



FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS AT RISK OF DROPPING OUT (SARDO) IN ACADEMIC STUDIES

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**Factors Affecting Students at Risk of Dropping Out (SARDO)
in Academic Studies**

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the factors that affect the SARDO students' academic studies amidst the pandemic in terms of motivation, family and peer pressures, social media influence, school, work, and health-related factors. In addition, it seeks to figure out the significant difference in the students' responses according to sex. Moreover, the study hypothesized that there would be no significant difference in those students based on their sex. The study utilized 52 SARDOs through purposive sampling, and those students were extracted from all grade year levels of the entire Ramon Enriquez High School (REHS). This study affirmed using a mixed method descriptive and quantitative research design to look for the answers to the given problems. The Researchers' Made Survey Questionnaire was utilized as an instrument for the respondents to share their responses. The respondents' answers were treated statistically through Arithmetic Mean and Independent Sample t-tests to derive the results of the answers to the given problems. Along with the study ventured, findings revealed that those students were found to have "less experienced" with support, which hinders SARDO students from pursuing academic studies. Furthermore, there was no significant difference in the factors that affect SARDO students in academic studies when responses were grouped according to sex. Lastly, this study recommends contextualized homeroom guidance counseling, which entails tailored strategies and approaches to support students' motivation and encouragement to pursue their academic studies.

Keywords: *Academic Studies; Family & Peer Pressure; Motivation; SARDO*

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Introduction

Education is the key to students' success, and their learned competency will be employed throughout their lives, particularly in reaching their chosen career to make their lives more sustainable. The 1987 Philippine constitution mentioned that "rights for education" shall be given to the learners regardless of their identity and cultural background. To some extent, education shall be accessible to all.

In today's era, where a new normal setting arises, the COVID-19 pandemic affects the life sustainability and the daily routine of individuals worldwide. Significantly, it challenges the learners to pursue academic studies considering the different factors such as health issues, economic and financial sustainability, and other related issues. (Johannesburg 2020)

In this generation, the national basic education system keeps on progressing as time goes by to cater to the student's learning needs, which are suited to the demands of the challenges in the real world of this new normal culture.

However, Trivino et al. (2017, 77-87) found out that not all learners nationwide are simultaneously progressing in academic studies and performance. Some students are left behind. Common challenges among students that affect academic progress are parent or peer pressure, media and technological influence, and less guidance. Even worse, some students officially dropped – out due to the circumstances, which, at some point, did not overcome those circumstances and significantly hampered academic advancement.

This study aimed to investigate factors that affect the SARDOs in pursuing academic studies amidst the new normal and to determine its significant difference when students are grouped according to sex.

The findings of this study can be utilized in developing a strategic and comprehensive plan for a customized homeroom guidance counseling program.

Literature Review

Legal Bases. The Department of Education (2021), through the DO 74, S. 2010, described the guidelines on the implementation of the Dropout Reduction Program (DORP) in Public Secondary Schools, which mentioned that the efficiency of the said program attains in reducing the dropout rate, improve participation and learning outcomes rate through either formal or informal approaches which prove in many schools of a region. Moreover, the Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE) inspires all school heads to utilize this program in formulating their School Improvement Plan (SIP) in all public secondary schools. It was mentioned that this approach utilizes the Family, Individual, Community, and School (FICS) Analysis to assist in identifying SARDO students, which would serve as a basis for initiating appropriate intervention. Furthermore, this FICS analysis consisted of cultural, economic, psychological, emotional, and social which would be pointed out as risk factors for SARDO students to drop out. In addition, the Dropout Reduction Program (DORP) will be developed by the school team following the last analysis and SARDO identification.

Besides, Ronda (2021) from The Philippine Star reported that the Department of Education (DepEd) discourages the "pass or drop" grading system. Whereas the DepEd executive committee and management committee asserted that students who are at risk of failing or dropping out should have remediation takes place, which is one of their first consideration. They also added that when they see a student who is at risk, they must formulate measures or interventions to assist them and demonstrate that there are no

students left behind. The Department of Education (DepEd) undersecretary stresses that the interests of teachers and students is their priority and encourages effective learning engagement.

Students' Motivational Factors in Academic Studies. According to Cherry (2021), students at some points who have experienced being afraid in their academic studies are associated with emotional trauma history, specifically having a fear of failing, poor testing history, and unpreparedness, as well as having low self-esteem and feelings of hopelessness, which influences their actions or behaviors to decline in their academic studies.

Relevantly, Kurt (2020) shares the contributions of humanistic psychologist Abraham Maslow through his theory of the hierarchy of needs, which permits that security needs should be satisfied with these needs for them to go forward to the next level.

Furthermore, Buckely (2021) shared the common reasons why individuals are demotivated to pursue their aims, supported by how to overcome each of the mentioned reasons. Notably, the common reasons why individuals are demotivated is due to exerting work without purpose, having a fear of facing challenges to attain their aims, exerting efforts with wrong motives, taking too much responsibility resulting in having less enjoyable work, dealing with mental and health issues, dealing with self – sabotaging, putting pressure to themselves, or, having a habit of not doing anything, or, fear and refusing to go beyond the limits.

