



Family Relations on Academic Performance and Personality of Undergraduates in Cambodia

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Abstract

Family relations plays a significant role in contributing to the children's personality development and their academic performance. The different types of personality traits, along with the level of academic performance, lead to career success and prosperity in life. This paper aimed to examine the correlation between family relations and students' academic performance and personality. The research study primarily focused on 3,000 undergraduate students at a private university in Cambodia, with a sample size of 100 students from various faculties. Among the sample size, there were 32 students who were freshmen, 25 who were sophomores, 15 who were juniors, and 29 who were seniors. There were 31 male students, and 69 were female students. In addition, this study employed survey questionnaires as the main research instrument, with three main parts: family relations, academic performance, and personality. The data analysis used the inferential statistic (correlation coefficient) to analyze the primary data. The result of this study revealed that there was a statistically significant correlation between family relations and the academic performance and personality of the undergraduates at the university being studied.

Keyword: Family Relations, Personality, Academic Performance

Introduction

The family environment significantly influences successful academic performance. In both Asian and Western countries, academic success has been found to be predicted by a number of family characteristics, including family structure, socioeconomic level, parental school engagement, parental relationship quality, and family relations. The children's environment, particularly the family atmosphere, has a significant impact on how they develop their personalities (Zografova et al., 2019).

In addition, Nakao et al. (2000) state that the home environment has an influence on a student's personality attributes. Considine and Zappalà (2002) proved that the family who had taken good care of their children impacted the student's academic performance. The children who were born and live with a good family who spent time educating, motivating, inspiring, and encouraging them are going to perform well in their academic journey. According to the initiative of the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports (MoEYS) with the slogans of "Education for All" and "Education Starts from Home," it is noticeable that the home environment is an extremely important factor that might influence the children's academic performance and personality development (Kakkar, 2026; Mammadov et al., 2018).

In Cambodia, most students stay with their families from when they are born until they finish their studies, or even after they get married. According to UNICEF (2018), over 75% of children in 2014 lived with both parents, making up 89% of all children living with at least one parent. According to the researcher's perspective, knowledge, and experiences, this study may be regarded as an initial investigation into the family relation factors on a student's personality and academic performance in Cambodia. In addition, using all the results of the research study, parents all over the country can establish and sustain healthy parent-child relations in the family to enhance undergraduates' personality in a positive direction and accomplish a higher level of academic performance henceforward.

Research Objective

The purpose of this quantitative correlational study was to examine the correlation of family relations on the academic performance and personality of undergraduates.

Research Questions

1. Is there any significant correlation between family relations and student's academic performance?
2. Is there any significant correlation between family relations and student's personality?

Research Hypotheses

Referring to the research question above, the hypotheses were addressed:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant correlation between family relations on student's academic performance.

H₀₂: There is no statistically significant correlation between family relations on student's personality.

Literature Review

1. Family Relations

Family is a system made up of parents, children, and siblings, and this system is affected by each other and impacts each other. Family is described as a social institution that begins before the birth of individuals and retains its effect until the end of their lives (Uzun et al., 2021). A child's personality characteristics and socialization are greatly influenced by communication and interactions within the family. The family relationship is the relationship between husband and wife, siblings, and children and their parents.

Both good and bad effects on the home environment can be attributed to husband and wife interactions. A close, fulfilling relationship between parents typically reflects a pleasant and supportive home environment. Noller and Victor (1991) claim that a family's atmosphere is determined by how satisfied the parents are with their marriage. Children are traumatized by parental domestic violence, and the long-term effects may be harmful to the family structure and the children's growth. According to Emery and Leary (1984), family conflict is associated with behavioral issues in kids and teenagers.

One of the relationships that lasts the longest and has the capacity to affect all facets of a person's life is the sibling bond (Fortuna et al., 2011). During adolescence, sibling relationships have traits that differentiate them apart from friendships and relationships with parents (Kramer &

Conger, 2011). Adolescents frequently have emotionally intense sibling relationships that are characterized by competition and conflict, as well as by nurturing and support (Campione-Barr & Smetana, 2010). Adolescent siblings can serve as rivals, emotional supports, and communication partners. Sibling relationships can take many different forms, including sharing, helping, arguing, teaching, and playing. Positive sibling relationships also support teenagers' sociability, health, autonomy, and sense of self-worth (McHale et al., 2012).

