

PEER GROUP INTERACTION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF BOR COUNTY IN JONGLEI STATE, SOUTH SUDAN

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the effects of peer group interaction on the academic performance of students in Bor County in Jonglei State, South Sudan. It was guided by three objectives; to establish the relationship between social support and the academic performance of students in Bor County Secondary schools, to examine the relationship between information and the academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Bor County Secondary schools, and to analyze the relationship between open communication and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Bor County Secondary schools. The study used a cross-sectional survey design to collect quantitative data from 103 respondents namely; students, teachers, and administrators, and the main instruments were self-administered questionnaires. The study hypotheses were tested using the Pearson correlation coefficient index using the scientific package for social scientists (SPSS). The study finding indicated that social support ($F= 64.295$; $p= 0.000 > 0.05$), information sharing coefficient ($F = 0.919$; $p= 0.00 > 0.05$), and open communication ($Beta = 0.716$; $p=0.000$) are significant relationship with student academic performance in Bor County in Jonglei State, South Sudan. The researcher thus recommended managers of educational institutions encourage social support among students as it enhances academic performance and emotional well-being. But they should take caution on the best social support that is important for students to enhance their academic performance. Second, it was recommended that educational institutions promote knowledge sharing among students since it's the basis for

academic performance. Thirdly, it was recommended that educational institutions embrace open communication among students. This can be promoted in debates, seminars, and workshops.

Key words: PEER GROUP INTERACTION AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Background to the Study

According to Narad and Abdullah (2016), academic achievement is the evaluation of teachers' grades and/or the knowledge acquired by students and teachers over the learning goals achieved within a certain period of time. They added that these goals are measured by regular tests or test results. Cambridge University Reporter (2003) defines academic success as how students perform in tests, studies and exams (Zulaikah & Rebecca, 2023). Interpersonal relationships refer to behaviors that are not limited to open communication or information sharing, but foster relationships that foster and build trust among owner's trap (Pauline, 2023). The post-test is an assessment, an assessment made at the end of a term, its purpose is to check the level of knowledge the child has acquired during the school year.

(Vanderburg and Shepard, 2010). End-of-year exams are exams given at the end of the study period to determine whether students have learned enough material at that time (Van der Berg & Shepherd, 2010). What unites a group of people is developing relationships, sharing information and communicating. Social support is a trade-off between two people perceived by the provider or the recipient to increase the well-being of the recipient (Shumaker & Brownell, 1984). Information sharing is the right to provide useful answers to information requests (Rafaeli & Raban, 2005).

Students in schools such as Ball County Secondary School in Jonglei Province have been criticized for having poor academic performance, and critics have noted that these secondary schools have excellent overall performance in reading and math, with an overall score of 53% in reading and math and arithmetic (Middle School students 2). 30% (secondary school students 2) numbers (Victoria et al., 2023). Students' failure is due to substances such as student drug use and adolescent pregnancy (Othman, Aghamohammad, & Farid 2019; Vincent & Alemu, 2016). The low level of education among students mentioned above has led to negative consequences such as poor student performance and lower academic standards. This study hopes to help solve the problem of academic failure by examining how peer group interactions cause problems (Godfrey et al., 2017).

Problem Statement

Jonglei State, Technical education in schools such as Bor District Secondary School is important to achieve Vision 2040, which states "Improving Country Education and Knowledge" (Juba-South Sudan Country Report, 2019). To make it effective, the Ministry of General Education and Training will force teachers and administrators to be trained on curriculum reform to improve education (Christopher et al., 2022). At the same time, Othman, Aghamohammad, and Farid (2019) pointed out that drug use, including drug use, increases achievement in secondary school due to peer relationships. Vincent and Alemu (2016) acknowledge that childbearing harms schooling because girls' grades drop and others drop out. The GESS pilot study in a middle school sample showed poor overall reading and math scores, with 53% in reading (Middle School 2 students) and 30% (GESP 2017-2022) in math (Middle School 2 students). If this low level of education continues in South Sudan's secondary schools, the Ministry of General Education and Training will not be able to achieve Vision 2040 for an educated and informed country (Michael et al., 2023). Therefore, this study examines the impact of peer relationships on student learning

Specific Objectives

To establish the relationship between social support and academic performance of students in in Bor County Secondary schools.

To examine the relationship between information and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Bor County Secondary schools.

