

A STUDY OF COLLEGE ADJUSTMENT AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG EDUCATION DEGREE COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

The main aim of this study was to investigate college adjustment and psychological well-being among Education Degree College Students. The total of 274 college students (Male=120, Female=154) from two selected Education Degree Colleges were randomly selected 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, and college. The Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ); developed by Baker & Siryk, 1984, 1999) was used to measure college adjustment of Education Degree College students. Both descriptive and inferential statistics such as *t* test and ANOVA were carried out. According to ANOVA result, there was a significant difference in college adjustment by subject combination ($F=6.962, p<.001$). Moreover, there was a significant difference in college adjustment by college ($t=-3.372, p<.001$). And Psychological Well-being Scale (PWB) developed by Ryff (2014) was used to measure the psychological well-being of college students. The result of ANOVA showed that there was a significant difference in subject combination ($F=6.113, p<.001$). There was a significant difference in psychological well-being by college ($t=-3.819, p<.001$). And, the result of correlation analysis revealed that college adjustment and psychological well-being was significantly correlated. There was a positive correlation between college adjustment and psychological well-being. So, if students well adjust in their campus, their psychological well-being will increase. This study provides recommendation 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. Through proper orientation, their process of adjustment to college will be accelerated.

Keywords: Adjustment, College Adjustment, Well-being, Psychological Well-being

Introduction

College adjustment is important on its own as it is linked directly to a person's experiences. It is also an important factor in college retention and academic outcomes. College adjustment can be an overwhelming experience for many students and predictive of academic performance in college. Therefore, students' college adjustment is important in improving retention rates in higher education. Based on Tinto's theory of retention, integration into an academic environment and academic experiences are directly linked to student's decision to continue in college. Further, the level of students' success can carry an impact on the individual, educational institution, as well as society.

The process of adjusting to a higher education environment can be complex. College adjustment occurs in multiple contexts and can be defined in terms of academic, personal, social, as well as attachment to the institution (Arkoff, as cited in Abdullah, Elias, Mahyuddin & Uli, 2009). College adjustment occurs in the context of a person's background characteristics, personal variables, interactions with the immediate environments and the more distant environments. Hence, students' college experiences may vary significantly due to differences in the impact of these levels. The process of transition, which leads to adjustment to college, has been explored by various scholars. Incoming college students face a number of challenges, which

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include greater academic demands, greater autonomy, and less academic structure as compared with their high school experiences.

Many students continue to be burdened with family demands placed by parents on them to prioritize family over individual needs. Family commitments can influence students' adjustment to college in various ways. Research in the area of college adjustment and outcomes has emphasized the importance of experiences within the educational environment. The process of adjusting to a higher education environment can be complex (Arkoff, as cited in Abdullah, Elias, Mahyuddin & Uli, 2009).

College adjustment is an important factor in the success of learning of students. Baker and Siryk (1986) documented various aspects of adjustment, including social, personal-emotional, academic, and institutional adjustment are challenges the average college student. College adjustment can be seen from their involvement in institutional activities, psychological wellbeing, and good academic performance (Julia & Veni, 2012). One of the earliest definitions of college adjustment was proposed by Arkoff (as cited in Abdullah, Elias, Mahyuddin & Uli, 2009) and referred to a student's interaction with his or her environment. This definition referenced student's academic achievement and personal growth as measures of the adjustment.

Consistent with his explanation of the adjustment process, well-adjusted students obtained good grades, passed their courses, and graduated. The adjustment to college occurs in the context of a person's background characteristics, personal variables, interactions with the immediate environments and the more distant environments Bronfenbrenner (1979).

A college education is recognized as a means to upward economic, financial, and social mobility. Therefore, for many students of color, a college education may be viewed as a valuable avenue to achieving a lifestyle that is free from adversity. Unfortunately, the struggles that college students to leave behind do not easily dissipate as they pursue higher education. Rather, they encounter academic, personal, social, and cultural challenges that impact their college-going experiences and mental health. Therefore, College adjustment is needs for college students and it has become important for their peace of mind. So students' college adjustment may also affect their psychological well-being or functioning.

Shek (1992) defined psychological well-being as the state of a mentally healthy person who possesses a number of positive mental health qualities such as active adjustment to the environment and unity of personality. According to Ryff (1989), psychological well-being is active engagement in a number of existential challenges. Ryff (1989) describe psychological well-being as a multidimensional construct comprised of six areas of positive functioning: autonomy, positive relations with others, purpose in life, personal growth, environmental mastery, and self-acceptance.

