Romantic Relationship status and Sociablity as Predictors of Academic Achievement among Hawassa University Students

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed to investigate the level at which romantic relationship status will predict academic achievement among undergraduate students, to understand the influence of sociability on academic achievement among undergraduate students and to investigate the level at which having reading friends could predict academic achievement among undergraduate students

Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted in selected 8 Departments from 4 Faculties at Hawassa University, Ethiopia. A total of 180 participants were involved in the study comprising of 90 males and 90 females. A validated semi-structured questionnaire was used to investigated romantic relationship and sociability while academic achievement was based on students' CGPAs. Descriptive chi-square, ANOVA and t-test were used to analyzed data for independent samples.

Results:The results of this study depicts that romantic relationship has no significant influence on academic achievement (F=0.621, df=198, p>.05) while sociability has a negative influence on academic achievement (t=1.046, df=129, p<.05). Having reading/interacting friends have a significant relationship with academic achievement (x^2=14.830, p<.05).

Conclusion: The study made an important contribution to the body of knowledge on romantic relationship and sociability as predictors of academic achievement.

Keywords: Romantic relationship, Social life, Academic achievement, Undergraduates, University students.

Introduction

Educators named academic performance as representation of performance outcomes that is the indication of the extent to which aperson has accomplished specific goals that were focus of activities ininstructional

environments specifically in schools, colleges and universities [2]. The development of one country interms social and economical is directly related with academic achievement of students [6]. The commitment of students' for their achievement plays an important role in producing best quality graduates who will become great leaders and work force for the country, thus responsible for the country's economic and social development [1]. A study conducted by [10] stated that education is one of the biggest achievement and the blue print on how individuals are recognized, not only at work, but also by people whom they meet in everyday life experience and the key in of goals attainment. It is obvious that people usually doff their caps to show respect when they come a well grounded scholar, and education happens to be the best legacy that could be given to a child in life. However, one of the step to attain desired educational heights is admission which could be used as eligible criterion to begin a formal employment. Eventhough the life of university might be exposed for stressful conditions but it is one of the sweet and unforggotable experiences in life. It represents a critical developmental

period for both late adolescents and young adults [4].

Romantic relationship is a human friendship process where two people agreed to companionship which goes beyond the level of friendship and with the aim of assessing the suitability as partner in an intimate relationship. Romantic relationship is an intimate friendship which involves sexual but could be a stressor when the level of commitment becomes too much At a minimum,romantic involvement is likely to require at least some investment of time and energy from the participants, but this can range up to a nearly all-consuming level of investment and due to these investments, romance potentially distracts students from other areas of their lives, most notably school [11].Romantic relationship negatively contributed to students' academic achievement and their psychosocial functioning [15],[13]. It also has anegative impact on academic achievement [13]. [9] Found that formation of intimate friendship includes trustworthy sprit among them, sensitivity and goal directed relationship been able to pay a value for equity and mutual profit. Likewise, students working for to

240

maximize academic achievement . However, it is established that romance has a positive effect on emotional health of adolescents [16].

Sociability is the result of welcoming expression and being in needs to meet other people to enjoy and spend time with them [3]. Sociability is the play form of association, that is ,the pleasurable, joyful and delightful experience that comes out of people's interaction in the society [12]. Acquiring a sound knowledge is bedrock of higher academic achievement as it involves interaction between students and lecturers and among students.However, students who display sociability traits could be pronet more opportunities for advancement in their academic achievement because the traits can instill confidence in them. Moreover, this confidence encourages the students to mix freely and interact with people around them. A study carried out by [8] on characteristics of personality as indicators of academic performance of secondary school students depicted that extraversion under which sociability is found that academic performance has a significant relationship with sociability. A student who can easily mix and interact

well with other students in the class as well as outside the class and lecturers usually finds it so easy to contribute to class discussion or ask questions from teachers and colleagues that have better chance to understand compared to a student who finds it challenge to relate with others. Such student may find it problem in approaching any one either lecturer or other students when faced with challenges in academic.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study are: To investigate the level at which romantic relationship status will predict academic achievement among undergraduate students, to understand the influence of sociability on academic achievement among undergraduate students and to investigate the level at which having reading friends could predict academic achievement among undergraduate students.

Significance of the Study

This study investigates to what extent students' academic achievement could be described by romantic relationship status. It also gave brief explaination about sociability could predict academic achievement or not. Moreover, the study assesses the influence of having

241

reading/interacting friends on academic achievement among undergraduate students

Hypotheses

Romantic relationship will significantly anticipate academic achievement among undergraduate students, Sociability will significantly anticipate academic achievement among under graduate students and having reading/interacting friends will have a significant relationship with academic achievement among under graduate students.

