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Relativity of Peers: Learning Efficiency of Secondary Students

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ABSTRACTS

This study aimed to know how peers can take over a secondary student's learning efficiency and if this relation is that cohesive. To gather data for the study, interviews, with the use of guide questionnaires, were conducted with the participants selected through purposive sampling. Data collected were analyzed through thematic analysis. The participants were five (5) secondary students of Sultan Kudarat State University – Laboratory Science High School. This study shows that the following points were made: (1) There are a lot of ways peers can assert changes to a student's academic performance. These can be manifested through all the statements that the participants gave to the researchers; (2) A larger number of peers can easily get a student persuaded in doing activities unrelated to their academics; (3) The length of friendship between the peers and the student matters by means of the cohesiveness of peers on the learning efficiency of a student; (4) The affiliation of peers toward the learning efficiency of students is very enormous that it plays a vital role in the things that could happen to a student's learning at school and everywhere; (5) There are tendencies that peers can't affect a student's learning efficiency. These conclusions can be of help to students, parents, teachers and future researchers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout adolescence, a person is highly vulnerable to peer influences, and these changes have modified drastically over the years. This education and society related topic could help us understand more of the issues surrounding such influences from peer groups (Maryanti *et al.*, 2021). It could also help be more appositely prepared to assist teenagers facing various aspects of peer pressure (Supovitz *et al.*, 2010; Samantray & Riccaboni, 2020; Müller, 2018).

Broadly, the effects of peer learning have been studied extensively (Jindal *et al.*, 2020). Several studies suggest that peers have non-trivial effects on student learning. However, another study mentions how peers influence learning (Carrell *et al.*, 2013). One of the key channels for the observed peer effect is that students teach each other in and outside of the classroom (Burke *et al.*, 2013). In peer-learning process, class composition affects peer learning. Class composition includes the distribution of peers who have high and low abilities (Ahmad, 2021a). On the one hand, tracking capabilities

It may be detrimental to low-ability students if they benefit from interactions with high-ability peers thereby exacerbating existing inequalities between high and low-ability students (Betts, 2010).

Peers are said to have a large effect on an individual's study and are shown in several ways: they interact with learning, share information, help each other in studies, influences each other by behaving rigorously or poorly, and so on (Kimbrough *et al.*, 2017). According to Monahan and Steinberg (2007), center youthfulness is an especially remarkable time in which the willingness to justify what one accepts and oppose the weight of one's peers to do something else is strengthened. The most common types of the peer group to be investigated are the secondary school children who fall into the same group that could have a negative influence on their learning (You, 2011).

The findings brought about by this study can be of help to students, parents, guardians and teachers. Secondary students are said to be very prone to influences brought about by peers/peer groups surrounding them (Lewis, 1978). This study aimed to know how peers can take over a secondary student's learning efficiency and if this relation is really that cohesive.

2. METHODS

The study was carried out inside the Sultan Kudarat State University – access campus. Purposive sampling technique was used to select five random students (considering he/she has friends close to him/her). The five participants chosen were junior high school students of the Laboratory High School department – Sultan Kudarat State University (SKSU).

To gather data, we conducted an interview with the participants. we asked some questions to the participants during the interview with the use of a guide questionnaire with following questions: (1) What are the ways peers in a peer group can help or assist and/or hamper a student's learning efficiency? (2) Does the number of peers in the peer group matter? (3) Do the length of their friendship matter? (4) How closely affiliated are peers toward a secondary student's learning efficiency? Lastly, the data collected by the researchers were analyzed according to thematic analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to qualitatively analyze how peers can affect one's academic performance and if this relationship is that closely associated (Ahmad, 2021b). The original research questions was how can peers affect a secondary student's learning efficiency and if this relation is that cohesive. In general, there are three aspects:

- (i) what are the ways peers in a peer group can help or assist and/or hamper a student's academic performance?
- (ii) does the number of peers in the peer group matter, does the length of their friendship matter?
- (iii) how closely affiliated are peers toward a student's academic performance?

Various themes were identified in an attempt to answer the original research questions (Bilad & Prayogi, 2021). This is also necessary to put activity to support the main themes (Sari & Faiz, 2021).

The two general themes and one emerging theme were determined from the guided interview used during the study: bonds, incline and unbreakable walls, each having sub-themes: on quantity, on time and on parents' knowledge for bonds; stray and on track for incline; one's own resolution and someone's authority for unbreakable walls (Jizat & Sulong, 2021).

Table 1-3 show general theme of guided interview. In short, **Table 1** shows bonds, **Table 2** shows incline, and **Table 3** is for unbreakable walls.

The research results showed that learning with peers increases the effectiveness of students in learning. This is because of the collaboration of people with heterogeneous knowledge (Bittner & Leimeister, 2014).

In addition, the peer learning process also produces interactions between the two students at the same level of knowledge so that they are trained to think to build an appropriate understanding (Greer *et al.*, 1998; Liu & Matthews, 2005).

However, it becomes ineffective for some students because usually students only rely on or take advantage of their peers' abilities without wanting to learn to do every assignment given by the teacher (Jizat & Sulong, 2021).

Table 1. Theme: Bonds.

Sub-Theme	Sample Response
On Time	"Uhhh... it's almost three years because we have mee- we uhhh... most od may friends... uhhh... were my friends, since I was in grade 7."
On Quantity	"A lot... I mean specifically, I can't tell that well, but yeah, I have a lot of friends."
On Parents' Knowledge	"Of course, not... I have been away from my parents for three years from now... since grade seven... because my hometown is far from Tacuog City, so yeah..."

Table 2. Theme: Incline.

Sub-Theme	Sample Response
On Track	"Yes... sometimes, they are the ones who's reminding me what stuffs related at school I should do... especially projects and assignments."
Stray	"Yes... during weekends, if we're not doing something and if they want to... if they want to go outdoors, they... they can easily come to me."

Table 3. Theme: Unbreakable walls.

Sub-Theme	Sample Response
One's own resolution	"No. I know my limits; I know my barriers; I won't let them control me."
Someone's authority	"No..... because... uhmm... they already know that I have strict parents so... they're already the ones who're... initiating... not to... persuade me to do such things unrelated to studies."

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, there are a lot of ways peers can assert changes to a secondary student's learning efficiency. These can be manifested through all the statements that the participants gave to the researchers. It was concluded that larger number of peers can easily get a student persuaded in doing activities unrelated to their academics. It was also found out that the length of friendship between the peers and the student matters by means of the cohesiveness of peers on the learning efficiency of a student. The affiliation of peers toward the learning efficiency of a secondary student is very enormous that it plays a vital role in the things that could happen to the student's learning at school and everywhere. Although, there are tendencies that peers can't affect a secondary student's learning efficiency as explained in the emerging theme "Unbreakable Walls" of the study.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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