Therefore, psychological well-being is about lives going well. It is a combination of feeling good and functioning effectively. Sustainable well-being does not require individuals to feel good all the time; the experience of painful emotions is a normal part of life, and being able to manage these negative or painful emotions is essential for long-term well-being (Huppert 2009). Psychological well-being is negotiated when negative emotions are extreme or very long-lasting and interfere with a person's ability to function in his or her daily life (Huppert, 2009).

College students experience unique academic, social, and cultural challenges have been found to increase students' risk of mental health problems. Bowman (2010) found that high

school GPA, college degree aspirations, involvement in co-curricular activities, and interpersonal relationships impact the psychological well-being of college students. Studies related to American graduate students have revealed that graduate students with better psychological wellbeing displayed better adaptive coping skills, while those with more environmental and academic stress showed maladaptive coping skills. For these situation college students need to adjust themselves and thus college adjustment play an important role.

Purpose of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate college adjustment and psychological well-being among Education Degree College students.

The specific objectives of this study are

- To study college adjustment among Education Degree College students by subject combination and college.
- To explore psychological well-being among Education Degree College students by subject combination and college.
- To find out the relationship between college adjustment and psychological well-being among Education Degree College students.

Definitions of Key Terms

Adjustment; Adjustment is a psychological concept that refers to the behavior that permits people to meet the demands of the environment (Rathus & Nevid, 1986).

Adjustment as a person interactions with his/her environment and involves reconciliation of personal and environmental demands (Arkoff, 1968).

College Adjustment; College adjustment refers to how well students think they fulfill various academic and social demands associated with university experience (Akbalık, 1998).

Well-being; Well-being is a dynamic concept that includes subjective, social, and psychological dimensions as well as health related behavior (Ryff, 1989).

Psychological Well-being: Shek (1992) defined psychological well-being as the state of a mentally healthy person who possesses a number of positive mental health qualities such as active adjustment to the environment and unity of personality.

Materials and Methods

Research Design and Participants

In this study, descriptive research design and quantitative approach of questionnaire survey method were used for measuring college adjustment and psychological well-being of students. The total participants of this study were 274 students of Education Degree Colleges. Hence, science students were 107, arts & science were 129 and arts students were 38. All of the participants involved 120 males and 154 females. The sample was chosen by using simple random sampling method. **Instrumentation**

Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ)

In order to determine the college adjustment of Selected Education Degree Colleges, the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire SACQ; developed by Baker & Siryk (1984) was used. This inventory is intended to access the four dimensions of the Student Adaptation to

College Questionnaire (SACQ) was composed of 66 items and it has four subscales of college adjustment; Academic adjustment, Social adjustment, Personal/Emotional adjustment and Institutional adjustment. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients are 0.688.

Psychological Well-being Scale (PWB)

For investigating psychological well-being of the participants, Psychological Well-being Scale (PWB) developed by Ryff (2014) was adapted. The inventory consists of 42 items which are assessed on 5-point Likert Scale. The PWB assesses psychological well-being by six subscales; namely Autonomy, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relation, Purpose in Life and Self-acceptance. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients are 0.657.

Findings

Descriptive Statistics for College Adjustment of Students

College Adjustment consisted of four dimensions; academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment, and the institutional attachment/institutional adjustment. In order to compare the mean scores of Education Degree College students the descriptive statistics was conducted. Descriptive statistics analysis revealed the differences in means and standard deviations for college adjustment of students (see Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for College Adjustment of Students

Variable	No. of Items	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
College Adjustment	66	224	321	260.77	16.571

As shown in Table 1, the mean and standard deviation of students' college adjustment were 260.77 and 16.571 respectively. And, the observed mean score (260.77) of students in college adjustment was greater than the theoretical mean score (198) of students in college adjustment. Therefore, it could be said that the level of college adjustment of students was satisfactory.

Descriptive Statistics for Psychological Well-being of Students

To find out psychological well-being of students, statistical descriptive procedure was conducted. The results of descriptive statistics for psychological well-being of students were shown in terms of minimum, maximum and standard deviation in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Psychological Well-being Students

Variable	No. of Items	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Psychological Well-being	42	137	202	164.85	10.901

As shown in Table 2, the mean and standard deviation of college students' psychological well-being were 164.85 and 10.901 respectively. For psychological well-being, the observed mean score (164.85) was greater than the theoretical mean score (126). Therefore, it can be said that the psychological well-being of college students was satisfactory.