In addition, Plevin (2020) shares why students are less motivated to pursue their academic studies. Further mentioned that the lesson learned is not relevant to them. They are unable to see how applicable the learned lesson is to their part; they are emotional, afraid, and embarrassed, which makes them decline to pursue their academic studies, third have a feeling of inadequacy. Some students pointed out that the school experience is a struggle for them. Fourth, uninspiring work, viewing “boredoms” with the lesson presented to them, or activities expected to accomplish are viewed as much more complex than their capability and limits. Furthermore, he suggested that teachers should be flexible enough to look for fun and exciting ways to integrate the activities or lessons to reduce demotivation among students who experience struggles or difficulty pursuing academic studies.

Students' Family and Peer Factors. Devlin (2021) asserted that love from families is crucial for individuals' emotional well-being, which aids them in developing emotional wellness in the progress of their teen and adulthood development. In contrast, dissatisfaction with love from family negatively impacts their development.

Social-Media Platforms in Pursuing Academic Studies. American University (2020) permits that technology facilitates learning among students by giving them easy access to information, promoting learning, and being motivated and able to apply the learnings they acquired.

However, Klawitter (2020) claimed that there were challenges among individuals in technological utilization, such as internet connectivity, limited access, and availability of electronic media that hinder students from catching up on needed activities they need to be involved in through social media platforms.

School-Related Factors in Pursuing Academic Studies. Carlson (2016) emphasizes that students will have negative remarks about their academic studies due to psychological stress caused by pressures to maintain academic studies, their grades/achievement, and attitudes toward accomplishing academic tasks. The ACANC assessment stated that 25% of learners claimed that their grades and capability to complete the course are significantly affected due to psychological stress as a main

culprit for this effect. In addition, when students are stressed and preoccupied, their ability to concentrate on a certain task might vary from expected. In fact, it causes them to drop out due to having less pleasure in continuing their academic studies.

Challenges Encountered by Students Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic. The Kajeet Network (2020) cited the common challenges in distance learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly unstable internet access, which is one of the very obvious challenges in distance learning; Two or more learners shared on a single computer; the difficulty of modification from traditional learning to distance learning; Parents at home particularly assist their children in distance learning and managing their technological resources which would be the tool in distance learning; Parents at work would also be the challenge in distance learning whereas, parents at work unable to assist children in distance learning and consequently, intends to drop out; lastly, uncertainty of duration to when a pandemic will last which could affects teachers in managing distance learning environment.

Educational Plans in a New Normal Setting. Nichollis (2020) shared that the undersecretary of the Department of Education (DepEd) officially announced last May 28, 2020, that there would be no face-to-face classes unless there was an assurance of health among students. In line with this, there are some challenges met by parents. Parents are worried about the extra expenses they must spend for the students to pursue their academic studies. Further mentioned that virtual requirements, having to invest for internet service regularly. In addition, teachers faced challenges amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically those working in rural areas. It mentioned that developing printed modules and preparing the massive number of printed modules could take time for teachers. However, one teacher tells CNN News that although teachers are not ready for these immediate changes, they must adopt or embrace them.

Furthermore, Mean-Chin (2020) shared additional insights regarding the banes of modular distance learning with a normal family setup. Whereas it cited that technical elements such as the knowledge and skills in using technological media for learning and communication would hinder academic progress among learners. Secondly, content-reliability of SLM modules with which one is concerned, especially typographical or erroneous content. Third, the focus and concentration of learners in accomplishing SLM modules could also be challenging to them since there are home responsibilities that they have to do while accomplishing SLM modules at the same time. Lastly, educational background among parents to assist their children in accomplishing their SLM modules since students have assistance and support from parents to learn and accomplish SLM modules given to them.

In addition, Helpline PH Network (2020) shared the downsides of employing modular learning as a mode of delivery of instruction to Filipino students. Further mentioned disadvantage is that not all students are committed to accomplishing the given modules. Furthermore, some parents spoiled their children by means of parents themselves working on the given modules instead of the students themselves. Additionally, some students attempt to copy the answered activity in the module to their peers instead of faithfully accomplishing given modules. Moreover, majority of the students claimed that they have less learning gained from modular learning. Lastly, it also claimed that modules given are accomplished for formality and cannot be internalized by students.

Factors Affect Students' Academic Progress. Furthermore, Noori (2021, 7) focused on the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' academic progress to look into the significant impact of the pandemic on students' academic progress. Along with the study, they found that most students are less likely to

experience learning with the advent of the pandemic, which significantly affects their academic involvement. Also, there was no significant difference when data were grouped into the students' sex. In line with these findings, it recommends policy enhancement focusing on emergencies and unpredictable phenomena to maintain the students' academic involvement despite rising circumstances.

