



# A Comparison Study of Supporting Factors for Learning Environment of Rural Students between Private University and Government University

## การศึกษาเปรียบเทียบสภาพแวดล้อมที่สนับสนุนการเรียนรู้ของนักศึกษาที่มาจากต่างจังหวัดระหว่างมหาวิทยาลัยของเอกชน และมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐ

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### Abstract

The purposes of this study were 1) to study key factors supporting rural students' learning environment; and 2) to compare the factors supporting rural students' learning environment in private and government universities. The sample of 668 rural students (300 students from private university and 368 students from government university) who are currently studying in undergraduate level was selected from the total population of 5,777 rural students in both universities. The data were selected through simple random sampling method from rural students in both universities. A cross-sectional survey design was utilized and learning motivation theories were applied as frameworks for this quantitative study. The study used descriptive statistics to measure the extent to which various factors supporting students' learning motivation.

The results of this study revealed that 1) the factors such as family support, peer support, teacher support, school administration, and socio-economic status are important factors supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university; and 2) Between private and government university, the key factors such as family support and teacher support are at high level, peer support and socio-economic status support rural students' learning environment

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at moderate level and school administration factor differently support rural students' learning in private university (moderate level) and government university (high level).

## Keywords

Supporting, Learning Environment, Rural Students

## บทคัดย่อ

งานวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อ 1) ค้นหาปัจจัยด้านสภาพแวดล้อมสำคัญที่สนับสนุนต่อการเรียนรู้ของนักศึกษาจากต่างจังหวัด และ 2) เพื่อเปรียบเทียบปัจจัยสภาพแวดล้อมที่สนับสนุนต่อการเรียนรู้ของนักศึกษาจากต่างจังหวัด ซึ่งกำลังศึกษาอยู่ในมหาวิทยาลัยของเอกชน และมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐ กลุ่มตัวอย่างทั้งหมดมีจำนวนนักศึกษาต่างจังหวัด 668 คน (300 คน มาจากมหาวิทยาลัยของเอกชนและ 368 คน มาจากมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐ) ที่กำลังศึกษาอยู่ในระดับปริญญาตรี ถูกคัดเลือกจากประชากรทั้งหมด 5,777 คน จากมหาวิทยาลัยทั้งสอง (มหาวิทยาลัยของเอกชนและมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐ) งานวิจัยนี้ได้ใช้แบบสอบถามและใช้วิธีการสุ่มตัวอย่างแบบง่าย มากกว่านั้นการเรียนรู้ทฤษฎี แรงจูงใจถูกนำไปใช้เป็นกรอบสำหรับการวิจัยเชิงปริมาณ ใช้สถิติเชิงพรรณนาเพื่อวัดขอบเขตไปที่ปัจจัยต่างๆ สนับสนุนการสร้างแรงจูงใจในการเรียนรู้ของนักเรียน

ผลงานวิจัยพบว่า 1) ปัจจัยด้านสภาพแวดล้อมที่สำคัญสำหรับการสนับสนุนการเรียนรู้ของนักศึกษาจากต่างจังหวัดในมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐและเอกชน คือ ปัจจัยที่สนับสนุนจากครอบครัว ปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากเพื่อนๆ ปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากอาจารย์ ปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากมหาวิทยาลัย และปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากสังคม และ 2) ระหว่างมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐและเอกชน ปัจจัยด้านสภาพแวดล้อมสำคัญสำหรับการสนับสนุนการเรียนรู้ของนักศึกษา เช่น ปัจจัยที่สนับสนุนจากครอบครัว และปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากอาจารย์อยู่ในระดับสูง ปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากเพื่อนๆ และปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากสังคมอยู่ในระดับปานกลาง มากกว่านั้น ปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากมหาวิทยาลัยมีความแตกต่างกัน โดยปัจจัยสนับสนุนจากมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐอยู่ในระดับสูง ส่วนมหาวิทยาลัยของรัฐและเอกชนอยู่ในระดับปานกลาง

## คำสำคัญ

การสนับสนุน สิ่งแวดล้อมที่ส่งผลต่อการศึกษา นักศึกษาที่มาจากต่างจังหวัด

## Introduction

Motivation is a type of intrinsic transfer mode. It can encourage and drive students to discover knowledge until they get success in learning achievement (Harmer, 2001). Students who are supported and motivated to learn from families as well as society usually achieve their future



goals. Henderson et al. (2002, 7) stated the influence of family involvement on children's development and achievement is "consistent, positive, and convincing". Parent-child interactions, particularly encouraging and active parenting practices, are crucial influences on a development of child's academic (Christian, Morrison, & Bryant, 1998). Wong (2007) research illustrates that even though parents could not assist their children's learning academically, they supported their children's both spiritually and financially.

