

Article

The Impact of Social Exclusion on Academic Delay among University Students: A Field Study

Page | 207

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CITATION

Gabra, N. (2024). The impact of social exclusion on academic delay among school students: A field study, *Intercontinental Social Science Journal*. 1(4), 207-221. <https://doi.org/10.62583/vppmhq88>

Received 15 Feb 2024

Accepted: 12 May 2024

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Abstract: This study examines the impact of social exclusion on academic delay among university students, with a particular focus on family-related factors and gender differences. Social exclusion is becoming a multidimensional concept, which influences accessibility to resources, as well as social participation and access to education by individuals. In the university setting, it can have a huge impact on the academic activity and performance of students. The research design used was quantitative descriptive research design; a sample of 60 students undertaking Sociology of Sport programme at South Valley University, Egypt was used to collect data. The dimensions of social exclusion and academic delay were measured by a structured questionnaire. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and one-way ANOVA. The results indicated that family related issues such as parental violence, neglect, and unstable family backgrounds are the major causes of social exclusion among the students. The findings also reported an average amount of academic latency to the same factors. In addition, correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between social exclusion and academic delay, which implies that the more the social exclusion, the more the academic problems arise. Moreover, the differences were not statistically significant according to gender. The research recommends the significance of the management of social and family-related issues in the educational environments to enhance academic performance of the students. It adds to the already existing literature because it builds on the existing knowledge on social exclusion, which has only touched on the social and behavioural effects of the behaviour, but not on the effects on the academic performance.

Keywords: *Social exclusion; academic performance; academic delay; higher education; family factors*

Introduction

Modern societies have experienced the rapid change in all the spheres of economic, social and cultural and this has resulted in the appearance of complicated social issues which directly influence the opportunities of life of people and their well being (Littlewood & Herkommer , 2017). Social exclusion is one of these problems and has been getting more and more scholarly interest since it has significant consequences on the capabilities of individuals to engage positively in social, economic and educational structures.

Social exclusion is defined as a process that is multidimensional that people or groups are marginalised and deprived of access to resources, opportunities, and social participation(Yadav & Longchar,2028; Millar, 2007). This process can be a result of different factors, among which are economic inequality, family instability, institutional neglect, and structural disparities in the society of greater array (Galabuzi, 2004; Jovanović, 2020). Consequently, a socially excluded person is likely to have restricted access to education, social support and have less opportunity to become a successful personal and academic achiever (Pinnock, H., & Hodgkin, 2010; Elias & Haynes, 2008; Arslan, 2018).

In the learning environment, social exclusion is a very important aspect of the academic experience and performance of the students. Exposed students, outside the familial socialization, the school setting, or peer groups, will tend to develop disengagement, lack of motivation, and problems with academic accomplishment (Vollet & Kindermann, 2020). The challenges can eventually translate into what is also known as academic delay which is an aspect of deteriorated academic performance, inability to comprehend course material, and failure to achieve academic performance according to expectation (Thies ET AL., 2021).

Past research has pointed at the association between social exclusion and different adverse outcomes in the younger generation, such as behavioural issues, poor well-being, and the tendency to be susceptible to social risks(Filia ET AL., 2025). Nevertheless, as the amount of literature is increasing, empirical studies which directly test the effects of social exclusion on academic delay in a university setting especially in the developing world like Egypt are still lacking. In addition, there has been minimal focus on the issue of gender differences in influencing this relationship.

In this regard the study aims at investigating how social exclusion affects academic delay in university students in South Valley University in Egypt. It is also going to determine the primary factors that lead to social exclusion and investigate whether this association varies with gender. By discussing these

concerns, the study brings the discussion of the social determinants of academic performance one step closer to a better comprehension of the matter at hand, and the information it provides can be used to create a more inclusive educational setting.

Literature Review

There has been a rising literature concerning the notion of social exclusion and its impacts on individuals and societies especially among the youth and students. Social exclusion has been extensively linked to various social and behavioural negative consequences such as marginalisation, poor well-being, and access to opportunities.