Lastly, Chinyoka (2014, 75-82) ventured into the study of the of inadequate nutrition's negative influence on academic performance among grade 7 students in Zimbabwe. It tries to figure out the consequences of malnutrition on the academics of grade 7 students through quantitative analysis. Along with his study, findings revealed that malnutrition resulted in slow intellectual progress and cognitive and motor development, which significantly affects the academic performance of grade 7 students. In line with this, it further recommends that school administrators, teachers, and parents focus on the root cause of the issue, support nutrition programs, and assist students who are psychologically affected by poor nutrition to improve their nutritional status, which could also be the way to improve their academic performance.

Intervention Addressed to Students' At Risk and Dropped Out. Christenson and Thurlow (2004, 36-39) were concerned that schools faced significant challenges, particularly for students not pursuing academic progression, leading to dropout. Along with this, various reasons and factors are figured out that push students to drop out. Moreover, it pointed out that the effective intervention is identifying and tracking students' failure to determine the root cause of their decline in academic progress. In addition, maintain and concentrate on students' academic progression. Furthermore, teachers must address issues, particularly on students' mobility, and alternate ways or strategies for school completion. Lastly, schools have to engage students in their academic progression and evaluation. Those cited interventions would be an effective way to reduce student dropout rates.

Challenges of Students in Pursuing Academic Studies. Philippine Statistics Authority (2015) reported that 26.5% of Filipino citizens were classified as socio-economically poor, which individuals at their young age forced to work even on dangerous working duties to support their life and family more sustainably. At some point, it drastically affects their academic studies due to their total commitment to their working duties compared to the time they spend on their academic studies.

Trivino. et al. (2017, 77-87) intended to analyze family, individual, community, and school profiles to predict at-risk students dropping out in Cebu. Furthermore, findings revealed that gender, deceased father, cyber scenario conflicts, broken family, inferiority complex, child labor, and less community support found significant factors contributing to students who are likely to drop out. Moreover, it shows an increased likelihood of male students being classified as Students at Risk of Drop Out (SARDO). In this effect, the Drop Out Reduction Program (DORP) was initiated as an intervention plan to assist schools in reducing the probability of increasing dropout rates.

Research Questions

This study aimed to explore the significant difference in the factors that affect SARDO students to pursue academic studies amidst a new normal setting when students are grouped according to sex. Particularly, it sought the following:

1. What are the factors that affect SARDO students to pursue academic studies amidst the new normal setting in terms of the following:
 - 1.1. Motivational factor

- 1.2. Family and Peer Pressures
- 1.3. Social Media Influence
- 1.4. Work-related factor
- 1.5. School-related factor
- 1.6. Health-Related Factor?
2. Do the factors that affect SARDO students to pursue academic studies amidst a new normal setting significantly differ as contrasted based on their sex?

Scope and Limitation

This study focused on the factors affecting Students At Risk of Dropping Out (SARDO) in pursuing academic studies amidst a new normal setting, particularly on motivational support, family and peer pressures, social-media influence, work-related, school-related, and health-related factors as the element for SARDO students to be declined in their academic studies. Furthermore, researchers intend to determine the significant difference in the factor that affects SARDO students in pursuing their academic studies when they group according to sex. Also, this study includes Students At Risk of Dropping Out (SARDO) across all year levels to be the respondents of this study. However, it delimits some students who change their residence outside the city. This study was conducted only at Ramon Enriquez High School (REHS) for SY 2020-2021.

Method

Research Design

The study inspired to employ the descriptive–quantitative (comparative) research design. A Descriptive research method using a 4-point Likert scale research instrument was approved for this study to determine the SARDO students’ experience in pursuing their academic studies amidst new normal settings. On the other hand, a quantitative (comparative) research design was approved, which used based on the students’ sex as a preference to investigate the significant difference of the factors that affect their pursuance on their academic studies with regards to motivational factors, family and peer pressures, social media influence, work-related, school-related, and health-related factor.

Research Participants

Figure 1: Total Population of Students Officially Enrolled in REHS for Academic Year 2020 - 2021

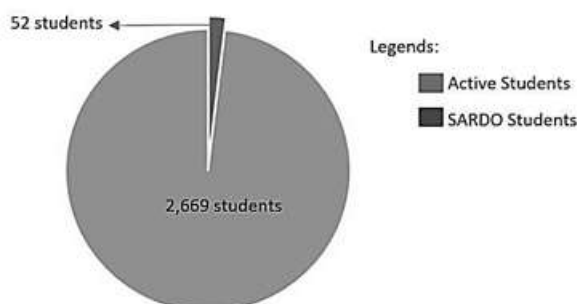
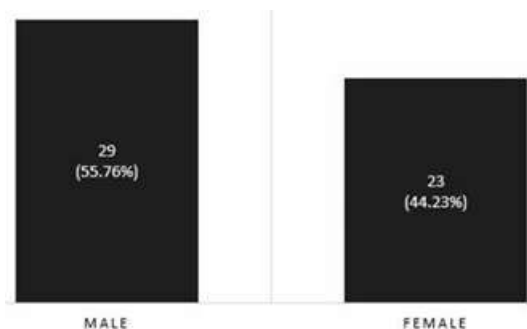


Figure 1 presents the total population of students officially admitted to Ramon Enriquez High School for SY2020 – 2021. There were 2,721 total students officially enrolled across all year levels. Furthermore, there were 98.08% active in pursuing academic studies. However, 1.91% of students were categorized as SARDO or at risk of dropping out.

