

## **ACADEMIC MOTIVATION AND COLLEGE ADJUSTMENT OF STUDENT TEACHERS FROM EDUCATION DEGREE COLLEGES**

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### **Abstract**

The main purpose of this study is to investigate academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges. A total of 700 student teachers (Male=209, Female=491) from selected Education Degree Colleges were selected randomly in this study. Quantitative, descriptive research design and survey method were used in this study. The questionnaires were used to collect demographic information of the participants such as gender, subject combination, year and colleges. The Academic Motivation Scale by Robert J. Vallerand, Luc G. Pelletier, Marc R. Blais, & Nathalie M. Briere (1989) ) was used to measure academic motivation of Education Degree College students. Both descriptive and inferential statistics such as *t* test and ANOVA were carried out. The *t* test result revealed that there was no significant difference in academic motivation by gender ( $t=-1.533, p \geq 0.05$ ). And then, the *t* test result revealed that there was significant difference in academic motivation by year ( $t=3.044, p < 0.01$ ). According to ANOVA result, there was no significant difference in academic motivation by subject combination ( $F=.632, p \geq .532$ ). There was significant difference in academic motivation by colleges ( $F=11.493, p < .001$ ). And College Adjustment questionnaire, the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ); developed by Baker & Siryk, 1984, 1999) was used to measure college adjustment of Education Degree College student teachers. Both descriptive and inferential statistics such as *t* test and ANOVA were carried out. The *t* test result revealed that there was no significant difference in college adjustment by gender ( $t=1.067, p \geq 0.05$ ). The *t* test result revealed that there was significant difference in college adjustment by year ( $t=3.728, p < 0.001$ ). According to ANOVA result, there was no significant difference in college adjustment by subject combination ( $F=.430, p \geq .650$ ). There was significant difference in college adjustment by colleges  $F=24.767, p < 0.001$ ). And, the result of correlation analysis revealed that academic motivation and college adjustment was significantly correlated.

Keywords: Academic Motivation, College Adjustment

### **Introduction**

Human being must face a great number of changes throughout one's life. Today's youth view enrolling in college as one of their priorities. When students enroll in the university, their goal is to fulfill their departmental requirements and graduate with honors while also realizing their career goals. The degree to which students expectations are met it directly correlated with their motivation and professional skills (Abu Karsh, 2018). Every students must make the necessary adjustment in order to pursue a college education. Moreover, first year student teachers at college can be a very stressful period of social and academic change.

A number of issues faced by the student teachers included the fact that their classroom, learning materials, and teaching methods differed from those found in universities. The competition is also more subtle. For these situations, students need to adjust academically. Moreover, instructors also need to guide them how to cope these situations. Socially, students need to form and establish new friends both with peers and lecturers. Living with roommates in hostels or halls in the college can have special problems.

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Students who are unable to properly adapt to obstacles report higher level of stress, depressive symptoms (Dyson & Renk, 2006). In contrast, if they can adapt well, they spend more time with peers, have more opportunities to explore different lifestyles and values and be challenged intellectually by academic work (Heaven, 2000). Therefore, college life is both opportunity and challenge for them. Sommer (2013) described students who enthusiasm in and who are parts of social activities may adjust better.

According to Tinto's (1993) student integration theory, if students supervise to have informal and formal social and academic integration, they can reconsider their commitments, goals and intentions from and to the institution Higher levels of interaction can lead to higher levels of student persistence and graduation (Tinto, 1993).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main aim of this study is to investigate academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges.

The specific objectives are as follow;

- To compare academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers by gender and subject combination.
- To compare academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers by colleges,
- To compare academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers by Year,
- To examine whether there is a relationship between academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

#### **Motivation**

The simplest definition of motivation boils down to wanting (Baumeister, 2016). We want a change in behavior, thoughts, feelings, self-concept, environment, and relationships.

#### **Academic Motivation**

Academic motivation is defined by a student's desire (as reflected in approach, persistence, and level of interest) regarding academic subjects when the student's competence is judged against a standard of performance or excellence (McClelland, et al., 1953 ).

**Adjustment:** is a continual process by which a person varies his/her behavior to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself/herself and his/her environment (Aggarwal, 1998).

**College adjustment:** refers to how successfully a student meets educational demands, commits to the institutional goals, deals with interpersonal experiences, and manages psychological distress during their first year of college (Baker & Siryk, 1989).

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Research Design and Participants**

The sample of this study consists of 700 student teachers from selected Education Degree Colleges. The participants of this study were 200 student teachers from Mawlamyine Education Degree College, 150 student teachers from Hpa-an Education Degree College, 200 student teachers

from Yankin Education Degree College and 150 student teachers from Thingangyun Education Degree College was selected. The sample was chosen by using simple random sampling method.

