

Group Differences in Functional Impairment, Social Support and Academic Achievement among Adolescents

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The aim of conducting the present study was to identify the effect of the social support and functional impairment on the academic achievement of adolescents. The sample ($N = 200$) was taken from both public ($n = 95$) and private schools ($n = 105$) including an equal number of boys and girls of grade 9th and 10th. The age range of the sample was from 14 to 17 years. Brief Impairment Scale (Bird et al., 2005) and Social Support Scale (Manzoor, 2009) were used to measure the functional impairment and social support, respectively, where as academic achievement was assessed with final academic results of the students. Results showed that social support had significant positive relationship with academic achievement; while functional impairment had significant negative association with academic achievement. Significant gender differences were found in relation to social support, functional impairment and academic achievement. Significant differences were also found in relation to parental education on academic achievement and paternal education on social support. Results showed that social support play a vital role as a mediator in explaining the relationship between functional impairment and academic achievement. Future implications of the study were also discussed.

Keywords: functional impairment, social support, academic achievement, and adolescents.

Functional impairment in both children and adolescents is currently a major issue all over the world because as opposed to physical disability this remains unidentified and obscured and this functional impairment may be cognitive, emotional or social (Brill, Levine, Lubin, Rabinowitz, & Weiser, 2009). Functional impairment is present in varying degrees in nearly all childhood mental disorders (Goldstein & Naglier, 2009). If left unidentified, it may have a very negative impact on such children or adolescents, in areas such as social adjustment, personal growth, and academic performance (Goodman, 1997).

Social support is briefly defined as an input that one person directly receives from another person and this input helps the receiving person in achieving their personal goals (Light, 2012). Social support is an aspect worth reviewing since it is described as both a buffer against life stressors as well as an agent in promoting health and wellness (Benard, 1998). Social support is also taken as reference to the invaluable feeling of being loved, cared for and supported by others who hold a prominent place in a person's life (Gurung, 2006). Social support is believed to be one of the best motivators for students (Dong, Hunsberger, Pancer, Pratt, & Tao, 2000). Psychological problems such as stress can be avoided in students with the help of social support (Dollete, Matthews, Phillips, & Steese, 2004).

Social support plays an important role in the life of a student and its absence could cause many of psychological problems such as depression, anxiety, etc (Santrock, 2006). A large amount of empirical evidence has established a strong relationship between social support and psychological problems amongst students studies

(Friedlander, 2007; Hatfield, Hirsch, & Lyness, 2012). It also plays a vital role in the life of any student and in case it is absent it may lead to psychological problems such as depression, loneliness and anxiety, (Eskin, 2003). Similarly social support has been

observed as having an indirect relationship with various symptoms that are related to psychological problems, it is, however believed and found to have a direct and positive relationship with physical and mental health (Smith, 2002). It helps a person comes to terms with their lives depending upon the characteristics and the quality of the social support that they receive (Uchino, 2004). People who do not receive this kind of support have greater chances of facing psychological problems and may seek refuge in the company of other people (Gurung, 2006). People such as friends, family and relatives play significant role in the life of a person suffering from such mental and psychological problems (Friedlander, 2007). There are varying models that differentiate the various types of social support but the most popular amongst them share three common factors, emotional support, tangible aid, informational support and esteem support (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004).

Sources of support would include but not only limited to family, friends, partners, peers, community relationships and co-workers (Gurung, 2006). The said sources can be natural or more formal (Daalen, Sanders, & Willemson 2005). Support from a romantic partner is often associated with health benefits, especially for men (Hatfield et al., 2012). Early family social support has been found to be as very important in the ability of children to develop social competencies and supportive parental relationships have also had benefits for even college students (Shirey, 2004).

