# Family Influence on Student Mental Health and Academic Achievement in University Transition

Prisca Diantra Sampe[1], Dewi Puspita Sari[2], Izak Jakobis Makulua[3]

[1] Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Pattimura University, Indonesia, priscadiantrapsi@gmail.com
[2] Faculty of Psychology, Semarang University, Indonesia, dewipuspitasari062@gmail.com
[3] Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Pattimura University, Indonesia, ijakobis.makulua@mail.unpatti

**ABSTRACT**

This study explores the crucial role of social support in facilitating the transition of adolescents from high school to university, focusing on two respondents, BM and MM. BM, in his second semester at a state university, struggles with the challenges of living independently in a boarding house, feeling significant emotional strain due to limited parental communication. MM, a student at a private university, maintains a close and supportive relationship with his father, despite the absence of his mother since he was two years old. The research highlights the importance of different types of social support—appraisal, belonging, and tangible—in aiding students' adaptation to university life. Appraisal support involves the availability of someone to discuss problems, while belonging support encompasses emotional and task-related assistance from family members. Tangible support refers to material assistance provided by parents. The findings indicate that effective social support, particularly from family, is essential for promoting mental health, academic success, and overall well-being during this critical transition period. The study underscores the need for future research to explore these dynamics further, considering broader cultural and socio-economic contexts that influence the availability and effectiveness of social support.

**Keywords:** social support, university transition, adolescent mental health, parental involvement, student well-being

## INTRODUCTION

The transition from high school to college marks a significant phase for students, especially during their first year when they are referred to as new students. These students come from diverse backgrounds, personalities, and places of origin, with many at FKIP hailing from areas outside Ambon. This transition is often challenging as it involves adjustments in various aspects of life, leading to heightened stress levels that can impact mental health (Conley, Travers, & Bryant, in Gunandar & Utami, 2017). New students, being in their teenage years, face additional pressure and anxiety due to developmental changes and the need to adapt to a new environment (Sawitri & Alfiasari, 2023). Hu and Wu (2020) highlight that difficulty in adapting can adversely affect academic performance and mental well-being.

Interviews with FKIP students reveal personal struggles in adjusting to college life. XR mentioned that becoming a migrant was one of the hardest decisions, emphasizing the need for thorough preparation. Similarly, YY shared feelings of sadness and laziness when faced with

problems, underscoring the emotional challenges of migration. According to Sitepu, Alsa, and Madid (2024), social support is crucial for an individual's social competence, enhancing cooperation and empathy while reducing antisocial behavior. Sarafino and Smith (in Desiningrum, 2011) add that social support involves actions by individuals to assist others, fostering acceptance and belonging.

Parental support plays a pivotal role in ensuring psychological well-being. Without family support, individuals may experience feelings of abandonment, depression, and even violence, as noted by Desiningrum (2022). The family is seen as the most critical support system for maintaining mental health. Armstrong, Birnie-Lefcovitch, and Ungar (2005) highlight that family social support contributes to overall well-being, quality of parenting, and resilience against serious issues. Hasanah and Alfiasari (2023) also affirm that parental support positively influences the ability to adapt to new environments, although Sitepu et al. (2024) suggest that support from teachers and friends can be even more significant. Family social support is vital for the mental health and adaptation of new students. Living away from familiar support systems requires new students to navigate their academic and personal lives independently. This research aims to explore the extent and impact of family social support on new students, particularly those adjusting to new environments and the associated challenges.

**METHOD**

The research methodology employed in this study is qualitative in nature, aimed at comprehensively understanding the phenomena experienced by the research subjects. Qualitative research, as defined by Moleong (2007), involves the interpretation of experiences through words and language that are accessible and comprehensible. This approach aligns with the constructivist perspective, as elucidated by Creswell (2018), where researchers develop theories or patterns based on the knowledge claims they make through an immersive, reflective process. This particular study adopts a collective case study approach, as described by Fiantika (2022), which allows for the generalization of findings from specific cases to broader phenomena or populations. The selection of respondents was carried out using purposive sampling, targeting early-year students living in boarding houses, aged 16-18 years. This intentional selection ensures that the sample is representative of the population being studied and relevant to the research questions.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews and systematic observations. These methods facilitated a rich, detailed understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives. The analysis of the collected data followed the framework proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (as cited in Mouw, 2022), which consists of three distinct steps: Data Condensation, Data Display, and Conclusion Drawing and Verification. The initial step of data condensation involves the selection, focusing, simplification, and transformation of raw data. Field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials are systematically reviewed and distilled to capture the essence of the phenomena under study. The next phase, data display, involves organizing the data into a coherent and easily interpretable format. Visual displays such

as matrices, graphs, charts, and networks are employed to facilitate understanding and to discern patterns and trends. This stage is crucial for enabling researchers to gain insights and identify key themes that warrant further investigation.

