemic. Further, other indicators for both social support and adolescent resilience may be explored to give more meaning and add to new knowledge. This study may also be conducted in a different or bigger locale for more thorough investigation of the two variables and their relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher would like to express his sincere gratitude to Sultan Kudarat State University for the grant given which became influential to the success of this endeavor, especially to the University President, Dr. Samson L. Molaoz

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