Gender differences in social support, led to the conclusion that women may be better providers of such

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social support as also they are more engaged in their social networks (Wellman & Wortley, 1989) and this is not one way, just as they are better at giving out social support they are also in need of more social support in stressful conditions (Vaux, 1985), and social support also found to be more beneficial for women. Gruenewald, Gurung, Klein, Lewis, and Taylor (2000) have come up with the reason for this difference and reasoned can the basis of biological differences between men and women and in the light of that how they respond to stress (Carolyn, Lieber, & Sandefur, 2001). The same study also suggested that compared to women, men are more anti-social, also they do not regard that much their coping would have on their surroundings and vice versa for women. This is also an answer as to why women are more susceptible to depression and anxiety based on their sensitive nature (Burda, Schill, & Vaux, 1984).

Another variable catered in the present study is functional impairment considered as the decrement to the above functions, which on the bodily level are often known as impairments, and at the person level they are known as activity limitations and lastly, on the social level they are known as the participation restriction (Kennedy & Ustun, 2009). These restrict the ability of a child to deal with experiences of childhood (Henderson, Rosenbum, & Skelton, 2008), and are described as a physical, intellectual and even as a development disability (Greist, Marks, Mundt, & Shear, 2002).

Functional impairment also refers to the deficient functioning of a person (Shahzad, 2002). Functional impairment when demonstrated by children is showed by a serious emotional disturbance which is characterized by a decreased ability to meet challenges at the day to day level over a long period of time and interactions at school and the community (DSM-IV; APA, 1994). This impairment in the school setting is defined by DSM-IV-TR (1994) as a child having significant problems relating to level of attention in class, participation in group activities and with maintaining relationships amongst their peers.

The symptoms of functional impairment generally include manifestations of some form of decrease in some ability that is visible to others, e.g., a certain functional impairment that hampers the movement of hands may come up as the inability to curl the hand into a fist or to grip objects which in the past would not have even occurred as a difficult task (Adler, Chang, Lapitsky, McLaughlin, & Rogers, 2006). It is also related to emotional issues, the development of phobias, anxiety disorders, and depression are some of the conditions that may be classified as impairments along with dementia or any other such form of mental illness (Kennedy & Ustun, 2009).

Global learning behavior dysfunction is a reference to a child's impairments in academic achievement discipline (Kennedy & Ustun, 2009). It is for both class activities and extra-curricular activities (sports) and this is characterized by lack of confidence, shyness, lack of communication skills, assertiveness, culture, punctuality, and social relationships with both family and peers (DSM-IV, 1994). Youngsters that have mental disorders perform poorly at

school, they tend to score low on standardized achievement tests, and they receive lower grading from their teachers and obtain lower grades at schools (Bukhari, 2010).

Academic achievement is considered as the performance excellence in all academic disciplines as well as extra-curricular activities (sports, communication skills, arts, etc.) that is attained by the student (Locke, 1966). Good performance in these disciplines is achieved when adolescent adjusts well to these situations (Ashraf, 2004). Moreover, a final score acquired by the students in their final examination is considered as their academic achievement (Bukhari, 2010). Similarly, marks obtained by an individual from their teachers indicate their levels of academic achievement and also the skill in the subject that the student is studying (Shafiq, 2002). Achievement in the field of academics is generally considered in the tasks related to study for any specific period of time that may be achieved by any student (Darling, Donrnbusch, Lamborn, & Steinberg, 1992). These very educational tasks and their related goals are not the same for every student. It would be diverse for the different students; and these goals are measured by different appraisals or patterns e.g., monthly or final exams, course assignments (Ashraf, 2004). If any student achieves these goals in a satisfactory manner then the term, academic achievement is used.

Obstacles to Academic Achievement

Academic performance is affected by a number of factors including admission points, social economic status and school background (Crosnoe, Glen, & Johnson, 2004). Many times these obstacles find their basis on environment, e.g., decreased social support, negative attitudes towards the society that may find their basis on gender, religion, culture (Krashen, 2005). Women are one example in this regard. It is a common assumption that women are capable of performing some typical tasks like teaching, nursing and this very thinking leads to the prejudice against women that they may have no ability to perform managerial level tasks and this thinking is a hindrance for women who want to get higher level jobs (Adler et al., 2006). In most cases, the academically poor performers are those students who at a certain point in their lives have lacked social acceptance (Qureshi, 2007). Theory of Educational Productivity (Walberg, 1981) suggested three factors based on affective, cognitive, and behavioural skills of adolescents which play an important role in optimizing the learning and quality of academic performance. Firstly, aptitude towards learning which further includes ability, development, and motivation. Secondly, instruction delivered by the teacher reflected in amount and quality. Thirdly, environment surrounding the student and comprised of home, classroom, peers, and television (Roberts, 2007).

