The Impact of Social Support on the Mental Wellness of International Students

By

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Introduction

Pursuing a university degree can be very challenging. Usually, students are young and transitioning from high school into the adult academic environment. Transitions can be hard. Some students struggle and need help with their transition, while others seem to have an easier time. Indeed, moving abroad to pursue a degree can be one of the most challenging experiences one can have. Learning the ins and outs of a university is already challenging, but learning a new culture, customs, social norms, and way of life can be particularly stress-inducing.

International students usually leave their home country and enter a new world where they know little to nothing; they leave their native social support network, friends, and families to explore the unknown of a different country and educational system. Additionally, international students can suffer from isolation, cultural barriers, and social norms can be difficult to navigate and understand, and students can feel alone while trying to adjust to their new lives (English et al., 2022). International students are also prone to suffering from depression and anxiety (Ke et al., 2023) and finding help can be difficult. However, universities usually have support services for newcomers, where they teach new skills and give pointers on how to integrate into campus life (Martirosyan et al., 2019), which can help students have transformational experiences that could lead to personal growth and self-discovery.

Academic services have been proven to be effective in aiding transition and adaptation; however, social support is one key factor that can transform challenging experiences into learning opportunities (Martirosyan et al., 2019). Social support comes in various forms, including friends, family, professors, and religious communities, and it has been proven to aid adaptation, lower homesickness, and provide better mental wellness.

Social support becomes a protective factor that helps students overcome challenges and enjoy the unique experience of studying abroad.

The current study seeks to investigate the effects of social support on the mental wellness of international students. It will investigate whether social support can aid adaptation, decrease homesickness, provide better mental wellness, and overall make students feel better. The findings of this study revealed that social support did not predict improved mental wellness; however, support from friends made in Canada seemed to aid adaptation and a sense of belonging.

Literature Review

The number of international students admitted to Canada has steadily grown since the early 2000s and reached its peak in 2019, with 250,020 undergraduate students admitted and enrolled in universities across the country (Crossman et al., 2021). While Canada welcomes students from across the globe, the top ten countries with the most students in Canada are South Korea, China, Japan, United States, France, Mexico, United Kingdom, India, Taiwan, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Nigeria and Vietnam. (Crossman et al., 2021). Nevertheless, only seven countries have remained the same since the early 2000s: South Korea, China, Japan, the United States, France, Mexico and India (Crossman et al., 2021). These countries currently hold the highest number of student permit visas and will likely continue holding as many, if not more, permits in the upcoming years (Crossman et al., 2021).

Accommodating so many students with different beliefs and cultures can become complicated, especially since most students come to Canada alone, leaving family and friends behind to forge their paths in Canada and pursue their undergraduate studies (Rankin et al., 2018). Most face loneliness, isolation, and difficulty adapting to a new country with different norms and societal expectations (Rankin et al., 2018). There are available services to aid an international student's transition, and most universities offer counselling services. However,

students who are still learning the ins and outs of their new surroundings and facing loneliness tend to have difficulty finding those resources (Lee, 2013).

The cycle of helplessness can be difficult to overcome and conquer; however, social support has been proven to change an international student's experience, significantly and greatly reduce depression and anxiety, and provide an easier transition into living in a new country. Social support can come from various sources, such as friends, family, faculty, and religious communities. This study will look into how these sources of social support may impact the mental wellness of students.

Religion

Religion has been proven to help students adapt better and show improved mental wellness over time. According to a study by Aflakseir (2012), Muslim Pakistani students who studied in England showed an increased sense of belonging, better mental wellness and decreased feelings of loneliness compared to other international students. Edara (2022) also conducted a study in Taiwan to investigate whether religious international students had a better experience than those who did not. The results were positive, showing that students from religious communities had better outcomes and happier experiences while studying in a foreign country (Edara, 2022).

An additional study conducted on Chinese students who studied in Malaysia sought to investigate the role of resilience and spirituality in perceived social support and emotional well-being (Qi et al., 2021). This study also used psychological well-being (PWB), which represents a combination of feeling good and being able to function efficiently, as a mediating factor (Qi et al., 2021).

The study found a positive relationship between increased levels of perceived social support and PWB (Qi et al., 2021). Higher levels of perceived social support also demonstrated higher levels of resilience and better coping with stressors (Qi et al., 2021).