Furthermore, teacher support is also one of the essential factors for rural students' learning environment that students need good relationships with teacher not only in terms of academic assistance but also the cognitive support and positive feedback from teachers in order to foster their sense of self-worth (Ormrod, 2006). A good relationship between teachers and students is necessary for motivating students. Students might gain some confidence and probably will get rid of the problem that they might have when they are in the class if they have a good relationship with the teacher (Yunus, Osman & Ishak, 2011). Teachers have to provided students unconditional acceptance and at the same time providing them with accurate feedback. "As long as students know their worth is secure they will absorb accurate feedback about what they do." (McLean, 2003, 20).

Peer groups have influences on students' motivation. There are important research observing the connection between social competence and successful academic result. This study suggests that comparing to socially rejected adolescents; those adolescents who are accepted by their peers normally demonstrate higher feelings of self-esteem, self-worth, as well as achievement (Brown & Lohr, 1987 ; Eccles, Wigfield & Schiefele, 1998). Razak & See's (2010) study, peer learning also promotes the development of learning outcomes, teamwork, critical enquiry and reflection, communication skills, and learning meaningfully. Loke & Chow (2007) revealed that peer can facilitate cooperative learning and provides opportunities for students to discover their inadequacies and to correct misunderstanding. Jordon stated that "greater potential for interaction with positive peers who share similar goals...and can encourage and inspire them to do well in school" (Jordan & Nettles, 1999, 1).

Socio-economic factors could have an influence on independent learning behavior in some possible ways (Lamb, 2012). Fan (2011) demonstrates that socio-economic status does not only have an influence on the achievement of language learning but also has an influence on students' learning motivation, self-regulation, and self-related beliefs of the students McClelland (1961) which illustrates that there are three needs which have an effect on human behavior and these needs were socially acquired as well as these motivators are presented variedly from one to another, and



depends on the individual backgrounds. It is necessary to provide an inner measure of students' likelihood to obtain social acceptance and the significant roots of self-esteem which means to get social approval and belief that learner is an attractive partner or follow group member (Leary & Baumeister, 2000).

Munoz (2008) suggested that students from different social backgrounds have access to different types of schools as an example of government and private schools and varying levels of extracurricular exposure to the language targeted, for example; tuition privately, resources for learning, study abroad opportunities, etc. School should pay attention in preparing some programs that offer to solve the students' motivational problems with simple system (McLean, 2003). Moreover, students must be engaged in every school activities in order to acquire the knowledge and skills required for a successful transition into postsecondary and careers (Wang & Eccles, 2013).

Motivation is needed to maintain the stability of students' learning because if they satisfy their learning, as a result, they will not drop out of school. Bridgeland, Dilulio & Morison (2006) found out that there are some vital variables which contribute to a lack of motivation and lead to students' dropping out of school. Supportive learning environment can encourage and drive students to discover knowledge until they get success in learning achievement (Harmer, 2001). To develop learning effectively is the same as to build a house which consists of individual bricks and it needs solid foundations otherwise when under stain, it will collapse (Reid, 2007). A successful learning relies on motivation that encourages students to try hard on their study (Reid, 2007, 2). It is also extremely crucial for school that has a lot of disadvantaged and rural students who are poor.