Different demographic factors are found to play an influential role in the academic achievement of the adolescents. Generally these factors include age, gender, parental education, socioeconomic status, language, geographical origin, ethnicity, marital status, parental profession, and religious affiliations (Bandura, 2000). Krashen (2005) further concluded that students of highly

educated parents showed better academic scores as compared to those whose parents are not educated. Empirical evidence showed that educated parents can better communicate with their children regarding the school work, curricular activities, better assist their children in their work, and facilitate in school activities (Fantuzzo & Tighe, 2000).

The environment and the personal characteristics of learners play an important role in their academic success. The school personnel, members of the families and communities provide help and support to students for the quality of their academic performance (Mastekaasa, 2006). This social assistance has a crucial role for the accomplishment of performance goals of students at school (Goddard, 2003). On the other hand sometimes achievement is not possible by our personal or subjective factors, these very subjective factors may sometimes be in from of pressure from a person whose opinion is of worth, and it may even be uncontrollable or the student may not have ability to cope with them (Carter, Powell, Steelman, & Werum, 2002). Negative attitudes towards the students' self or any other may lead to poor academic performance (Barreto & Ellemers, 2000). A person may even feel guilty if they know that they have the ability to perform better than they did previously (injury or a sudden illness) could be a set back (Krashen, 2005).

Gender differences in social support, led to the conclusion that women may be better providers of such social support as they are more engaged in their social networks (Haqqani, Huma, Khalid, Qadir, & Medhin, 2013; Wellman & Wortley, 1989). Higher social-economic backgrounds like, levels of parental education, and higher family income had significant positive correlation with psychological well-being and academic performance of adolescents (Berhanu, Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq, 2011; Kausar & Naz, 2007; Satapathy, 2008). Students of private schools showed better academic performance as compared to public schools (Amjad, 2012). Private schools access to resources such as computers, which have been shown to enhance academic achievement among the students (Eamon, 2005).

There are various types of social support that positively associate with the psychological wellbeing and academic achievement of adolescents (Aijaz, Ali, Gulzar, & Hussain, 2010). Emotional support is generally defined as giving the person in focus a feeling that they are cared for by providing feelings of empathy, love, care, and trust (Aftab, Ahmed, & Rizwan, 2011; House, 1981). Such perceptions have been found to play a critical role in the development and maintenance of family, intimate relationships, and work interaction (Burlison, 2003). Informational support is the provision of information or good advice. The purpose of this sort of support is to give the focal individual a means to help themselves (Brock & Lawrence, 2009). Tangible support is may be easiest type of support to recognize as it involves the provision of the basic elements such as providing money, goods, or services to an individual (John, 2004). Network support is sometimes also referred to as appraisal support and it helps to improve health level, lowered blood pressure, and

lower blood sugar levels which indirectly influences the adoptive coping responses (Bano & Sitwat 2010; Sullivan, 2003).

Functional Impairment, Social Support, and Academic Achievement

There are different studies that strive to form the relationship among functional impairment, social support, and academic achievement. For instance, a high level of social support leads to higher level of achievement by students (Bernard, Julka, & Spielmans, 2004; Yasin, 2011). Perceived social support also enhances the probability of academic achievement by reducing the stress levels being faced by a student (Mackinnon, 2010). Similarly, social support is positively correlated with academic achievement in adolescents and emerging adults and social support leads to increased academic achievement (Domagała, 2006).

