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# Teachers' Support Characteristics, Peer Relations, and Academic Confidence of Undergraduate Education Students

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ABSTRACT: This survey-correlational research design aimed to determine the teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence of undergraduate education students. The respondents were one hundred thirty-seven (137) undergraduate education students. The independent variables were the teachers' support characteristics and peer relations while the dependent variable was the academic confidence. The statistical tools used were frequency count, mean, standard deviation, ANOVA, and Pearson r. Data were gathered using the standardized teachers' support characteristics questionnaire adopted by Collin & Martin (2014), Hager et al. (2007), and Luciano et al. (2020); peer relations standardized questionnaire adopted from Aydogdu (2022); and standardized academic confidence questionnaire adopted from Schwarzer, & Jerusalem (1995), Goñi et al. (2019), and Pekrun et al. (2014). The findings of the study revealed that the level of teachers' support characteristics was high. The level of peer relations was very high. The level of academic confidence was high. There was a significant difference in academic confidence based on teachers' support characteristics in favor of excellent support characteristics and peer relations in favor of very high peer relations. Furthermore, there were positive, strong associations, and significant relationships among teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence.

**KEYWORDS:** Teachers' Support Characteristics, Peer Relations, Academic Confidence, Undergraduate Education Students.

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a way of enriching a student's understanding of the different academic fields. It serves as a measurement of one's academic capabilities and abilities, yet it must also observe the manner of student enrichment. The world is driven by the progressive nature of the individuals' knowledge as molded and developed by education. However, education is not always about the development of knowledge. Academic institutions, professors, and researchers shall not only focus on the development of a student's academic knowledge, for a student's academic confidence must also be looked upon.

Academic institutions are built as a center of development for students, wherein the key to student development is the teachers. Teachers, especially the support characteristics that they provide, influence how students perform at school. Teachers' support characteristics must not only aim to develop the academic knowledge of students, but it must develop their academic confidence as well. Without academic confidence, students hinder themselves from believing in their abilities and capabilities, which affects their total academic performance and causes a slow build-up of academic development. Hence, students can academically succeed through a process of the development of academic confidence as guided and determined by the teacher support characteristics.

Moreover, teachers are not the only external group of individuals that influence the academic confidence of students. Peers, who are a group of people related to students, particularly in an academic setting, can influence the academic confidence of students too. Similar to teacher support characteristics, peer relations can negatively or positively influence the academic confidence of the students. Accessing the academic performance of students is critical for





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teachers to comprehend how such factors of teachers' support characteristics and peer relations affect the academic confidence of students. Therefore, the conduct of this research is crucial to understand how variables such as teachers' support characteristics and peer relations move and influence the students to be academically confident since academic confidence has a pivotal role for students to attain academic development and success.

This study aimed to determine the teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence of undergraduate education students in the College of Teacher Education for the school year 2023-2024. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

- 1. What is the level of teachers' support characteristics as an entire group and in terms of autonomy support, emotional support, and teacher adaptability?
- 2. What is the level of peer relations as an entire group and in terms of interpersonal trust, friendship, and peer acceptance?
- 3. What is the level of academic confidence as an entire group and in terms of self-efficacy, self-concept, and academic emotions?
- 4. Are there significant differences in academic confidence based on the teachers' support characteristics and peer relations?
- 5. Are there significant relationships among teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence of undergraduate education students?

#### II. RELATED LITERATURE

Teachers' support characteristics refer to various forms of assistance provided by teachers in students' academic activities, such as offering help, building trust, forming friendships, and stimulating students' interest. Teacher support characteristics can be viewed from two perspectives: broad or narrow, The broad perspective, as described in the social support framework by [3], defines teacher support characteristics as the provision of informational, instrumental, emotional, and appraisal support to students in any context. Teachers' support characteristics strengthen the teacher-student relationship. Specifically, teachers who demonstrate care and concern for their students often receive reciprocation from these students who show respect and adhere to classroom norms [4]. In contrast, when teachers shout at students, blame them, or use aggressive discipline, these students tend to show less concern for the teacher and exhibit fewer cooperative behaviors in the classroom [3].