A number of research studies have depicted the influence of social exclusion on the behaviour of the youth. An example is that Radi (2023) discovered that social exclusion is a major cause of high rates of violence in young people, indicating that the more marginalised a group is, the more likely it is that such a group will develop deviant or risky behaviours. In the same way, Ammara (2023) has shown that social exclusion is directly related to deviant behaviour and the results show statistically significant differences in favour of males.

Al-Ajili (2021) revealed in discussions of social exclusion several factors that contribute to it, especially family conditions such as domestic violence and neglect and instability of the household structures. These results underline the key position of the family as one of the main contexts when social exclusion is experienced and strengthened.

Moreover, Qurawi (2017) investigated how social exclusion is linked to the youth participation in ideological movements, and it was found that exclusion might provoke people to have other types of social identity and affiliations as the form of compensation. Interestingly, the researchers had no statistically significant differences in the experience of social exclusion by gender, which indicates that the effects of social exclusion could be similar across the populations of both men and women in general.

Although these studies have brought a lot, a majority of research that is present has concentrated on the social and behavioural implications of social exclusion including violence, deviance and ideological affiliation. In comparison, little has been done in the area of its educational implications especially in academic retardation among university students. Moreover, empirical studies that are carried out in the Egyptian setting and specifically address this relationship are also lacking.

As such, the current research will attempt to fill this gap by examining the effects of social exclusion on academic delay in university students as well as the importance of gender in influencing this correlation. In this way, the research broadens the literature on the subject to the academic performance as an important aspect of social exclusion.

Objectives

1. To identify the main factors contributing to social exclusion among university students.
2. To examine the impact of social exclusion on academic delay among university students.
3. To investigate whether there are statistically significant differences in this relationship based on gender.

Problem

Although the social exclusion has increasingly gained weight as a social issue, its effects on the academic performance of learners have been under-researched more so in the university setting in the developing societies. Social exclusion that can be based on family settings, schools, or the larger society can adversely affect the involvement, motivation, and performance of the students.

Students who have been excluded (parental neglect, family disarrays or absence of institutional support) are prone to encounter problems in ensuring steady academic development. Such challenges could be academic delay in the form of poor achievement, lack of concentration and low performance in terms of academic demand. In as much as past researchers have done on the social and behavioural implications of social exclusion, empirical studies have not been conducted to identify the direct link between academic delay and social exclusion among college students. More than that, it is still not clear to the level to which this relationship can vary depending on gender.

In this regard therefore, this research aims to provide a solution to this gap by researching on the effects of social exclusion on the academic delay of college and university students, with special consideration of the possibility of gender differences.

Questions

1. What are the main factors contributing to social exclusion among university students?
2. What is the effect of social exclusion on academic delay among university students?
3. Are there statistically significant differences in the effect of social exclusion on academic delay attributable to gender?

Theoretical Framework

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion is said to be a multidimensional process where people are systematically sidelined and deprived of social, economic and institutional resources. It goes beyond being economically deprived to being less involved in the social relations, poor access to education, and poor integration into the society. In this regard, family factors that could be involved in the social exclusion could be due to parental neglect, domestic conflict, and emotional support, and institutional factors which could be in poor educational settings and poor student-teacher relationships.

In terms of sociology, the social exclusion may be viewed as a structural situation restricting individuals in the possibilities to realize social mobility and their personal growth. Excluded people tend to have cumulative disadvantages that influence various spheres of their lives such as their mental health, social assimilation, and academic participation.

Social Deprivation and School Dropout

The connection between academic delay and social exclusion can be described by the fact that such supportive social frameworks are important in effective learning. To ensure motivation and academic performance, students are dependent on flourishing family atmospheres, good experiences at school and their social support. They will be more prone to disengagement, lack of concentration and poor academic performance when such structures have been weakened by exclusion.

In this context, academic delay implies a decline in the academic progress of students that can be seen through the problems in grasping the course material, lower performance, and failure to achieve the estimated academic expectations. Social exclusion is also one of the factors that lead to this delay by forming an atmosphere filled with stress, unsteadiness and absence of support which would adversely affect the ability of the students to focus in their studies.