There are numerous negative relationships between social support and psychological problems which suggested that higher the level of social support, lower the number of problems faced by students (Gurung, 2006). Different studies also indicated that social support is one of the most important elements that has a positive impact on children and adolescents and social support is an aspect that could be reviewed since it is described as both a buffer against life stressors as well as an agent promoting health and wellness (Dollete et al., 2004). Various studies have concluded social support as an essential element of progress and enhancement in individual's lives (Brough, Cooper, Kalliath, O'Driscoll, & Poelmans, 2009). Therefore, many psychological problems (depression, loneliness, and anxiety) has been found to be related with scarcity in social support (Eskin, 2003). Elliot and Gramling (1990) also asserted that psychological distress reflected by college students is greatly reduced by the provision of social support. Moreover, social support greatly helps the students in managing and diminishing their psychological problems.

Social support that is received from family and friends influence the academic achievement (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Social support that is received from teachers, parents and even peers goes a long way to motivate students in their studies (Considine & Zappala, 2002). When an adolescent has a positive interaction with a peer it helps in reducing the stress and facilitates in academic achievement (Daalen et al., 2005). Similarly social support rendered by friends and family assist the students in their performance at school because it has an encouraging effect (Tardy, 1985). Students who have received a higher level of social support tend to exhibit better grades as compared to their counterparts (Bowen, Richman & Rosenfeld, 2000). Likewise, social support has been observed as an important buffer between functional impairment and depressive symptoms (Hatfield et al., 2012). Functional impairment affects cognitive and emotional development of adolescents negatively. It also adversely affects their academic performance and quality of life as well as the lives of those around them like their families (Henderson et al., 2008).

The primary rationale of the present study was to determine the effects of functional impairment and in what manner does it hamper academic achievement as well as to determine the role of the social support that if made available to adolescents, how it would be assistive in their academic performance. In context of Pakistan, social support can be used as a powerful tool to boost towards academic excellence primarily because of the strong family structure that existed in most Pakistani families. Therefore, social support can have significant impacts on the academic achievement as well as health of both children and adolescents. Similarly, family and friends as two primary sources of social support, play an important role in elevating the psychological well-being of the individual. In addition to that, provision of acceptance and emotional warmth of family and friends' support is associated with better academic grades in school and college, minimal issues of misconduct, psychological distress, and delinquency among students thereby paving the way for enhanced academic achievement adolescents.

Functional impairment in both children and adolescents is currently a huge issue all over the world because as opposed to any physical disability, this remains hidden and the case worsens when there is little awareness about it. It is equally crucial to give awareness to both parents and teachers about this and its effects and how it may lead to poor academic performance. Similarly, in Pakistani society the relationship between social support and functional impairment also needs to be identified because social support can be used to its advantage because of our strong family networks. Thus the functional impairments may relate to academic achievement, social competence, and familial relations experienced by adolescents, these difficulties adversely affect the individuals themselves, their families, and society at large.

The broader objectives of the present study were to explore the relationship among social support, functional impairment and academic achievement among adolescents. It was also intended to investigate the role of various demographic factors (e.g. gender, parental education) in relationship to social support, functional impairment and academic achievement among adolescents.

Hypotheses

On the basis of literature review, the following hypotheses were phrased:

1. Social support will be negatively related with functional impairment and positively associated with academic achievement.
2. Functional impairment will be negatively related with academic achievement.
3. Social support will be a strong predictor of functional impairment.
4. Different types of social support will mediate the relationship between functional impairment and academic achievement.
5. Girls will express more functional impairment and less social support as well as academic achievement as compare to boys.
6. Students of private schools will show better academic achievement as compare to students of public schools.
7. Adolescents with high parental education will experience more social support, better academic performance and less functional impairment as compared to those with low parental education.

Sample

In present study, purposive sample comprised of adolescents ($N = 200$), with equal ratio of boys ($n = 100$) and girls ($n = 100$). Inclusion criteria of mothers were that they were all house wives with minimums educational level of metric. The age range of the respondents was from 14 to 17 years ($M = 15.50$, $SD = 2.36$). Respondents were students of grade 9 ($n = 100$) and 10 ($n = 100$) of both private ($n = 95$) and public schools ($n = 105$). Parental education was also being considered for both parents with fathers' education ranging from metric to graduation while mothers' education ranged from metric to intermediate.