Figure 2: Total Population of SARDO Students According to Sex



Based on Figure 2, 52 students were considered SARDO. 29 students, 55.56%, are male, while 23, or 44.23%, are female. Criteria in selecting the respondents were: 1.) Students who have not submitted their SLM modules for the two quarters and beyond due to various reasons make them the candidate SARDO status, and 2.) Students who decided to quit their academic studies due to various challenges that hindered them from pursuing their studies. This study utilized purposive sampling of selecting respondents. The selection criteria for respondents were at least students officially enrolled in Ramon Enriquez High School (REHS) for the academic year 2020 - 2021 and classified in a SARDO status across all year levels. Those respondents shared their experiences regarding the hindrances and challenges of pursuing academic studies.

Research Instrument

The survey questionnaire utilized in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire. It consisted of two parts. Part I consists of students' profiles, which respondents have to fill – in their profile, such as name (optional), address, grade year level, section, and gender. Part II consists of 5 statements of each sub-variable: motivational factor, family and peer pressures, social-media influence, work-related, school-related, and health-related factor. Provided with a rating scale, respondents have to check the rating scale, which manifested their experience as a factor that affects SARDO students to pursue academic studies. A 4-point Likert scale was used with the description as shown below:

Table 1: Rating Scale of Experiences as a Factor that Affects Academic Studies among SARDO Students

Range	Likert Scale	Description
3.26-4.00	4	Highly Experienced
2.56-3.25	3	Experienced
1.76-2.50	2	Less Experienced
1.00-1.75	1	Not Experienced

Since the research instrument constructed was a researcher-made questionnaire, the survey questionnaire was done with a validity test by submitting the instrument to the panel of experts for further corrections, critiquing, and improvement upon approval to determine whether the instrument constructed is suitable and relevant to the research problem.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers presented the approved permit to gather data to the School Principal. Following permission, researchers informed the grade year level coordinators and advisers that data collection would commence. Researchers asked the concerned class advisers regarding the names and addresses of students considered SARDOs. When the names and contact information of the SARDOs were gathered, the researchers attempted to contact students through teleconferencing. They requested authorization to speak with them in person at a convenient place for data collection. Before the instrument was given to the respondents, informed assent or consent was obtained. During data gathering, the researchers instructed respondents to answer the instrument. Following that, responders were given a flexible window of time to complete the provided instrument. Then, the instrument was collected for statistical analysis. Moreover, during the meet-up, the COVID-19 safety and prevention protocol was observed to ensure health wellness among researchers and respondents.

Data Analysis

The researchers intend to determine the factors that affect SARDO students in pursuing their academic studies in a new normal setting. As well as to investigate the significant difference in the factors that affect SARDO students in a new normal setting when grouped according to their sex. Specifically, Simple Mean is a descriptive statistical tool utilized to determine the factors that affect SARDO students to pursue academic studies in a new normal setting. Furthermore, T-Test for Independent Sample is an inferential parametric statistical tool through an independent sample-separate variance model used to test the significant difference of the factors that affect SARDO students pursuing academic studies in a new normal culture when grouped to sex.

Results and Discussion

Factors Affecting Students at Risk of Dropping Out. Table 2 presents the factors that affect SARDOs in pursuing their studies.

Table 2: Factors Affecting Students at Risk of Dropping Out (SARDO) in Pursuing Academic Studies Amidst New Normal Setting

No.	Factors	Mean	Verbal Description
1	Motivational Factor	2.25	Less Experienced
2	Family & Peer Pressure	2.19	Less Experienced
3	Social Media Influence	1.94	Less Experienced
4	Work-Related Factor	2.01	Less Experienced
5	School-Related Factor	2.03	Less Experienced
6	Health-Related Factor	2.37	Less Experienced
	Grand mean	2.13	Less experienced

Legend: 1.00-1.75=Not Experienced; 1.76-2.50 Less Experienced; 2.51-3.25=Experienced; 3.26-4.00=Highly Experienced

Table 2 shows the computed mean results of the factors affecting Students at Risk of Dropping Out (SARDO), which revealed a grand mean of $\bar{x}=2.13$ and described as “less experienced” with a range from 1.94 to 2.27. All variables are considered “less experienced,” implying that motivational factors, family and peer pressure, social-media influence, work, school, and health-related factors lead students to withdraw from their academic studies. It was supported by Cherry (2021) that students who are afraid to pursue academic studies have an emotionally traumatic history, particularly in fear of failure, poor testing history, and unpreparedness. In addition, low self-esteem and hopelessness influence their actions or behaviors to decline in their academic studies. Hence, SARDOs had “less experienced” or difficulty overcoming their anxiety or fears due to the mentioned possible factors. In relation to this, Kurt (2020) cited the idea of Abraham Maslow about the basic or physiological needs being met, which means individuals can go further into the next level of attaining their needs.

