

THE DYNAMICS OF PEER INFLUENCE IN THE ACADEMIC LIFE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS: A PHENOMENOLOGY

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Abstract-The purpose of this study was to describe the dynamics of peer relationships and the extent they were experienced that influenced the academic lives of the college students; how they coped with the challenges in mingling with peers and the insights to peer statuses and relationships. Phenomenological approach was utilized with 17 college students from Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges of General Santos City, Philippines for School Year 2015-2016 who were picked to undergo in depth interview and focused group discussion. The results of the interview were transcribed, translated and coded to produce themes. As regards to college students' experiences on dynamic peer influence, the following were the themes: sense of belonging and acceptance, anchorage and refuge, collaboration, connivance and negative influence. As look upon to their challenges in mingling with peers, the themes were created: blending in, being candid and open, and imposing boundaries. As to their insights, the themes were generated: social support and influence, kinship and camaraderie, and commitment.

Keywords: To provide common understanding about the important terms and concepts used in the study, they were operationally defined below:

Dynamics of Peer Influence. This refers to the factors of the peer group that would greatly affect individual interactions and relationships which could be about peer statuses or friendship. Peer statuses which could describe how popular or acceptable a student in a peer relationship could be a great influence in their school academic success. This could also, where it was believed that friendship influence children's attitudes towards school and how successful are they in the classroom. A study conducted by Wentzel, Barry & Caldwell (2004) support that students who did not have friends engaged in less prosocial behavior had lower grades and were more emotionally depressed, than their counterparts with one or more friends were more emotionally distressed, are academically oriented, socially skilled and have positive school achievement as well as were linked to a lower level of negative behavior.

Academic life of College Students. This refers to the school achievements on the required subjects offered in the different academic programs of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges where the respondents are presently enrolled. Their school achievements might be Very Good, Good or Poor.

Phenomenology. This refers to a kind of qualitative research which is concerned with the study of phenomena actually experienced by the college students. It is reliving the experiences of the RMMC college students who are involved in the study who actually had experienced the dynamics of peer relationships that one way or the other had influenced their academic life success. Through this kind of the study, the participants will be helped relived their experiences by going deeper into their thoughts to surface complex issues in peer relationships, by identifying the essence of those experiences as described by the student participants, through interview and group discussions.



INTRODUCTION

In addition to families and teachers, peers who are children of about same age or maturity level, also play powerful roles in children's development and schooling (Lansford, Dishion & Doge, 2010; Robin & Caplan, 2010; Wentzel & Watkins, 2010). Researchers have found out that children who play well with others and have at least one close friend adjust better in the transition to first grade, achieve more in school, and are more mentally healthy (Ladd, Birch & Buks, 2009). One of the most important functions of the peer group is to provide source of information and comparison about the world outside the family.

Relative to this, good peer relations might be necessary for normal development (Howes & Tonyan, 2000; Robin & Caplan, 2010). Social isolation or the inability to plug in to a social network, is linked with many problems and disorders, ranging from delinquency and problem drinking to depression (Kupersmith & Corie, 1990). In the same vein, a study conducted had reported that poor peer relation in childhood were associated with dropping out of school and delinquent behaviors in adolescence (Roff, Sells & Golden, 2012). In another study, harmonious peer relations in adolescence were related to positive mental health of midlife (Hightower, 2010).

Aware of these dynamics of peer relations, this motivated us to gather information about their influence on the academic life of the students. It is a fact that as children begin to move away from parental influence, the peer group opens new perspectives and frees them to make independent judgment. One of the positive influences of peer relations is that children can gauge their abilities realistically and gain a clearer sense of self efficacy (Bandura, 1994). The peer group helps children learn how to get along in society, that is how to adjust their needs and desires to those of others, when to yield and when to stand firm.

As a matter of fact, no qualitative research is done specifically on the dynamics of peer influence on the academic life of college students. The fact that college professors and college personnel do not always recognize the dynamics of peer influence on the academic life of students, it suggests that more research is necessary in order to inform better parents and the community about the problems on peer relationships especially their effects to academic achievement.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe how the dynamics of peers, influence the academic life of college students. This study involves college students of Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Colleges (RMMC), General Santos City, with the objective of gaining a clearer understanding of the factors among peer statuses and peer relationship that may influence the educational life of the students specifically in the said college.