Students from poor or rural backgrounds had fewer resources and motivation to learn in higher education. When schools have limited external resources, as it is geographically remote rural schools, they must depend on other kinds of resources in order to achieve the goals of achievement and persistence. Even though at-home resources are available for some rural students to support their positive academic outcomes, many still have limited at-home and community resource result to low achievement and dropout risk (e.g., low socioeconomic status, single-parent families, low parental education, low parental and community valuing of education); (Fowler & Walberg, 1991). Comparing to urban students, rural students face more inequitable situations such as different economies, opportunities, and possibly different peers and social capital. These areas have different unemployment rates, poverty rates, racial demographics, average age of population, and educational attainment rates (Tosha, 2013). Although learning in higher education is costly and time consuming, the benefits provided are long term and far exceeding the initial investment cost



(Dohm & Wyatt, 2002). Rural students already aware of the difficulties of continuing their college education but they keep their struggling for a better future of their employment for themselves, families, and communities. Regarding to Jongsma (2007), unemployment of college graduates is less often occurs during their career or for shorter periods of time and they have higher incomes than the rest of the labor force. "Many employers feel that college-educated workers are more motivated, learn tasks more quickly, are better able to meet deadlines, and have better problem-solving and communication skills compared to non-college educated employees" (Knutson, 2011, 3) These factors are capable to lead the decreased training time that employers need to spend on college educated workers and therefore, this make college graduates become the first choice for employers (Dohm & Wyatt, 2002).

Regarding to the situation in Cambodia, because the number of HEIs and its quality of education in rural area are limited, demotivated rural students decided to quit higher education after high school completion while highly motivated students in rural zones decided to enroll higher education in Phnom Penh city even though they already aware of the difficulties of living and studying in the city and for the other students who cannot afford living and learning in the city, they gave up and return back to study and live at their hometowns.

The foreign study about Cambodia states that rural students in Cambodia are typically belong to families that parents have low levels of education because most educated people in Cambodia were executed during the genocidal war, surviving residents generally have low education so their ability to guide their children through college is minimal (Eng, Zvonkovic, Mulsow & Ritchey, 2010). Hence, parents have few financial resources to help their children and colleges that students attend in rural area are usually poorly provided in terms of service quality and facilities they are, generally, smaller than urban area.

In addition, whether studying in private or government universities, students are affected by tuition prices. Government universities were established in the purpose of providing residents the opportunity to receive government higher education while private universities basically and heavily rely on tuition fees and other private contributions. The matter of costs, class size, academic activities, culture, and environment between government and private universities are involved in students' learning environment.

The purpose of this research paper is to find out the most important factors supporting learning environment and to compare the factor supporting rural students' learning environment in private and government universities.



## Research Objectives

1. To study key factors supporting rural students' learning environment.
2. To compare the factors supporting rural students' learning environment in private and government universities.

## Research Methodology

### 1. Population and Sampling

This study was carried out in University of Cambodia and Royal University of Agriculture located in Phnom Penh City, Cambodia. The University of Cambodia is a private University providing Bachelor to Doctoral program. Furthermore, Royal University of Agriculture is a government university providing Bachelor to Doctoral program and offer various major related to agriculture and forestry. A quantitative method was employed and the primary data is applied in the research study through survey questionnaires. The data was analyzed using quantitative statistics. The total population of this study is 5,777 rural students who are currently studying Bachelor degree at The University of Cambodia (1,200 students) and Royal University of Agriculture (4,577 students) located in Phnom Penh City, Cambodia. In order to ensure the selected sample is representative to the whole population of rural students, researcher followed the calculation of Yamane (Yamane, 1967, 886). The researcher planned to be at the 95% confidence level. Therefore, the sample size from the population of 4,577 rural students of Royal University of Agriculture (RUA) is 368 students. Moreover, the sample size from the population of 1,200 students of University of Cambodia (UC) is 300 students. As a result, the total population is 5,777 rural students and the total sample size from the population of both universities is 668 students. In this study, simple random sampling method is used so that the sample.

### 2. Research Instruments

This research adapts Likert scale (Likert, 1932) to measure factor supporting learning environment of rural students in private and government universities. The researcher modifies model Henderson et al. (2002) ; Ryan & Patrick (2001) ; Jamian & Baharom (2012) ; Jordan & Porath (2006) ; Fan (2011) ; Hamjah, Ismail, Rasit, & Rozali (2011) to generate five independent variables such as Family Support, Peer Support, Teacher Support, School Administration Support, and Socio-economic status to combine with Herzberg (2003) model that implied to be some subordinate questions accompanying each variable.