Theoretical Relationship between Variables

The current research is based on the fact that social isolation is a major social predictor of academic performance. To be more precise, it is anticipated that, the stronger the rates of social exclusion, the stronger the rates of academic delay. The given relationship is related to the wider sociological knowledge that educational performance is not as much an individual product, but it is heavily conditioned by the social and environmental factors.

Based on the previous literature and the theoretical framework, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between social exclusion and academic delay among university students.

H0: There are no statistically significant differences in the effect of social exclusion on academic delay attributable to gender.

Methodology

Research Design

The research design to be used in this study is a quantitative descriptive research design in order to study the correlation between social exclusion and academic delay among university students. This method is suitable because it enables systematic gathering and examination of numerical data in order to discover the patterns, connections and distinctions between variables.

Population and Sample

The study sample is the entire student body taking Sociology of sport programme at South valley university Egypt as of the academic year 2023/2024 and a sample population of 150 students.

The method of choosing a sample was a simple random sampling technique to select a sample of 60 students, both male and female. The sampling approach was decided on to provide all the members of the population an equal opportunity of being sampled out to increase the sample representativeness.

Demographic Characteristics of Sample.

The sample was also gender balanced (the proportion of male and female students was equal, 30 each). Parental education wise, fathers (63.3) and mothers (56.7) were found to be of secondary (majority) and of post-graduate education (small proportion). On the family size, the majority of the respondents were in the family of 5 or 8 members.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the Study Sample

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	30	50.0%
	Female	30	50.0%
Father's Education	Illiterate	12	20.0%
	Secondary	38	63.3%
	Undergraduate	8	13.3%
	Postgraduate	2	3.3%
Mother's Education	Illiterate	6	10.0%
	Secondary	34	56.7%
	Undergraduate	12	20.0%

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Family Size	Postgraduate	8	13.3%
	Less than 4	6	10.0%
	5–8 members	34	56.7%
	More than 8	20	33.3%

As presented in Table 1 the study sample was evenly gender balanced with 50 per cent males and 50 per cent females. Most parents were of secondary education level, with most of the respondents having medium-sized families (5-8 members).

Research Instrument

A questionnaire that was designed by the researcher was used to collect data. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: the first part was the demographic data (gender, parental education, family size). The second section included Study variables which were 10 items based on two dimensions namely Social exclusion (5 items) and Academic delay (5 items).

The items covered such issues like parental neglect, family conflict, harsh treatment and its effects on academic engagement and performance of students.

Validity and Reliability

The instrument validity was determined by means of expert review where the questionnaire was reviewed by academic specialists to make sure it was clear, relevant and appropriate with regard to the items.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the reliability. The score of reliability of the instrument was 0.80, which consists of a high level of internal consistency and the appropriateness of the instrument in data collection.

Table 2

Reliability Statistics of the Study Instrument

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Social Exclusion	5	0.78
Academic Delay	5	0.81
Total Scale	10	0.80

As can be seen, the values of Cronbach's alpha were between 0.78 and 0.81 with a total reliability coefficient of 0.80, which shows that the study instrument had high internal consistency and is reliable.

Data Analysis

Statistical methods were used in analysing data and were consistent with the objectives of the study. The data was summarised using descriptive statistics such as the means and standard deviations. Moreover, Pearson correlation was conducted to determine the relationship between academic delay and social exclusion as well as a one-way ANOVA was used to analyze the gender difference in academic delay. All the statistical analyses were performed at (alpha = 0.05) level of significance.

Results

Results Related to the First Research Question

What are the main factors contributing to social exclusion among university students?

To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated for the items measuring the causes of social exclusion.

Table 3

Means and Standard Deviations of Social Exclusion Factors

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
My parents use violence against me or each other	4.20	0.83	High
My parents and teachers treat me with indifference	4.19	0.91	High
My parents and teachers treat me harshly	3.63	1.41	Moderate
I live in a tense family environment	3.47	1.32	Moderate
I come from a dysfunctional family	3.34	1.11	Moderate
Overall Mean	3.68	—	High

Table 3 demonstrates that total mean score of factors of social exclusion was 3.68 meaning that the participants had a high perceived social exclusion. The overall scores were between 3.34 and 4.20.

