

University of Nebraska - Lincoln
DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)

Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

November 2018

Student Engagement and adjustment to College among Undergraduate Students

Abdelmadjid Benraghda

Universiti Malaysia Pahang, engmadjid@gmail.com

Zohra Goudih

Ssekamanya Siraje Abdallah

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>

 Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Benraghda, Abdelmadjid; Goudih, Zohra; and Siraje Abdallah, Ssekamanya, "Student Engagement and adjustment to College among Undergraduate Students" (2018). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 1889.
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1889>

Student Engagement and adjustment to College among Undergraduate Students

Zohra Goudih¹, Ssekamanya Siraje Abdallah², Abdelmadjid Benraghda³

^{1,2} Institute of Education, International Islamic University of Malaysia, Malaysia

³Centre for Modern Languages and Human Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Pahang, Malaysia.

ABSTRACT

Student engagement and adjustment to college are important factors that contribute to their success. This study aims to investigate the relationship between these two variables and the differences that can be drawn in the context of undergraduate students at International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM). Three types of adjustments namely; (academic adjustment, social adjustment, and personal-emotional adjustment) were measured by SACQ. In addition, three types of student engagements (peer-to-peer engagement, engagement with faculty, and engagement with the university) were assessed using the accredited National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). 446 students were involved in the current study. ANOVA, *t*-test, and correlation analysis were used. The findings of this study revealed a moderate relationship between adjustment to college and student engagement $r = .487$. The overall findings suggest relatively low involvement which would allow the institution the opportunity to develop their programs to increase student engagement and encourage students to graduate on time.

Keywords: adjustment, engagement, college, student, and characteristics.

Corresponding author: engmadjid@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Student engagement focuses more on achievement, positive behaviors and the sense of belonging among students. In addition, many studies focus on school and high school students, especially on the problem of disengagement which is a cause of tension in the education field (Willms, Friesen & Milton; 2009). Student engagement has recently been rendered to become a goal for all students to enhance their abilities for lifelong learning (Gilbert, 2007).

The mission of the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education states that higher education should “promote the use of its professional standards for the development, assessment, and improvement of quality student learning, programs, and services” (CAS, 2015). This requires the need to investigate significant predictors of students’ adjustment to college as well as student engagement to help councilors and those who are interested to consider factors that may affect adjustment and increase engagement. Tinto (1993) mentioned that adjustment problems cause students to drop out of college; although many youths enrolled into college, they failed to graduate on time (within five years) and many did not graduate at all (American College Testing Services, 2010). Moreover, half of the students began their degrees in universities but did not graduate, and those who managed to finish their study have taken a long time to do so. It should be noted that only 35% of them have graduated in five years...

In Islamic concept, the well-adjusted person experiences tawhid follows the commands of Allah, and complete his/her responsibilities to the society and family. Mental health is the reciprocal combination of the issues of everyday life within the requirements of Islam (El Azayem & Hedayat-Diba, 1994). Reading Qur’an and performing prayers can be protective means against pressure and stress, and a way of raising psychological and moral maturity (El Azayem & Hedayat-Diba, 1994; El-Islam, 2004). It is a matter of concern that a lot of studies in this issue are found in the USA and other parts of the West, whereas Islamic countries do not have enough studies which are correlated with these two dimensions, namely academic engagement and psychological adjustment. As per the researcher’s modest knowledge, many studies correlate one of these variables with others but arguably, not enough studies have concentrated on the relationship between academic engagement and psychological adjustment. Therefore, this study seeks to highlight these two issues and identify the correlation in determining the possibility of controlling one of them for the success of the other and avoid many negative consequences in the educational field.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

It is a common phenomenon that students tend to perceive their academic life as stressful and tiring (Hammer, Grigsby & Woods, 1998; Wam, 1992); students in college live as delayed adolescents, where they face stress related to changing circumstances and social relationship. They face challenges of integration and merging of identities and discover professional and personal aspirations. In this context, there is an increasing interest in the mechanism of coping with stress, where the coping is one of indicators of psychological adjustment and

positive health. Responses related to coping with stress lead to a heightened sense of self-effectiveness and reduce the level of stress. Billings and Moos (1981), Lengua (2000) and Thornton, Pickus and Aldrich (2005) viewed stress as a mutant process and a result of the imbalance between demands of the environment of a person and the available sources. In this context, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) presented a model of stress and coping which includes five elements, namely:

1. Persons and factors influencing the environment,
2. cognitive assessments,
3. stress,
4. coping responses, and
5. results as adaptive, short and long term.

Researchers developed several models of adaptation to college in order to measure the degree of different types of adjustment students make in college and to examine the relationship or effects of every types of adaptation with student's academic achievement. They include scholars such as Baker and Siryk (1984) who developed three types of adjustment, Searle and Ward (1990) and Ward and Kennedy (1999) who developed four types of adjustment, Bochner, McLeod and Lin (1977) and also Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2001) who developed Bochner's functional model of friendship networks, John who developed the 'International Student Problem Inventory' which was later modified by Jenkins and Galloway (2009). These models address different aspects and conceptualization of the dimensions related to adjustment to college. More specifically, Baker and Siryk's (1984) three types of adaptation to college model, academic adjustment, social adjustment and personal-emotional adjustment is the most widely used reference on adjustment to college when the responses involve local and international contexts.