**Instrumentation**

**Instrument of Academic Motivation;** The Academic Motivation Scale by Robert J. Vallerand, Luc G. Pelletier, Marc R. Blais, & Nathalie M. Briere (1989) measures the seven subscales of motivation towards college studies. It contains 28 items assessed on a 5-point scale. The AMS-C 28 is subdivided into seven subscales which measures three types of intrinsic motivation (intrinsic motivation to know, to accomplish things, and to experience stimulation), three types of extrinsic motivation (external, introjected, and identified regulation) and amotivation. Cronbach's alphas was calculated to assess the internal consistency of academic motivation for the whole sample ( $\alpha=.729$ ).

**Instrument of Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire SACQ;** the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire SACQ; developed by Baker & Siryk, 1984, 1999) was used. This inventory is intended to access the four dimensions of the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) was composed of 50 items and it has four subscales of college adjustment; Academic adjustment, Social adjustment, Personal/Emotional adjustment and Institutional adjustment. This questionnaire concerns five-point Likert scale; strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree with a score of 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively. Cronbach's alphas was computed to measure the internal consistency of college adjustment for the whole sample ( $\alpha=.732$ ).

**Finding**

**Descriptive Statistics for Academic Motivation of Student Teachers**

In terms of descriptive statistics, minimum-maximum scores, mean and standard deviation of academic motivation were calculated and used to describe the data. The results of analysis were described in Table 1.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Academic Motivation of Student Teachers**

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Academic Motivation	99	139	122.15	7.089

Table. 1 indicated that the mean score and standard deviation for the whole scale were 122.15 and 7.089 respectively. Moreover, to be more specific the independent samples *t* test was used to examine the differences in academic motivation by gender. So, the independent samples *t* test result were described in Table 2.

**Table 2. Results of Independent Sample *t* Test for Academic Motivation by Gender**

Variable	Gender	Number	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
Academic Motivation	Male	209	-1.533	698	.126
	Female	491			

According to table 2, there was no significant difference in academic motivation by gender ( $t=-1.533, p \geq 0.05$ ). The academic motivation did not differ significantly between the male and

female student teachers. The reason is attitude, capabilities and behaviors of teenagers are generally similar than varying.

### Comparison for Academic Motivation of Student Teachers by Years

To find out the year differences between year 1 and year 2 student teachers in academic motivation statistical descriptive analysis was conducted. The independent samples *t* test was used to examine the differences in academic motivation by years. So, the mean, standard deviation, and the independent samples *t* test result were described in Table 3.

**Table 3. Results of Independent Sample *t* Test for Academic Motivation by Education Level**

Variable	Years	Number	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
Academic Motivation	Year 1	540	122.59	7.058	3.044	698	.002**
	Year 2	160	120.66	7.009			

Note\*\* the mean difference was significant at 0.01 level

According to table 3. there was significant difference in academic motivation by years ( $t=3.044, p \leq 0.01$ ). It was revealed that the academic motivation differs significantly between the year 1 and year 2 student teachers. Student teachers have to demonstrate the complex combination of knowledge, understanding, skills and practice values and disposition growth and development while competencies were introduced in year 1 and developed in year 2. In year 1 student teachers tend to build a strong foundation and continually build the knowledge and understanding, skill and disposition to improve their practice over their professional career.

### Comparison for Academic Motivation of Student Teachers by Subject Combination

To test the statistically significant differences among academic motivation of student teachers by subject combination, one-way analysis of variances (ANOVA) was conducted and the results were shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. ANOVA Result for Academic Motivation of Student Teachers by Subject Combination**

Variable		Sum of Square	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Academic Motivation	Between Groups	63.595	2	31.797	.632	.532
	Within Groups	35059.543	697	50.301		
	Total	35123.137	699			

According to ANOVA result, there were no significant differences in academic motivation ( $F=.632, p \geq .532$ ). Student teachers from both year 1 and 2 have to study the same learning areas and subject. A spiral curriculum approach student teachers return to familiar concept and then to obtain more detail information of how different in student teachers' academic motivation by subject combination.

To explore whether the differences of academic motivation by colleges were significant or not, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The results of the analysis were displayed in Table 5.