Teachers' support characteristics not only enhance students' motivation to learn but also mitigate the negative impact of low motivation on their learning, as cited in the study by [5] It follows, then, that students who perceive their teachers as supportive and as promotive help-seeking behavior, may report higher levels of adaptability [2]. Teacher adaptability is an emerging construct in research on teacher classroom behaviors with evidence of correlation to improved outcomes for both teachers and students posited [6]. [7], furthermore found that more adaptable teachers tend to use teaching practices in the classroom that adjust to the needs of the students.

Interpersonal trust mediated the relationship between peer relationships. The findings of the study show that college students with good peer relationships are more likely to show the willingness to cooperate in creating friendships and excel well in their academics. Good peer relationships can aid people in developing positive moral qualities and interpersonal trust. reduce the psychological gap between people, resulting in increased cooperation and willingness to work toward shared objectives among peers. This suggests that college students should fully trust their peers when cooperating, to better accomplish common goals [8]. [9] explained that there is considerable evidence that children's peer relationships and interpersonal trust beliefs are interrelated.

Trust among others could be one way that peers support constructive conversations with friends and other people regarding individuals as trustworthy, dependable, and worthy of trust. It is therefore assumed that these trusting beliefs drive the urge to participate in compassionate and cooperative interpersonal interactions to foster and preserve amicable interpersonal interactions. This implies that a crucial element of healthy trust-building involves identifying which traits and actions to avoid classmates in school are deserving of one's confidence of peers. [10], pointed out that trust management is important for peers to assess the trustworthiness of students and to interact selectively. In the paper, they consider that interpersonal trust has a significant relationship in peer relationships. To improve the resistance of negative peers, they must find the right group of friends to prevent misunderstandings and evaluate the trustworthiness of a peer.





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Moreover, [11] suggest that when students at the masters' level experienced positive facilitation and support from their teachers, they tend to enhance their efficacious behavior in academics thus, furthering their academic engagement. [12] emphasized that friendship is important for once well-being and school adjustment. Peer relationship are positively related to self-worth which is very important to improve one's academic confidence.

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[13] results showed that peer relationships and interpersonal trust have a key influence on the learning motivation and academic confidence of students from different backgrounds. Peer groups are like the pinnacle of society for college students. Students who get along with their peers learn to respect and value others, as well as how to help and collaborate, as well as how to understand and embrace themselves. Female classmates were found to be more caring about their classmates' lives than male classmates, and this phenomenon was defined as "females are the group that attaches more importance to relationships" Therefore, females are more intimate, sharing, and loyal than males when it comes to peer relationships and interpersonal trust. Males are accustomed to being in big peer groups and treat most people as friends, but girls typically have smaller social circles and close interactions. Compared to men, women spend more time interacting with others and socializing.

The results of [14] systematic review in 2021 indicate that compared with negative academic emotions, positive academic emotions may be more effective at improving certain aspects of learning effects, especially in high school and college students. The results not only contribute to an understanding of the different learning effects of academic emotions but also have some practical significance. There is growing support for incorporating the regulation of students' academic emotions into classroom teaching plans, perhaps through different learning materials, learning environments, teaching methods, and facial recognition tools, to study students' academic emotions throughout the learning process as an effective way to improve learning effects. Thus, knowing how to incorporate the regulation of students' academic emotions in an academic setting is essential in understanding how to constructively develop their academic confidence.

In the discussion, it was found that there is a positive and significant relationship between students' self-concept and academic motivation. The positive and significant relationship between students' self-concept and academic motivation could be a result of the fact that academic motivation brings about good academic achievement which inculcates in students' confidence that culminates in consistently good academic achievement [15].