In addition, those students who were less satisfied with their families' and friends' support for academic sustainability could be a factor for SARDO to pursue academic studies. In this case, since findings revealed that those students were "less experienced," it also pertains that they cannot meet the needs that a family or peers expected to provide. In relation to these findings, Devlin (2021) suggests that love from families is important for individuals' emotional well-being, which helps them to develop emotionally healthy in their teen and adulthood development. However, unsatisfied love from family has a negative impact on their development. In this case, SARDOs have experienced the risk of dropping out of school since there is less support, guidance, and love from their families, which could be a factor for those students to experience.

Furthermore, as supported by Klawitter (2020), students encountered "less experienced" to have enough technological resources to work on their academic studies, be employed in completing their academic activities, and utilize various platforms to support their communication, which manifests as a social-media influence and as a factor affecting their academic studies, especially on internet connectivity, limited access, and availability of electronic media that hindered their academic studies. In relation to this, American University (2020) suggests that technology facilitates learning among students by giving easy access to information, promoting learning, and giving motivation and opportunity to apply the learnings they acquired. In relation to this, students with technological resources could be tools to accomplish certain academic tasks efficiently, motivating them to pursue their academic studies.

Also, students have “less experienced” concentrating on their academic studies despite the many responsibilities they are obligated to do and less opportunity to manage their time to work on their academic studies and responsibilities simultaneously. Those limited experiences were pointed out as a factor affecting their academic studies. In fact, the Philippine Statistics Authority (2015) reported that 26.5% of Filipino citizens were classified as socioeconomically poor, which individuals at their young age forced to work on dangerous working duties to support their life and family be more sustainable. At some point, it drastically affects their academic studies due to their total commitment to their working duties compared to the time they spend on their academic studies.

Moreover, students are "less experienced" in keeping updated with their teachers regarding their academic progress, have limited opportunities in communicating to their classmates to work on their activities, distribution, and retrieval of SLM modules, and have difficulty learning through SLM modules which serve as a factor affecting students to pursue on their academic studies since Face-to-Face Learning Modality was banned during the academic year as mentioned by Nichollis (2020) that the

department banned the physical learning modality due to the advent of pandemic. Furthermore, Noori (2021,7) supported that the advent of the pandemic significantly affects students' academic involvement. In relation to this, Christenson and Thurlow (2004, 36-39) suggested that the school must look for the root cause for the students' disengagement towards academic studies and derive intervention to address identified problems.

Lastly, the students have “less experienced” to be secured about their health maintenance, limited medical resources, and limited consumption of healthy foods, a health-related factor affecting students' involvement in their academic studies. Less secure in their health and limited medical resources associated with psychological stress students that hinder them from engaging with their academic studies justified by Carlson (2016) shared the ACANC assessment result, which revealed that there were 25% of students denoted that their grades and ability to complete the course are significantly affected due to psychological stress as a primary culprit for this effect. In addition, Chinyoka (2014, 75-82) claimed that poor nutrition could significantly affect students' academic performance, resulting in the inability to concentrate on certain tasks, reduced retention ability, and reduced learning abilities, significantly affecting their academic performance.

Testing the Difference in the Factors Affecting SARDOs When Grouped According to Sex. Table 8 displays the “T-Test Result on the Difference in the Factors in Pursuing Academic Studies according to Sex” which entails the T_{comp} and probability value as a key indicator to test the Null Hypothesis (H_0) of “*There is no significant difference of the factor that affect SARDO students to pursue academic studies amidst new normal setting when are students grouped according to their sex.*” given with the alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$ or 5% with the degree of freedom of $df = 50$.

Table 2: Significant Difference in Factors to Pursue Academic Studies According to SARDO's Sex

Factors	Sex	Mean	t-computed value (t_{comp})	t-critical value (t_{crit})	P value	Interpretation
Motivational Factor	Male	2.31	0.55	2.00	0.58	Not Significant
	Female	2.19				
Family & Peer Pressure	Male	2.25	0.60	2.00	0.54	Not Significant
	Female	2.11				
Social Media Influence	Male	1.90	0.42	2.00	0.67	Not Significant
	Female	1.99				
school-Related Factor	Male	1.96	0.80	2.00	0.42	Not Significant
	Female	2.13				
Work-Related Factor	Male	2.00	0.12	2.00	0.90	Not Significant
	Female	2.02				
Health-Related Factor	Male	2.37	1.03	2.00	0.30	Not Significant
	Female	2.14				

Motivational Factor. The t computed value in the table is $t_{comp} = 0.557$, which was lesser than the t critical value of $t_{crit} = 2.00$, implying that the null hypothesis was accepted. On the other hand, the p-value of $p = 0.580$ is greater than the alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$, which asserted that the null hypothesis was accepted also. Since the computed

value and p computed value coincide and have similar results, findings revealed no significant difference when responses were grouped according to sex. Based on the findings, it permits that there was no significant difference in the motivational factor that affects SARDO students to pursue academic studies amidst the new normal setting when students are grouped according to sex. This finding implies that male and female SARDO students have similar responses regarding challenges they met regarding motivational factors. This further implies that insufficient motivation can affect academic studies regardless of gender identity among students since both need motivation and support to pursue academic studies. Significantly, lesser motivation among students can lower their intention to pursue their academic studies. These findings revealed and its implication supported the idea of Cherry (2021) that demotivation affects all people and results from prior emotional trauma, low self-esteem, and unpreparedness.