To analyze the relationship between open communication and academic performance of students in public secondary schools in Bor County Secondary schools.

Research Hypotheses

There is no significant relationship between social support and academic performance.

There is no significant relationship between information sharing and academic performance.

There is no significant relationship between open communication and academic performance.

Methodology

Research Design

This study used quantitative approach while adopting survey design. The researcher collected quantitative data at one point in time. The researcher used both correlational and cross-section survey designs.

Study Population

The target population in the study constituted 145 students study, in 4 public secondary schools in Bor county secondary schools. Altogether, the population was 145 students for quantitative study. The researcher selected these categories because of their participation in various academic activities in their respective schools. The study concentrated on English subject in S.3 classes in four schools.

Table 1: Target Population and Sample Size

Name of the School	Target Population	Sample size
Malek Secondary	35	32
Bor Secondary	35	32
Baidit Secondary	35	32
Greenbelt Secondary	40	36
Total	145	103

Sampling Procedures

The study adopted sampling methods, namely simple random and stratified sampling. Simple random sampling has been selected because it enables producing of

generalizable findings. Stratified sampling is an adaptation of random sampling in which you divide the target population into two or more relevant and significant strata based on one or a number of characteristics (Taherdoost, 2016).

Sample Size

Of the target population 140 students, 4 head teachers, 4 English teachers, and 4 Directors of studies department, and heads of departments, Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) of sample size determination, suggests a minimum sample size of 103. However, following the advice given by Gay and Avraisan (2003) given that the suggested minimum sample size of 103 is not very different from the population of 145 and given that not all students may return the instruments.

Data Collection Methods

The researcher collected quantitative data from respondents using questionnaire survey.

Data Collection Instruments

The researcher contacted respondents for first-hand data information using the survey method involving the use of self-administered questionnaires (SAQS) for students.

Questionnaires

The study used Self-Administered Questionnaires to collect data in accordance with the research questions and hypothesis. The SAQs started with a main title, then an introductory letter and sections. Section A will give the background information of the respondents; (e.g. department, age, and gender, level of income, current job, and qualification). Section B adopted a dependent variable in the study, student-centered, measurable, concise, meaningful, achievable, and outcome-based. Section C was on the independent variable in the study which is Peer group interaction in secondary schools in Bor County where students study, namely: social support,

information sharing, and open communication. To ease administration instruments used close-ended, that is, will have options given.

Data Analysis and Presentation

The data collected was prepared or processed for analysis and later actually analyzed. The data on SAQs was be edited, categorized, coded, and entered into the computer using (SPSS) for generation summary frequency tables and graphics (Nelson et al., 2022). The actual data analysis at a univariate level based on relative frequencies from frequency tables; descriptive statistics at the bivariate level, learning outcome will be correlated with respective peer group interaction using Pearson's correlation method. At the multivariate level, academic performance was correlated with all three-peer group interaction operationalized variables using multiple linear regressions.

RESULTS

Response Rate

Higher survey response rates help to ensure that survey results are representative of the target population. Table 1 below represents response rates of the targeted population.

Table 1: Showing response rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Response	103	71
Non-Response	42	29
Total	145	100.0

Source: (Primary data, 2023)

Referring to table 1 above, out of the 145 questionnaires administered to the respondents, 103 respondents filled and returned the questionnaires thus creating 71% response rate. According to Bryman and Bell (2015) and also Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), a feedback rate of amounting to 50% is enough for data analysis and

drawing conclusions while equally a feedback rate of 60% is good and feedback above 70% is excellent.

Background characteristics of the Respondents

Findings on gender of respondents

The researcher was interested to find out the gender of each of the respondents that participated and the results are presented in table 2 below;

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by gender

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	69	67
	Female	34	33
	Total	103	100.0

(Source: Primary data, 2023)

From the study results, out of the 103 respondents that participated in the study, 69 (67%) were males and 34 (33%) were females. This shows that the biggest portion of respondents were males as compared to their female counterparts.

Findings on the age of respondents

The researcher was interested in finding out the age of each of the respondents that participated in the study. The results are presented in the table below;

Table 3: Distribution of respondents by age

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Below 16years	30	29.13
	16-20Years	30	29.13
	21-25 years	23	22.33
	26Years and above	20	19.41
	Total	103	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2023

When asked to indicate their ages, majority of respondents 30(29.13%) were between the age of 16 and 20 years, 23(22.33%) were between 21 and 25 years, 30(29.13%) were below 16 years while 20(19.41%) were 26 and above 20years. All age groups were significantly represented in the study.