The final step, conclusion drawing and verification, entails drawing conclusions based on the analyzed data and verifying these conclusions through a rigorous process of validation. This involves revisiting the data to confirm interpretations and ensure that the findings are grounded in the empirical evidence collected. The iterative nature of this process helps in refining the conclusions and enhancing their reliability and validity. Through these meticulous and systematic methods, the study aims to generate a nuanced understanding of the experiences of new students transitioning to college life, with a particular focus on the role of social support in their adaptation and well-being.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION
### Respondent Identity

Respondent 1, BM, is the second child of two siblings, currently in his second semester at a state university in Ambon. Both his parents are teachers. BM chose to study in Ambon due to the lower costs compared to other places. He lives in a boarding house, which he finds challenging. He experiences a stark contrast between his current life and when he lived with his parents, often feeling deep sadness due to their absence. Communication with his parents is limited to after class, and sometimes not at all if his mother is busy. Respondent 2, MM, is the third of four children and studies at a private university in Ambon. His father is a fisherman, and his mother left the family when he was two years old. MM chose to study in Ambon, his hometown, to improve his life and make his father proud. He has a close and emotional relationship with his father, who has been both a mother and father to him. MM often feels emotional, particularly when he remembers his father's sacrifices and support.

### Social Support and Its Importance

Social support is crucial for adolescents, as highlighted by Qizi (2020), who stated that parents play a significant role in their independence, decision-making, and development of common sense. This study explores themes of appraisal support, belonging support, and tangible support. Appraisal support, as defined by Desiningrum (2022), involves an individual's perception of availability to discuss problems. BM, who identifies as an indifferent individual, handles most issues on his own, only reaching out to his parents for serious problems. He admits that although he has a good relationship with his parents, their upbringing involved forced independence, leading to aggressive tendencies in his behavior, especially when dealing with conflicts. Conversely, MM prefers to share everything with his father, who has been a constant support. Despite his mother's absence, his father's dedication has made MM feel secure and valued. McCarty et al. (2005) suggest that emotional support fosters the externalization of values, which is evident in MM's

strong bond with his father. This contrasts with Hastuti et al. (2020), who emphasize the mother's role in instilling positive values.

## Belonging Support

BM revealed that he often handles everything by himself, including his decision to study in Ambon, which his parents did not fully support. They believed he needed to learn independence by managing his own tasks. This approach contradicts the essential role of parents in facilitating children's development, as suggested by Swastika and Choiriyah (2022). Juwariyah et al. (2019) also emphasized the importance of parents as tutors in their children's growth and decision-making processes. MM, on the other hand, finds significant support from his father, who helps him with all his assignments and tasks, making them easier to manage. Ceka and Murati (2016) assert that parental involvement fosters positive development, aiding in the child's overall growth and personality development.

## Tangible Support

Tangible support, according to Desiningrum (2022), refers to material assistance provided by parents. Both BM and MM receive financial support to meet their needs. Despite financial constraints, MM's father, with the help of his older brother, ensures that all necessary expenses are covered. This financial support is crucial for both respondents, as it enables them to focus on their studies without worrying about material needs.

The transition from adolescence to adulthood, particularly in the context of moving from high school to university, presents significant challenges and adjustments for students. This study focuses on two respondents, BM and MM, who are experiencing this transition while living away from their families. Their experiences highlight the critical role of social support in their adaptation and overall well-being. Respondent 1, BM, is the second child of two siblings and is currently in his second semester at a state university in Ambon. Both his parents are teachers, and he chose to study in Ambon due to the lower costs compared to other locations. BM lives in a boarding house, which he finds challenging, particularly due to the contrast between his current life and his previous life with his parents. He often feels deep sadness due to their absence and has limited communication with them, mostly restricted to after class when his mother is not busy. Respondent 2, MM, is the third of four children and studies at a private university in Ambon. His father is a fisherman, and his mother left the family when he was two years old. MM chose to study in Ambon, his hometown, to improve his life and make his father proud. He has a close and emotional relationship with his father, who has been both a mother and father to him. MM often feels emotional, particularly when he remembers his father's sacrifices and support.