Comparison of College Adjustment of students by colleges

To know whether the two groups of college varied significantly in their college adjustment, the means, standard deviations and the independent sample *t* test of College 1 and college 2 students in college adjustment were shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Comparison of Mean and Standard Deviation, and the Result of Independent Sample *t* test for College Adjustment by College

Variables	College	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>MD</i>
College Adjustment	College1	257.37	14.502	-3.372**	272	.001	-6.63
	College2	264.00	17.775				

Note. ** The mean difference was significant at 0.01 level.

The result in Table 3 showed the difference between the mean scores of College 1 and college 2 students in college adjustment. Moreover, it could be seen that the mean score of college 2 students was greater than that of College 1 students in college adjustment. According to the result of *t* test, there was a significant difference in college adjustment by college. It was revealed that the college adjustment differs significantly between the college 1 and college 2 students. It may be concluded that college 2 students may probably experience better college environment and possess their own strength in different areas of college adjustment. It may be concluded, all college 2 students come from the same environmental condition (transportation, flat land, economic background and so on.) on the other hand most of college 1 students come from costal region as well as island area and in the other case of different ethnically language. So college 1 students had some adjustment difficulties in all four subscales of college adjustment. This result is consistent with the findings of Stoklosa (2015).

Comparison of Psychological Well-being of students by colleges

To know whether the two groups of college varied significantly in their psychological well-being. The means, standard deviations and the independent sample *t* test of College 1 and college 2 students in psychological well-being were shown in Table 4.

Table 4 Comparison of Mean and Standard Deviation, and the Result of Independent Sample *t* test for Psychological Well-being by College

Variables	College	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
College Adjustment	College1	162.32	9.271	-3.819***	272	.000
	College2	167.23	11.784			

Note. *** The mean difference was significant at 0.001 level.

The result in Table 4 showed the differences between the mean scores of College 1 and college 2 students in psychological well-being. Moreover, it could be seen that the mean score of college 2 students was greater than that of College 1 students in psychological well-being. It was revealed that the psychological well-being differs significantly between the college 1 and college 2 students. It may be concluded college 2 students may probably experience better feeling good and functioning effectively, having confidence to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks. Moreover, college 1 students come from costal region as well as

island area and in the other case of different ethnically language. This result is consistent with Anderson et. al (1978).

Comparison of College Adjustment and Psychological Well-being of Students by Subject Combination

In this study, three subject combinations of students were classified as Science, Art & Science and Art students to compare whether any differences in college adjustment or not descriptive statistics was conducted. The result of descriptive statistics for college adjustment of students in terms of mean and standard deviation with regard to the subject combination was shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics for College Adjustment of Students by Subject Combination

Variable	Subject Combination	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
College Adjustment	Science	107	258.02	15.391
	Arts & Science	129	260.50	16.618
	Arts	38	269.42	17.121

Table 5 indicated that the mean score of art students was higher rather than science students and arts & science students.

To test the statistically significant differences among college adjustment of students by subject combination, One-Way Analysis of Variances (ANOVA) was conducted and the results were shown in Table 6.

Table 6 ANOVA Results for College Adjustment of College Students by Subject Combination

Subscales		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p
College Adjustment	Between Groups	3663.577	2	1831.789	6.962**	.001
	Within Groups	71301.474	271	263.105		
	Total	74965.051	273			

Note. **The mean difference was significant at .01 level

According to ANOVA results, there were significant differences in college adjustment at 0.01 level. And then to obtain more detail information of how different in students' college adjustment by subject combination Post-Host test was computed by Games-Howell method. The result of difference in college adjustment in term of students' subject combination was presented in Table 7.

Table 7 Results of Games-Howell for College Adjustment by Subject Combination

Components	Major (I)	Major (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	P
College Adjustment	Science	Art & Science	-2.42136	.479
		Art	-11.34629**	.002
	Arts & Science	Science	2.42136	.479
		Art	-8.92493*	.017
	Arts	Science	11.34629**	.002
		Art & Science	8.92493*	.017

Note* the mean difference was significant at 0.05

** the mean difference was significant at 0.01

According to Table 7, it was indicated that students' college adjustment may differ according to subject combination. This may be that arts students had higher college adjustment than science and arts & science. Arts students may try to develop into integration with other students, apply social activities together, socialize with each other, professors and the college's staff, creating friendly communities.

Mean Comparison for Psychological Well-being of College Students by Subject Combination

In this study, three subject combinations of students were classified as Science, Arts & Science and Arts students to compare whether any differences in psychological well-being or not. Descriptive statistics was conducted. The result of descriptive statistics for psychological well-being of students in terms of mean and standard deviation with regard to the subject combinations was shown in Table 8.