The students who consistently obtain good academic performance develop a high level of confidence which can result in a build-up in motivation necessary for future good academic performance. Thus, academic confidence is a factor in honing the motivation of students to perform in school. Cited in the study of [16], when students do not have the self-concept and self-confidence to achieve learning in school, they are not motivated to succeed. When people activate their learning goal orientation, they interpret the situations as opportunities, which means they perceive themselves as capable of obtaining academic excellence [17]. The results of their study show a positive and significant relationship between learning motivation and students' self-concept, thus incorporating the need for confidence in the academic setting.

Students with a positive academic self-concept are motivated and determined to achieve their goals due to their high confidence [18]. Based on the study of [18] on the self-concept of minority and majority elementary school students, the result shows that the explicit measure of academic self-concept displays incremental predictive validity for students' achievement. Hence, a student with self-concept denotes the confidence to achieve

#### III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey-correlational method of research involving 137 undergraduate education students who were selected using stratified random sampling. The sample was determined using Slovin's formula. Data were





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gathered using the standardized teacher's support characteristics questionnaire adopted by [6], [19], and [20]; the peer relations standardized questionnaire adopted from [21]; and the standardized academic confidence questionnaire adopted from [22], [23], and [24]. The instrument was validated by the panel members of experts. Their suggestions and comments for instrument development were incorporated into the questionnaire. Once the instrument was validated, the questionnaire underwent a reliability test using SPSS Software. The independent variable was the teachers' support characteristics and peer relations while the dependent variable was the academic confidence of education students. Data analysis included descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, standard deviation) and inferential statistics (ANOVA, Pearson correlation coefficient), with a significance level (alpha) set at 0.05.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Level of Teachers' Support Characteristics

The level of teachers' support characteristics as an entire group and in terms of teachers' adaptability, autonomy support, and emotional support are shown in Table 1. Data show that the level of teachers' support characteristics is high (M = 4.10, SD = .47). It also shows that the teachers' adaptability (M = 4.12, SD = .49), autonomy support (M = 4.09, SD = .54), and emotional support (M = 4.10, SD = .59) are high.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Support Characteristics

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Teachers' Support Characteristics	4.10	High	.47
Teachers' Adaptability	4.12	High	.49
Autonomy Support	4.09	High	.54
Emotional Support	4.10	High	.59

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The teachers' support characteristics are high. This implies that oftentimes teachers provide a supportive and caring environment where students feel valued and understood. Teachers oftentimes offer help with academic challenges and provide constructive feedback which helps students to achieve their best. This is because teachers are approachable, empathic, and have a positive relationship with the students.

The teachers' adaptability is high. This implies that teachers frequently adjust their teaching strategies to meet the specific needs of their students. This flexibility ensures that their instruction is inclusive, accommodates different learning styles, and promotes continuous student engagement. By adapting easily, teachers create a more productive and supportive environment that helps students succeed. The students often feel more engaged, confident, and capable leading to greater success and self-efficacy in their learning.

The autonomy support is high. This implies that teachers often encourage independence, active learning, and student-centered instruction. This promotes and boosts students' interest, intrinsic motivation, and overall well-being. This is because teachers create a learning environment that reduces tension and fosters engagement, creating a more positive and engaging environment.

The emotional support is high. This implies that teachers often create a secure and nurturing classroom where students feel understood and valued. Teachers frequently address individual challenges, encourage peer interactions, and show genuine interest in students' needs. This is because teachers are sensitive to students' emotions, support their autonomy and choices, and foster open communication.

#### **B.** Level of Peer Relations

The level of peer relations as an entire group and in terms of interpersonal trust, friendship, and peer acceptance are shown in Table 2. Data show that the level of peer relations is very high (M = 4.27, SD = .47). It also shows that interpersonal trust (M = 4.31, SD = .59), friendship (M = 4.25, SD = .49), and peer acceptance (M = 4.24, SD = .53) are very high.





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Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Peer Relations

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Peer Relations	4.27	Very High	.47
Interpersonal Trust	4.31	Very High	.59
Friendship	4.25	Very High	.49
Peer Acceptance	4.24	Very High	.53

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The peer relations are very high. This implies that the students always have strong interpersonal trust, develop close and supportive friendships, interact positively, and provide emotional support to each other. It is because they have a healthy and collaborative relationship that they can thrive both academically and personally.

