International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies (IJIRAS)
Volume 6 Issue 9, September 2019

ISSN: 2394-4404

Social Support And Academic Burnout Among Secondary School Students In Kenya

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Abstract: ***Academic burnout is a serious problem that negatively impact on students' well being and academic performance. As defined by Schaufeli, Pinto, Salanova, and Bakker (2002), academic burnout is a feeling of mental and emotional exhaustion which is not only associated with learners negative attitude towards school work, but also with pessimistic feelings and lack of motivation to carry out classroom activities. Academic burnout may be as a result of enormous academic pressure exerted on learners to excel in academic endeavors. This pressure may be exerted on learners without considering their internal and external resources that may help them cope with such challenging situations within their learning environment. This study therefore investigated the extent to which social support predicted academic burnout among secondary school. The study used a correlational research design. The sample comprised 714 form four students (436 boys; 278 girls) with a mean age of 18.11 with a standard deviation of 1.49, ranging from 15 to 23 years. A demographic form, The Child and Adolescence Social Support Scale and Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey were used to collect data. Analysis of data was through multiple linear regressions. The results indicated that social support predicted academic burnout ($F(6,707) = 11.70$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .09$). A key implication of the results is that, peer counseling initiatives in schools and enhanced teacher-student relationship may ameliorate student social support.***

Keywords: Social Support, Academic Burnout, Secondary School Students

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic burnout which comes as a result of reduced mental and physical energy of learners is in fact a problem in institutions of learning. It can manifest itself in various ways; anxiety, insomnia, depression, frustration, fear and aggression (Rahmati, 2015; Salmela-Aro, & Upadyaya, 2014). In addition, academic burnout has been linked with students' lower commitment, low morale, absenteeism, high dropout rate, and reduced academic productivity (Akbay & Akbay, 2016; Salanova, Schaufeli, Martinez, & Breso, 2010; Winga et al., 2016).

Academic burnout has been defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002) as a feeling of mental and emotional exhaustion that is due to academic requirements and demands. This then make learners develop negative attitude and pessimistic feelings or lack motivation to carry out classroom activities. In addition, the authors maintained that, academic burnout is composed of three main dimensions; emotional exhaustion, cynicism and academic inefficacy. Emotional exhaustion arises from the academic pressure exerted upon the learners due to the nature of academic requirements and the need to excel. Cynicism develops when learners fail to excel in their academic work as expected by the significant others. As a result, they tend to become indifferent and develop a negative attitude towards academic work. Academic inefficacy which comes as the last phase of academic burnout refers to a feeling of inadequacy, a diminished feeling of competence leading to low academic productivity.

Globally, academic burnout has been acknowledged as a problem in institutions of learning. A study conducted in Spain among university students by García-Izquierdo, Ríos-Risquez, Carrillo- García, and Sabuco-Tebar (2015) revealed that, when learners experience academic burnout, they become

unproductive in their academic endeavor. In Turkey, Akbay and Akbay (2016) indicated that academic burnout has a negative direct effect on students' academic achievement. Many empirical studies in western and Asian countries have documented similar results (Aypay & Sever, 2015; Charkhabi, Abarghuei, & Hayati, 2013 Rahmati, 2015; Salmela-Aro, & Read, 2017). Studies conducted in Africa, that is, South Africa and Nigeria have revealed that academic burnout negatively affects students' wellbeing and academic performance (Kotzé & Kleynhans, 2014; Olwage & Mostert, 2014; Onuoha, 2015).