Table 8 Descriptive Statistics for Psychological Well-being of Students by Subject Combination

Variable	Subject Combination	Number	Mean	Standard Deviation
Psychological Well-being	Science	107	162.35	8.985
	Arts & Science	129	165.73	11.815
	Arts	38	168.92	11.163

Table 8 indicated that the mean score of art students was higher rather than art & science and science students.

To test the statistically significant differences among psychological well-being of students by subject combination, one-way analysis of variances (ANOVA) was conducted and the results were shown in Table 9.

Table 9 ANOVA Results for College Students of Psychological Well-being by Subject Combination

Component		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p
Psychological Well-being	Between Groups	1400.392	2	700.196	6.113**	.003
	Within Groups	31038.473	271	114.533		
	Total	32438.865	273			

Note ** The mean difference was significant at .01 level

According to ANOVA results, there was a significant difference in psychological well-being at 0.01 level. And then to obtain more detailed information of how different in students' psychological well-being by subject Post-Host test was computed by Games-Howell method. The result of difference in psychological well-being in terms of students' subject combination was presented in Table 10.

Table 10 Results of Games-Howell for Psychological Well-being by Subject Combination

Components	Major (I)	Major (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	P
Psychological Well-being	Science	Arts & Science	-3.38289*	.035
		Arts	-6.57526**	.005
	Arts & Science	Science	3.38289*	.035
		Arts	-3.19237	.285
	Arts	Science	6.57526**	.005
		Arts & Science	3.19237	.285

Note* the mean difference was significant at 0.05.

****** the mean difference was significant at 0.01.

According to Table 10, the results indicated that students' psychological well-being may differ according to subject combinations. The result revealed that the students from Science, Arts and Arts & Science possessed higher psychological well-being. The students may try to goals in life and a sense of directedness meaning to their present and past life, hold beliefs that give life purpose and have aims and objectives for living. This result is not consists with Namrata punia & Dr.Renu Malaviya (2015).

The Relationship between College Adjustment and Psychological Well-being of Students

In order to explore the relationship between college adjustment and psychological well-being of students, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed. The results were shown in Table 11.

Table 11 Relationship between College Adjustment and Psychological Well-being of Students

Variables	College Adjustment	Psychological Well-being
College Adjustment	-	.675***
Psychological Well-being	.675***	-

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

According to Table 11, the results showed that there was a significant positive relationship between college adjustment and psychological well-being of students ($r = .675$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, it was found that college adjustment of students was moderate correlation with psychological well-being of students. It can be concluded that if the college adjustment of students' increases, the psychological well-being of students will increase. This result was consistent with finding of Jokela and Virtanen (2011).

Discussion

Differences College Adjustment of Students by College: According to the results from mean comparison of overall college adjustment and each subscale by college, the observed mean score of college 2 students was greater than that of college 1 students in college adjustment. The result of the independent samples *t* test indicated that there was significant difference in college adjustment by college. The result revealed that there was a significant difference in overall college adjustment and social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment and institutional adjustment by college at 0.05 level, 0.01 level and 0.001 level. This means that college 2 students could adjust more than college 1 students in social adjustment, personal emotional adjustment and institutional adjustment. It may be concluded, all college 2 students come from the same environmental condition (transportation, flat land, economic background and so on.) on the other hand most of college 1 students come from costal region as well as island area and in the other case of different ethnically language. So college 1 students had some adjustment difficulties in all four subscales of college adjustment. The result was not consistent with the finding of Krenek (2006).

Differences in College Adjustment of Students by Subject Combination: For overall college adjustment and each subscale; academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment and institutional adjustment. To explore the differences in college adjustment of students by subject combination, one way ANOVA was used and the result revealed that there was a significant difference in overall college adjustment and social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment and institutional adjustment by subject combination at 0.05 level and 0.001 level. Moreover, for more detailed analysis, Post Hoc Test computed by Games-Howell method for academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment and institutional adjustment. There were significant differences in college adjustment of students among subject combinations.

For social adjustment, there was a significant difference between art students and science students. This may be that arts students may try to develop into integration with other students, apply social activities together, socialize with each other, professors and the college's staff, creating friendly communities. For personal emotional adjustment, art students well adjust relates to somatic condition and psychological situation such as physical health, feelings, self-esteem and mental matters. And then for institutional adjustment, art students with their lecture experience in the college where they present a student.