Family and Peer Pressures. In “Family and Peer Pressure” as a sub-variable used in this study, findings revealed that the t computed value shown in the table is $t_{\text{comp}} = 0.607$, which is lesser than the t critical value of $t_{\text{crit}} = 2.00$, implies that the null hypothesis was accepted. As well as, the p -value of $p = 0.547$, which was higher than the alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$, asserted that the null hypothesis is also accepted. In relation to this, both t_{comp} and p -value have the same implication of this study, it is further suggested that the null hypothesis of no significant difference was statistically accepted.

Therefore, there was no significant difference between the family and peer factor that affects SARDO students in pursuing their academic studies amidst the new normal setting when students are grouped according to their sex. These findings revealed SARDO students, regardless of sex, have similar experiences encountered in terms of their family and peer factors. Indeed, Devlin (2021) said that family plays a significant factor in cultivating students’ motivation for their academic studies and their learning progress from childhood to adulthood stage. Students’ overall progress and development relies on the way their family maintains sustainability to establish their relationship.

Social-Media Influence. Based on the table provided, the t computed value is $t_{\text{comp}} = 0.422$, which was lesser than the t critical value of $t_{\text{crit}} = 2.00$, implying that the null hypothesis was accepted. Also, the p -value of 0.547 , higher than the alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$, suggested that the null hypothesis was statistically acceptable. Likewise, both t_{comp} and p values have the same findings of this problem, it is further concluded that the null hypothesis of no significant difference was statistically accepted. To conclude, no significant difference in social media factors affecting SARDO in pursuing academic studies amidst new normal settings when grouped according to their sex. This further implies that both male and female SARDOs faced similar challenges regarding the use of social media, which could be their tool in their learning process amidst this pandemic. Both sexes have similar limitations regarding the availability of technological resources and limitation of the use of social media and other online media platforms, which hinder them from pursuing their academic studies. In line with this, American University (2020) implicates that social media and other online media platform in the 21st-century generation plays a significant role in facilitating learning for the students to maintain their academic studies brought by its accessibility of information and motivation that cultivates students’ intention to maintain their academic studies. Thus, students in the current generation rely on the availability of technology to support their academic studies.

School-Related Factor. The t computed value shown in the table is $t_{\text{comp}} = 0.805$, which was lesser than the t critical value of $t_{\text{crit}} = 2.00$, suggesting that, the null hypothesis was statistically acceptable. Also, the p -value of 0.425 , which was higher

than the alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$, the same way it suggested that the null hypothesis was statistically acceptable. Since both t_{comp} and p-value have similar implications for this problem, it is further concluded that the null hypothesis of no significant difference was statistically accepted. Hence, there was no significant difference in school-related factors that affect SARDOs in pursuing their academic studies amidst the new normal setting when students group according to sex. These findings also imply that SARDOs, regardless of their sex, have similar experiences with the challenges met in terms of school-related factors. Moreover, difficulty in accomplishing SLM modules, academic tasks, risks of the pandemic, and other related factors affect those students to pursue their academic studies. Based on the findings and its implication revealed, this supports to the idea of Carlson (2016) that inability to establish a positive schools' climate leads on academic and psychological stress to the students that leads them also to be demotivated to maintain their academic studies.

Work-Related Factor. The t computed value shown in the table is $t_{\text{comp}} = 0.120$, which is lesser than the t critical value of $t_{\text{crit}} = 2.00$, which recommends that the null hypothesis is statistically acceptable. Also, the p-value of 0.905, greater than the alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$, reveals that the null hypothesis was statistically acceptable. Furthermore, both t_{comp} and p values have similar implications for this problem. It is further suggested that the null hypothesis of no significant difference was statistically accepted. Therefore, there was no significant difference in work-related factors affecting SARDOs in pursuing their academic studies amidst the new normal setting when data were grouped according to their sex. In this matter, it also implies that both males and females have similar experiences regarding work-related factors.

To some extent, regardless of sex, SARDOs have limited financial resources. They have experience in helping their parents to sustain the family's needs. Although they have different natures of work, both affect their academic studies since they spend more time working. Due to this instance, SARDO students need more time and capability to accomplish different academic tasks. In line with the findings and its implication revealed, Audl (2020) advised that students should spend their attention on their academic studies as a way to maintain and to accomplish their academic obligations aside from others.