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. Part one is the personal information such



as age, gender, faculty, university, family income, and family occupation. Part two is the factors supporting learning environment which consists of five factors and each factor consists of five questions. Hence, there are 25 questions to measure family support factor, peer support factor, teacher support factor, school administration factor, and socio-economic status factor. The questionnaire consists of items answering on 5-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932) to measure the factor supporting learning environment ranging from 1 to 5 (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Finally, part three is the commentary part for further suggestion.

### 3. Data Collection Method

To ensure validity of the questionnaires, three experts in education field were requested to verify the items of questionnaires by using Indexes of Objective Congruence (IOC) score on a range from -1 to 1 (Rovinelli & Hambleton, 1977). The items with scores lower than 0.5 was revised; however, the ones with higher than or equal 0.5 were kept. The result of IOC score from three experts is 1 which means acceptable.

The questionnaires were administered and translated in Khmer language for the sake of clarity for the Cambodian participants. To assure the accuracy and appropriateness of the translation, two Cambodians are invited to modify and verify the translation.

After the revising of questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted with 30 rural students to find out reliability by using Coefficient Cronbach Alpha. To ensure the reliability, the value of Coefficient Cronbach Alpha should be in between 0.7 and 0.9. According to the pre-test, the Cronbach's Alpha was 0.842, therefore it was reliable.

### 4. Data Analysis

This study is the quantitative research and the computer calculation application software was employed to analyze the collected data. Descriptive statistic method was adopted to figure out the value of frequencies and the percentage. The interpretation of the mean score was applied to evaluate the most important factors supporting rural students' learning environment in a private and a government universities and to study the difference of factors supporting rural students' learning environment between private and government university.

Regarding to Best (1981, 179-187), the interpretation of the mean score was applied during the data analysis is shown as the following:

4.21-5.00	=	highest supporting
3.41-4.20	=	high supporting
2.61-3.40	=	moderate supporting



1.81-2.60 = low supporting  
1.00-1.80 = lowest supporting

## Results

### 1. Respondents' Personal Information

Section I of the survey gathered personal information of the participants.

Data gathered included gender, age, family income, and family occupation. Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 present the authentic figures.

#### 1.1 Gender

Table 1

Gender of all respondents from both Universities

Gender	Frequency			Percentage		
	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both
Male	155	237	392	51.7%	64.4%	58.7%
Female	145	131	276	48.3%	35.6%	41.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The respondents to the questionnaire of supporting learning environment of rural students in private university (The University of Cambodia) are 300 students which consist of male 155 (51.7%) and female 145 (48.3%). Moreover, the respondents from government university (Royal University of Agriculture) are 368 students which contain mostly male 237 (64.4%) and female 131 (35.6%). Therefore, respondents in total from both universities are 668 students that consist of male 392 (58.7%) and female 276 (41.3%).





## 1.2 Age

**Table 2**

Age of all respondents from both universities

Age	Frequency			Percentage		
	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both
17	4	3	7	1.3%	0.8%	1.0%
18	22	3	24	7.3%	0.8%	3.6%
19	41	27	68	13.7%	7.3%	10.2%
20	72	66	138	24.0%	17.9%	20.7%
21	44	75	119	14.7%	20.4%	17.8%
22	33	78	111	11.0%	21.2%	16.6%
23	31	55	87	10.3%	14.9%	13.0%
24	20	31	51	6.7%	8.4%	7.6%
25	8	15	23	2.7%	4.1%	3.4%
26	11	5	16	3.7%	1.4%	2.4%
27	4	5	9	1.3%	1.4%	1.3%
28	5	2	7	1.7%	0.5%	1.0%
29	5	3	8	1.7%	0.8%	1.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The age of respondents from The University of Cambodia have most relevant age range between 19 and 21 while the age of respondents from Royal University of Agriculture most relevant age range is between 20 and 22. Furthermore, the overall most relevant age range of respondents from both universities is between 20 and 22.