The interpersonal trust is very high. This suggests that students always trust one another, fostering respect, positive traits, and mutual support. It is because having interpersonal trust reflects resilience among peers, creating a solid foundation for meaningful relationships and effective collaboration in both academic and social settings.

Moreover, peer acceptance is very high. This implies that acceptance by peers always leads students to have academic development. It is because building closer peer relationships and significant cooperative tendencies linked with peer trust not only develop social skills but also develop their academic skills through peer influence. Peer acceptance fosters persistence and a sense of belonging. Thus, if students are accepted by peers, they tend to learn from each other and adapt their habits of completing academic responsibilities that are deemed to be essential for their academic growth.

#### C. Level of Academic Confidence

The level of academic confidence of undergraduate education students as an entire group and in terms of self-efficacy, self-concept, and academic emotions are shown in Table 3. Data show that the level of academic confidence is high (M = 4.97, SD = .47). It also shows that self-efficacy (M = 4.11, SD = .59), self-concept (M = 3.86, SD = .49), and academic emotions (M = 3.94, SD = .53) are high.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Academic Confidence

Variable	Mean	Description	SD
Academic Confidence	3.97	High	.47
Self-Efficacy	4.11	High	.59
Self-Concept	3.86	High	.49
Academic Emotions	3.94	High	.53

Note Interval. 4.21–5.00: Very High, 3.41–4.20: High, 2.61–3.40: Moderate, 1.81–2.60: Low, and 1.00–1.80: Very Low

The academic confidence is high. This implies that the students are oftentimes confident of their academic skills, and feel capable of overcoming challenges and achieving their goals. It is because the students are academically confident and self-assured of their abilities, allowing them to successfully achieve their academic endeavors.

The self-efficacy is high. This implies that students are oftentimes confident in their skills. They can adapt and utilize such in achieving their academic goals or tasks. It is because they are confident that they always finish the tasks given to them with motivation, great effort, and perseverance.

The self-concept is high. This implies that students often see themselves highly. It is because they have high regard for themselves in the academic setting. This is explained by how academic successes and failures have consistently evolved. An adequate consistent high level of performance leads to the development of a good and high degree of self-





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concept, and vice versa. Also, self-concept has an interrelated link with academic motivation, where academic motivation leads to academic achievement, thereby having a high self-concept.

Moreover, academic emotions are high. This implies that students often feel positive emotions about their academic performance. This is because having a positive emotion reflects success in accomplishing academic tasks. Positive emotions have an optimistic impact on a student's view and drive toward how they approach their scholastic endeavors.

#### D. Differences in Academic Confidence Based on the Teachers' Support Characteristics and Peer Relations

The differences in academic confidence based on teachers' support characteristics and peer relations are shown in Table 4. Data show that there is a significant difference in academic confidence based on the teachers' support characteristics  $F(29.432^*) = .000$ , and peer relations  $F(29.977^*) = .000$ , p < .05. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the academic confidence based on the teachers' support characteristics and peer relations is rejected.

Table 4: ANOVA on the Differences in Academic Confidence Based on Teachers' Support Characteristics and Peer Relations

Category	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Teacher's Support Characteristics					
Between Groups	13.333	3	4.378	29.432*	.000
Within Groups	19.782	133	.149		
Total	32.915	136			
Peer Relations					
Between Groups	12.452	3	4.151	29.977*	.000
Within Groups	20.463	133	.154		
Total	32.915	136			

<sup>\*</sup>p < .05 - significant at 5% level

The academic confidence varies significantly based on teachers' support characteristics. This suggests that the level of academic confidence students feel can be strongly influenced by the way teachers provide support and encouragement. This concept highlights the important role teachers play not just in delivering academic content, but also in shaping students' beliefs about their abilities and potential for success. It is because the way teachers interact with their students—through encouragement, support, and guidance—can play a pivotal role in shaping students' confidence in their academic abilities. Teachers who provide consistent, personalized, and constructive support are more likely to foster a sense of academic self-efficacy, while those who fail to do so may inadvertently contribute to lower academic confidence among their students.