A study conducted in Kenya by Winga, Agak and Ayere (2016) revealed that secondary school students are predisposed to academic burnout due to constant pressure to excel in the academic arena. This pressure can be attributed to the value that has been placed on education. Generally, education has been accepted as fundamental to the construction of the knowledge economy and society (UNESCO, 2014) and it has been perceived as the springboard to success. Due to this, a great deal of emphasis has been put on formal education which has always been measured in terms of academic performance. In the Kenyan context, the grade a student obtains at the end of four years of schooling is used as a prerequisite to post secondary training at te same time used as a determinant of one's career and job placement. This makes learners to be under constant pressure to work hard to excel academically. Additionally, these learners face many challenges in their pursuit of good academic grades; the continuing demanding academic activities, inadequate learning resources, and the limited time within which academic activities are supposed to be accomplished. All these make learners suceptible to academic burnout (Winga, Agak, & Ayere, 2016). Conservation of resource theory by Hobfoll (1989) explains that despite the inner resources that learners possess, they also need some external resources to help them cope with such challenging situations within their learning environment. Among the external resources cited by Hobfoll is supportive social networks from parents, teachers, peers and significant others. Accordingly, the more resources learners have at their disposal, the more the demands are perceived as less taxing, and the less the chances of experiencing academic burnout.

The question that remained begging was: Are learners receiving enough social support to help them cope with such kind of pressures? To answer this question, this study sought to:(i) explore the extent to which social support predict academic burnout (ii) establish the main source of social support to learners and its relationship to academic burnout and (iii) establish the social support domain with the highest predictive value on the domains of academic burnout.

The key to understanding academic burnout itself lies in understanding some of the factors associated with it such as, social support that may help learners reduce or cope with stressful learning situations. Empirical studies have revealed that social support is one of the situational factors that predict academic burnout. It has also been found to be one of the resources that have a buffer effect on academic burnout. Social support can be described as any help students receive from their parents, teachers, classmates and close friends aimed at enhancing their wellbeing, (Demaray & Malecky, 2002). It involves interpersonal transactions namely; showing emotional concern, giving instrumental aid and providing necessary information to the learners. Alarcon, Edwards and Menke (2011), postulated that, students' ability to cope with stressful situations are increased by the availability of more sources of social support within their learning environment. According to Olwage and Mostert (2014), students who experience adequate social support from their teachers, parents and peers are able to withstand stressful academic demands. The researchers added that, social support provide learners with a sence of purpose, recognition of self-worth, ability to meet expectations and confidence that may assist them in overcoming challenges of school life.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

We identified many studies where social support played an important role in reducing the effects of academic burnout. Kim, Jee, Lee, An, and Lee (2017) carried out a meta-analytical study to comprehensively investigate how to relate specific social support, that is, teacher support, parent support and peer support with the three burnout domains. The sample consisted of university students, middle school students and high school students. Data were collected in twelve countries. The results revealed that all the various sources of social support were negatively and significantly related to student burnout. Additionally, it was revealed that teacher support had the strongest negative relationship to student burnout. Among the three domains of academic burnout, inefficacy was more strongly related to social support than emotional exhaustion and cynicism. Social support may be perceived differently by different students depending on the environment. Considering that social support is culture specific, it was deemed necessary to conduct the current study to widen the scope through which generalization can be made.

In another study, Karimi, Bashirpur, Khabbaz, and Hedayati, (2014) explored perfectionism, social support dimensions and academic burnout among university students. The study employed cluster sampling of eight faculties, 300 participants comprising of Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts. These participants were randomly selected and data was analyzed using independent t-statistics. The results revealed that social support was high among students with low academic burnout than those with high academic burnout. Although results in this study revealed a relationship between social support and academic burnout, the sample was based on university students and there was need to compare the results when secondary school students were used.

A study by Olwage and Mostert (2014) investigated whether social support predicted burnout and engagement among 782 undergraduate university students drawn from various faculties in North-West University in South Africa. Notably, more than half (64.3%) of the participants were females and the sample's ages ranged from 21 and 29 years. Using cross-sectional design and multiple regression analysis, the study revealed that social support network predicted all the variables of student burnout and engagement. The study focused on students in institution of higher learning. The need to carry out a related study was informed by limited local

literature that investigate the extent to which social support predict academic burnout among high school students. This was hoped to make the results more generalizable to a wider population across cultures.