This study also envisions to record down experiences of college students while experiencing peer relationships that would likely affect their academic success in life. This phenomenological study presents evidences about the informants'

personal characteristics, activities and achievement in school, experiences they encountered with friends in the peer group they involved with, their desires and ambitions in life as college students, and their capacity to stay strong and face squarely the challenges in life to survive some dynamics of peer that one way or the other may influence their academic success.

In this study, the intention is to work closely, listen and grasp the stories as unveiled by the college students while enjoying or struggling the life as a member of the peer group and how they were able to survive peer pressures and control themselves in order to choose events in peer relationship that would let them fail or succeed in their academic life particularly on how they cope with the negative influence that happened in peer group relationship as how they were able to maintain their harmonious status and friendship producing positive effects in their academic life.

Research Questions

This study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the dynamics of peer relationships and the extent they were experienced that influence the academic lives of the college student?
2. How do college students cope with the challenges in mingling with peers?
3. What insights to peer statuses and relationships could be drawn from the results of the study?

METHODOLOGY

This section presents the nature of the study, the research design to be used with regard to presentation, analysis and interpretation, the philosophical assumptions, role of the researcher, research participants, the data collection process, data analysis, trustworthiness which includes the following: credibility, conformability, transferability and dependability of the study and all individuals involved and the ethical considerations in the process.

Research Design

In this study, we applied descriptive qualitative method particularly phenomenology. Phenomenology is concerned with the study of human perception of events or phenomena from the actual happenings in the real world. It is reliving the experiences of participants who will be involved in the study and will be going deeper into their thoughts, identifying the essence of the experiences as described by the participants, though lengthy discussions (Campbell, 2011; Creswell, 2007; Speziale and Carpenter, 2007; Willis, 2007).

We used the phenomenological approach because it is a powerful tool in getting a clear understanding of human experiences, penetrating into their thoughts, feelings and actions in order to gain insights from their experiences. It will clearly

illustrate the specific details of the experiences and how they will be seen by the subjects in the situation. It is an appropriate instrument in our study wherein we needed to envision and explore the actual experiences of our participants who had experienced the dynamics or factors of peer relationship that may influence RMMC college students' academic lives.

In phenomenological research, the use of bracketing is to be applied to minimize presuppositions to prevent potential harmful effects of presumptions that may affect the research process, thereby improving the precision of the research study. The researcher must be vigilant at all times, aware of his/her own views and the pre-existing beliefs on the study, to learn to set aside his/her own a-priori knowledge and experiences to fully capture the experiences being told by the participants with an open mind (Starks and Trinidad, 2007; Taylor, 2012; Tufford and Newman, 2010). In conducting this qualitative study, we were interested to know how things happened and how individuals interpret their experiences and how they find meaning to these experiences (Merriam, 2009).

Through phenomenological reduction, the researcher simply reduced the realm from how it is perceived naturally, with all biases and judgment to a realm of pure phenomena (Willis, 2007). Thus, the essence of the phenomena is allowed to surface. In addition, the participants' own words were used throughout the process of data analysis and phenomenological description. The process of bracketing is to be employed throughout the course of the study. The method will examine and scrutinize the phenomena through the subjective eyes of the participants, focusing on subjectivity of reality and continually pointing out the need to understand how humans view themselves and the world around them, and on the process, the researcher set aside his personal experiences and opinion to fully grasp the experiences of the participants, identifying its essence (Creswell, 2007).

This will make the phenomenological approach very good at surfacing deep issues. In our study, we need to make the voices of these students in the peer group be heard exposed the taken-for-granted assumptions like the existence of workplace peer pressures and challenge its complacency. It focused on what the informants have common in their experiences of the phenomenon. Our objective here is to extract a common theme from the experiences of the subjects, convert these experiences to a description of the universal essence of phenomenon; we considered the multiple realities experienced by the participants themselves- the insider perspectives.