### 1.3 Family Income (Monthly)

Table 3

Family income of all respondents from both Universities

Family income (Monthly)	Frequency			Percentage		
	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both
Less than 200\$	133	215	348	44.3%	58.4%	52.1%
200\$-500\$	117	119	236	39.0%	32.3%	35.3%
500\$-800\$	30	18	48	10.0%	4.9%	7.2%
More than 800\$	20	16	36	6.7%	4.3%	5.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data of respondents' family monthly income range from The University of Cambodia shows mostly less than 200\$ is 44.3% while Royal University of Agriculture shows mostly less than 200\$ (58.4%). Moreover, the data of respondents' family monthly income range from both universities shows mostly less than 200\$ (52.1%).

### 1.4 Family Occupation

Table 4

Family occupation of all respondents from both universities

Family Occupation	Frequency			Percentage		
	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both	Private (UC)	Government (RUA)	Both
Government official	57	37	94	19.0%	10.1%	14.1%
Private official	26	20	46	8.7%	5.4%	6.9%
Merchant	49	64	113	16.3%	17.4%	16.9%
Farmer	158	236	394	52.7%	64.1%	59.0%
Other	10	11	21	3.3%	3.0%	3.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The respondents' family occupations from The University of Cambodia are mostly farmer (52.7%) while from Royal University of Agriculture are also mostly farmer (64.1%). Moreover, the overall respondents' family occupations from both universities are mostly farmer (59%).



## 2. Analysis of factors supporting learning environment of rural students

### 2.1 Private University (The University of Cambodia)

**Table 5**

Mean, standard deviation, level and rank of factors supporting learning environment of rural students in private university

Factors supporting learning environment	Sample size = 300			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Rank
1. Family Support	3.97	.907	High	1
2. Peer Support	3.30	.802	Moderate	3
3. Teacher Support	3.56	.828	High	2
4. School Administration	3.19	.875	Moderate	4
5. Socio-economic Status	3.30	1.114	Moderate	3

The level of family support for rural students learning in private university in overall was at the highest level (Mean = 3.97). Following by family support, students perceive teacher support at the high priority (Mean = 3.56). Moreover, peer support (Mean = 3.30), socio-economic status (Mean = 3.30), and school administration (Mean = 3.19) present moderate significant factors on rural students' learning.

### 2.2 Government university (The University of Cambodia)

**Table 6**

Mean, standard deviation, level, and rank of factors supporting learning environment of rural students in government university (Royal University of Agriculture)

Factors supporting learning environment	Sample size = 368			
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Rank
1. Family Support	4.07	.889	High	1
2. Peer Support	3.19	.702	Moderate	5
3. Teacher Support	3.55	.709	High	3
4. School Administration	3.57	.829	High	2
5. Socio-economic Status	3.31	1.022	Moderate	4

The level of family support for rural students learning in government university in overall was at the highest level (Mean = 4.07). Following by family support, students perceive school administration support (Mean = 3.57) and teacher support (3.55) at the high priority. Moreover, peer support (Mean = 3.19) and socio-economic status (Mean = 3.31) present moderate significant factors on rural students' learning.

### 3. Comparison of supporting factors for learning environment of rural students between private and government universities

Table 7

The mean difference in factor supporting learning environment of rural students between private university and government university

Variable	University	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level
1. Family Support	Private	300	3.97	.907	High
	Government	368	4.07	.889	High
2. Peer Support	Private	300	3.30	.802	Moderate
	Government	368	3.19	.702	Moderate
3. Teacher Support	Private	300	3.56	.828	High
	Government	368	3.55	.709	High
4. School Administration	Private	300	3.19	.875	Moderate
	Government	368	3.57	.829	High
5. Socio-economic Status	Private	300	3.30	1.114	Moderate
	Government	368	3.31	1.022	Moderate

The result of the study shows that family support factor is one of the very important factors which generate high level of supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university. However, the level of family support factor for rural students' learning in private university (Mean = 3.97) is lower than government university (Mean = 4.07).

Similarly, teacher support factor is also an essential factor which contributes high level of supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university. The



result of peer support reveals that the level of peer support factor for rural students' learning in private university (Mean = 3.56) is slightly higher than in government university (Mean = 3.55).