Findings on the components of English language

The researcher was interested in finding out the components of English language of each respondent that participated. The results are presented in the table below;

Table 4: Distribution of components of English language

Components of English language		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Writing	20	19.42
	Speaking	23	22.33
	Listening	33	32.04
	Others	27	26.214
	Total	103	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 4 shows that when respondents were asked to indicate their components of English language, the majority of respondents 33(32.04%) were good at listening, 27(34.5%) were others, and 23(8.0%) were good at speaking and 20(19.42) were good at writing. The results show that majority of the respondents that participated in the study were good at listening.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents by type of school

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Public	70	68
	Private school	33	32
	Total	103	100.0

Source: Primary data 2023

Table From the study results, out of the 103 respondents that participated in the study, 70 (68%) were from public schools and 33 (32%) were from private schools. This shows that the biggest portion of respondents were from public schools as compared to their private school counterparts.

Table 6: Distribution of taught English lessons

<i>Taught English lessons</i>		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
<i>Valid</i>	<i>2-3 times a week</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>58.25</i>
	<i>4 times a week</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>29.13</i>
	<i>5 and above</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>9.71</i>
	<i>Others</i>	<i>03</i>	<i>2.913</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Source: Primary data 2023

When asked to indicate their When asked to indicate their components of English language, the majority of respondents 60(58.25%) were taught 2-3 times a week, 30(29.13%) were taught 4 times a week, 10(9.71%) were taught 5 and above and 03(2.913) were others. The results show that majority of the respondents that participated in the study were taught 2-3 times a week.

Distributive statistics of the study constructs

Table 7: Summery of descriptive Statistics for students' academic performance

<i>Academic performance</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>NS</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>SA</i>	
<i>I always finish activities</i>	<i>7.7</i>	<i>15.0</i>	<i>6.2</i>	<i>62.8</i>	<i>8.8</i>	

<i>given to me in time</i>						
<i>My teacher says that I'm a good performer</i>	8.0	28.3	17.7	39.8	6.2	
<i>I and my friends cooperate in finishing exercises.</i>	0.9	6.3	19.5	61.1	12.4	
<i>I'm good at essay writing</i>	0	15.0	14.2	46.0	24.8	
<i>I'm good at English comprehension</i>	12.4	5.3	26.5	61.1	5.3	
<i>I'm good in literature</i>	8.0	40.7	18.6	31.9	9	
<i>I love English as a subject</i>	8.0	42.8	17.4	46.0	1.8	
<i>I love all my English teachers</i>	8.0	33.6	27.4	26.5	4.4	
<i>My class teacher gives time to our exercises.</i>	0.9	24.8	36.3	24.8	13.3	
<i>My school employs good English teachers</i>	8.8	12.4	14.2	41.6	23.0	
<i>My schools takes us for English essay competitions</i>	2.7	8.0	17.7	52.2	19.5	
<i>My school gives all English textbooks</i>	0	4.4	21.2	65.5	8.8	
<i>My friends encourage each other to pass</i>	9	1.8	19.5	74.3	3.5	

<i>English</i>						
<i>I and my friend always participate in debates</i>	6	1.5	22.8	60.4	15.7	
<i>I and my peers participate in English discussions</i>	9.1	19.9	13.4	7.5	50.1	
<i>I enjoy reading novels</i>	4	12.4	18.9	30.4	34.3	

Key: *SD= Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, NS = Not Sure, A = Agree and SA = Strongly Agree.*

Table 7 shows that the majority of the respondents (74.3%) agree that their friends encourage each other to pass English, (65.5%) agreed that their school gives them all the English textbooks, 62.8% agree that they always finish English activities given to me in time, (61.1%) agreed that they cooperate in finishing exercises, (61.1%) agreed that they are good at English comprehension, and (52.2%) agreed that their schools takes us for English essay competitions, 60.4% agreed that they participate in debates and 50.1% strongly agreed that they participate in English discussions. On the centrally, no respondent strongly disagreed that they are good at essay writing and their school gives them all English textbooks. This indicates that the majority of the respondents love and pass English language as a subject.