Parental violence had the highest rating as it had a mean score of 4.20 closely followed by indifference by parents and teachers (M = 4.19) as the level of agreement was very high. In comparison, the other reasons, including cruel treatment, strained family atmosphere, and family breakdown were reported at a medium level.

These results indicate that family related conditions especially violence and neglect are central in defining the experiences of social exclusion among students.

Results Related to the Second Research Question

What is the effect of social exclusion on academic delay among university students?

To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated for the items measuring the impact of social exclusion on academic delay.

Table 4

Means and Standard Deviations of the Impact of Social Exclusion on Academic Delay

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
Family tension affects my exam performance	4.32	0.86	High
Violence between my parents affects my concentration on studying	4.23	1.16	High
Neglect from parents and teachers reduces my interest in studying	3.43	1.25	Moderate
Harsh treatment from parents and teachers leads me to neglect my studies	3.30	1.20	Moderate
Family breakdown affects my understanding of academic material	3.12	1.14	Moderate
Overall Mean	3.60	—	Moderate

According to Table 4, the average of the effects of social exclusion on academic delay was 3.60, which is considered moderate. The average scores were between 3.12 and 4.32.

Items rated with the highest level of agreement included family tension which had a negative impact on exam performance (M= 4.32) and parental conflict which had a negative impact on concentration (M= 4.23). These results emphasize the power of the family instability on the academic functioning of students.

Conversely, other causes, like neglect and cruel treatment, were reported to moderate levels indicating that they are also a cause of academic delay but not to a significant extent.

In totality, the findings imply that social exclusion especially through family-based stress and conflict has a major role to play in determining the academic delay in students.

Testing the First Hypothesis

H1: There is a statistically significant relationship between social exclusion and academic delay among university students.

Table 5

Pearson Correlation between Social Exclusion and Academic Delay

Variable	Social Exclusion	Academic Delay
Social Exclusion	1	0.52**
Academic Delay	0.52**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (p < 0.05)

As indicated in Table 5, social exclusion also has a moderate positive correlation with academic delay (r = 0.52, p < 0.05). This shows that the greater the levels of social exclusion the greater the level of academic delay among the students in universities.

The first hypothesis (H1) is supported by this outcome, which proves that social exclusion has a statistically significant impact on academic delay.

Testing the Second Hypothesis

H0: There are no statistically significant differences in the effect of social exclusion on academic delay attributable to gender.

Table 6

One-Way ANOVA Results for Differences in Academic Delay Based on Gender

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig.
Between Groups	0.572	1	0.572	0.078	0.780
Within Groups	79.40	58	1.369	—	—
Total	79.97	59	—	—	—

According to Table 6, the significance value ($p = 0.780$) is larger than the desired level of significance (0.05). This implies that academic delay is not statistically significant in male and female students.

In this respect, the null hypothesis (H0) is accepted according to which gender does not affect significantly the impact of social exclusion on academic delay.

Discussions

The current paper was designed to investigate the effects of social exclusion on academic delay among university students, especially the identification of its critical factors and the possible gender differences.

The results of the study on the initial research question were that social exclusion among school going children is affected mostly by family issues especially the violence of parents, their neglect and lack of concern. These findings indicate that the family setting is very important in determining the social life of students. Sociologically, these circumstances can undermine social integration and emotional support, and make students susceptible to exclusion.

These results are confirmed by the other studies, especially the one conducted by Al-Ajili (2021) who stressed the importance of family instability and domestic conflict as the main causes of social exclusion. In the same manner, the findings correlate with Ammara (2023), who has also pointed to adverse social effects of exclusion due to dysfunctional family settings.

In the second research question, the results showed that social exclusion moderately affects academic delay. Specifically, the family tension and parental conflict were also identified to have a significant influence on the concentration and academic performance of the students. This implies that academic

problems are not only associated with the personal capacities but are highly affected by the social and environmental factors that surround the student.