A research by Dzulkifli and Yasin (2009) investigated the relationship between social support and psychological problems on students' academic achievement in Malaysia. Among the variables tested was the relationship between social support and psychological problems such as anxiety, stress and depression. Independent sample t-test was used to test for differences in the level of social support and psychological problems between low and high achieving students. Results from this research revealed that there were significant differences between social support and anxiety, stress and depression among university students. The study revealed that the higher the social support, the lower the psychological problems experienced by students. This research was done among older group of students who were at the university, the current study involved secondary school students.

In a study among 454 students in a Midwestern University, Alarcon et al. (2011) investigated whether social support predicted academic burnout and engagement. Through structural equation modeling, it was established that although social support was a valuable resource, it was not a significant predictor of burnout. The authors argued that learners with more social support may have received many suggestions on how to cope with stressful situations. The authors therefore concluded that social support "…act as an emotional catharsis and provides alternative path for coping with stressful situations and avoiding burnout" (Alarcon et al., 2011, p. 222). Through empirical research, the importance of social support in cushioning student against the negative effects of burnout cannot be under rated. However, not much has been done locally to draw conclusions; this created the motivation for the current study.

A study by Onuoha (2015) explored the relationship between perceived teacher support and school burnout. The design of the study was cross-sectional, ex post facto survey. A total of 300 undergraduate students participated in the study. The sample was drawn from public universities in southwest Nigeria. The study revealed that, perceived teacher support has a significant positive influence on school burnout, such that school burnout tends to increase with more favorable teacher support. However, these findings contradicted earlier findings on the relationship between social support and academic burnout. There is a possibility that these contradictions could be stemming from individualistic verses collectivistic cultural views of social support and academic achievement. This contradiction presented a compelling need for the current study to explore on social support in the Kenyan educational context.

III. METHODOLOGY

DESIGN

The study used a correlational research design; a design that is used to describe and measure the degree of association between two or more variables. The design was considered appropriate for this study because it permits the researcher to analyze the relationships among large number of variables in a single study.

MEASURES

This study used an adapted version of Child and Adolescence Social Support Scale (CASSS) by Malecki, Demaray, and Elliot (2000), and Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS) that was designed by Schaufeli, Martinez, Pinto & Bakker (2002). CASSS is a multi-dimensional scale instrument consisting of five 12-item subscales. The instrument can be administered to students from grades 3-12 (equivalent of class 3 to form 4 in the Kenyan context). CASSS measures students' perceptions of available support from major sources; close friends, classmates, and teachers. Such support includes: emotional, instrumental and informational. The instrument uses a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Never*) to 6 (*Always*). The frequency scores are calculated by summation of response values for each item on all the sub-scales. Higher scores on each subscale was an indication of high social support. The reliability of CASS was originally reported at 0.97. In the current study, the instrument was piloted and the internal consistency was found to be 0.79.

MBI-SS consists of fifteen (15) items measuring burnout on three subscales; Emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and academic efficacy. MBI-SS is scored at 7-point Likert scale and a higher score of 30 on emotional exhaustion, higher score of 24 on cynicism and lower score of 6 on academic efficacy was indicative of higher levels of burnout. The reliability of MBI-SS was reported at 0.86 by Schaufeli et al. (2002) across many samples. In the current study, internal consistency was found to be 0.78.

PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURE

The participants were drawn from 307 public secondary schools in Homa-Bay County, Kenya. Form four secondary school students (N = 714) whose mean age was 18.11 (*SD* = 1.49), ranging from 15 to 23 years participated in this study. The participants consisted of more males (436) than females (278). The form four students were preferred because we hypothesized that at this stage of their learning, they seem to be more focused as they prepare for national examinations. In addition, teachers are likely to be pushing them with lots of assignments, and remedial teaching to enable them complete the syllabus in readiness for national examinations. Based on this, form four students were more likely to experience the greatest amount of pressure to either maintain the school's performance records or do even better. Involving secondary schools in Kenya specifically, helped in addressing the gap in literature regarding the extent to which social support predict academic burnout.