Table 8: Descriptive statistics on social support and academic performance of secondary school students in English.

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Statement</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Not Sure</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.DIV</i>
1	<i>I get the support I need from my friends</i>	40 38.83	40 38.83	0 0	20 19.42	03 2.913	3.79	1.145

2	<i>I get the emotional support I need from my peers</i>	10 9.71	70 67.96	0 0	20 19.42	03 2.913	4.04	1.081
3	<i>I feel connected with my fellow peers during group discussions</i>	60 58.25	30 29.13	0 0	10 9.71	03 2.913	3.89	.920
4	<i>I feel comfortable with my fellow peers during group discussions</i>	40 38.83	30 29.13	0 0	10 9.71	23 22.33	3.74	.980
5	<i>I feel encouraged to ask questions during discussions with fellow peers</i>	10 9.71	60 58.25	0 0	03 2.913	0 0	4.13	.968

Primary data, 2023

The Mean and Standard Deviation for students who get support they need from friends were 3.79 and 1.145. Table 8 shows that the majority of the respondents who strongly agreed and agree is that they get the support they need from their friends is

38.83%. On contrary 19.42% disagreed and 2.913 strongly disagreed. The mean score suggests a relatively low level of social support from friends.

The Mean and Standard Deviation for students who get the emotional support from peers were 4.04 and 1.081. Table 8 shows that the respondents who get emotional support they need from their friends agree 67.96%, strongly agree 9.71% strongly disagreed 2.913%, disagreed 19.42 and strongly disagreed. The mean score indicates a relatively high level of emotional support from peers. Considering the positive feelings of connection, comfort, and encouragement reported during group discussions.

The Mean and Standard Deviation for students who feel connected with their fellow peers during group discussions were 3.89 and 0.920. Table 8 illustrates that the respondents who feel connected with their fellow peers during group discussions strongly agreed 58.25%, agreed 29.13%, disagreed 9.71% and strongly disagreed is 2.913%. The mean score suggests a moderate sense of connection and engagement during group discussions.

The Mean and Standard Deviation for students who feel comfortable with my fellow peers during group discussions were 3.74 and 0.980. Table 8 illustrates that the respondents who feel comfortable with my fellow peers during group discussions strongly agreed at 38.83%, agreed 29.13%, disagreed 9.72% and strongly disagreed 22.33%. The mean score indicates a relatively low level of comfort and ease of interaction during group discussions. Create a safe and non-judgmental environment during group discussions, where students feel comfortable asking questions and expressing their thoughts. Encourage respectful and inclusive conversations, allowing all students to actively participate and contribute.

The Mean and Standard Deviation for students who feel encouraged to ask questions during discussions with fellow peers were 4.13 and 0.968. Table 8 indicates that the majority of the respondents who feel encouraged to ask questions during discussions with fellow peers agreed at 58.25%, strongly agree 9.71%, disagree 2.13% and strongly disagree 0%. The mean score suggests a relatively moderate level of encouragement and support for active participation in group discussions. Equip students with resources and materials that can facilitate peer learning which comprises of online platforms for collaborative learning, or shared resources that students can access and discuss together.

Table 9: Descriptive statistics on information sharing and academic performance of secondary school students in English

S/N	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	disagree	Strongly Disagree	mean	S.DV
1	I share knowledge with my peers in English	30 29.13	30 29.13	0 0	33 32.039	10 9.71	3.42	1.208
2	I feel confident when asking questions always during peer group discussion	25 24.272	45 43.69	0 0	23 22.33	10 9.71	3.61	1.081
3	I share my	37	23	0	23	10	3.86	1.194

	<i>expertise to do my assignments with my fellow peers</i>	35.92	22.33	0	22.33	9.71		
4	<i>I have learned to do my assignments with my fellow peers</i>	55 53.4	25 24.272	0 0	10 9.71	13 12.62	3.53	1.078
5	<i>I am encouraged by my peers to participate in group discussions</i>	60 58.25	30 29.13	0 0	10 9.71	03 2.913	3.55	1.000
6	<i>I have confidence in my peer's ability to participate in group discussions</i>	27 26.21	43 41.75	0 0	20 19.42	13 12.62	3.65	1.379

Primary data, 2023

Table 9 illustrates that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students who love sharing knowledge with their peers in English were 3.42 and 1.208. The respondents who love sharing knowledge with my peers in English disagreed at 32.039%, strongly

disagreed 9.71%. On contrary 21.13% strongly agreed and agreed. The mean score suggests a relatively level of knowledge sharing among the students.