However, peer support factor is one of the key factor that contribute moderate level of supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university. In addition, peer support factor which supports rural students learning environment in private university (Mean = 3.30) is higher than in government university (Mean = 3.19).

Likewise, socio-economic status is identified as one of the necessary factors that generate moderate level of supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university. However, level of socio-economic status factor for rural students' learning in private university (Mean = 3.30) is a little lower than in government university (Mean = 3.31).

Finally, the study notices that school administration factor contributes different level of supporting rural students' learning environment between private and government university. School administration factor shows moderate level in supporting rural students' learning in private university (Mean = 3.19), while school administration factor that support rural students' learning in government university is at high level (Mean = 3.57).

## Discussion

The result suggests that family support factor is one of the very important factors which highly support rural students' leaning in private and government university. Moreover, by comparing mean score between family support factor between private and government university, the result shows that family support for rural students in government university (Mean = 4.07) is a little higher than private university (Mean = 3.97). Apparently, family support in private university is statistically a little lower than government university. Due to the tuition fees at private university is higher than government university, rural students' parents at private university focus more on children' tuition fees rather than mental encouragement or spiritual support unlikely rural students' parent at government university. Wong (2007) research illustrates that even though parents could not assist their children's learning academically, they supported their children's both spiritually and financially. Additionally, family support is the most important factor of rural students' learning environment in both private and government university in Phnom Penh. Family support between a private and a government university is remarkably and similarly in high level due to parents' better understanding of education value and benefit including stronger encouragement to their children's learning effort. Even though their parents are mostly famers and having average monthly income



less than 200\$, they prefer seeing their children persist, contribute, and explore their knowledge in higher education level. Parents keep motivating their children by praising them when they receive good result, cheer them up when they fall down, and comfort their feeling in order to focus on their study. Henderson et al. (2002, 7) stated the influence of family involvement on children's development and achievement is "consistent, positive, and convincing". Parent-child interactions, particularly encouraging and active parenting practices, are crucial influences on a development of child's academic (Christian, Morrison & Bryant, 1998).

Teacher support factor is also an essential factor which contributes high level of supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university. Furthermore, by comparing mean score between teacher support factor in private and government university, the result shows that teacher support for rural students in private university (Mean = 3.56) is slightly higher than government university (Mean = 3.55). Apparently, teacher support in government university seems to be slightly lower than private university due to the quality of teaching techniques, having good relationship, and mental encouragement. However, both teacher supports at government and private university is in high level because teachers are capable to apply effective teaching methods for the sake of student's understanding, using new effective technology in teaching, give feedbacks to students for improvement, and provide cognitive support such as paying more attention, encouraging, and persuading them to accomplish their study goals. Students might gain some confidence and probably will get rid of the problem that they might have when they are in the class if they have a good relationship with the teacher (Yunus, Osman & Ishak, 2011). Teacher support is also one of the essential factors for rural students' learning environment that students need good relationships with teacher not only in terms of academic assistance but also the cognitive support and positive feedback from teachers in order to foster their sense of self-worth (Ormrod, 2006). Peer support factor is one of the key factor that contribute moderate level of supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university. By comparing mean score between peer support factor in private and government university, the result shows that peer support for rural students in private university (Mean = 3.30) is a little higher than government university (Mean = 3.19). Apparently, peer support in government university seems to be statistically a little lower than private university due to the lower academic activities or group working involvement. Razak & See's (2010) study, peer learning also promotes the development of learning outcomes, teamwork, critical enquiry and reflection, communication skills, and learning meaningfully. Peer support in both universities support students' learning environment similarly in moderate



level. Between rural students and urban students, their group work connection and being helpful for explaining lesson to each other are not noticeably good enough. However, rural students agree that their relationship with classmates, their encouragement for each other and the way they share knowledge and experience together work very well. Loke & Chow (2007) revealed that peer can facilitate cooperative learning and provides opportunities for students to discover their inadequacies and to correct misunderstanding. Jordan stated that “greater potential for interaction with positive peers who share similar goals...and can encourage and inspire them to do well in school” (Jordan & Nettles, 1999, 1).