**Table 5. Result of ANOVA for Academic Motivation by Colleges**

Variables		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	P
Academic Motivation	Between Groups	1657.800	3	552.600	11.493	.000***
	Within Groups	33465.337	696	48.082		
	Total	35123.137	699			

Note\*\*\*the mean difference was significant at 0.001

According to the result of Table 5, there were significant differences in student teachers' academic motivation by colleges at .001 level ( $F=11.493, p \leq .001$ ). To obtain more detailed information on which particular colleges had the significant differences, the Post Hoc Test was carried out by Games-Howell method. The results were shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Result of Games-Howell Test for Academic Motivation by Colleges**

Variable	College (I)	College (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	P
Academic Motivation	MEDC	HEDC	-.902	.640
		YEDC	2.120*	.012*
		TEDC	3.112*	.000***
	HEDC	MEDC	.902	.640
		YEDC	3.022*	.000***
		TEDC	4.013*	.000***
	YEDC	MEDC	-2.120*	.012*
		HEDC	-3.022*	.000***
		TEDC	.992	.534
	TEDC	MEDC	-3.112*	.000***
		HEDC	-4.013*	.000***
		YEDC	-.992	.534

Note\* The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Note\*\*the mean difference was significant at 0.01 level.

Note\*\*\*the mean difference was significant at 0.001 level.

According to the Post Hoc Test Games-Howell results, it was found that there was significant difference by colleges. The reasons behind this may be the following facts. The study habits and efforts of student teachers may not equal because of their different values and

expectations regarding their college life. Student motivation will be associated with study habits and efforts (Maurer et al., 2008).

### Comparison for College Adjustment of Student Teachers by Gender

To be more specific the independent samples *t* test was used to examine the differences in college adjustment by gender. So, the mean, standard deviation, and the independent samples *t* test result were described in Table 7.

**Table 7. Results of Independent Sample *t* Test for College Adjustment by Gender**

Variable	Gender	Number	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
Academic Motivation	Male	209	.721	698	.471
	Female	491			

According to table 7, there was no significant difference in college adjustment by gender ( $t=1.067, p \geq 0.05$ ). It was revealed that the college adjustment did not differ significantly between the male and female student teachers. Degree of adjustment experienced by each students depend on background, experience, environmental factor.

### Comparison for College Adjustment of Student Teachers by Years

To be specific the independent samples *t* test was used to examine the differences in college adjustment by years. So, the mean, standard deviation, and the independent samples *t* test result were described in Table 8.

**Table 8. Results of Independent Sample *t* Test for College Adjustment by Education level**

Variable	Years	Number	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
Academic Motivation	Year 1	540	3.728	698	.000***
	Year 2	160			

Note\*\*the mean difference was significant at 0.001 level.

According to table 8, there was significant difference in college adjustment by years at 0.001 level ( $t=3.728, p \leq 0.001$ ). It was revealed that the college adjustment differ significantly between the year 1 and year 2 student teachers. These include attending all the discussions or lectures, reading and exploring new books and reviewing notes regularly. College administrator and faculty should implement programs that can intensify adjustment of students to college. The future researchers may include other variables that can affect the level of adjustment to college.

To test the statistically significant differences among college adjustment of student teachers by subject combination, one-way analysis of variances (ANOVA) was conducted and the results were shown in Table 9.

**Table 9. ANOVA Result for College Adjustment of Student Teachers by Subject Combination**

Variable		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	P
College Adjustment	Between Groups	137.350	2	68.675	.430	.650
	Within Groups	111194.037	697	159.532		
	Total	111331.387	699			

According to ANOVA result, there were no significant differences in college adjustment ( $F=.430$   $p\geq.650$ ). It seems like how successfully every student teachers meet educational demands, commit to the institutional goals, deal with interpersonal experiences and manage psychological distress. They learn both science, arts & science and arts so that there is flexibility in teacher deployment in basic education school.

To explore whether the differences of college adjustment by colleges were significant or not, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The results of the analysis were displayed in Table 10.

**Table 10. Result of ANOVA for College Adjustment by Colleges**

Variables		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	P
College Adjustment	Between Groups	10738.790	3	3579.597	24.767	.000***
	Within Groups	100592.597	696	144.530		
	Total	111331.387	699			

**Note\*\*\***the mean difference was significant at 0.001

According to the result of Table 10, there were significant differences in student teachers' college adjustment by colleges at .001 level ( $F=24.767$ ,  $p\leq.001$ ). The reasons behind this may be the following facts. Students' interaction with faculty (teachers) may diverse among Education Colleges. If there was a rapport between students and teachers, students may have opportunities to discuss their feelings and adjustment difficulties and may also get guidance from teachers (faculty support). Students who dedicate their energy to interact with faculty members, their adjustment level increase (Yalim, 2007).

To know whether there were significant relationships between academic motivation scores and college adjustment scores; Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted. The results of the analysis were displayed in Table 11.

**Table 11. Relationship between Academic Motivation and College Adjustment of Student Teachers**

Variables	Academic Motivation	College Adjustment
Academic Motivation	-	.612***
College Adjustment	.612***	-

**Note\*\*\*** Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level

According to Table 11, the result showed that there was significant positive relationship between academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers ( $r=.612$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ).