Differences Psychological Well-being of Students by College: According to the results from mean comparison of overall psychological well-being and each subscale by college, the observed mean score of college 2 students was greater than that of college 1 students in psychological well-being. The result of the independent samples *t* test indicated that there was a significant difference in psychological well-being by college. The result revealed that there was a significant difference in overall psychological well-being and personal growth, positive relation, purpose in life by college at level, 0.01 level and 0.001 level. It may be concluded that college 2 students may probably experience better feeling and functioning effectively, having confidence to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks. Moreover, college 1 students come from costal region as well as island area and in the other case of different ethnically language.

Differences in Psychological well-being of Students by Subject Combination: For overall psychological well-being and each subscale; autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relation with other, purpose in life and self-acceptance. To explore the differences in college adjustment of students by subject combination, one way ANOVA was used and the result revealed that there was a significant difference in overall psychological well-being and autonomy and purpose in life by subject combination at 0.01 level and 0.001 level. Moreover, for more detailed analysis, Post Hoc Test computed by Games-Howell method for autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relation with other, purpose in life and self-acceptance. There was significant difference in psychological well-being of students between subject combinations. For autonomy, arts students have self-determining and independent able to resist social pressure to think and act in certain way, regulate behavior and evaluate their self by personal standard. For purpose in life, science students have goals in life and a sense of directedness meaning to their present and past life, hold beliefs that give life purpose and have aims and object for living. This result was not consistent with Namrata punia & Dr.Renu Malaviya (2015).

Relationship between the College Adjustment and Psychological Well-being of Students- In order to know the relationship between college adjustment and psychological well-being of students' correlation analysis was used. The result was ($r = .675$, $p < 0.001$) and this mean that there was a moderate correlation between college adjustment and psychological well-being of students. The possible reason is that the college adjustment of students will be increase; the psychological well-being of students will increase. Among four dimensions of college adjustment, there were positive correlation between the six dimensions of psychological well-being, $r = .371$, $p > .001$ for academic adjustment, $r = .472$, $p > .001$ for social adjustment, $r = .226$, $p > .01$ for personal-emotional adjustment, $r = 1.097$, $p > .001$ for institutional adjustment. Among them, college adjustment was best correlated with psychological well-being. So, if students well adjust in their campus, their psychological well-being will increase.

Conclusion

In this study, the students from Education Degree College should be providing counseling sessions in order to maintain a high level of well-being and adjustment. College and university should work toward facilitating meaningful relationships among all students. As Allport (1954) and many others have argued, merely creating the opportunities for social interaction and engagement (e.g., through residence halls) is not sufficient for facilitating meaningful relationships, particularly across racial/ethnic groups. Instead it is critical that students form quality relationships with one another while minimizing hostile interactions across diversity. This study indicates that the quality of interpersonal relationships with other students has a significant effect on all six dimensions of well-being. Thus, for many students, the college environment shapes and contributes to numerous facets of psychological well-being.

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. Through proper orientation, their process of adjustment to college will be accelerated. Fear of negative evaluation has an effect on academic adjustment and emotional-personal adjustment, but has not social adjustment and institutional adjustment. Social avoidance and distress have an effect on academic adjustment, social adjustment, personal-emotional adjustment and institutional adjustment. College students are

adolescents have capability to do highest adjustment with so many dreams, lot of wishes to fulfill it, commitments and flexibility. They are mentally prepared for adjustment to reach at goal.

For those students who want to improve college adjustment, here are some suggestions,

- Involvement with others and campus activities are healthy pursuits. Involvement can breed positive thoughts and feelings and is related to good self-esteem and academic success.
- Working toward maintaining an optimistic attitude and interacting with others in productive ways. Can raise self- awareness of accepting and tolerant of others.
- Attendance in class should be prioritized. As academic success and successful stress management is dependent upon good attendance.
- Independence and autonomy is occurred by becoming individuation and making sure of developing new relationship in new community within the college years a time to develop these state in college studying.

For those who want to improve psychological well-being, here are some suggestions which are grounded on the inventory used in the present study. Students should:

- Be self-determining and independent
- Not afraid to voice own opinions, even when they are opposition to others
- Judge oneself what they think is important, not by the values of what other think
- Acknowledge and accept multiple aspects of oneself including both good and bad qualities
- Enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends
- Have warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others
- Have a feeling of continued development and open to new experiences

According to Psychological Well-being Scale (PWB), individuals with high environmental mastery possess a sense of mastery in managing the environment, control complex array of external activities; make effective use of surrounding opportunities and can choose contexts suitable to their personal needs and values. Students may have better control on their environments to act independently, in a focused and persistent manne than their counterparts.

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