Before collecting data, research authorization was sought from; Graduate School of Kenyatta University, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI), Director of Education, Homa-Bay County for data collection within the county. In addition, the school

principals gave permission to conduct the study in their schools. Written informed consent was sought from the participants before the actual data collection. Moreover, participants' confidentiality was assured. The Questionnaire was administered in a classroom setting in the presence of the researchers, the participants filled in the questionnaires which were then collected at the end of the session.

IV. RESULTS

A preliminary descriptive analysis of social support and academic burnout by school type, gender and age was done as presented in Table 1.

		Social support			Academic Burnout		
		M	*SD*	*Sk*	*M*	*SD*	*Sk*
School Type	GB	78.09	11.98	-.31	25.94	13.50	1.60
	BB	77.20	13.26	-.47	32.45	19.92	.94
	CD	75.87	14.23	-.35	35.77	19.59	.77
Sex	Boys	77.07	13.64	-.55	33.69	19.93	.86
	Girls	76.79	12.81	-.17	29.32	16.53	1.32
Age (Years)	15-17	77.84	12.22	-.21	29.87	17.48	1.22
	18-20	76.69	13.61	-.41	32.59	19.09	.98
	21-23	71.92	19.28	-.96	46.46	22.94	-.05

Note. N = 714; GB = Girls' Boarding schools; BB = Boys' Boarding schools; CD = Co-educational Day schools; M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; Sk = Skewness

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis for Social Support by School Type, Sex and Age

Social support scores from all school type, sex and age categories had negative coefficients of skewness, but positive coefficient of skewness in academic burnout. This implied that the participants highly rated themselves in the social support scale, but rated themselves relatively low in terms of academic burnout scale. The standard deviations reported, denoted variability in the scores with the lowest and the highest variability being noted among the participants from girls boarding and co-educational day schools respectively in both variables.

However, younger learners reported high social support (M = 77.79, SD = 12.22) as compared with older learners (M = 71.92, SD = 19.28). This was attributed to younger learners being more dependent on adult members for the maintenance of their wellbeing and success in school. Noteworthy, is the fact that academic burnout increased with age. The older students tended to experience more academic burnout compared to the younger students. Participants in the bracket of 15-20 years comparatively had the lowest mean as opposed to those in the age bracket of 21-23 years (M = 46.46, SD = 22.94), who also showed the highest variability in academic burnout scale. The possible explanation could be that, other than academic work, older students may develop broad extracurricular interests which may slowly sap up their energy leading to academic burnout. In as much as the participants were at the same level of schooling, male students seemed to enjoy more social support (M = 77.07, SD = 13.64) than the female students (M = 76.79, SD = 12.81). It was interesting to note that more boys than girls experienced high academic burnout.

We established the levels of social support and academic burnout by categorizing the participants' scores into two distinct levels; low and high. It was revealed that the majority (85.3%) of the participants were in the high category of social support. Conversely, a total of 81.2% of the participants were in the category of low level of academic burnout group (M = 23.93, SD = 8.96). Meanwhile, only 14.7% and were in the low category of social support and only 18.8% were in the category of high academic burnout group (M = 66.88, SD = 5.84) implying that majority of the participants enjoyed a lot of support within their learning environment which helped them withstand every day academic pressures.

Academic burnout is composed of three main dimensions; emotional exhaustion, cynicism and academic inefficacy. We conducted a bivariate correlation analysis to establish the interrelationships between the three dimensions and the overall academic burnout. Correlation results indicated that cynicism had a positive correlation with emotional exhaustion (r (712) =.73, p < .05) but a negative correlation with academic efficacy (r (712) = -.76, p < .05). This implied that a higher cynicism level was directly related to a higher emotional level and reduced academic efficacy. Similarly, a negative correlation was found between emotional exhaustion and academic efficacy (r (712) = -.64, p < .05). Overall academic burnout score was positively correlated with emotional exhaustion (r (712) = .87, p< .05), cynicism (r (712) = .92, p < .05) and negatively correlated with academic efficacy (r (712) = -.91, p < .05). The results from these inter-correlations may mean that when learners experience emotional exhaustion, they develop a detached negative attitude towards academic work. They are likely to experience high academic burnout, reduced academic efficiency and feelings of inability to accomplish academic tasks.