Moreover, students with higher levels of PWB, resilience and perceived social support tended to develop healthier, positive relationships and consider spirituality an essential part of their lives and well-being (Qi et al., 2021).

These findings suggest that religion is fundamental for the adjustment and wellness of international students. Furthermore, social support reduces stress, enhances students' experiences, well-being, and positive attitudes, and reduces depression and anxiety levels (Qi et al., 2021).

Support Services

Universities also accommodate international students and offer support through various academic and social services. Martirosyan et al. (2019) sought to investigate the many ways twenty American universities supported their students. Many academic and social services were available to students, including targeted writing support, academic support, student success initiatives and extensive English language programs where skills such as reading, writing and speaking were the main focus (Martirosyan et al., 2019). Results showed that universities offering such services had a higher satisfaction rate and improved mental wellness among international students (Martirosyan et al., 2019).

A similar study conducted by Shadowen et al. (2019) investigates the prevalence of depressive symptoms in international students and how universities can better serve and help them in a 4-year university in the Mid-Atlantic region in the United States. Students were asked to participate in a questionnaire which was designed to measure depression and anxiety levels, English fluency, acculturative stress, perceived discrimination, and levels of social support (Shadowen et al., 2019). The results showed that 45.3% of participants met the clinically significant cutoff for clinical depression, 24.7% of participants screened positive for moderate to severe symptoms of anxiety, and Asian students reported higher levels of anxiety compared to non-Asian students (Shadowen et al., 2019).

The study also found that the prevalence of depression symptoms was higher in those who experienced higher levels of acculturation stress, perceived discrimination and lack of English fluency (Shadowen et al., 2019). The study supported the hypothesis that higher levels of social support would decrease levels of depression and anxiety and improve emotional well-being, showing that students who received social support reported lower depression and anxiety levels, better emotional well-being and enhanced ability to deal with stressors (Shadowen et al., 2019).

Family

Many studies discuss the importance of support from friends and university services; however, support from family is just as significant in helping students achieve better outcomes. A study by Llamas and Consoli (2012) showed that familial support helped Latina/o university students reduce intragroup marginalization, aided thriving and decreased stress levels.

Friendship

Once students leave their home countries and face a new country with its challenges, making new friends and creating a support system becomes essential to better acclimate and develop a sense of belonging. A study by Kyunghee et al. (2022) sought to investigate the role of social support and friendship among Indian and Chinese students at a southwest American university (Kyunghee et al., 2022). The results showed that students usually sought support from other students from their origin country, citing a lack of English fluency and cultural differences as reasons why they avoided making friends with fellow American students (Kyunghee et al., 2022). Surprisingly, the students reported a great enthusiasm for supporting other international students and aiding their transition (Kyunghee et al., 2022).

Hendrickson et al. (2011) found different results at a Hawaiian university. Hendrickson et al. (2011) first hypothesized that international students were more likely to

have co-national friends than host-country friends and, secondly, that those students with more host-country friends would report higher levels of satisfaction and contentment and report feeling less homesick. The results showed that students with more host-country friendships reported higher satisfaction levels and contentment and decreased homesickness (Hendrickson et al., 2011). In contrast with the previous study mentioned above, this study highlights that friendships made in host countries with host nationals can also provide social support and increase mental wellness.

Current Study

These studies highlight the importance of social and emotional support for international students' well-being and adaptation. Friendship, support services, family, religion, religious communities, and faculty and staff have been shown to be efficient in helping students achieve better outcomes and decrease depression levels, as well as foster connections and a sense of belonging.

However, many present studies have yet to thoroughly investigate how students from different nationalities interpret, receive, and seek social support. Some studies investigated whether religion and spirituality helped a student's adjustment but did not compare how students from different religions might receive and seek social support. These essential questions can help universities and students adapt and have better outcomes.

The current aims to investigate if nationality impacts which source of support students seek and rely on. Its emphasis is on whether there is a pattern among specific demographics and whether religion plays a positive role in mental wellness. It is hypothesized that students with higher social support have improved mental wellness and an overall positive experience while studying in Canada.