Nonetheless, sources of qualitative data included interviews, observations and documents (Creswell, 2007; Giorgi, 2009; Locke et al, 2010; Suter, 2012), emphasizing two ways of collecting data if one wanted information about the lived experience of a phenomenon from another person, the traditional face to face interview and the written account of the experience, both could not be broken down, easily by a statistical software. In our study, we used specific methodologies such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and note-taking, giving much attention to details and importance of the emotional content to open up an array of human experiences of the subjects involved in the study. What one seeks from a research interview in phenomenological research is as complete a description as possible of the experience that a participant has lived through (Giorgi, 2009).

In using a descriptive phenomenology approach, preconceptions about the student's experiences were documented prior to the onset of the study and to be compared to what had transpired and observed during the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The preconceptions, beliefs, and findings of the researcher will reveal unambiguously the research report. The researcher will observe flexibility and openness which will connect with having learned to maintain a fair amount of ambiguity (Strauss and Corbin, 2008) in order to have a useful and positive output.

In our research study, we were able to classify themes of the phenomena with 10 informants for in-depth interviews and 7 participants for focused group discussion. According to (Creswell, 2006; Giorgi, 2009; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009), in qualitative research such as phenomenology, it is recommended that for in-depth interviews, researchers could interview 5-25 participants who had experienced the same phenomenon, if one would want to achieve the goal of research participants. Nevertheless, sample sizes of 10-15 are adequate, provided participants are able to provide rich descriptions of the phenomena (Speziale and Carpenter, 2007). Moreover, (Hancock et al, 2009) further stated that focus groups are considered to work quite well with approximately eight people.

Role of the Researcher

Many have seen the positive and negative outcomes brought about by peer relationships. We saw it on television and heard it in the news. Peer pressures are strong that at times it endangered the lives of many students. Sometimes teachers especially parents became worried especially if their children start to join a group or organization they may not be familiar with. Accidents happened caused by group that at times may lead students to neglect their studies. Especially members of the peer group who is popular or the least popular. They did things to maintain their statuses and relationships among peers. This study ignited our inquisitiveness on the phenomenon regarding peer manipulation.

Since this study has a personal meaning for me, being a priest myself, a teacher and an Doctor of Education student, and also with the co author and a professor, we personally gathered the data by conducting the in-depth interviews with all the 10 informants and 7 participants for the FGD, which we facilitated, with the assistance of a colleague who took notes during the interviews and FGD and will served as one of our independent readers and analysts. Moreover, we asked assistance from another independent reader and analyst. The three of us analyzed the data gathered from the audio recordings of the interviews and FGD. After coming up with the same findings, we employed the expertise of a professional data analyst for data analysis and interpretation and thereafter, will form our personal insights.

Research Participants

Prior to the conduct of our study, we already identified some of our informants. The identified informants were our college students in this private school, whom we choose through purposive sampling as our participants based on a pre-

selected criteria relevant to the research study (Richards and Morse, 2006; Saunders, 2012; Speziale and Carpenter, 2007) in this case, they were all freshmen and sophomore college students who actively are in relationship with peer or gang group. They were referred here in this study as targets and participants of this study.

Starting with only 10 informants, five from freshmen group and five from the sophomore, we asked them if they know other students who somehow experienced active participation in peer group and if it would be possible to contact them. We asked some referrals who could be informants in our study. After contacting these prospects and explaining to them the purpose of my study, and agree to participate. We asked some college instructors and program directors who personally know and asked if they had knowledge of any incident in their school contributed for their being a part of a peer group.

Only freshmen and sophomore students who had experienced significant situations being a part of a peer group were included in our study. We made sure that our informants are well prepared and properly oriented on their involvement. During the preliminary meeting, it was explained that in the actual interview, the flashback of those painful memories or negative influence of being in a peer group experienced would be inevitable so they had to prepare their heart and mind to combat those negative burst of emotions. We assured them that we understand their doubts and apprehensions and we will not intend in any way, to cause them harm. We see to it that they feel comfortable, to encourage openness. We have to convey the message that they are important to me and express sensitivity to their feelings. When embarking in qualitative interview, the researcher need to be aware of the situation and culture in which the respondent is located, to be polite, display courtesy and facilitate talk without judgment or critical opinion in order to establish trust.

We emphasized to them also that we might encounter problems along the way but the outcome of the study would be very relevant in solving the problem of negative influence of peer related to school achievement, which most people are not aware the problem exist. We made them understand that their contribution to this study could make a difference in the lives of freshmen and sophomore students.