Design

Cross-sectional design was used in this investigation. Semi-structured questionnaires were also involved to address/point out some very important information about independent variables (sociability and romantic relationship).

Study setting

The study was carried out in Hawassa University. Which is one of the recognized universities in south region, Hawassa, Ethiopia. Geographical site of Hawassa University (HU) is found in Hawassa town, South Ethiopia. It was established in April 2000. HU comprises seven campuses (only four of them are in Hawassa and three them are outside of Hawassa – Wondo Genet,

Awada and Bensa-Daye), five Colleges and one Institute. Moreover, it has its own Comprehensive Specialized Hospital in the town.

Study Population

The study population comprised of undergraduate students of Hawassa University.

Sample Size

The sample size of this study was 180 undergraduate students. The sample comprised male female students 90 male students and 90 males.

Sampling Procedure

A researcher used a multi-step random sampling procedure in this study.

First step: Four Faculties were randomly selected by lottery method from the existing five Faculties in the University. The selected Faculties are Faculties of Business and Economics, Engineering, Computational Sciences and Social Science and Humanity.

Second step: Two Departments were randomly selected by Lottery method from each of the selected Faculties to make a total number of eight Departments for the study. The selected Departments are Psychology, Geography, Economics, Civil

Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, and Accounting.

Third step: Eight participants were randomly selected by Lottery method from each level of the Department selected.

Study Instruments

The instrument used for this study was a self-help constructed questionnaire comprising of three sections namely:

Part One: It includes socio-demographic information of the participants such as age, gender, level, faculty and department

Part Two: It includes items that measure sociability. The Sociability scale is a 32-item questionnaire measuring reading/interacting attitude and sociability developed by [5]. Items1-10 measure attitude towards keeping friends, items13, 14 & 15 measure gender sensitivity in establishing relationship, items 11 & 12 measure attitudinal consistency in keeping relationship, items13-23 measure group membership and social behaviour while items 24-27 measure profile self-evaluation. The scale has a coefficient of r=0.86 for error variance of time, a coefficient of r=0.96 for error variance of content, and a coefficient of r=0.97 for error variance of homogeneity as reliability coefficients while it has a criterion validity

coefficient of r = 0.24. Questions 1,1-9 were adapted from the Sociability Scale [5] to suit the research findings on having reading/interacting friends.

Part Three: In order to measure romantic relationship status, a valid ordinary questionnaire item was used. This single questionnaire item does not need to meet up with requirement of validity.

Procedure

Since getting approval letter from different concern body is mandatory, the data collection procedure was begun by getting approval from the necessary University Officers including the Registrar, Heads of Departments, Dean of Students' Affairs and Academic Affairs Office to allow for easy access to the students CGPA. Participants consent was also obtained before the commencement of the study.

The students' academic achievements were assessed based on the following grades:

First class division (3.75-4.00)–Excellent achievement, Second class, Upper division (3.0-.3.74) High achievement, Secondary class, Lower division (2.5-2.90) - Average achievement, Third class (2.0-2.49) – Fair achievement and Fail (Below 2.0) – Low achievement

Statistical Analyses

After collection of data, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 17 was used to analyze the collected data. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, standard deviation, and variance was conducted to describe the socio-demographic information of the participants. Some categorical data were presented as charts. Chi-square statistics was utilized to check the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the difference in mean score of continuous variable and t-test for independent samples was also used to test for the research hypotheses.

Results

Table I: Demographic information of participants

Variables	N(%)
Gender	
Male	
	90(50)
Female	
Total	90(50)
	180(180)
Level of year	
Second	
	90(50)
Third	
	90(50)
Total	180(100)
Faculties	
Social Sciences	

Ethical Consideration

Before starting data collection Letter of approval was obtained from the University Registrar. Participants were well informed for the purpose of study and confidentiality was assured by a researcher. Necessary orientation was also given by the researcher before going to data collection. Consent forms were given to the participants to read and to sign agreement to participate in the study before the distribution and filling of the questionnaires. The researcher was also given the freedom to accept or decline participation in the study with no penalty attached.