Methods

Participants

A total of 75 undergraduate international students ($N = 75$) were recruited in this study. Participants were randomly recruited in person in student-dense areas (e.g., library, cafeteria and student lounge). Five participants were removed due to the study's exclusion of domestic students. Therefore, the final participant count was 70 ($N = 70$). Participants were also recruited via social media posts on the Capilano University Psychology Instagram page, the Capilano University Psychology eLearn portal and posters across the North Vancouver campus. Participation was voluntary; only undergraduate international students attending the Spring 2025 term were included. 81.2% of participants self-identified as female ($N = 56$), 14.4% of participants self-identified as male ($N = 10$), and 2.9% of participants self-identified as non-binary ($N = 2$).

The study used a correlational research design to explore the relationships between international students' sources of social support, levels of mental wellness, adaptation to life in Canada, and sense of belonging to the Capilano University community. The study employed religion, nationality, and sources of social support as predictor variables.

Materials

Sources of Social Support

For the survey, I divided sources of social support into four categories and two subcategories. The first category was "family," followed by subcategories "family residing in Canada" and "family residing in origin country." The second category followed a similar pattern, with "friends" as the main category and "friends made in Canada" and "friends from origin country" as subcategories. Consecutive categories comprised "faculty and Capilano University Staff" and "religious communities." Participants were also asked which social support they relied upon the most and their perceived social support from each category.

Mental Wellness

Mental wellness was measured using a self-report item nine (How would you describe your emotional state while in Canada?). Participants were provided with a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated very unhappy and 5 very happy. Higher scores signified higher levels of mental wellness, while low scores signified low mental wellness levels.

Adaptation to Life in Canada and Sense of Belonging

Sense of belonging and adaptation to life in Canada was measured by item four (How easy was it to make friends upon arriving in Canada?), item five (Do you feel part of the Capilano University community?) and item eight (How easy was it to adjust to the way of life in Canada?). Participants were given a 5-point Likert scale. Higher scores signified a lack of difficulty making friends, a higher sense of belonging and better adaptability. Moreover, lower scores signified difficulty making friends, a low sense of belonging and low adaptability to living in Canada.

Religious Affiliation, Gender Identity and Nationality

Participants were asked about their religion, gender identity, and nationality. They were then given the option to select from the following religions: "Christian," "Muslim," "Hindu," "Sikh," "Buddhist," "Atheist/Agnostic," and "Other." When asked about their gender identity, participants were provided with the following options and given the option of selecting more than one: "Female," "Male," "Non-Binary," "Trans," and "Prefer Not to Answer." Finally, participants were asked about their nationality and allowed to select from the following options: "India", "Brazil", "Vietnam", "USA", "Japan", "Mexico", and "Other"

Finally, REDCap was used as the survey platform provider. All data was stored in the REDCap servers and on a password protected laptops.

Procedure

In-person recruitment was the main form of recruitment used in this study. Participants were recruited over two months in student-dense areas (library, student lounge and cafeteria) and were randomly approached to avoid profiling. To further avoid profiling, I only approached groups of two or more students across all recruitment locations. Additionally, only students sitting at tables were approached in the cafeteria and student lounge.

In the first recruiting session, I distributed fifty flyers and approached various groups, including same-sex and mixed groups. Participants seemed engaged and paid attention to me when I introduced the study. Female-only and mixed groups physically turned to me while I talked, while the male-only groups engaged but remained in their original posture. The first recruitment session yielded good results, with twenty participants taking the survey. Similar results were found in the following recruitment session; male-only groups either ignored my approach or paid little attention. However, mixed groups with one or more women and at least two men engaged with me, similar to female-only groups.

Before proceeding with my recruiting experience, I want to discuss a few studies that have considered the impact of clothing and gender on survey-taking behaviour and compliance, particularly how the gender and attire of the recruiter can impact compliance and participation. As a woman, I have been directly impacted by my gender and clothing choices while conducting this study.

A study by Fabio et al. (2018) examined how female graduate students were perceived and rated while wearing "professional" or "sexy" attire. Results showed that female students wearing professional-looking clothes were rated as more competent, putting more effort into their graduate work and overall better grades than female students wearing sexy clothes (Fabio et al., 2018). Other studies were conducted on how uniform use yields

better compliance; Bushman (1988) investigated whether female uniform-wearing influenced behaviour compliance. In the study, female confederates were dressed as professional, confederate uniform or sloppy attired and were instructed to tell subjects to give a change to other people whose car's meter had run out (Bushman, 1988). Obedience was the highest when female confederates wore uniforms (Bushman, 1988).