Data Collection

In the collection of data of the study, we underwent the processes namely: interviewing in-depth with the study-informants, conducting focus group discussion with the participants and note-taking.

Before conducting the actual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the study participants, we made sure that ethical considerations were properly observed. We applied the key principles of ethical issues (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006; Bricki and Green, 2007; Kaiser, 2009; Mack et al, 2005) that should be considered in any research study which are consent and confidentiality.

Since establishing rapport is an essential component of an interview (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006), we arranged a preliminary meeting with them and explain the details of the study, make them understand that everything will be done in

confidentiality. After gaining their trust, we asked them to sign a written consent. Essentially, rapport involves trust and respect for the interviewee and the information he/she shares. It is very important to provide him/her a safe and comfortable environment for sharing his/her personal experiences (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). To comply this requirement, we made sure that the setting of the interview was conducted in a quiet room that would ensure privacy and away from distractions like a private office or in comfort places, if they prefer.

In-depth interview is one approach that was undertaken in order to gather information from the study informants. The in-depth interview is a technique designed to elicit a vivid picture of the participant's perspective on the research topic (Mack et al, 2005). Additionally, in-depth interviews should be done in the most rigorous ways to ensure reliability and validity (Bashir et al, 2008; Bricki and Green, 2007) which are important concepts in qualitative researches. Focus groups resemble interviews, but in focus group discussions, both the strengths and the weaknesses of focus groups flow directly from their two defining features: the dependence on the researcher's focus and the group's interaction.

In summary during the data collection, we ensured that the principles of listening were observed. It will give freedom to the participants to unveil their feelings especially those who were in their first year of their schools and second year with their peer group. We tried to show to them that we were throughout the time they tell their experiences with their peer group. Of course, during their revelation there might be some issues we needed to clarify, but we made sure to it that when it will be asked again and it will be done with respect to earn the trust I hope for.

With all confidence, and trust that we focused on the field of interest (phenomenon) equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills in conducting interviews, group discussions and note taking. We believed that the objectives we had in conducting this research would be a success.

Analysis of Data

Analysis of data in a research study involves summarizing the mass of data collected and presenting the results in a way that communicates the most important features (Hancock et al, 2009). Data were analyzed using a method which included data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing and verification (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2007), adding that qualitative content analysis is "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings.

In the analysis of data, we conducted the phenomenological study that searched for the essential structure of the phenomenon we were investigating about the dynamics of peer group that influence school success, by interviewing in-depth my participants who had experienced this phenomenon. In addition, clarity of issues would be enhanced by the use of focus-group discussions as well as the taking of notes. Then, we extracted what we considered to be relevant statements and then clustered these statements into themes. We integrated these themes into a narrative description of the phenomenon that would be the positive and negative influence of

peer relationship in students' academic lives. These things were consulted to other experts to help in the sorting out of ideas with the final agreement of each participant.

Trustworthiness

To come up with the state of trustworthiness of my study, we followed its four components to establish it as follows: credibility, conformability; transferability and dependability.

Ethical Consideration

Our research study involves college students who might be hesitant to disclose information out of fear and withheld some data. However, as part of research rigor, several safeguards was applied that will erased their fears and promoted trust. We made ensure that our study is to be guided by ethical principles as described by (Mack et al, 2005), namely: respect for persons, beneficence, justice, consent and confidentiality.

Respect for persons requires a commitment to ensure the autonomy of research participants and where autonomy may be decreased, to protect people from exploitation of their weakness. Prior to conducting a study, the permission was secured from the President of RMMC and academic program directors of the college where the data collection took place. These permissions to gather data will be obtained at an early stage in the research (Creswell, 2012). We underwent all these processes as a symbol of my respect for the students involved in the study.

Informed and voluntary consent is a mechanism for ensuring that people understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so they can decide in a conscious, deliberate way whether they want to participate. Informed consent is one of the most important instruments for ensuring respect for persons during research (Mack et al, 2005). Before we conducted the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, we explained verbally and in writing about the objectives and purpose of this research study and made clear that the proceedings would be audio-taped. After getting their approval, we asked them to sign a written consent. The informants were informed of the findings and results of the study believing that they have the right to know because they were the ones involved in the first place and due recognition as well were given to them.