Health-Related Factors. The t-computed value shown in the table is $t_{\text{comp}} = 0.944$, which was lesser than the t critical value of $t_{\text{crit}} = 2.00$, further suggesting that the null hypothesis was statistically acceptable. Also, the p-value of $p = 0.307$, which is higher than the alpha level of $\alpha = 0.05$. In the same way, the null hypothesis was statistically acceptable. Moreover, both t-comp and p values have similar implications for this problem. It is further suggested that the null hypothesis of no significant difference was statistically accepted. Therefore, there was no significant difference in health-related factors that affect SARDOs from pursuing academic studies amidst a new normal setting when students were grouped according to sex. These findings also imply that both males and females have similar experiences and are both at risk of the pandemic, experienced limited medical assistance and resources, and limited financial resources. Based on these findings and its implication revealed, Magsambol (2020) confirmed that the Department of Education (DepED) administration decided to implement modular distance learning as a modality of students' learning which gave an opportunity for the students to learn at their own pace despite of the health-related issues rises brought by COVID-19 crisis.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study sought the factors affecting Students' At Risks of Dropping Out (SARDO) in pursuing academic studies in terms of motivation, family and peer pressure, work, school, and health-related factors, and its significant difference clustered according to the students' sex. This study also concluded that SARDOs motivation, family and peer pressures, social media impact, work, school, and health-related factors that prevent them from pursuing academic studies in the new normal context are described as "less experienced". Furthermore, there was no significant difference in the factors when grouped according to sex.

Given the findings and conclusions, this study recommends that the school administration invite the students, parents, and concerned teachers to determine the specific challenges that directly affect students from pursuing their academic studies. It is further recommended to profile and identify students' status, such as but not limited to their lifestyle, daily routine, available resources, and family's economic condition. The school may invite registered psychologists or guidance counselors for possible remedies or interventions to address students' concerns. Moreover, a strong collaboration with parents or guardians should be established to provide guidance and regular feedback to struggling students. Further, it is recommended that the school and teachers develop a customized homeroom guidance counseling program addressing the students' issues. Lastly, teachers should be provided with technical assistance in developing personalized homeroom guidance counseling programs to see the relevance between the program/plan and the needs of students.

The Teachers and class advisers may assist students in organizing tasks, priorities, and time management, which will be more flexible for students to give time to focus on their academic studies without being conflicted with personal matters. Concerned teachers, with the collaboration of a registered psychologist or guidance counselor, may conduct aptitude tests while the enrollment is going on in order to figure out the strengths, interests, and weaknesses that students have in order to develop a personalized homeroom guidance counseling program in case of challenges among students comes in. They may develop monitoring tools whenever personalized homeroom guidance counseling programs are applied to see if students' behavior towards academic studies changes. Lastly, Teachers may prepare personalized instructional materials suited to students' needs and interests.

Dissemination and Advocacy Plan

I. Rationale

Personalized Homeroom Guidance Counselling Program. The intervention program will be developed by school administrators' psychological experts, teachers, and parents to help students maintain their academic involvement by addressing psychological issues and factors affecting them. This program, inspired by the agenda of the Department of Education (2021) through the DO 74, S. 2010, emphasized the guidelines on the implementation of the "Dropout Reduction Program (DORP) in the Public Secondary Schools" pertaining on reducing dropout rate, improve students' academic involvement and learning outcomes.

II. Objectives

Based on the findings reported in this study, the intervention aimed to address the challenges in motivation, family and peer pressure, social media influence, work, school, and health-related factors that hinder students' academic involvement.

III. Strategy

The teacher may employ root-cause analysis to determine the SARDO's disengagement towards academic activities recorded through their anecdotal record. The anecdotal record consists of the teachers' observation of specific challenges or factors affecting SARDOs' academic involvement associated with its root cause. The anecdotal record will serve as a reference for teachers and school administrators with the collaboration of professional psychologists or licensed career guidance counselors to draw an intervention to address students' disengagement towards academic involvement.

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Financial Report

Quantity	Particulars	Unit Price	Total Price
3 reams	Bond Paper (Long Size for gathering data purpose)	300	900
2 reams	Bondpaper (A4 size for printing <u>research output</u>)	250	500
2 pcs	Printer Ink	125	250
6 copies	Hardbounded Research Output	300	1800
53 sets	Foods (for respondents)	25	1325
	Transportation	225	225
	GRAND TOTAL PRICE		5,000

Appendix A

Survey Questionnaire

Dear Respondents,

The researcher is on the process of data gathering for the basic research titled: “FACTORS AFFECTING SARDO STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC STUDIES IN A NEW NORMAL SETTING OF RAMON ENRIQUEZ HIGH SCHOOL: BASIS TO DEVELOP PERSONALIZED HOMEROOM GUIDANCE COUNSELLING PROGRAM”. In line with this, researchers would like to ask for favorable consideration in responding the survey questionnaire, that will provide substantial information for the realization of the research work. Rest assured that your responses will be carefully treated with utmost confidentiality.

PART I. PROFILE

NAME (Optional) : _____ **YR. AND SEC:** _____
ADDRESS : _____ **DATE :** _____
GENDER : _____

PART II. STATEMENTS FOR SURVEY

Direction: Read the following statements carefully and check the appropriate box that reflects your honest response to a particular statement. Observing the rating scale and its interpretation as (4 pts) Strongly Experienced, (3 pts) Experienced, (2 pts) Slightly Experienced, and (1 pt) Strongly Less Experienced.