Similarly, the difference in academic confidence based on peer relations suggests that the social dynamics among students—how they interact, support, and influence each other—can significantly affect their individual beliefs in their own academic abilities. In other words, students' confidence in their academic skills is not only shaped by their own experiences with teachers or coursework but also by their relationships with their classmates. This highlights the significant role that social interactions play in shaping students' academic self-beliefs. Positive peer relations—marked by support, collaboration, and shared academic goals—tend to enhance academic confidence, while negative peer dynamics—characterized by competition, exclusion, or criticism—can undermine it.

#### E. Relationships among Teachers' Support Characteristics, Peer Relations, and Academic Confidence

The relationships among teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence of undergraduate education students are shown in Table 5. Data reveal that there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between teachers' support characteristics r = .651\*, p = .000 < .05, and academic confidence. There is also a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between peer relations r = .642\*, p = .000 < .05, and academic confidence. Furthermore, there is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between teachers'





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support characteristics r = .592\*, p = .000 < .05, and peer relations. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there are no significant relationships among teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence is rejected.

Table 5: Relationships among Teachers' Support Characteristics, Peer Relations, and Academic Confidence

Variables	r-value	Sig
Teachers' Support Characteristics and Academic Confidence	.651*	.000
Peer Relations and Academic Confidence	.642*	.000
Teachers' Support Characteristics and Peer Relations	.592*	.000

\*p < .05 - significant at 5% level

There is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between teachers' support characteristics and academic confidence. It implies that the way teachers interact with and support their students is a key factor in fostering students' belief in their own academic abilities. This suggests that the more supportive, encouraging, and effective a teacher is in their interactions with students, the higher the students' academic confidence will be.

There is a positive, strong association, and significant relationship between peer relations and academic confidence. It implies that students' social interactions and relationships with their classmates play a crucial role in shaping their beliefs about their academic abilities. This means that the quality of peer relationships—whether they are supportive, collaborative, or encouraging—can significantly enhance students' confidence in their capacity to succeed in academic tasks.

There is a positive and significant relationship between teachers' support characteristics and peer relations. It suggests that the way teachers support and interact with students can directly influence the dynamics and quality of peer relationships in the classroom. Essentially, supportive teachers can create an environment that fosters healthy, collaborative, and positive peer interactions.

#### V. CONCLUSIONS

When teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence are all high, the classroom environment becomes a nurturing ecosystem where students feel emotionally supported, academically empowered, and socially connected. This creates a virtuous cycle: supportive teachers encourage positive peer relationships, which in turn build academic confidence, which then leads to greater engagement, collaboration, and academic success. High academic confidence fosters continued motivation and perseverance, which fuels further success. Ultimately, this creates a positive, thriving learning environment that promotes both personal and academic growth, setting students up for success both in the classroom and beyond.

Given that there are differences in academic confidence based on teacher support characteristics and peer relations, it reflects the multifaceted nature of academic confidence. Teacher support and peer relationships each play a critical role in shaping how students feel about their academic abilities, and the interaction between these two factors can either reinforce or diminish a student's confidence. The key takeaway is that both teacher support and positive peer relations are essential for fostering academic confidence, and efforts to improve both can help create a more supportive, inclusive, and empowering learning environment for students.

The relationships between teachers' support characteristics, peer relations, and academic confidence are complex and interconnected. Teachers who create a supportive and inclusive classroom environment can help foster positive peer interactions, which in turn can bolster students' academic confidence. Similarly, positive peer relationships can amplify the effects of teacher support on students' academic self-efficacy, leading to better academic outcomes overall. Understanding how these elements interact can provide insights into how to improve student motivation, engagement, and achievement.





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