Participant's gender seemed to also play a role in engagement and participation. A study by Porter and Whitcomb (2005) found that females were likelier to participate and engage in studies. Additionally, socially engaged females showed more interest in participating and responding to the survey (Porter & Whitcomb, 2005).

My experience was similar to what Fabio et al. (2018) found. Attention and participation varied depending on my presentation between recruitment sessions. In recruitment session one, I wore makeup and business casual attire; the results were positive and showed great engagement. During the second recruitment session, my attire was casual and akin to what regular students would wear to class (e.g., jeans, sweaters, and sneakers), and I did not wear makeup. Participants seemed the least engaged and physically moved away as I approached them. Only five participants were recruited that day. In the following session, I changed my attire to all-black business casual with heels and light makeup. Female participants complimented me on my outfit and engaged the most.

In contrast, male participants did not engage, seemed nervous when I approached them and did not participate in the study. Results yield moderate female-only participation. I wore similar business casual attire, light makeup, and no heels on our next recruiting session. Male participants seemed at ease, were more attentive, and participated the most out of all sessions. Female participation was not different from the previous pattern.

Data analysis

To address hypothesis one, a Pearson's r correlation was conducted to investigate the relationship between social support and increased levels of mental wellness, followed by a linear regression to analyze whether social support was a predictor of improved mental wellness.

To further examine the relationship between religious affiliation and improved mental wellness and address hypothesis two, religious and non-religious students were compared using an independent t-test. A second Pearson's r correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between religious affiliation and support sources.

A third Pearson's r was conducted to address hypothesis three and investigate whether increased social support yields better adaptation, less homesickness, greater sense of belonging and less difficulty making friends. A linear regression was also conducted to examine whether higher levels of social support predicted better adaptation levels.

A Pearson's r was also conducted to investigate whether there was a relationship between improved mental wellness and address hypothesis four, adaptation and homesickness and each source of support (family in Canada, family in origin country, friends made in Canada, friends from origin country, religious community). A multiple linear regression was also conducted to examine whether social support from each source predicted better mental wellness outcomes.

Additionally, to investigate hypothesis five, a Pearson's r correlation analysis was conducted with each nationality to investigate the relationship between different nationalities and their levels of social support. A second Pearson's r correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between nationality, homesickness, adaptability to life in Canada, difficulty making friends and sense of belonging. Finally, a Pearson's r correlation was conducted to

address hypothesis six and examine the relationship between gender, adaptation levels, and difficulty making friends upon arriving in Canada.

All data was analyzed using R software.

Results

Social Support and Mental Wellness

A Pearson correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between mental wellness and social support from a family residing in Canada. Results showed a moderate, positive correlation between the two variables, $r(98) = .38$, $p = .001$. This suggests that higher levels of family support in Canada are associated with improved mental wellness among students. A multiple linear regression was then conducted to examine whether social support from friends, family, and Capilano University staff predicted increased levels of mental wellness. The overall model was not significant, $F(3, 64) = 1.38$, $p = .26$, $R = .06$. Support from friends was a marginal significant predictor, $\beta = 0.19$, $p = .08$. While support from family ($\beta = 0.05$, $p = .69$) and Capilano University staff ($\beta = 0.08$, $p = .48$) were not significant predictors.

Additionally, participants who felt supported by their families also felt supported by Capilano University staff, $r(n) = .34$, $p = .005$.

Religion and Mental Wellness

An independent t-test was used to compare mental wellness levels between non-religious and religious students. The results indicated that non-religious students had a slightly higher average score (3.70) than religious students (3.18).

Overall, religious students did not show improved mental wellness compared to non-religious students. However, Sikh students felt more supported by their families $r(68) = .32$, $p < .01$ and Christian students felt the least supported by Capilano University staff and faculty

$r(68) = -.38, p < .01$. Christian students also reported religious community as their biggest source of support $r(68) = .35, p < .01$.

Social Support, Homesickness, Sense of Belonging, and Adaptation Levels

A Pearson's r correlation analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between support from friends and adaptability to life in Canada. The results showed a significant positive relationship between variables $r(68) = .34, p = .004$, indicating that support from friends greatly impacted adaptability. A second Pearson's r correlation analysis revealed that students who were supported by friends felt less homesick, $r(68) = .33, p = .006$.