244

	4525)
Engineering	45(25)
Computational Science	
	45(25)
Business and Economics	45(25)
Total	180(25)
Students academic performance	
Excellent	12 (6.5)
High	
	32(17.77)
Average	71(39.5)
Fair	65(36.5)
Low	---
Total	180(100)
Religion Affiliation	
Orthodox	
	68(37.5)
Muslim	
	35(19.5)
Catholic	15(8.5)
Protestant	
	59(32.5)
Other	3(1.7)
Total	
	180(100)

Table 2: Testing the influence of dating status on academic performance (CDPA) using ANOVA

	N	Mean	Std.deviation	Std error	95% of confidence interval for mean	
					Lower bound	Upper bound
Open relationship	70	2.1218	.7.0862	.10246	2.5746	2.0781
Serious relationship	62	2. 7056	.66505	. 10390	2.3952	1.7843
Same sex relationship	5	2.0400	.00363	.30866	1.3455	2.5424
Others	43	2.0127	.73687	.10872	2.5431	2.0234
Total	200	2.0187	.67788	.04107	2.5943	1.8901

Table 3, Tsesting the influence of romantic relationship on academic achievement (CGPA) by using ANOVA descriptive

Open relationship	70	2.1218	.7.0862	.10246	2.5746	2.0781
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Same sex relationship	5	2.0400	.00363	.30866	1.3455	2.5424
Others	43	2.0127	.73687	.10872	2.5431	2.0234
Total	200	2.0187	.67788	.04107	2.5943	1.8901

ANOVA (CGPA)

	Sum ofSquare	df	MeanSquare	F	Sig.
BetweenGroups	1.012	2	.458	.621	.441
WithinGroups	121.690	196	.574		
Total	113.364	1 98			

Table III depicts that the test of ANOVA means difference of CGPA among the groups (F=0.621, DF=198, p>.05) is not statistically significant. Therefore, researcher is forced to reject hypothesis1.

Table 4: Testing the variables of sociability by independent t-test

Group Statistics CGPA

Social Characteristics	N	Mean	Std.Deviation	Std. Error Mean
No	14	2.3320	.68641	.10305
Yes	136	2.0692	.73864	.05941

Independent Samples Test

CGPA	Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
	F	Sig.	t	Df

	.145	.560	1.046	129	
Equal variances assumed					
			1.157	12.440	
Equal variances not assumed					

Independent Sample Test

CGPA	t-test for Equality of Means		
	Sig.(2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal variances assumed	.022	.36282	.12618
Equal variances not assumed	.015	.36282	.11459

Table 4, result depicts that the negative statistically significant influence of sociability on academic performance (t=1.046; df=129, p<.05).

Table 5.: Tests of relationship between academic performance and some variables using chi-square

Variables	2	P-value	Status
Romantic relationship	23.837	0.530	Not significant
Opposite sex friend	2.577	0.612	Not significant
Opposite sex more than same sex friends	5.355	0.173	Not significant
Team/group member	1.776	0.654	Not significant
Good reading/interacting group	4.243	0.287	Not significant
Having friends in your department	10.236	0.012	Significant
Keeping a reading/interacting friendship for long	14.830	0.005	Significant
Kind of friendship	10.181	0.022	Significant
Place of keeping reading/interacting	1.027	0.821	Not significant
friendship	3.975	0.209	Not significant

|			
Possesses Social Characteristics	3.655	0.763	Not significant

Table 5, depicts that sociability has statistically significant relationship with academic achievement of students by having reading and interacting friends while insignificant relationship between academic achievement of students and practice of romantic relationship and possession of some other social characteristics are reflected in the table above.

Table 6: Table showing the academic performance of the participants

Variables	N (%)
Class	
First class	4(2.0)
Second class upper division	46 (23.0)
Second class Lower division	70 (35.0)
Third class	20(10.0)
Pass	40(20.0)

Table 6 reveals that only one student has CGPA of between 3.750 and 4.00 (First division), 70 has Second Class Lower Division, and 4 of them have less than 2.0 in their CGPA.