To establish the extent to which social support predicted academic burnout, we conducted a hierarchical regression analysis after ensuring that regression assumptions were satisfied and that, the data did not violate the assumption of homoscedasticity of variance and linearity. Data was then entered in four stages controlling for variables that could have given spurious results. The results are presented in Table 2.

Model	*R*	R^2	Adjusted R^2	*SEE*	*df*	*F*	Sig.
1	.17[a]	.04	.04	18.45	2,11	14.53	.00
2	.20[b]	.04	.04	18.46	3,710	9.79	.00
3	.22[c]	.05	.04	18.41	5,708	7.01	.00
4	.30[d]	.09	.08	18.00	6,707	11.70	.00

Note. N = 714; SEE = Standard Error of the estimate
a. Predictors: (Constant), School Type,
b. Predictors: (Constant), School Type, Sex
c. Predictors: (Constant), School Type, Sex, Age
d. Predictors: (Constant), School Type, Sex, Age, Perceived Social Support

Table 2: Model Summary of Social Support on Academic Burnout

As shown in Table 2, at stage one in the regression model, school type was entered and it significantly predicted academic burnout (F (2, 711) = 14.53, p < .05). The coefficient of determination was R^2= .04, indicating that approximately 4% of the variance in academic burnout could be explained by school type. At stage two, sex was added into

the regression model, and the linear combination of the variables was significant (F (3, 710) = 9.79, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .04$). In essence, the addition of sex into the model did not contribute to any change in the variance in academic burnout. An addition of age into the model at stage three saw the coefficient of determination go up to .05, indicating that 5 % of variability in academic burnout could be explained jointly by the three variables entered and it was significant (F (5, 708) = 7.01 $p < .05$, $R^2 = .05$). The coefficient of determination at step four in the regression model was $R^2 = .09$ indicating approximately 9% of the total variance in academic burnout could be explained by the intervening variables and social support. This suggested that without the inclusion of these variables in the equation, nearly 4% of the variation in the participants' academic burnout was explained by social support. On the overall, the regression equation for academic burnout was significant (F (6,707) = 11.70, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .09$).

The beta coefficients for social support on academic burnout revealed that at step four, school type and sex did not significantly predict academic burnout. The model revealed that among the covariates, it was only age that significantly predicted academic burnout ($\beta = .08$, $p < .05$). The participants in the age bracket of 21-23, tended to experience more academic burnout due to relatively low social support they receive when compared to those aged between15-17 years. Social support was found to be a significant predictor of academic burnout ($\beta = -.21$, $p < .05$). The negative Beta value was an indication that social support negatively predicted academic burnout. This further suggests that students who receive relatively good social support in their learning environment are more likely to be associated with less emotional exhaustion and less cynicism but with greater sense of academic efficacy. Further analysis using a t-test for independent samples also established that learners with different levels of social support differed significantly in their academic burnout scores. Participants with low level of social support had a mean of 39.14, (SD = 20.37) while those with high level of social support had a mean of 30.75, (SD = 18.24). There was a statistically significant difference between the participants with low and high level of social support in academic burnout (t (712) = 3.95, $p < .05$).

Social support as a construct, emanates from various sources such as; teachers, classmates and close friends within the learning environment. To establish the main source of social support and its relationship to academic burnout, we conducted a correlation coefficient to provide the direction and the strength of the relationship. The mean score for each source was computed and used for the analysis. The results presented in Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations and correlations.