Table 9 connotes that the Mean and Standard Deviation who feel confident when asking questions during peer group discussion were 3.61 and 1.081. The respondents who feel confident when asking questions always during peer group discussion agreed at 43.69%, strongly agree 24.272%, disagree 22.33% and 9.71% strongly disagree. The mean score indicates a relatively low level of confidence in asking questions.

Table 9 connotes that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students who share their expertise to do assignments with fellow peers were 3.86 and 1.194. The respondents who share their expertise to do my assignments with fellow peers strongly agree that at 35.92%, agreed 22.33%. On contrary 22.33% disagree, 9.71% strongly disagreed. The mean score suggests a low level of collaboration and sharing of expertise among the students.

Table 9 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students who learned to do their assignments with my fellow peers were 3.53 and 1.078. The respondents who learned to do my assignments with their fellow peers strongly agreed at 53.4%, agreed 24.272%, disagreed 9.71% and 12.62% strongly disagree. The mean score suggests a moderate level of learning and collaboration in completing assignments together.

Table 9 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students who were encouraged by peers to participate in group discussions were 3.55 and 1.00. The respondents who encouraged by peers to participate in group discussions strongly agreed at 58.25%, agreed 29.13, disagreed 9.71% and strongly disagreed 2.193%. The mean score indicates a moderate level of peer encouragement for active

participation which fosters a culture of constructive feedback during peer interactions.

Table 9 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students who confidence in peer's ability to participate in group discussions were 3.65 and 1.379. The respondents who confidence in my peer's ability to participate in group discussions agreed 41.75%, strongly agree 26.21, disagree 19.42% and strongly disagree 12.62. The mean score show a moderate level of students who confidence in peer's ability to participate in group discussions

Table 10: Descriptive statistics on open communication and academic performance of secondary school students in English

S/ N	Statement	Strongl y Agree	Agree	Not Sur e	Disagre e	Strongl y Disagre e	Mea n	S.Dv
1	I exchange ideas with my fellow peers	20 19.42	40 38.83	00 00	20 19.42	23 22.33	3.83	1.195
2	I engage in a composition competition with my peers to upgrade in writing skills	50 48.5	50 48.5	00 00	03 2.913	00 00	3.91	1.177
3	Ineffective	35	35	00	20	13	3.69	1.103

	<i>communication among peers distracts learning</i>	33.981	33.981	00	19.42	12.62		
4	<i>Peer to peer communication among peers distract to effective learning</i>	70 67.96	20 19.42	00 00	10 9.71	03 2.913	3.44	1.164
5	<i>Peer to peer communication enables effective learning</i>	50 48.5	47 45.63	00 00	06 5.825	0 0.0	3.54	1.164
6	<i>Communication with my peers has helped my level of motivation to learn</i>	48 46.602	50 48.5	00 00	02 1.942	03 2.913	3.91	1.177
7	<i>Student-teacher communication has helped</i>	32 31.068	48 46.602	00 00	20 19.42	03 2.913	3.56	.944

	me to connect with colleagues outside the classroom								
8	Communication in class is meaningless without my peers	42 40.777	38 36.893	00	18 17.47		05 64.854	4.34	6.897

Primary data, 2023

Table 10 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students who exchange ideas with fellow peers were 3.83 and 1.195. The respondents who exchange ideas with my fellow peers at 38.83% agreed, strongly agreed 19.42%, disagreed 19.42% and strongly disagreed 22.33. The mean score suggests a relatively high level of open communication and idea exchange among the students.

Table 10 shows that the mean and Standard Deviation for students who engage in a composition competition with my peers to upgrade writing skills were 3.91 and 1.177. The respondents either strongly agree or agree at 48.5% , disagreed 2.913% and strongly disagreed 0% that they participate in composition competitions with their peers to enhance their writing skills. The mean score indicates a moderate level of engagement in writing competitions.

Table 10 connotes that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students whose ineffective communication among peers distracts learning were 3.69 and 1.103. The majority of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed at 33.981%, disagreed

19.42% and strongly disagreed is 12.62% that ineffective communication among peers can be distractive to learning. The mean score suggests low level of awareness of the negative impact of ineffective communication on learning.