Beneficence requires a commitment to minimizing the risks associated with research, including psychological and social risks, and maximizing the benefits that are due to research participants as affirmed by Mack et al (2005). To minimize the risks or harm that may come to the participants, anonymity of the interviewee in relation to the information shared was maintained (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Participants will be protected at all times so that data or files of information were not left lying around in notebooks or unprotected computer files (Bricki and Green, 2007).

Confidentiality of the findings and protection of the identities of the informants by using a coding system to hide their true identities, will be explained to them (Maree and Van der Westhuizen, 2007). College students who will participate will be informed, as recommended by Maree and Van der Westhuizen (2007), that the entire data base (i.e digital voice recorders, typed transcripts, filed notes, and other related materials) would be destroyed upon completion of analysis.

Justice requires a commitment to ensuring a fair distribution of the risks and benefits resulting from research. It is important to build into the research plan a method of acknowledging the contributions that participants make to the success of the research process and to reimburse them in various ways for their efforts (Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

RESULTS

Presented in this section are the experiences of the study participants, their insights and discernments as well the concepts which emerged from the information gleaned through in-depth interviews and focused group discussion. The following research questions made possible the production of data from the informants.

1. What are the experiences of college students as they go through with the dynamics of peer influence?
2. How do college students cope with the challenges in mingling with their friends?
3. What insights do college students have that are worthy of sharing to their peers and the academe as a whole?

Table 1

Essential Themes and Thematic Statements on How College students Deal with their Experiences on the Dynamics of peer influence

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Sense of Belonging and Acceptance	They make me feel I am part of their life.
	For me, my friends are my better half.
	They are just like sisters/brothers to me.
	I consider my friends as my family.
	We call each other siblings from another mother.
	I feel at home and accepted with them.
	I accept them with their flaws because they also accept me
Anchorage and Refuge	I derive strength from them during difficult and low moments
	They are the ones I go when I have troubles or problems
	They help me move on when times are rough
	We find ways to make our friends feel better during trying times
Collaboration	We work together for our project,
	We do group study and have fun together.
	We go to the library together.
	We make a group chat to discuss our lessons.
	We go to the church together; worship together.
	We go dared each other to earn a spot in Dean's List
Connivance	We once got drunk.
	We hiked late in the afternoon,
	We cut classes and went malling.
	We did things without our parent's permission.
	We tried to smoke cigarettes for fun.
	We wasted money on things we did not need.
	We talk about other people (rumors and gossips)
	We did some gimmicks and just idled time away in the plaza.
	I enjoy chatting and playing games with them.
Negative Influence	Because of them, I failed in my subjects.
	When I'm with them, I don't have time to study anymore.
	I get distracted when they are around.

Table 2

Themes and Thematic Statements how college students cope with the challenges of mingling with their friends

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Blending In	I just go with the flow
	I respect and adjust to their culture.
	I tried to fit it so I won't be out of place
	I adjusted my behavior to fit theirs.
	I go bonding with them
Being Candid and Open	I usually talk with them whenever I have issues.
	Communication is the key in my problem.
	I address my problem by talking to them.
	I converse with them one step at a time.
	I become open to them about the problems encountered.
	I text them always.
	I confront them when there are issues to be resolved.
Imposing Boundaries	There is a limit to what I entrust to my friends
	I do not bring my friends at home.
	Sometimes, I spend less time with my friends.
	When necessary, I limit association with them.
	Sometimes, if I cannot help it, I tend to separate myself from them.
I set priorities.	