Social support is vital for adolescents, especially during transitional phases such as starting university. Qizi (2020) emphasizes that parents play a crucial role in fostering independence, decision-making, and common sense in teenagers. This study identifies three key types of social support: appraisal support, belonging support, and tangible support. Appraisal support, as defined

by Desiningrum (2022), refers to an individual's perception of the availability of someone to discuss problems. BM, who is more indifferent, manages most issues on his own, reaching out to his parents only for serious problems. His upbringing, which emphasized forced independence, has led to aggressive tendencies in his behavior, especially in conflicts. This aligns with findings by Knafo and Galansky (2008), who note that shifts in values between children and parents can impact socialization and relationships. In contrast, MM shares everything with his father, whose dedication has made him feel secure and valued. McCarty et al. (2005) suggest that emotional support helps in the externalization of values, evident in MM's strong bond with his father. This supports Hastuti et al. (2020), who highlight the mother's role in instilling positive values, although in MM's case, his father has successfully filled this role.

BM's experience of handling everything by himself, including his decision to study in Ambon, reflects a lack of belonging support from his parents. They believed he needed to learn independence by managing his own tasks, which contradicts the essential role of parents in facilitating children's development, as suggested by Swastika and Choiriyah (2022). Juwariyah et al. (2019) also emphasize the importance of parents as tutors in their children's growth and decision-making processes. Conversely, MM benefits significantly from his father's support, which helps him manage his assignments and tasks more effectively. Ceka and Murati (2016) assert that parental involvement fosters positive development, aiding in the child's overall growth and personality development.

Tangible support, according to Desiningrum (2022), refers to material assistance provided by parents. Both BM and MM receive financial support to meet their needs, despite financial constraints. MM's father, with help from his older brother, ensures all necessary expenses are covered. This financial support is crucial, enabling both respondents to focus on their studies without worrying about material needs. The experiences of BM and MM underscore the multifaceted nature of social support and its impact on students' adaptation to university life. Effective social support, particularly from family, is essential for their emotional well-being and academic success. The findings align with international research highlighting the importance of parental support in various forms—emotional, material, and developmental—in fostering resilience and positive outcomes in young adults (Armstrong, Birnie-Lefcovitch, & Ungar, 2005; Yu et al., 2022; Knafo & Galansky, 2008). The study illustrates the critical role of social support in helping students navigate the challenges of transitioning to university life. While BM and MM's experiences differ, both highlight the importance of familial support in promoting mental health, academic success, and overall well-being. Future research should further explore these dynamics, considering the broader cultural and socio-economic contexts that influence the availability and effectiveness of social support.

**CONCLUSION**

This study highlights the pivotal role of social support in facilitating the transition of adolescents, like respondents BM and MM, from high school to university life. BM, who manages

his challenges independently, and MM, who relies heavily on his father's support, exemplify how varying levels of parental involvement and support impact their emotional well-being and academic success. The findings underscore the importance of appraisal, belonging, and tangible support in aiding students' adaptation. Effective social support from family not only promotes mental health and academic achievement but also helps students navigate the multifaceted challenges of university life. Future research should explore these dynamics further, considering the broader cultural and socio-economic contexts that shape the availability and impact of social support.

## REFERENCES

Armstrong, M.I., Birnie-Lefcovitch, S., & Ungar, M.T. 2005. Pathways Between Social Support, Family Well-Being, Quality of Parenting and Child Reslience: What We Know. Journal of Child and Family Studies, 14(2), 269-281

Ceka, A., & Murrati, R. 2016. The Role of Parents in The Education of Children. Journal of Education and Practice, 7(5), 61-64

Cresswell, J.W., & Poth, C.N. 2018. Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design Choosing Among Five Approaches.California:SAGE Publication

Desinigrum, D.R. 2022. Emotional Competence, Family Social Support and Parental Stress in Mothers of Children With Autism During the Pandemic. Journal of Educational, Health and Community Psychology, 11(1), 342-363

Dewi, S.S. 2017. Parent's Involvement in Children's English Language Learning. IJET, 6(1), 102-122

Estvez, E., & Gongora, J.N. 2009. Adolescent Aggresion Towards Parents:Factors Associated and Intervention Proposals. Nova Science Publisher Inc.