The correlation analysis also validated the presence of statistically significant positive relationship between the variables of social exclusion and academic delay. The results in this study confirm the premise that the degree of academic problems is linked to the level of social exclusion. Theoretically, this may be attributed to the fact that protective social mechanisms that are very crucial in facilitating effective learning are disrupted resulting in decreased academic participation and performance.

This result is consistent with the existing literature like that by Radi (2023) and Ammara (2023) who showed that social exclusion is a factor in the negative behavioural and developmental consequences of the youth. Nonetheless, the current research paper builds upon them by emphasizing academic delay as one of the major implications of the concept of social exclusion in the context of the university.

Concerning the differences related to gender, the findings indicated that, there were no statistically significant difference between the male and female students in academic delay. This implies that the effect of social exclusion is not very different between genders. The presented observation aligns with that of Qurawi (2017) who also did not find any significant difference in experiencing social exclusion between the genders in youth.

In general, the results of the present research highlight the fact that social exclusion is an important social determinant of academic performance. It contains the necessity to discuss the family aspects and enhance the learning conditions in order to mitigate the adverse impacts of exclusion to the academic achievement of students.

Conclusion

This paper has reviewed how social exclusion has led to academic delay among college students focusing on the contribution of family issues and gender variations. The results indicated that family conditions which are parental violence, neglect, and poor household conditions are the major determinants of social exclusion.

The findings also indicated that social exclusion causes academic delay in a moderate manner yet significantly as it affects the concentration of students, their motivation and academic interest. The correlation test confirmed that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between the two variables of social exclusion and academic delay, which implies that the higher the level of exclusion is the higher the academic delays.

In addition, no statistically significant differences were found between male and female students and this indicates that the effects of social exclusion on the delay of academic achievement is not quite different between the genders.

On the whole, the paper shows the significance of social and familial contexts as one of the major factors influencing academic achievement and the necessity of a more accommodating and supportive education system.

Limitations

A number of limitations are associated with this study that must be taken into consideration when explaining the results. First, the limited sample size and the fact that it was restricted by students studying in one academic programme at one university can restrict the generalisability of the results. Second, the application of self-reported information can cause the bias in responses, because participants can not provide accurate answers based on their experience. Besides that, the research was based on some dimensions of social exclusion which were selected and it failed to consider other factors that may have contributed to social exclusion, including peer relationships or institutional assistance. Lastly, it is seen that the study has a cross-sectional design that constrains the establishment of the causal associations between academic delay and social exclusion.

Implications

The theoretical and practical implications of the findings of this study are significant. Theoretically, the research adds to the literature by showing that social exclusion is an important variable that affects academic delay thus, a research that goes beyond behavioural and social outcomes to academic performance. In practice, the findings indicate the significance of the implementation of social and family-related issues in educational contexts. The policymakers and universities should employ inclusive policy that supports the counselling services, the relationship between the students and the teachers and have supportive environments in which learning is done. The results also indicate that all students need to be addressed during interventions because the effects of social exclusion also seem to be similar between all genders.

Recommendations

On the basis of the results of the given research, some recommendations may be offered. Schools and colleges must come up with specific programmes that help alleviate the effects of social exclusion, especially the ones that are perpetrated by family instability and neglect. The psychological and counselling services should also be enhanced in universities to help students in case they encounter social and emotional difficulties. Also, there should be awareness campaigns to sensitize families on adverse impacts of violence, conflict, and neglect to the academic performance of students. It is recommended that policymakers should incorporate social support systems in the education systems to achieve an inclusive and supportive environment among all learners.

Future Research

It is suggested to conduct future research to investigate the association between social exclusion and delay in academic achievement with larger and more heterogeneous samples in order to increase the overall generalisability of the results. It is also recommended that researchers investigate other variables including peer influence, institutional support and psychological well being to show a more detailed picture of the phenomenon. Moreover, longitudinal and mixed-method research may provide more information about causal processes and experiences of social exclusion, as well as their effects on academic performance.

Conflict of Interest: The author declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the publication of this research.

Funding Statement: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency, institution, or organisation.

Data Availability Statement: The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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