Figure I: Bar chart showing participants' responses for question on romantic friendship
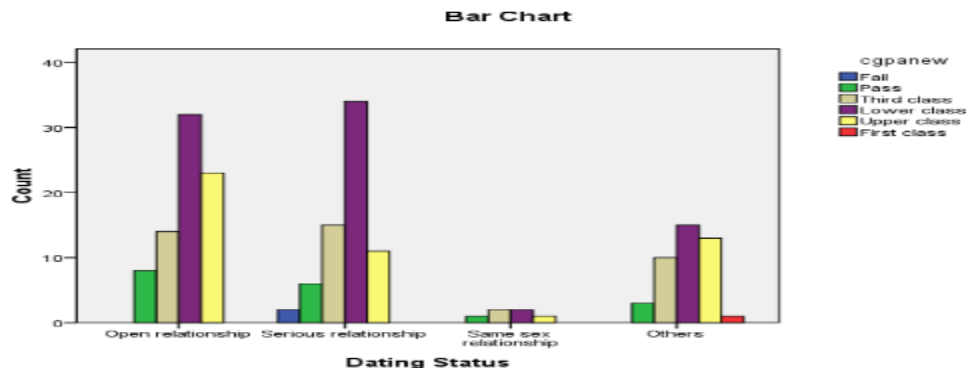
friendship

Figure I above depicts participants' responses for questions on romantic friendship and they are grouped interms of the division of CGPA.
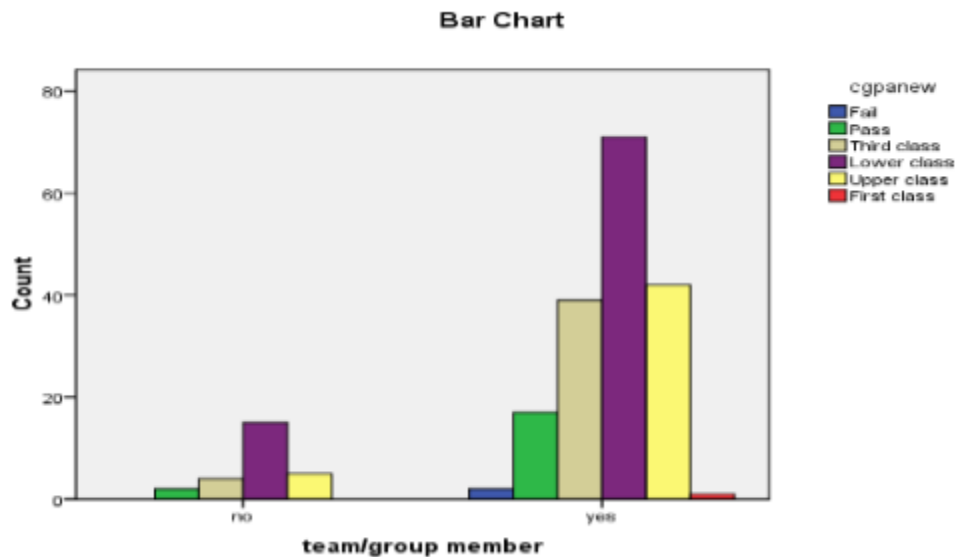

Figure II: Bar chart showing participants' responses to their Active Memberships.

Figure II reveals the response of partcipants for question on being active memberships in any academic group work they are assigned to, and the chart reveals the category the respondents belong to and their divisional CGPA.

FigureIII: Bar chart showing respondents responses to Having Reading/Interacting Group
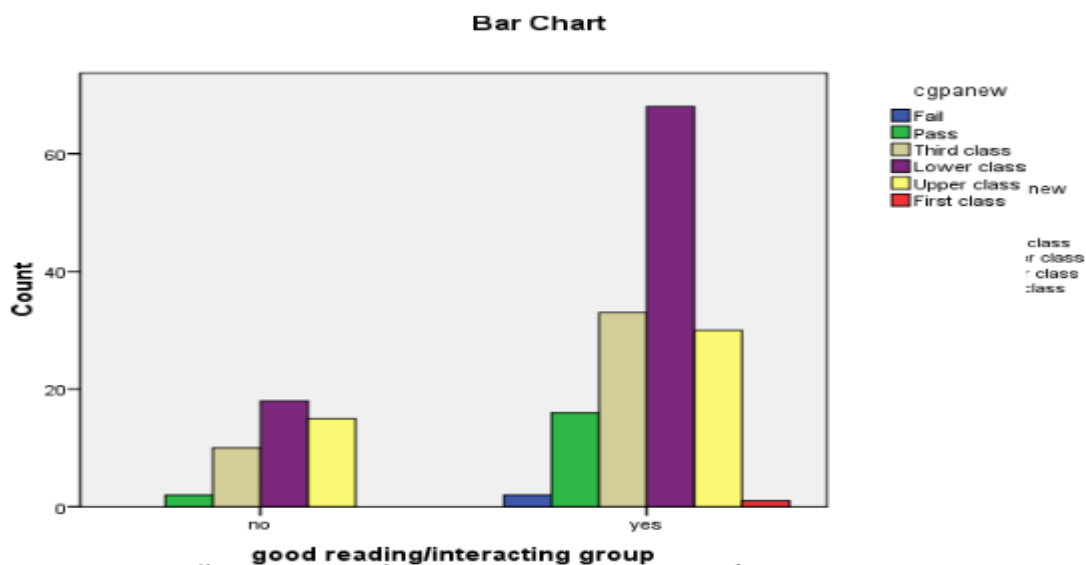
Figure III shows respondents responses to question on having good reading/interacting group; it reveals the category that the respondents fallen and their division ofCGPA.