Instruments

Social Support Scale (SSS; Malik, 2002) consisted of 51 items that comprised of subscales. Informational support (No. of items = 6; $\alpha = .81$); Social Network Subscale (No. of items = 13; $\alpha = .71$); Emotional subscale (No. of items = 16; $\alpha = .74$); Esteem Subscale (No. of items = 11; $\alpha = .65$); and Tangible Subscale (No. of items = 5; $\alpha = .74$). It's a 4-point Likert scale ranging from *always* (1) to *never* (4), with possible score ranged from 51 to 204. Its reliability coefficient was .94 (Manzoor, 2009); whereas alpha of .94 was acquired for the total Social Support Scale and for subscales alpha ranged from .73 to .83 in the resent study.

Brief Impairment Scale (BIS; Bird et al., 2005) consisted of 24 items and included three subscales. Interpersonal Subscale (items = 8); School Subscale (items = 9); Self Subscale (items = 7). It was rated on 7-point Likert scale and its reliability was found to be .94, internal consistency = .81 to .88 and reliability on three subscale ranged from .70 to .81 (Bird et al. 2005). Response option ranged from *no problem* (1) to *don't know* (7). Three options refusal, not applicable, or don't know are not summed in the score. In the present study, alpha of .91 was acquired for the total Brief Impairment Scale and for subscales alpha ranged from .73 to .89.

Academic Achievement was measured by the final results of the students (Akram, 2004; Bukhari, 2010; Shafiq, 2002). In the present study annual marks obtained by adolescents of grade 9 in the last promotion exams of class 8th; whereas students' annual marks of the 9th class for grade 10 students were considered.

Procedure

To conduct the present study two instruments were used. For the administration of the Social Support Scale students of the private and public school were approached. After taking the permission from the school administration, students were approached in the class rooms. Students whose parents were agreed to give the information about their children were only included in the study. Social Support Scale was administered on the grade

9th and 10th students. Instructions were written on the questionnaire but brief verbal account was also provided. Brief Impairment Scale was filled by the mothers of these students of grade 9th and 10th by approaching them at homes. Brief account was given to the mothers about the confidentiality of data that were provided by the mothers, students and school principals. For measuring the academic achievement of these students the total scores in annual results were taken from the school administration with the permission of parents and school principals.

Results

To determine the group differences *t*-test and one way ANOVA were used. For predictive relationship Linear Regression was used. Mediation was used to identify the mediating role of social support in the relationship between functional impairment and academic achievement.

Table 1
Summary of Correlations for Scores on the Brief Impairment Scale, Social Support Scale and Academic Achievement (N = 200)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. AA		-.64**	-.55**	-.36**	-.64**	.79**	.78**	.75**	.71**	.66**	.54**
2. BIS(Total)			-.48**	-.32**	-.59**	-.83**	-.68**	-.81**	-.75**	-.85**	-.65**
3. IPS				-.64**	-.32**	-.74**	-.60**	-.72**	-.67**	-.75**	-.60**
4. SS					-.22**	-.89**	-.83**	-.88**	-.82**	-.78**	-.62**
5. Sc-S						-.83**	-.69**	-.81**	-.74**	-.85**	-.64**
6. SSS(Total)							.89**	.89**	.87**	.88**	.79**
7. SNS								.86**	.73**	.74**	.55**
8. EMS									.86**	.81**	.68**
9. ES										.73**	.71**
10. TS											.76**
11. IS											

Note: AA = Academic Achievement, BIS (Total) = Brief Impairment Scale, IPS = Interpersonal Subscale, SS = Self Subscale, Sc-S = School Subscale, SSS = Social Support Scale, SNS = Social Network Subscale, EMS = Emotional Subscale, ES = Esteem Subscale, TS = Tangible Subscale, IS = Informational Subscale.
p* < .05, *p* < .01.