Gunandar, M.S., & Utami, M.S. 2017. Hubungan antara Dukungan Sosial Orang Tua dengan Penyesuaian Diri Mahasiswa Baru yang Merantau. Gadjah Mada Journal of Psychology, 3(2), 98-109

Fiantika, F.R. 2022. Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. Padang:PT Global Eksekutfif Teknologi

Jannah, M., Hariastuti, R.T. & Nursalim, M. 2023. Negatice Impact of a Dysfunctional Family on Adolescents:A Literature Study. Harmoni Sosial:Jurnal Pendidikan IPS, 10(2), 109-121

Hasanah, N.N., &Alfiasari. 2023. The Importance of Social Support for Adolescents Adjustment Capabilities of Inonesian Migrant Worker Family. Journal of Child, Family and Consumer Studies, 2(2), 101-112

Hastuti, D., Arlianty, L.S., & Simanjutak, M. 2021. Childrens Values, Social Support, Mother;s Roles, and Psychososcial Stimulation in Boys and Girls. Journal of Family Sciences, 6(1), 20-36

Hu, B., & Wu, W. 2020. Parental Support in Education and Social Integration of Migrant Children in Urban Public Schools in China. Science Direct Elsevier, 106

Juwariyah, S. Slamet, A., & Kustiono. (2019). Analysis of Parenting and Involvement of Parents in Early Childhood. Journal of Primary Education, 8(3), 364-370

Knafo, A., & Galanksy, N. 2008. The Influence of Children on Their Parents Values. Social and personality Psychology Compass, 2(3), 1143-1161

Mangrio, E., Enskar, K., Rmaji, R., Sjorgen-Forss, K., Tengland, P-A., Theodoridis, K., Zdravkovic, S. & Ramgrad, M. 2022. The Need for Parental Support for Migrant Parents in Transistion Into Sweden: A Persepctive. Perspective: Froontiers in Public Health, 10, 1-7, https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.680767

Martin, F., Ferrey, A. Hobbs, L., Lascelles, K., Van Even, S., & Oliver, T. 2024. Understanding the Impact of Childrens and Young People's Self Harm on Parental Well-Being: a Systematic Literature Review of Qualitative and Quatitative Findings. Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 1-14

McCarty, C.A. Zimmerman, F.J., Disgiuseppe, D.L., & Christakis, D.A. 2005. Parental Emotional Support and Subsequent Internalizing and Externalizing Problems Among Children. Developmental and Behavioral Pediactrics, 26(4), 267-275

Moleng, L.J. 2007. Metodologi Penelitian Kualittaif. Bandung:Remaja Rosdakarya

Mouw, E. 2022. Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif. Padang:PT Global Eksekutfif Teknologi

Qizi, S.G. 2020. The Role of Parents in Teenager's Independent Decision Making. International Journal on Integrated, 3(6), 45-47

Sawitri, F., & Alfiasari. 2023. Adolescents Subjective Well-Being of Indonesian Migrant Workers Families: The Role of Social Support and Parental Communication. Komunitas:International Journal of Indonesian Society and Culture, 15(1), 67-76

Sitepu, J.M. Alsa, A., & Madiid, A. 2024. The Influence of Parent, Peer, Teacher Support on Students's Social Competence Using Structural Equation Modeling. Educational Aministrastion: Theory and Practice, 30(5), 9050-9060

Swastika, L.S., & Choiriyah. 2022. The Role of Parents as Facilitators in Helping Children to Learn During the Covid-19 Pandemic. Journal of Early Childhood Educational, 4(1), 34-47

Yu, X., Kong, X., Cao, Z., Chen, Z., Zhang, L., & Yu, B. 2022. Social Support and Family Functioning during Adolescence: a Two- Wave Cross-Lagged Study. International Journal of Enviroment Research and Public Health, 19(10)