249

Figure IV: Bar chart showing respondents responses to questions on Having Friends in the Same Department
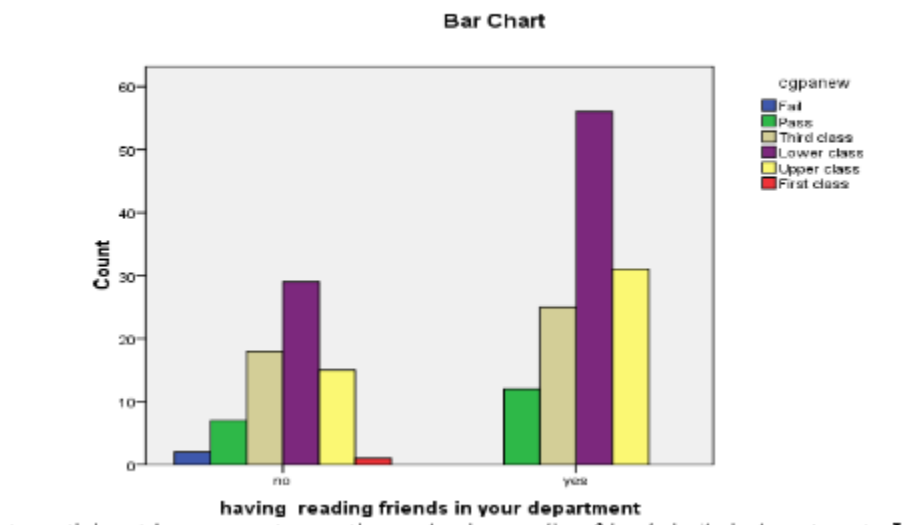

Figure IV depicts participants' responses to question on having reading friends in their departments. It reveals the category they belong and their division ofCGPA.

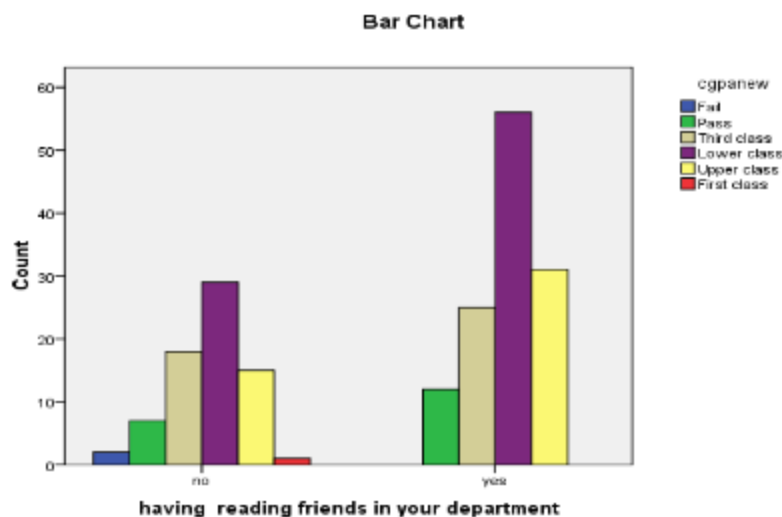**Figure V: Bar chart showing respondents responses toHaving Social Characteristics**

Figure: V depicts that the participants' responses for question on some characteristics of social structures such as having ability to mix freely with collogues, enjoying, entertaining, outgoing, and spontaneously friendly; the chart also reveals the category the respondents belong and