At the ages of 14 to 15 years old, children spend more time with their parents. When children reach puberty, it is the least time with their parents (Laurence, 2017). It is widely accepted that parents play a key role in a child's psychological and behavioral well-being. In addition, research has also shown that successful students have strong academic support from their involved parents (Epstein et al., 2018). Parents who have close relationships with their children have time to monitor, guide, and educate the children from home. According to the study, students' academic performance improves when parents participate in their children's educational activities, show their children affection, attend school events, are democratic and responsive, and maintain high educational expectations (Jaiswal & Choudhuri, 2017).

2. Personality

Kinicki and Fugaet (2017) claim that personality is the stable combination of a person's physical, behavioral, and mental traits that give them their unique identities. There are many traits that children get from their parents, and according to Gruseck and Hastings (2007), “socialization is the process through which a youngster creates his own personality.” Feher and Vernon (2021) described the “big five” personality traits, which have been connected to a range of psychological outcomes including job satisfaction, relationship satisfaction, leadership, internet addiction, educational outcomes, and health outcomes, highlighting the significance of this personality model in our comprehension of human nature.

Table 1

Costa and McCrae's Five-Factor

Personality	Hight Score	Low Score
Extraversion	affectionate	reserved
	joiner	loner
	talkative	quiet
	fun loving	sober
	active	passive
	passionate	unfeeling
Neuroticism	anxious	calm
	temperamental	even-tempered
	self-pitying	self-satisfied
	self-conscious	comfortable
	emotional	unemotional
	vulnerable	hardy
Openness	imaginative	down-to-earth
	creative	uncreative
	original	conventional
	prefers variety	prefers routine
	curious	uncurious
	liberal	conservative
Agreeableness	softhearted	ruthless
	trusting	suspicious
	generous	stingy
	acquiescent	antagonistic
	lenient	critical
	good-natured	irritable

Personality	Hight Score	Low Score
Conscientiousness	conscientious	negligent
	hardworking	lazy
	well-organized	disorganized
	punctual	late
	ambitious	aimless
	persevering	quitting

Source: (Feist, Feist, & Roberts, 2018)

3. Academic Performance Indicator

Academic performance is measured by using performance in tests, performance in coursework, and performance in examinations (Kyoshaba, 2009). The test is used to examine a student's knowledge of what the student knows or learns; it measures the level of the student's understanding in class. The test was conducted at the end of the lesson of the class. The performance in coursework is one of the key indicators to measure student performance in this study. Students who are studying at the undergraduate level must meet all the coursework requirements from the university. There are two examinations every semester for undergraduates. The university requires the students to take the mid-term tests and the final examinations; it is a centralization examination at the university.

Research Methodology

This research study employed a quantitative method because its aim is to investigate the relationship variables and test the hypothesis. Correlational designs provide an opportunity for the researcher to predict scores and explain the relationship among variables. In correlational research designs, investigators use the correlation statistical test to describe and measure the degree of association (or relationship) between two or more variables or sets of scores. In addition, the correlation design includes specific characteristics such as the displays of scores, associations between scores, and multiple variable analysis (Creswell, 2015).

The research questionnaires were used as an instrument to collect the data that were organized into three main parts, as described in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Research Instrument

Instrument	Description	Number of items	Adopted
A	Family Relations	24	Hudsen (1982)
B	Personality	41	Goldberg (1999)
C	Academic Performance	5	KYOSHABA (2009)

The questionnaire in Part A consisted of 24 items, and it was used to collect data related to family relations. The respondents' choices were demonstrated on a five-point scale, which explains that 5 is for all of the time, 4 is for “a good part of the time,” 3 is for “some of the time,” 2 is for “a little of the time,” and 1 is for “none of the time.”. It was originally developed by Hudsen (1982) with a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.82.

The questionnaire in Part B was about personality. There were five main types of personality, including Openness, Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Agreeableness. There was a total of 41 items in this part of the questionnaire with 7 items for Openness, 9 items for Extraversion, 10 items for Conscientiousness, 8 items for Emotional Stability, and 7 items for Agreeableness. The respondent choices were demonstrated on a five-point scale, which explained that 1 is for “very inaccurate,” 2 is for “moderately inaccurate,” 3 is for “neither accurate nor inaccurate,” 4 is for “moderately accurate,” and 5 is for “very accurate.”. This part of the research instrument was originally developed by Goldberg (1999) with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.792.

The last part of the research questionnaire was Part C, Academic Performance. It contained five main items, including lesson tests, course work, midterm and final examinations, core and compulsory courses, and grade point average (GPA). This part of the instrument was developed by Kyoshaba (2009), and it had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.778.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the surveyed questionnaire; the current study checked IOC and Cronbach’s alpha. The IOC (Item-Objective Congruence) is used in test preparation to assess content validity at the item development stage. In addition, a survey questionnaire was used to measure the reliability through a pilot study by calculating Cronbach’s alpha.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of 3,000 undergraduate students from a private higher education institution in Cambodia. The undergraduates selected for the sample were 100 students from the freshmen, sophomore, junior, and senior classes to participate in this research study via a non-probabilistic snowball sampling.