Statements	RATING SCALE			
	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt
	Strongly Experienced	Experienced	Slightly Experienced	Strongly Less Experienced
Motivational Factor				
I feel rewarded and recognized whenever I accomplished something (Nakaramdam ako ginanimpala at pagkilala kapag ako ay may nagawa)				
I Satisfied with all my basic needs (Ako'y nasiyahan sa aking mga pangangailangan)				
I feel loved and a sense of belongingness (nakaramdam ako ng pagmamahal)				
I interested to pursue my academic studies (interesado ako sa aking pag-aaral)				
I am not afraid to face any challenges that hinders my academic studies (Hindi ako takot na harapin ang anumang dagok sa aking pag-aaral)				

Statements	RATING SCALE			
	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt
	Strongly Experienced	Experienced	Slightly Experienced	Strongly Less Experienced
Family and Peer Pressure				
I feel loved by my family (Nakaramdam ako ng pagmamahal mula sa aking pamilya)				
My parents provides all my academic needs (Nabibigyan ako ng pangangailangang sa pagaaral mula sa aking pamilya)				
My family assist me on my academic studies (Tinutulungan ako ng aking pamilya sa aking pag-aaral)				
I maintain communication and peace with my friends and classmates (Napapanatili ko ang komunikasyon at kaayusan sa aming magkakaibigan at magkaklase)				
I'm working with my academic together with my friends and classmates (sinasagawa naming ang mga academic requirements kasama ang aking kaibigan at kaklase)				
Social Media Influence				
I have enough technological resources to work on my academic studies (Meron akong sapat na technological resources na syang maktutulong sa aking pag-aaral)				
I have so many activities that I accomplished due to my technological resources that I have (marami akong nagagawang aktibidad dahil sa technological resources na meron ako)				
I communicated with my teachers regarding on the activities that I have to accomplished (Nakikipag-ugnayan ako sa aking kaguro ukol sa mga aktibidad na dapat kong tapusin)				

Statements	RATING SCALE			
	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt
	Strongly Experienced	Experienced	Slightly Experienced	Strongly Less Experienced
I communicated with my classmates regarding on the activities that I have to accomplished (Nakikipag-ugnayan ako sa aking kaklase ukol sa mga aktibidad na dapat kong tapusin)				
I gained learnings from social media that I am accessing like facebook, twitter, etc. (may nakukuha akong aral mula sa social media na aking madalas na ginagamit)				
gaya ng facebook, twitter atbp.)				
Work-Related Factor				
I can concentrate to my academic studies despite of many responsibilities that I have to do (Makakakonsentreyt ako sa aking pag-aaral kahit may iba pa akong responsibilidad na dapat kong gawin)				
I can manage my time to work on my academic studies despite of having work (Nagagawa kong isaayos ang aking oras upang isagawa ang aking pag-aaral kahit ako'y may trabaho)				
I can balance between my academic studies and my work responsibility (Nagagawa kong balansehin ang aking pag-aaral at ang aking trabaho)				
My working experiences increases my academic performance (Napapaangat ng aking karanasan sa trabaho sa aking pag-aaral)				
I became more responsible academically because I have working experience (Mas nagiging responsible ako sa aking pag-aaral dahil sa aking karanasan sa trabaho)				
School Related Factor				
My teachers keeps on updating me for my academic studies (Kinakamusta ako ng aking guro ukol sa aking pag-aaral)				

Statements	RATING SCALE			
	4 pts	3 pts	2 pts	1 pt
	Strongly Experienced	Experienced	Slightly Experienced	Strongly Less Experienced
I have communicated with my classmates to work on our activities (Nakikipag-ugnayan ako sa aking kaklase ukol sa mga ibat-ibang Gawain)				
Given SLM modules are easy to accomplished (Madali lang isagawa ang mga ibinigay na SLM modules)				
I learned easily through SLM modules given (Mas madali akong matututo dahil sa SLM na ibinigay)				
I can travel easily to the distribution and retrieval site to get and submit SLM modules (Mas madali lang makapunta sa distribution at retrieval site upang ibigay o kumuha ng SLM modules)				
Health Related Factor				
I'm immuned against from any illnesses (Hindi ako basta-basta nadadapuan ng anumang sakit)				
I am in a safe place (Ako ay nasa ligtas na lugar)				
I have further understanding on how I take care of myself (May sapat akong kaalaman kung paano ko iingatan ang aking sarili)				
I often consumed healthy foods (Madalas akong kumakain ng masustansyang pagkain)				
I have enough medical resources such as medicines (meron akong sapat ng pangangailangang pang – medical gaya ng gamot)				

Prepared by:

Researchers

Secondary School Teachers

Responded by:

Appendix B

Assent Form



ASSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH DATA COLLECTION

I, _____, the _____ of _____
 (Name of parent/guardian) (Relationship) (Name of Student)

give my approval to allow my son/daughter to participate in relation to the research study
 by giving his/her responses to answer the survey questionnaire given for the data
 gathering in relation to their study. I acknowledged that the responses and personal
 identity of my son/daughter will be kept utmost confidentiality.

Signed by:

 (Printed name and signature of
 parent/guardian)