	1	2	3	4	5
1 Teacher Social Support	-				
2 Classmates Social Support	.36**	-			
3 Friends Social Support	.28**	.43**	-		
4 Social Support Global Score	.82**	.74**	.69**	-	
5 Academic Burnout Score	-.24**	-.09*	-.13**	-.22**	-
M	4.39	3.95	4.41	76.96	32.00
SD	.86	.98	1.22	13.32	18.79

Note. N = 714; M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation

Table 3: Correlation Matrix of Sources of Social Support and Academic Burnout

The results pointed to a strong positive correlation between all the three sources of social support and overall social support. Friends had a positive and significant correlation with social support (r (712) = .69, $p < .05$). Classmates' social support was positive and significant (r (712) = .74, $p < .05$). The highest correlation was between teachers' social support and overall social support (r (712) = .82, $p < .05$). The findings indicated that teachers' social support is negatively correlated with academic burnout (r (712) = -.24, $p < .05$). This implied that students perceived greater social support to be emanating from their teachers. This may be as a result of teachers being the adults within the learners' environment who could be depended on. Social support, especially from teachers was, therefore, related to lower levels of academic.

Social support was measured using three main domains; instrumental, emotional and informational support. The descriptive statistics and results of the correlation for the domains of social support are summarized in Table 4.

	1	2	3	4
1 Instrumental Social Support	-			
2 Emotional Social Support	.61**	-		
3 Informational Social Support	.38**	.35**	-	
4 Social Support Global Score	.86**	.91**	.54**	-
M	27.19	40.15	9.61	76.97
SD	5.88	7.72	2.25	13.32
Sk	-.06	-.61	-.81	-.41

Note. N = 714; M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; Sk = Skewness

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

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation, Skewness and Correlation Matrix of Domains of Social Support

Table 4 shows that the lowest mean score and the highest mean scores are obtained on informational social support (M= 9.61, SD = 2.25) and emotional social support (M = 40.15, SD = 7.72) respectively. However, instrumental social support had a mean of 27.17 (SD = 5.88). On the overall, the standard deviation was fairly large for emotional social support. The lowest variability was registered in the informational social support. A bivariate correlation analysis pointed to a moderate positive correlation between instrumental social support and emotional social support (r (712) = .61, $p < .05$); positive correlation between instrumental social support and informational social support was (r (712) = .38, $p < .05$) and a strong positive correlation with the overall social support (r (712) = .86, $p < .05$). A strong positive correlation was obtained between emotional social support and overall social support (r (712) = .91, $p < .05$). Emotional social support and informational social support had a weak correlation (r (712) = .35, $p < .05$), though a moderate correlation was realized between informational social support and overall social

ISSN: 2394-4404

support (r (712) = .54, p < .05). Among the three domains of social support, emotional social support had more bearing on the overall social support. This may mean that at this stage of the students' lives, they are likely to perceive emotional support as the most important coping strategy to solve the challenges within their learning environment. These challenges may include; passing exams, maintaining good grades, being accepted by peers, and being judged by others. They are more likely to seek emotional support in the form of empathetic responses to reduce their anxiety.

To establish a more robust prediction equation of academic burnout based on the three main domains of social support, we conducted a stepwise multiple regression analysis. A significant regression model was found F (3,710) = 13.94, p < .05, R^2 = .06. This implied that 6% of academic burnout variance was explained by the three domains of perceived social support. The contribution of each domain is presented in Table 5.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	β	*SE*	β
(Constant)	28.25	2.33	
ESS	-.29	.05	-.16
(Constant)	31.67	2.58	
ESS	-.22	.06	-.14
InSS	-.63	.20	-.12
(Constant)	30.22	2.63	
ESS	-.32	.07	-.21
InSS	-.75	.21	-.14
ISS	.25	.09	.12

Note: N = 714; SE = Standard Error; ESS = Emotional Social Support; InSS = Informational Social Support; ISS = Instrumental Social Support.