According to Table 11, the result revealed that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between overall academic motivation and overall college adjustment ( $r=0.655$  ( $r=0.612$ ,  $p\leq 0.001$ ), it can be seen that academic motivation was positively correlated with college adjustment.

Therefore, it can be said that Education Degree College student teachers with high intrinsic motivation and well integrated extrinsic motivation may be better in their college adjustment.

### Conclusion

This study showed that the student teachers from four selected Education Degree Colleges learned educational studies, Myanmar, English, mathematics, sciences, social studies, arts, local curriculum, physical education and ICT in their education Degree colleges. Therefore, they may be curious and have eager to explore about their interests. Intrinsically motivated behavior is characterized by “curiosity, exploration, manipulation, spontaneity, and interest” (Petersen, Louw & Dumont, 2009). To maintain and improve student teachers’ intrinsic motivation, faculty members should equally provide autonomy, competence and relatedness.

Students who were well adjusted to university reported to receive more social support than moderately or poorly adjusted students (Halamandaris & Power, 1997). In addition, student teachers may replace family support systems with peer support systems to separate past communities (Law, 2007). Misra et al., (2000) described perceived social support from friends was predictive students’ adjustment. Above these facts, the student teachers from four selected Education Degree Colleges had better college adjustment. The instructors should guide college students to seek adequate social support for adjusting to the new demands, tasks, responsibilities and requirements of college life.

**Differences in Academic Motivation by Gender:** There was no significant difference in academic motivation by gender ( $t=-1.533$ ,  $p\geq 0.05$ ). The academic motivation did not differ significantly between the male and female student teachers. The reason is attitude, capabilities and behaviors of teenagers are generally similar than varying by gender.

**Differences in College Adjustment Gender:** It was revealed that the college adjustment does not differ significantly between the male and female student teachers Degree of adjustment experienced by each students depend on background, experience, environmental factor

**Differences in Academic Motivation by Education Level:** The result of independent sample  $t$  test for comparing academic motivation revealed that the year 1 student teachers had more academic motivation than the year 2 student teachers. This is particularly important for college students because the year of university is a very complex and sensitive moment that, on the one hand, can bring unique and positive changes but, on the other hand, can often give rise to negative

outcomes, such as switching academic courses or abandoning the university altogether. Students are not always able to ask for support, and when they do, the situation has often become problematic.

**Differences in College Adjustment by Education Level:** The result of independent sample *t* test for comparing college adjustment revealed that the year 1 student teachers had college adjustment than the year 2 student teachers. These include attending all the discussions or lectures, reading and exploring new books and reviewing notes regularly. The college administrator and faculty should implement programs that can intensify adjustment of students to college. The future researchers may include other variables that can affect the level of adjustment to college

**Differences in Academic Motivation by Colleges:** The ANOVA results for academic motivation by colleges revealed that there was significant difference in academic motivation among four selected Education Colleges. The study habits and efforts of student teachers may not equal because of their different values and expectations regarding their college life. Student motivation will be associated with study habits and efforts (Maurer et al., 2008).

**Differences in College Adjustment by Colleges:** The ANOVA results for college adjustment by colleges showed that there was significant difference in college adjustment among four selected Education Colleges. Students' interaction with faculty (teachers) may diverse among Education Colleges. If there was a rapport between students and teachers, students may have opportunities to discuss their feelings and adjustment difficulties and may also get guidance from teachers (faculty support). Students who dedicate their energy to interact with faculty members, their adjustment level increase (Yalim, 2007).

**The Relationship between Academic motivation and College Adjustment:** The study found that academic motivation had a significant positive correlation with college adjustment. It is consistent with the previous researches conducted by Baker, 2004; Petersen et al., 2009; Sommer, 2013; Bryan, 2013; Vallerand & Bissonnetee (1992).

According to the result of the study, it was found that the higher the academic motivation, the better adjustment to college the student teachers have. For improving and maintaining academic motivation and having better college adjustment of student teachers, this research may provide information for instructors in their educational field. In addition, this research suggests that the other facts such as performance, achievement, persistence and coping may influence academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers.

This study provides recommendations to institutions of higher education in order to prepare for their student during the orientation of campus life, academic tasks, and how to get along with faculty and fellow college student. Fear of negative evaluation has an effect on academic adjustment and emotional-personal adjustment, but not on social adjustment and institutional adjustment. Facts such as performance, achievement, persistence and coping may influence academic motivation and college adjustment of student teachers. Social avoidance and distress have an effect on academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment and institutional adjustment. College students are adolescents who have capability to do highest adjustment with so many dreams, lot of wishes to fulfill it, commitments and flexibility as well.

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