Table 3

Themes and Core Ideas on insights worthy of sharing to their peers and the academe in general

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Social Support and Influence	My friends influence me positively in my studies.
	My friends have something to offer in terms of inspiring and motivating
	Their influence is very good in terms on my academic life
	My friends challenged me to strive harder in order to become an academic scholar.
	As a person, they influenced me to become the best I can be and accepted me.
	My friends guide and protect me.
	They encourage me to pursue my ambition in life.
	Their encouragement boosts my self-confidence.
	My grades improved since we became friends.
Kinship and Camaraderie	Even without constant communication, friendship can last a lifetime
	It is having someone through dark and good times.
	There are many temptations in life, we need to have strong and faithful friends.
	They really help me cope with my heartbreak.
	Friends serve as my comfort whenever I feel sad and alone.
	It means having someone on my side when I am in conflict with others.
	When I had a problem, my friend was there comforting me, throwing jokes.
	Friendship is about companionship.
	Friends make my life worth living.
Commitment	There is unstoppable laughing when we are together
	Be loyal to your friends
	Just trust each other
	Do not count what you have done, just do it
	We have to swallow our pride sometimes
	Friendship is accepting their flaws and showing the real you.
Just understand and accept each other.	

CHAPTER SUMMARY

From the result of the study, from the responses of both the in-depth interview informants and the FGD participants, the following issues are identified.

On issues related to how college students dealt with their experiences on the dynamics of peer influence, five major themes appeared which are sense of belonging acceptance, anchorage and refuge, collaboration, connivance and negative influence. The general responses of the value of their friends revealed that they value their friendship as that of their lives. They collaborated with each other and do group study and have fun together.

On the issues related to how college students cope with the challenges of mingling with their friends. There were three (3) major themes that appeared namely: blending in, being candid and open imposing boundaries, variant numbers revealed that problems with friend are common and normal, a lot of adjustment to keep their friendship strong and they commonly talked when there were issues and conflict.

Lastly, on the issues related to core ideas on insights worthy of sharing to their peers and the academe in general, there were three (3) major themes that appeared where ideas were highly related to social support and influence, kinship and camaraderie and commitment. The participants strongly responded that their friends influenced them positively in their studies and created them the urgency to become good in their studies so as to feel pride, friendship can last a lifetime even with less communication or close constant with commitment could keep up friendship.

IMPLICATION FOR PRACTICE

Based on the findings, the following implications for practice are offered:

On their experiences in going through the dynamics of peer influence. The experiences of the college students reflected in this study have effectuated both the positive and negative experiences. It also revealed a balance of advantages and disadvantages which solely lie on the hands and decisions of one person. Their peers could create havoc in their academic life in the extent of their permission. Hence, it would be of advantage that students should be exposed to various effects of friendship and be reminded that bad company corrupts good character.

On coping with the challenges of mingling with their friends, it has been established that they have learned to adjust their behaviors. It is the topmost resort of the participants since they admitted that their friends are good influence and that they could not trade them for others. It was also found out that most of them are proud of their friends. Since there are risky things that they did that were not supposed to be done, it would be better if they learn to create a healthy gap with their friends and set priorities with themselves to avoid being misled.

On the insights of their friendship with their peers, data suggested that the college students enjoyed social support, camaraderie and commitment with their peers. The topmost important to the respondents is to find a group of friends which

could be relied on both in happy and sad times. Their peers become the first and last resort when they have problems and long to build lasting friendship with no bounds, only commitment.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In as much as the dynamics of peer influence among the college students who are respondents in this study is limited in one school, the following implication for future research may be done:

Since the phenomenological study presents evidences about the dynamics of peer influence encompassing an eminent positive influence, it could be probable to conduct a study in a depressed school and know the reasons for negative resorts of peer influence.

A future research on the career pathing as influence by their peers could be conducted to know to the extent of peer influence in establishing the career of college students.

The findings of this study were viewed from the lens of the college students, thus another research that high school students as respondents would be another legitimate venture to compare the dynamics of peer influence between high school and college students.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The investigation on the experiences of college students on dynamics of peer influence has highlighted the significance and importance of the study. The results mentioned in this study substantiated Brown (2013) remarks that there are statistics showing that college students face experiences. This study provide the phenomenological experience of the college students showing their academic life as well as their small and big decisions reveal the strong influence of their peers. It also upheld the assertion of Starks and Trinidad (2007) that a qualitative method of research is better at bringing to surface not only what people experience and how they cope with such experience.

The data from the two methods were then the inspiration of this study in which the experiences of the college students of Ramon Memorial Colleges showed the dynamics of peer influence. Thus, they have left insights in coping with it by blending in with their peers and camouflaging with the norm. Opting to social support and emotional support on their friends helped them develop good academic life.

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