Table 1 indicates the significant negative relationship between the interpersonal, self and school subscales of Brief Impairment Scale with Social Network, Emotional, Esteem, tangible and Informational subscales of Social Support Scale. Result shows the significant positive relationship between academic achievement with Social Network, Emotional, Esteem, Tangible and Informational subscales. Conversely, significant negative relationship existed between the academic achievement with interpersonal, self and school subscales of Brief Impairment Scale.

Table 2
Linear Regression Analysis to Predict Effect of Social Support on Functional Impairment (N = 200)

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	P	R ²	ΔR^2
Constant	115.03	3.07		37.42	.00		
Social Support	-.45	.02	-.83	-20.95	.00	.68	.68

Regression analysis was carried out to show the effect of social support on functional impairment. Table 2 indicated significant prediction ($R^2 = .68, p < .01$). The finding showed that social support was significant predictor of the functional impairment among the sample as it explains 83% variance in the social support.

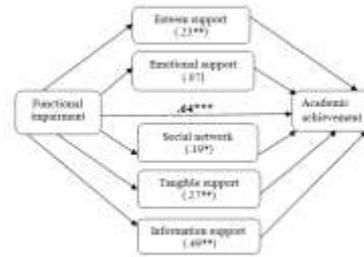


Figure 1. Indirect Effect of Functional Impairment on Academic Achievement Mediated by Dimensions of Social Support

Figure 1 shows direct as well as indirect effects of functional impairment on academic achievement of students. It has been found that value of standardized beta ($\beta = .64$) was significant for direct effect of functional impairment on academic achievement. However, emotional support shows the complete mediation between functional impairment and academic achievement as value of beta coefficient became nonsignificant ($\beta = .07$) when emotional support was added as a mediator in the path between functional impairment and academic achievement. On the contrary, esteem support ($\beta = .23$), social network support ($\beta = .19$), tangible support ($\beta = .27$) and informational support ($\beta = .49$) shows the reduced beta values but still significant thereby indicating partial mediation between the functional impairment and academic achievement.

Table 3
Gender Differences on Social Support, Academic Achievement and Functional Impairment (N = 200)

Variables	Boys (n = 100)		Girls (n = 100)		t(198)	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
SS	144.10	24.29	133.74	25.00	5.83	.00	17.56	3.13	.42
AA	68.89	10.39	63.57	13.08	3.98	.04	6.81	1.02	.35
FI	49.28	10.25	54.24	13.38	4.46	.01	1.98	8.93	.41

Note: SS = Social Support, AA = Academic Achievement, FI = Functional Impairment

Table 3 shows significant differences between boys and girls in relation to social support, academic achievement and functional impairment. Boys exhibited more perceived social support, high academic achievement and less functional impairment as compared to girls.

Table 4
School System Differences on Academic Achievement (N =200)

Variables	Private (n = 95)		Public (n = 105)		t	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Academic Achievement	71.55	11.24	67.31	12.14	2.54	.01	.96	7.51	.40

Table 4 indicates that private schools have a more significant positive effect on the academic achievement of the adolescents as compare to public schools.

Table 5
Differences on Maternal Education across Social Support, Academic Achievement and Functional Impairment (N = 200)

Variables	Education				n(198)	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	Metric (n = 151)		Intermediate (n = 49)				LL	UL	
SS	138.56	26.08	140.02	27.1	33	.73	-9.99	7.08	.05
AA	65.16	13.56	78.50	9.23	5.85	.00	-7.95	-1.24	.54
FI	54.49	12.01	49.51	12.00	2.25	.02	-1.68	7.64	.38

Note: SS = Social support, AA = Academic achievement, FI = Functional impairment.

Table 5 indicates the significant differences across maternal education on academic achievement and functional impairment. Results showed that adolescents of better educated mothers exhibited better academic achievement and less functional impairment as compared to adolescents of mothers with low levels of education. However, no significant difference was observed in relation to social support.

Table 6
One Way ANOVA on Paternal Education on Social Support, Functional Impairment and Academic Achievement (N = 200).