Figure VI: Bar chart revealing participants' responses for possession of social characteristics
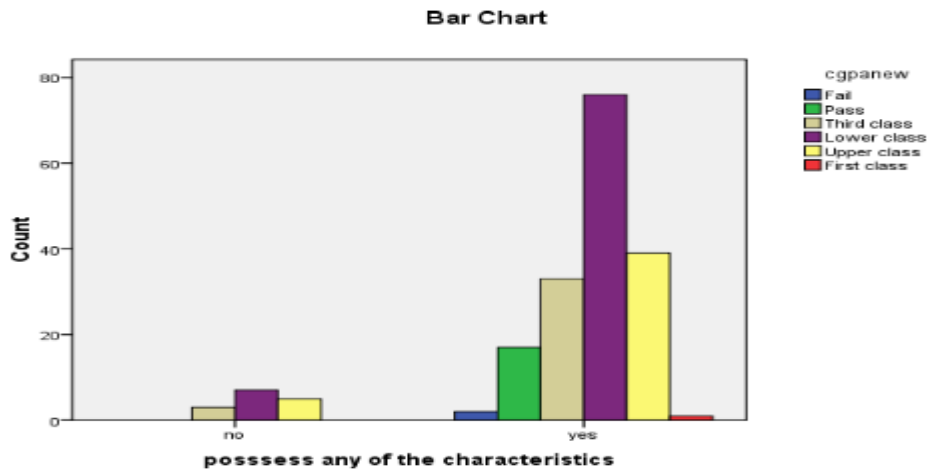

Bar Chart

Figure VI depicts the respondents' responses for questions on possession of social stractural characteristics, the chart is still in support of figure 4.2.5 above; it also reveals the category that the respondents belong and the division oftheir CGPA.

Figure VII: Bar chart revealing respondents' responses to questions on the degree to which they possess social characteristics
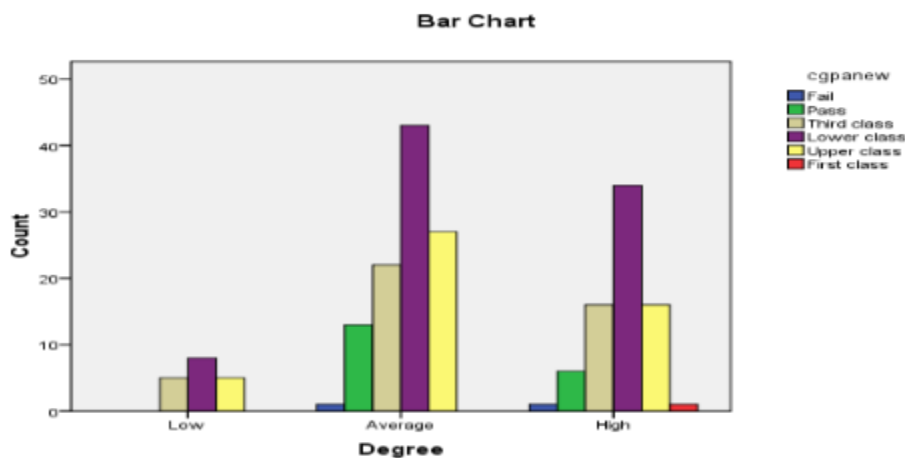

Bar Chart

Figure VII depicts the respondents' responses to question on the degree to which they posses social characteristics; itreveals the category they belong and the division of their CGPA.

Discussion

The finding of this study depicted that romantic relationship does not influence academic performance. When we see the academic achievement of the students and the plausible explanation of this finding, romantic relationship condition never has a negative impact. Likewise, previous studies conducted by [7] support present findings by generalizeing that students' academic performance (GPA) is not affected by romantic relationship. Whereas, past studies conducted by [10] and [15] contradict the present study which described that academic achievement is affected by having of romantic friend.

Moreover, results of present study showed academic achievement are negatively influenced by sociablity. This means that when students who do not practice such relation or don't have social characteristics have great academic achievement and students who have social characteristics scores less achievement. On the other hand study done by [14] who justified that high level of attaining academic achievement in the situation of education and practice of sociablity characteristics is directly related. Whereas, [8] written that being sociable had a statistically significant relationship

with academic achievement pursue to agree with the result of this study.

Present study also found that having reading/interacting friends have statistiaclly significant relationship with school achievement among undergraduate students. Thus, being relayed that if somebody establesh network with his/her social characteristics to keeping friends that should support, guide, assist, help and add more knowledge to his/her educational life, that could produce an important and great school achievement but some are those only enjoy being in a group of others joking and going out without useful positive contribution to their school performance.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Findings of the present study showed that academic achievement of under graduate students is not signifcantly influenced by romantic relationship. On the other hand, under graduate students' academic achievement is highly affected by sociability but it has a significant positive relationship with having reading/interacting friends. This is therefore, creating awarness and some short term training to be considered students to have reading/interacting friends in order to improve students' academic achievements during their stay in the university.

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