Data Analyses

The inferential statistic was used to analyze the primary data. Ganti (2020) explained the correlation coefficient is a statistical measure of the strength of the relationship between two continuous variables. The values of a Pearson correlation coefficient range between -1.0 and 1.0. A correlation of -1.0 shows a perfect negative correlation, while a correlation of 1.0 shows a perfect positive correlation. Cresswell (2015) stated that a p-value is the probability (p) that a result could have been produced by chance if the null hypothesis were true. Lind, Marchal, and Wathen (2017) provided that by comparing the p-value with the level of significance 0.05 (alpha), the null hypothesis can be rejected if the p-value is less than alpha ($p\text{-value} < \alpha$). However, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected if the $p\text{-value} \geq \alpha$.

Research Results

H_{01} : There is no significant correlation between family relations on student's academic performance.

Table 3

Correlation between Family Relations and Student's Academic Performance

Correlation Matrix		Family Relations	Student's Academic Performance
Family relations	Pearson Correlation	1	.378**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	n	100	100
Student's Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.378**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	100	100

**, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the correlation between the variables of family relations and student's academic performance. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was $r = 0.378$, $p = 0.000$, and $n = 100$. The p-value of the correlation is less than 0.01; thus, it was statistically significant.

H_{02} : There is no significant correlation between family relations on student's personality.

Table 4

Correlation between Family Relations and Student's Personality

Correlation Matrix		Family Relations	Student's Personality
Family Relations	Pearson Correlation	1	.362**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	n	100	100
Student's Personality	Pearson Correlation	.362**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	n	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 shows the correlation variables of family relations and student's personality. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was $r = 0.362$, $p = 0.000$, and $n = 100$. The p-value of the correlation is less than 0.01; thus, it was statistically significant.

Discussion and Conclusion

Table 5

The Thematic Discussion

Variable	Researcher	Results
Family relation	Li et al. (2022)	Relationships significantly and positively affected academic performance.

Variable	Researcher	Results
	Carmona et al. (2020)	Parent-child relations can directly predict a student's academic performance.
	Obeldobel and Kerns, (2021)	Parent-child relations directly affect academic performance.
	Zhang et al. (2018)	Parent-child relations were significantly correlated with personality traits.

Table 5 discusses the results compared with the findings from different authors. The finding indicates that family relations affect children's academic performance. A number of previous studies supported this finding that proved the correlation between family relations and academic performance. For instance, this result conforms to the finding by Obeldobel and Kerns (2021) that parent-child relations do not only directly affect academic performance but also an individual's positive emotions. Moreover, Carmona et al. (2020) have also found that parent-child relations can directly predict a student's academic performance. Another research study by Li et al. (2022) has also provided a similar result that the parent-child relations significantly and positively affected the academic performance of college students. The academic achievement of the undergraduate students in this study is definitely affected by their family relations. To exalt learning, a home environment must be positively created where comfort, understanding of each other, and deeper relationships among siblings and parents are formed.

The study has also found that family relations also affect students' personalities. Findings of the previous studies have found similar results to this study. For example, Zhang et al. (2018) found that there was a significant correlation between family relations and a student's personality traits. Yadav (2020) has found that different types of families have become significant influencing factors in children's personality traits. This indicates that family has a strong impact on the personality of children, which conforms to this study's findings. In conclusion, family relations are considered an important aspect since they are related to a student's academic performance and personality. A strong connection to family relations is the key to academic success and personality development.

Suggestions

1. Suggestions for Future Practices

Parents are the main individuals responsible for raising children from birth in every community; the family is acknowledged as a significant socialization force. Encouraging healthy parent-child interactions in family situations is the priority for building good family relations. In order to create great parent-child communication and a family environment, stakeholders could encourage parents to listen to their children's opinions, keep up with the times, improve their ability to accept new things, new dynamics, and new lifestyles, and avoid adherence to old ways and parental authority.

2. Suggestions for the Future Study

The research proved that there was a statistically significant between family relations on academic performance and personality of undergraduates. Future studies should be conducted in different contexts, using various educational theories, and employing other statistical tools. Future researchers could replicate their study in another setting or sample in order to verify the results of this present study. In addition, it is advised that larger samples be used in future research, and data should be gathered from a variety of universities to increase the study's generalizability in the Cambodian context.

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