Table 10 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students whose Peer-to-peer communication among peers distracts effective learning were 3.44 and 1.164. The respondents either strongly agreed at 67.96%, agreed 19.42%, disagreed 9.71% or strongly disagreed 2.913% that peer-to-peer communication among peers can be distracting to effective learning. The mean score indicates a higher level of recognition of the potential distractions caused by peer-to-peer communication. Which needs enhancement of the importance of balancing peer-to-peer communication.

Table 10 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation who feel that Peer-to-peer communication enables effective learning were 3.54 and 1.164. The respondents strongly agree at 48.5%, agreed 45.63%, disagreed 5.825% and strongly disagreed 0% that peer-to-peer communication enables effective learning. The mean score suggests a moderate level of acknowledgment of the positive impact of peer-to-peer communication on learning.

Table 10 indicates that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students who fell that communication with my peers has helped their level of motivation to learn were 3.91 and 1.177. The majority of the respondents agreed at 48.5%, strongly agreed 46.602%, disagreed 1.942%, strongly disagreed 2.913% that communication with their peers has positively influenced their motivation to learn. The mean score indicates a relatively moderate level of motivation resulting from peer communication.

Table 10 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation for students whose student-teacher communication has helped me to connect with colleagues outside the classroom were 3.56 and 0.944. The respondents agreed at 46.602%, strongly agreed 31.068%, disagreed 19.42% and strongly disagreed 2.913% that student-teacher communication has facilitated connections with colleagues outside the classroom. The mean score suggests a moderate level of recognition of the role of student-teacher communication in fostering connections.

Table 10 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation shows that students who feel that communication in class is meaningless without my peers were 4.34 and 0.897. The majority of the respondents strongly agree at 40.777%, agreed 36.893%, disagreed 17.476% and strongly disagreed 4.854% that communication in class is meaningful only when peers are involved. The mean score indicates a moderate level of importance placed on peer involvement in class communication.

Regression Analysis

To establish the relationship between peer group interaction and academic performance, the researcher carried out linear regression test. The results are presented in the tables below;

Table 11: Correlation between social support and academic performance of students in English

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.606 ^a	.367	.361	.31114
a. Predictors: (Constant), social support				

Source; Primary Data, 2023

The Regression results as presented in table 11 above show the adjusted R square value 0.361, it implies that academic performance of students in English only

contributes to 36.1% towards social support, the remaining 63.9% academic performance being explained by other factors. This generally shows that social support is a strong predictor of academic performance of students in English

Table 12: ANOVA values for social support and academic performance of students in English

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.224	1	6.224	64.295	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.746	102	.097		
	Total	16.970	103			
a. Dependent Variable: academic performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), social support						

Source; Primary Data, 2023

Table 12 of the study's findings shows that the regression model substantially and accurately forecasts the dependent variable. The regression model's statistical significance is demonstrated by $F = 64.295$ and $Sig = 0.000$, both less than 0.05. The regression means square value of 6.224 contrasted to the remainder mean square value of 0.097, which is substantial to zero, further supports this. This demonstrates that there is a significant relationship between social support and academic performance of students in English.

Table 13: Coefficients of social support and academic performance of students in English

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.687	.276		6.116	.000
	Social support	.572	.071	.606	8.018	.000

a. Dependent Variable: academic performance**Source; Primary Data (2023)**

The first row of the table represents the constant term in the regression model, which is 1.687. This constant indicates the expected value of the dependent variable (academic performance) when all predictor variables are set to zero. It signifies that for every one-unit increase in social support, there is an expected increase of 0.572 units in the academic performance of students in English. The standard error associated with the coefficient of social support is 0.071, reflecting the variability or uncertainty in the estimated coefficient. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for social support is 0.606. Standardized coefficients are valuable for comparing the relative importance of different predictors in the model. In this case, the Beta value indicates that social support has a moderate to strong positive influence on academic performance in English. The t-value of 8.018 is associated with the coefficient of social support, and it assesses the statistical significance of the coefficient. The reported p-value is .000, indicating that the coefficient of social support is statistically significant. This implies that social support strongly predicts academic performance in English is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.