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Burnout Score

Table 5: Beta Coefficient for Domains of Perceived Social Support

As presented in Table 5, it was evident that the three domains of social support had a bearing on academic burnout. Whereas emotional social support (β = -.21, p < .05) and informational social support (β = -.14, p < .05) had a negative predictive weight on academic burnout, instrumental social support (β = .12, p < .05) had a positive significant predictive value on academic burnout. This implied that the more the teachers, close friends and classmates offered instrumental support, the more the students' experienced academic burnout. A possible explanation would be that students spend a good amount of their time in academic activities to meet the high expectations of the significant others and in the process, they experience academic burnout. From Table 5, the best fitting model of prediction for social support was:

$\tilde{y}$= 30.22 - .32(ESS) - .75 (InSS) + .25(ISS)

Where: $\tilde{y}$ = predicted academic burnout; ESS = Emotional support; InSS = Informational social support; ISS = Instrumental social support.

To find out the specific contributions of the domains of social support on the domains of academic burnout, multivariate linear regression analysis was done as presented in Table 6.

Dependent Variable	Parameter	β	*SE*	*t*	Sig.	95% CI LB	95% CI UB
EE	Intercept	16.99	1.43	11.81	.00	14.17	19.82
	PISS	.14	.05	2.72	.00	.04	.24
	PESS	-.14	.04	-3.63	.00	-.22	-.06
	PInSS	-.41	.11	-3.55	.00	-.64	-.18
CY	Intercept	13.22	1.40	9.43	.00	10.47	15.97
	PISS	.10	.05	2.04	.04	.00	.20
	PESS	-.18	.03	-4.65	.00	-.25	-.10
	PInSS	-.34	.11	-3.01	.00	-.56	-.11
AE	Intercept	12.46	1.71	7.25	.00	9.09	15.84
	PISS	-.11	.06	-1.80	.07	-.23	.01
	PESS	.31	.04	6.56	.00	.21	.40
	PInSS	.50	.13	3.64	.00	.23	.77

Note. N = 714; SE = Standard Error; EE = Emotional exhaustion; CY = Cynicism; AE = Academic efficacy; ISS = Instrumental Social Support; ESS = Emotional Social Support; InSS = Informational Social Support; CI = Confidence interval; LB = Lower bound; UB = Upper bound

Table 6: Prediction of Academic Burnout using Social Support Domains

t	Sig.
12.10	.00
-5.03	.00
12.27	.00
-3.64	.00
-3.03	.00
11.49	.00
-4.47	.00
-3.54	.00
2.58	.01

The multivariate regression analysis indicated that informational social support had the highest negative predictive value on emotional exhaustion (β = -.41, p < .05) and cynicism (β = -.34, p < .05). Conversely, informational social support had the highest positive predictive value on academic efficacy (β = .50, p < .05). Emotional social support had a negative predictive weight on emotional exhaustion (β = -.14, p < .05) and cynicism (β = -.18, p < .05) and a positive predictive value on academic efficacy (β = .31, p < .05). Instrumental social support had a positive prediction on emotional exhaustion (β =.14, p < .05) and cynicism (β = .10, p < .05) but did not have a significant prediction on academic efficacy (β = -.11, p > .05).

V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Preliminary analysis revealed that younger learners seem to enjoy more social support compared to the older learners. The results also indicated that more males seemed to enjoy more social support than their female counterparts. A regression analysis revealed that social support significantly predicted academic burnout. It was further established that among the various sources of social support, the highest correlation was between teachers' social support and overall perceived social support implying that students received greater social support from their teachers than from any other source. Further, the results showed that teachers' social support was negatively related to emotional exhaustion, cynicism and overall academic burnout. Social support, especially from teachers was therefore related to lower levels of academic burnout and higher levels of academic efficacy. Additionally, the results demonstrated that among the subscales of social support, informational social support had the highest positive predictive value on academic efficacy as well as highest negative predictive value on emotional exhaustion.

