

## Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between freshmen's perceptions of their social support and their life adjustment while studying at the University of Macau. The effects of gender, status, department, and social-economic status on social support and life adjustment, and the relations between demographic variables and social support variables, were also analyzed.

A questionnaire survey was administered to 625 freshmen students from the University of Macau in the spring of 2006. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, t-test, One-way ANOVA, and Multiple Regression analyses were used as analytical tools. The major findings of this study were as follows:

1. The most accessible social support for the freshmen was informational, followed by emotional support, and lastly instrumental support. The major providers of informational and emotional support were their families, while peers were the main providers of instrumental support.
2. According to the life adjustment, the freshmen were best at goal adjustment, second was academic adjustment, the third was social adjustment and the least was emotional adjustment.
3. Female students obtained more social support than male students. Students in different faculties experienced different situations in terms of their social support, with students from the Faculty of Business Administration obtaining the most average score, and students from the Faculty of Law the least. Overseas students obtained more social support than local students. Finally, students of different social-economic statuses

experienced different situations in terms of their social support.

4. Male students achieved life adjustment scores as same as female students. Female students achieved higher social adjustment scores than male students.
5. Students from the Faculty of Business Administration achieved higher life adjustment scores than students from the Faculty of Science and Technology.
6. Local students achieved lower life adjustment scores than overseas students, and they experienced more problems in different categories of life adjustment than overseas students.
7. According to the life adjustment, the high social-economic status students were best in different social-economic statuses, and they had more capability than the low social-economic status students in terms of achieving goal adjustment, social adjustment, academic adjustment, and emotional adjustment. Furthermore, in terms of academic adjustment and emotional adjustment, high social-economic status students were better adjusted than middle social-economic status students.
8. Social support and life adjustment showed a positive correlation, while emotional support displayed the greatest variance in different categories of life adjustment.
9. The demographic variables and social support variables were of predictability of life adjustment, and the emotional support, Faculty of Science and Technology were the most powerful.