A third Pearson's r correlation revealed similar results: students who found it easy to make friends in Canada were significantly less homesick $r(68) = .41, p < .001$. Students who felt a sense of belonging also felt significantly less homesick $r(68) = .55, p < .001$. The opposite was also true; a fourth Pearson's r correlation revealed that students who had difficulty adapting to life in Canada showed high levels of homesickness $r(68) = .57, p < .001$. A fourth Pearson's r correlation revealed that students who felt supported by Capilano University faculty and staff also felt part of the community $r(68) = .49, p < .001$. Lastly, a fifth Pearson's r correlation revealed that students who easily adjusted to life in Canada had increased levels of mental wellness $r(68) = .58, p < .001$.

Finally, a simple linear regression was conducted to investigate whether social support yields higher levels of adjustment to life in Canada. The results showed that social support predicted adaptation $\beta = 0.59, t(68) = 5.82, p < .001$. The model showed approximately 33% of the variance in adjustment to life in Canada, $R^2 = .33, F(1, 68) = 33.91, p < .001$.

Sources of Social Support and Mental Wellness

To determine which source of social support yielded the most and least homesickness, a Pearson's r correlation analysis was conducted. Results showed that participants who received more support from family in origin country were more homesick $r(68) = -.44$, $p < .001$, while participants who had and relied on friends made in Canada felt less homesick $r(68) = .42$, $p < .001$.

Additionally, a multiple regression was conducted to investigate whether different sources of social support yield better mental wellness. The overall model was not statistically significant, $F(5, 64) = 1.42$, $p = .228$. However, it accounted for 10% of the variance in the variable mental wellness, $R^2 = .10$, adjusted $R^2 = .03$. However, friends made in Canada were a significant predictor of increased mental wellness, $\beta = 0.76$, $t(64) = 2.31$, $p = .024$.

Nationality, Adaptation, Sense of Belonging, and Preferred Social Support Sources

A Pearson's r correlation analysis was run to examine the relationship between nationality and sources of social support; the analysis revealed that Indian students felt most supported by their families $r(68) = .44$, $p < .001$. A second Pearson's r correlation revealed that Indian students also felt supported by the Capilano University faculty and staff $r(68) = .36$, $p = .003$. A third Pearson's r correlation analysis revealed the opposite for Brazilian students; the results showed that they felt the least support from their families $r(68) = -.32$, $p = .006$. A fourth Pearson's r correlation reviewed similar results for Japanese students who felt the least support from their families $r(68) = -.34$, $p = .005$. An additional Pearson's r correlation revealed that Indian students reported a high sense of belonging $r(68) = .31$, $p = .010$. In contrast, Brazilian students felt the least sense of belonging $r(68) = -.32$, $p = .007$.

The Impact of Gender on Adaptation and Ability to Form Friendships

To better examine the relationship between gender and homesickness, a Pearson's r correlation was conducted; male participants showed less homesickness $r(68) = .36$, $p < .01$, while female participants showed increased homesickness, $r(68) = –.31$, $p < .01$.

A second Pearson's r correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between gender and difficulty making friends in Canada. Male participants easily formed new friendships $r(68) = .46$, $p < .001$. In contrast, females showed increased difficulty making friends, $r(68) = –.35$, $p < .01$. Male participants also reported feeling more supported by friends made in Canada $r(68) = .33$, $p < .01$, while females found it hard to feel supported by friends made in Canada $r(68) = –.32$, $p < .01$.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of social support on the mental wellness and experience of international students while studying in Canada. Many factors can influence a student's life; this study took into account nationality, religion, and gender as factors that might influence their overall experience.

Contrary to previous research, social support was not strongly linked to increased mental wellness among the Capilano University international student population. Religion was not a strong predictor factor since non-religious students reported marginal improved mental wellness. I also analyzed how different sources of social support could impact overall mental wellness, and the findings we obtained are consistent with previous research. My findings suggest that students with more friends made in Canada were better adjusted, had less homesickness, and improved mental wellness. These findings were consistent across all nationalities. Support from family could not be generalized since only Indians and students who identified as Sikh felt supported by their families. At the same time, other nationalities did not report familial support.

Another point to consider is the differences between genders. Our findings suggest that males felt less homesick, had less difficulty adapting and making friends, and found more support in them. In comparison, female participants felt more homesick and had more difficulty adapting, forming friendships, and relying on them for support.