The study results supported the findings by Kim et al. (2017) which revealed that, all the various sources of social support were negatively and significantly related to student

burnout. Additionally, it was revealed that teacher support had the strongest negative relationship to student burnout. Among the three domains of academic burnout, inefficacy was more strongly related to social support than emotional exhaustion and cynicism.

The current result is in agreement with the earlier studies that have revealed a relationship between social support and academic burnout (Dzulkifli & Yassin, 2009; Olwage & Mostert, 2014; Karimi et al., 2014). These studies linked social support dimensions and academic burnout among university students. A study by Olwage and Mostert (2014) established that social support networks predict student academic burnout and engagement. Social support was found to be high in students with low academic burnout than students with high academic burnout. The similarity in findings despite the cultural differences and level of schooling, give credence to the importance of social support. As postulated by Hobfoll (1989), students with greater resources such as social support, are less vulnerable to resource loss that may lead to academic burnout. Alarcon et al. (2011) also observed that social support is an important personal resource in a learning environment that acts as an emotional catharsis in providing an alternative path for coping with stressful situations and avoiding burnout.

These results indicate that perceived informational, emotional and instrumental social support negatively predicted emotional exhaustion and cynicism dimensions of academic burnout. When the significant others within the learners' environment provide time and resources to the learners and give them feedback on tests or examinations done, they become emotionally stable. Such students are less likely to be emotionally exhausted or develop a negative attitude towards academic work due to the encouragement they get from the environment. With social support, students are more likely to thrive in a stressful situation and achieve their educational goals. The results supported the findings by Olwage and Mostert (2014) whose study concluded that social support give students' confidence that may help them deal with the challenges of school life. The current results also lend credence to previous research findings that social support makes students feel cared for and valued. This in turn raises their level of self-esteem and makes them develop a sense of competence which makes them reduce the chances of academic burnout (Karimi et al., 2014).

In theory, students who are more successful in their studies are those who are supported by their peers, teachers and parents in many ways and are cushioned against the negative effects of academic burnout. According to Hobfoll (1989), supportive social networks from parents, teachers, peers and significant others are energy resources that make learners perceive demands in their environments as less taxing. These learners are less likely to experience academic burnout as they are able to employ productive strategies to help them cope with challenging situations (Alarcon et al., 2011).

The results of this study showed that social support, especially teacher support is more practical and directly helpful to students in terms of instrumental, informational and emotional support. More importantly, instrumental social support had a positive significant predictive value on academic burnout such that academic burnout tended to increase with more instrumental support. This result is in agreement with Onuoha (2015) who reported that perceived teacher support has a significant positive influence on school burnout. Teacher social support and instrumental support would be perceived to aid students in taking up their academic responsibilities to achieve academic success. This support would motivate learners to put more effort and energy in their work not only to achieve their academic success but also to meet the expectations of the significant others. This effort may culminate into academic burnout since the learners want nothing but the best.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study revealed a relationship between social support and academic burnout. This is to the extent that learners who receive adequate social support experience less academic burnout. It can therefore be concluded that giving social support to students, especially emotional, informational and instrumental support is crucial to the learning process. Supportive social networks from teachers, peers and significant others are energy resources that make learners perceive demands in their learning environments as less taxing and this may help them negotiate the academic demands and avoid academic burnout.

This study has some implications for teachers and school counselors as adults within the learners' environment. It's important to understand that due to academic pressures, learners might get emotionally and physically exhausted. Before they experience cynical attitude towards classroom activities and reduced academic efficacy, teachers and school counselors might recognize this warning signal and extend some caring strategies, such as building close, supportive relationships with the learners to avoid the negative effects of academic burnout. This study however, had some limitations. Our sample was drawn from only form four students in Homa –Bay County, therefore this sampling issue may limit the population to which the results can be generalized. Secondly, the study relied on self-report questionnaire therefore some degree of subjectivity may not be ruled out in the results. Finally, this study used correlational research design therefore causation may not be implied.

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