	Metric (n = 72)		Intermediate (n = 54)		Graduation (n = 74)		F	p
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
Social support	132.81	26.14	142.68	24.69	148.12	26.78	3.10	.04
Functional impairment	52.68	12.68	49.27	14.5	52.67	15.7	1.09	.33
Academic achievement	62.15	11.78	69.01	9.86	72.63	12.58	5.70	.00

Table 6 shows that paternal educational level had significant differences on social support and academic achievement of the adolescents, whereas non significant differences of paternal education were found in relation to functional impairment. Result showed that adolescents of high paternal education exhibited more perceived social support and better academic performance

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to explore the relationship between the functional impairment, social support and academic achievement and to identify the affect of these variables on adolescents in Pakistani culture. Overall results of the present research indicated that there is a significant relationship between the social support, functional impairment and academic achievement.

First hypothesis posited that social support would be negatively related with functional impairment and positively associated with academic achievement. Results of the study support the hypothesis which indicated that social support have the positive impact on the academic achievement of the adolescents social support helps to improve the academic achievement on the other hand, social support negatively relate with the functional impairment among adolescents (see Table 1). Earlier evidence has shown that higher social support helps to reduce the chances of occurring functional impairment in the adolescents. Different studies established the

relationship between these variable. Bernard et al., (2004) in their research support this finding; and concluded that higher the social support leads to higher the academic achievement of the students. Burdusa and Jacobson (2012) indicated social support being significantly positively relate to the academic performance. Social support associated with higher level of depression, anxiety, attention problems, thought problems, social problems, somatic complaints, lower self esteem and other psychological problems (Brough et al., 2009; Friedlander, 2007).

Second hypothesis of the present study underline that functional impairment would be negatively related with academic achievement. Findings indicated the negative relationship between functional impairment and academic achievement; likewise prior empirical research also concluded that functional impairment hampers the academic achievement in adolescents. This result is supported by the several other studies. For example Henderson, Rosenbum, and Skelton (2008) concluded that functional impairment has a negative effect on children development, academic performance and quality of life. Functional impairment in school setting leads the significant problems at school with paying attention in class, with participation in group activities that prevent children's from better performance in school (Bukhari, 2010).

In the third hypothesis it was stated that social support would be a strong predictor of functional impairment. Findings indicated that lack of social support predicts functional impairment; likewise several earlier studies concluded the same result e.g., Dale, Evanoff, Franzblau, Gardner, and VanDillen (2008) reported that social support is an independent predictor of functional impairment. Social support is the important component of the Pakistani culture, low social support leads the functional impairment in adolescents. Eaton, Fiksenbaum, Greenglass, and Marques, (2005) identified that predictors of functional disability were age, gender, and satisfaction with social support.

Fourth hypothesis posited that different type of social support will mediate the relationship between functional impairment and academic achievement. Result shows the partial mediation of four type of social support between the functional impairment and academic achievement but emotional support completely mediates them. This finding is supported by Katon, McCauley, Rockhill, and Stoep (2008) reported that social support in different forms (e.g. informational, esteem, tangible) will mediated the association between functional impairment and lower grades for adolescents. Bernheimer & Weismer (2007) indicates that social support in any form will enhance the ability of a student to achieve the academic task efficiently. Rose & Teoh (2001) reported that different type of social support (e.g. emotional, social network) will improve the academic achievement by promoting the psychological wellbeing in the adolescents.

Fifth hypothesis sought to find out the girls will express more functional impairment and less social support as well as academic achievement as compare to

boys. Results of the present study support the hypothesis that indicates the significant difference between boy and girls. Mackinnon (2010) converted that correlation between the social support and high school grades was higher at the age of 15 for boys as compare to girls. That supports the result of the present study that indicated social support from different resources has more positive effect on the academic achievement of the boys then for girls. Result of the present study indicates the less functional impairment in boys then for girls. Garland, Hough, Lansing, and MacCabe (2002) reported that girls have significantly higher rates of psychopathology or functional impairment as compare to boys.

Sixth hypothesis underline that students of private school will show better academic achievement as compare to students of public school. Result of the present study shows the significant positive effect of the private school (see Table 5). This result is supported by the several studies. Private schools lead to better academic performance (Crosnoe et al., 2004). Eamon (2005) reported that private schools access to resources such as computers, which have been shown to enhance academic achievement.