Socio-economic status is identified as one of the necessary factors that generate moderate level of supporting rural students' learning environment in both private and government university. By comparing mean score between socio-economic status factor in private and government university, the result shows that socio-economic status factor for rural students in government university (Mean = 3.31) is slightly higher than private university (Mean = 3.30). Apparently, socio-economic status factor in private university seems to be statistically a little lower than government university due to the hardship of rural students' adaptation to new culture of living in the city. Rural students mostly have to work harder to compete with urban students who have better education background. This social class puts rural students in the situation of not having enough learning resource and well treated as urban students. They have to adapt new culture and environment of living in the capital city and build network by strengthening their communication with urban people for more opportunities. However, those who cannot adapt, persist, or learn new things may feel overwhelmed and want to drop out. Socio-economic factors could have an influence on independent learning behavior in some possible ways (Lamb, 2012). Fan (2011) demonstrates that socio-economic status does not only have an influence on the achievement of language learning but also has an influence on students' learning motivation, self-regulation, and self-related beliefs of the students. Because socio-economic factor is counted as one of the crucial factors motivating students, this is in line with the theory of McClelland (1961) which illustrates that there are three needs which have an effect on human behavior and these needs were socially acquired as well as these motivators are presented variedly from one to another, and depends on the individual backgrounds. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide an inner measure of students' likelihood to obtain social acceptance and the significant roots of self-esteem which means to get social approval and belief that learner is an attractive partner or follow group member (Leary & Baumeister, 2000).



The study shows that school administration factor contributes different level of supporting rural students' learning environment between private and government university. By comparing mean score between school administration support factor in private and government university, the result shows that school administration support for rural students in government university (Mean = 3.57) is higher than private university (Mean = 3.19). The different found in school administration factor which generate moderate level in private university and high level in government university is due to the context, curriculum, learning environment, and school management which is implemented in different ways. School administration support at government university was rated at high level because school principal has provided acceptable access for students such as accessing dormitory, safety, security, community field trip opportunity, learning environment in the school's campus, scholarship program which provide financial aid to support students as well as arranging conference or knowledge sharing event that were manipulated in order to nurture students' learning skills. Munoz (2008) suggested that students from different social backgrounds have access to different types of schools as an example of government and private schools and varying levels of extracurricular exposure to the language targeted, for example; tuition privately, resources for learning, study abroad opportunities, etc. School should pay attention in preparing some programs that offer to solve the students' motivational problems with simple system (McLean, 2003). Moreover, students must be engaged in every school activities in order to acquire the knowledge and skills required for a successful transition into postsecondary and careers (Wang & Eccles, 2013).

## Conclusion

Overall, learning environment is the major concern for all students. Having strong motivation encourages students to struggle and work hard to achieve their academic excellence. Motivating students to learn effectively is truly necessary for students who face various learning challenges; for example, lacking of self-confident, feeling discouraged, and lacking of strong commitment for their own academic excellence. This study suggest five key factors that support students' learning in both private and government university such as family support, teacher support, peer support, school administration, and socio-economic status. Through this comparison study, family support factor and teacher support factor were found in high level of supporting rural students' learning environment in private and government university. Moreover, peer support factors and socio-economic status factor were found in moderate level of supporting rural students' learning environment in private and government university. However, the result found that school administration





factor supports rural students' learning in different level between private and government university. School administration support in private university is in moderate level while in government university, school administration factor support students' learning in a high level. In short, even though the importance between one to another factor ranked differently, these five factors are the main factors which should be seriously taken into account for the sake of learning motivating as well as for students' accomplishment.

Due to the limitation of research related to rural students' learning environment, the study is beneficial as to articulately illustrate the factors supporting learning environment of rural students. It is also crucial for teachers, peer, families as well as education administrators to take in to account for consideration and put more action to adjust the difficult situations in the purpose of improving students' learning. The results of this study would be essential in proposing some guidelines for school principals and teachers to find the way out to strengthen the learning quality of rural students. The study will serve as a guide to the public in order to develop policies and strategies which will improve overall rural students 'conditions and needs. Finally, the study will serve as a guideline for further research in finding factor supporting learning environment of rural students in any kind of education or related field.

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