This suggests that social support, which may include emotional, informational, or instrumental assistance from peers, teachers, or family members, plays a crucial role in fostering students' English language skills and academic success.

Table 14: Correlation between social support and academic performance of students in English

		Social support	Academic performance
Social support	Pearson Correlation	1	.469**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	102	102
Academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.469**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source; Primary Data, 2023

Table 14 above summarizes the study's outcomes and illustrates the link between social support and academic performance (the dependent variable). It demonstrates that the association between social support and academic performance is $(r) = 0.496$ using bivariate means. Given that the significant value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05 ($p < 0.05$), this suggests that social support is significantly related with academic performance of students in English language.

Table 15: Correlation between information sharing and academic performance of students in English

		Information sharing	Academic performance
Information sharing	Pearson Correlation	1	.919**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

	N	102	102
Academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.919**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

Source; Primary Data, 2023

The correlation coefficient (0.919) shows a strong positive relationship between information sharing and academic performance of students in English. This is statistically significant since the P-value (0.00) is less than 0.05 and therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no relationship between information sharing and academic performance of students in English. This indicates that the sharing of knowledge, resources, and ideas among peers, teachers, and other individuals supports the development and improvement of English language skills, doesn't lead to enhanced academic performance in English language.

Table 16: Correlation between open communication and academic performance of students in English

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.786 ^a	.776	.774	.31114
a. Predictors: (Constant), open communication				

Source; Primary Data, 2023

The Regression results as presented in table 4.16 above show the, adjusted R square value 0.776, it implies that open communication only contributes to 78% towards academic performance of students in English, the remaining 77% open communication being explained by other factors. This shows that there is a significant relationship between open communication and academic performance of students in English

Table 17: ANOVA values for open communication and academic performance of students in English

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.345	1	5.234	44.067	.000 ^b
	Residual	8.568	102	.067		
	Total	13.913	103			

a. Dependent Variable: academic performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), open communication

Source; Primary Data, 2023

Table 17 of the study's findings shows that the regression model substantially and accurately forecasts the dependent variable. The regression model's statistical significance is demonstrated by $F = 44.067$ and $Sig = 0.000$, both less than 0.05. The regression means square value of 5.234

Contrasted to the remainder mean square value of 0.067, which is substantial to zero, further supports this. This demonstrates that open communication is significantly related with academic performance of students in English.

Table 18: Coefficients of open communication and academic performance of students in English

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.431	.466		4.136	.000
	open communication	.690	.078	.701	6.087	.000

a. Dependent Variable: academic performance

Source; Primary Data (2023)

The first row of the table represents the constant term in the regression model, which is 2.431. The constant indicates the expected value of the dependent variable (academic performance) when all predictor variables are set to zero.

The coefficient of open communication (0.690) indicates that for every one-unit increase in open communication, there is an expected increase of 0.690 units in the academic performance of students in English. The standard error associated with the coefficient of open communication is 0.078, representing the variability or uncertainty in the estimated coefficient. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for open communication is 0.701. The t-value of 6.087 is associated with the coefficient of open communication, and it assesses the statistical significance of the coefficient. The reported p-value is .000, indicating that the coefficient of open communication is statistically significant. This implies that the observed significant relationship between open communication and academic performance in English.

Table 19: Correlation between open communication and academic performance of students in English

		Open communication	Academic performance
Open communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.716**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	102	102
Academic performance	Pearson Correlation	.716**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	102	102

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

The correlation coefficient (0.716) shows a strong positive relationship between open communication and academic performance of students in English. This is statistically significant since the P-value (0.001) is less than 0.05 and therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between open communication and academic performance of students in English.

Conclusions

The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of peer group interaction on the academic performance of students in Bor County in Jonglei State, South Sudan. Based on the research findings the study concluded that;

Social support is positively related to the academic performance of students in Bor County in Jonglei State, South Sudan

Information sharing is positively related to the academic performance of students in Bor County in Jonglei State, South Sudan

Open communication is positively related to the academic performance of students in Bor County in Jonglei State, South Sudan

Recommendations

Managers of educational institutions should encourage social support among students as it enhances academic performance and emotional well-being. But they should take caution on the best social support that is important for students to enhance their academic performance.

Education institutions should promote knowledge sharing among students since it's the basis for academic performance.

Education institutions should embrace open communication among students. This can be promoted in debates, seminars, and workshops.

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