Last hypotheses posited that adolescents with high parental education will experience more social support, better academic performance and less functional impairment as compared to those with low parental education. Findings of the present study showed significant relationship between maternal education on functional impairment and academic achievement among adolescents (see Table 6); whereas paternal education has a significant association with social support and academic achievement among adolescents (see Table 7). This shows that functional impairment is more influenced by mother's education Farah, Noble, and Norman (2005) reported that maternal SES that includes the parent's occupation and education affect the functional impairment in children. Bandura (2000) found the direct effects of parental education, and argued that parental educational level is an important predictor of children's education it enhance the children performance at school and they are also a good source of social support for their children. Results of the present study shows that mothers' education has no significant affect on the social support for adolescents but fathers' education has significant affect on the social support for the adolescents. One possible reason of this result is that present research sample includes the 200 mothers who were house wives and would not be able to provide recognizable tangible support because of lack of personal economic resources but fathers with higher education would provide more tangible support because of better economic resources as compare to other fathers with low level education.

Conclusion

In Pakistan familial bonds are considered very essential in an individual's life and are the main sources of social support for them, especially in the functional impairment and academic achievement social support can be an essential tool that helps to reduce the chances of occurrence of functional impairment and buffers the

academic achievement. To conclude the findings of the present research it can be said that there exist a significant positive relationship between the social support and academic achievement and significant negative relation between the functional impairment and social support as well as between the functional impairment and academic achievement.

Limitations and Suggestions

The present study relying on mothers referral for the information of functional impairment in the adolescents rather than direct observation, mothers may have less information about the functioning of the adolescents in the school although in order to resolve this limitation teachers were added as key informants to provide the information of the functional impairment in their students so that to over looked aspects of the student's functional impairment by the parents could be compensated, yet the direct observations and in-depth interviews may be needed to unfold some more aspects.

In the present study, sole reliance on quantitative approach may limit the in-depth exploration of phenomena. Therefore, in future research, use of qualitative methods would make the study more comprehensive and acquire more in-depth information. Larger sample size should be taken to make the results more inferrable and generalizable. Nationwide data should be collected in order to draw more precise results and better inclusion of the participants. In future the relationship of other demographic variable like parents' occupation, school system can be explored with the functional impairment and academic achievement.

Implications

The current study is pretty insightful in understanding the role of social support in functional impairment and academic achievement. The study indicates that some demographic characteristic e.g. education of the parent may also play a vital role in enhancing the academic achievement. It is important to the parents and teachers to consider the role of functional impairment in the children's which face the self as well as the learning and adjustment problems in school and at home. The present study highlighted the pragmatic support in relation to positive impact of social support in the management of psychological problems prevailing among students. Moreover, the present findings also suggested that psychological problems of adolescents could be minimized by enhancing the provision of social support. Conclusively, having knowledge and understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of psychological problems would assist in designing and developing customized intervention programs by the educators, counsellors, and psychologists that may play pivotal role in the reduction of psychological problems among students.

The finding of the study would assist in elevating the academic performance of the students by designing indigenous strategies and mechanism. More specifically school counsellors would benefit from the inferences gained from the present study and help the students to face, manage, and overcome the psychological problems.

Hence, ultimate academic achievement of the students would be maximized by enhancing awareness and techniques for managing psychological problems among students. Psychologists must also render their services through comprehensive mental health programs by incorporating parenting skills, environmental support, and stringent student support policies. Teachers can also play the beneficial role by motivating the functional impaired children's for learning, by access to an environment which encourages accessing the materials and technology which aid functional impaired children. The present study also describe the important role of the parents that parenting skills can help the children to prevent the functional impairment their social support would be a beneficial resource to enhancing the academic achievement and decreasing the functional impairment in adolescents. The results suggest to preventing emotional and behavioral problems in adolescence it is of paramount importance to identify risk factors at the earliest possible stage and to provide training and support to the adolescents.

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Received: Feb, 24th, 2015

Revisions Received: April, 21st, 2015