Support from Capilano University faculty and staff had mixed results. Only students who identified as Sikh or Indian felt like professors supported them. The same pattern followed with the sense of belonging: Students who felt more supported by faculty and staff had more friends in Canada and felt more connected to the community.

Nationality and religion seem to play a significant role in students' adaptation levels, sense of belonging and reporting professors as the main sources of support. Christian and Brazilian students showed significant difficulty adapting, had a low sense of belonging and did not report professors as sources of social support. In contrast, Indian and Sikh students reported professors and family as their main source of social support, as well as a high sense of belonging to the Capilano University community and easier adaptation to life in Canada.

Interpretation of Findings

One of the main points found in this data was that students with more friends made in Canada were happier and had better adaptation. Hendrickson et al. (2011) found similar results in a Hawaiian university; students who reported high levels of mental wellness and less homesickness had more friends made in Hawaii. English et al. (2022) found that attentiveness and support from professors were fundamental for improved mental wellness and a greater sense of connection and belonging during the COVID-19 lockdowns. Similar results were also found at Capilano University; students who felt supported by their professors felt more sense of belonging and less homesickness. Aflakseir (2012) found that Muslim students in England had improved mental wellness and a more positive attitude to life compared to non-religious students. These results could not be found at Capilano

University. Our results showed the opposite effect: Religious students did not report significantly improved mental wellness compared to non-religious students.

Many studies were conducted on the fundamental role of social support in students' mental wellness and lives. As an international student myself, the findings of this research speak to the difficulties I faced upon arriving in Canada. Fortunately, I moved to Canada when I was still in high school, so my adaptation period was less stressful than those who decided to come to Canada to pursue their associate or bachelor's degrees.

The results shed light on the positive aspects of a student's life, such as the ability to form new friendships and build connectedness with a new community and the not-so-good aspects of student life. The results serve as a diagnostic of our international student population. The experiences of Indian students at Capilano University seem positive, while Brazilian and Japanese students seem to struggle. The results could help the Capilano University governing body address areas where students seem to be struggling.

Limitations

It is important to consider several limitations when interpreting the research findings. Our limited participant number can impede the generalization of the data to the greater population of international students in Canada. Another point to consider is that our study was composed mainly of female participants ($N = 56$), and males represented a very small portion of all participants ($N = 10$). Although a significant relationship was found between gender, adaptability, and ability to form friendships, there should be caution when applying these findings to greater populations since they may not represent the actual population.

Finally, the topic of our research could be felt to be invasive. Although our study was based on a strengths-based approach to mental wellness, talking and participating in surveys that directly address difficulties participants may be facing could have influenced self-report accuracy and deterred potential participants from participating.

Directions for Future Research

There is much to learn from the unique experiences of international students and the breadth of their lived experiences, which they bring to the Capilano University community. Future research could build on these findings by developing a more comprehensive survey that measures anxiety and depression levels and adding Capilano University services as a possible source of social support.

A possible way to expand on religion as a mediator factor of adaptability and improved mental wellness was addressed in a study by Qi et al. (2021), where religion was seen as something which brings peace, tranquillity and stability to students' lives. Our study used religion and religious communities as mediators in mental wellness; however, we lacked the depth and meaning religion can bring to students' lives. Expanding on the role of religion in well-being and a sense of belonging could yield a deeper understanding of how universities could better support students from different faiths.

Another thing to consider is expanding recruiting efforts and finding better ways of reaching students electronically. Using the Capilano University student email directory and sending survey information and invitations via student email could yield greater numbers of participants.

Conclusion

Although previous studies support the notion that social support and religion improve mental wellness, the present study challenges it. Furthermore, the findings highlight the importance of connectivity and a sense of belonging to one's community. It also provides insight into the role of forming friendships and adapting while living in Canada. When interpreting the findings of this research, it is important to consider its limitations, such as the limited number of participants and female participant dominance. Nevertheless, the results found in this research could be useful for better policy implementation at Capilano University

and serve as a temperature check on how healthy and supported international students who attend Capilano University feel.

The purpose of this research was to study the impact of social support on the mental wellness of international students. However, it was also about the experiences, both positive and negative, that these students have every day. I entered this research intending to investigate how social support improved students' lives. I am leaving with great compassion and hope that struggling students can adapt, form friendships, and have a positive experience in Canada. Our results reflect what the living and breathing Capilano University student population truly is like.

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