The current study distinguishes between adjustment to college for both students, and their engagement or involvement. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) assumed that effective coping is a result of good proportionality between using coping strategy and control of stress sources; here it can be observed that the effectiveness of coping is based on attitude and response (Shields, 2001). Many studies show that coping with problems leads to psychological adjustment, whereby efforts that student make for problem solving are important for the management of effects that can be controlled (Kfayy & Alaeddine, 2006). In this context, there is a need for the research on student engagement and the contextual variables to understand better how students engage and succeed (Christenson & Anderson 2002).

Factors and outcomes of student engagement have been given considerable attention in the literature since the mid-1990s. For instance, student academic engagement was the basic concern in the work of Alexander Astin (1984, as cited in Kuh, Schuh, Whit et al., 1991). They used different terms to explain notions of student engagement, as they based their views on the premise that students learn from what they do in college in referring to engagement. It has a positive relation with the objective and subjective criteria of gains in general capacities (Pascarella, Duby, Terenzini, & Inversion, 1983; Pascarella, 1996). Astin (1985) in his study of the behavior, motivation, timing, quality of programs, input based on demographics, student's background, their previous experiments, academic environment and its results, suggested that students need to engage academically and socially. This study by Astin (1985) on student involvement theory is applied as a framework for research.

Astin (1985) created a basic supposition about involvement, whereby it covers investment of psychosocial and physical energy, and that it is continuous. Moreover, the amount of energy invested varies from student to student and aspects of involvement may be qualitative and quantitative in terms of what a student gains from being involved (or their development). Finally, he argued that academic performance is correlated with the student involvement (Student Development Theory, 2007).

Furthermore, Kuh and Pike (2005) continued to study this correlation with similar results, involving student involvement in campus activities, collaboration and participation in learning communities. Universities have been encouraging students to become involved, namely to lead and take positive parts via co-curricular activities. Researchers utilized student involvement theory in their studies in order to examine the influence of motivation and sense making in student involvement (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Hu & Kuh, 2001; Kuh, 2009a), retention and achievement as well as student success and development (Astin, 1984; 1993; Berger & Milem, 1999; Chickering & Gamson, 1987; Goodsell, Maher & Tinto, 1992; Kuh, 1995; Kuh et al., 2005; Kuh & Vesper, 1997; Pace, 1995; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). The current study is also among the many studies that examines the relationship between adjustment and engagement and general student education. Student involvement theory which relates to the person and environment can also be used to reduce barriers. Mwita (2014) used involvement theory to investigate undergraduate student engagement at IIUM and correlated to academic self-handicap and she found that self-handicap is a predictor of disengagement. As such as H.C. Teoha, Maria Chong Abdullah *, Samsilah Roslanc, Shaffe Daud (2012) in their investigations on characteristics of student engagement which was referred as “students learning from what they do in college” found positive engagement and a high level of life-long learning. To examine this further, this study aims to identify the factor that influences both student adjustment and student engagement.

3. INFLUENCES OF ADJUSTMENT TO COLLEGE

Many studies discussed the factors that influence adjustment to college and university and examined the relationship of adjustment and persistence with college graduation (Spady, 1970; Bean, 1980, 1982; Tinto, 1975, 1986). Tinto (1975) mentioned that psychological and personal characteristic and background directly affect the student’s commitment or decision of dropping out.

In terms of the aspirations of peoples towards learning, some studies look directly to the differences in adjustment between students with different age levels to find out the relationship between age and adjustment to college. For instance, Napoli and Wortman (1998) found a positive relationship between age and academic adjustment, psychological adjustment, and institutional commitment, although there is an inverse relationship between age and social adjustment. It should be noted that this study was conducted among students between 18 to 19 years old only. Similar results have been found in Pratt et al.’s (2000) study, that there is a positive relationship between elder people and general adjustment. However, Brooks and Dubois (1995) found negative relationship between age and lateral

social aspects and overall adjustment and they found no relationship between age and lateral academic and personal and wellness dimensions.

Nonetheless, probably there is a systematic difference between students who are elder than traditional the aged students in terms of social class and capacities, and this makes it difficult to find that age form the factors that affect psychological and academic adjustment.

It is commonly known that a person will experience difficulties in adjusting with new situations or a different environment with different people, language, culture and religious belief and that family and friends can reduce the shock and stress derived from this. Social support depends on the person's interaction under the social context, and to maintain the support will be the exchange of social relations (Vaux, 1988). Cultural factor is one of the challenges international students face due to the cultural and linguistic distance they experience in the new environment, where the students finds themselves in need to adapt to be able to continue to perform well academically and establish social relations, as found in Gibbs' study (2011). According to a study by Rundles (2012), the lack of social support and the difficulties of communication and language barriers are all the challenges posed by limiting oneself to the same experience. This in turn leads to negative consequences, namely poor communication or the so-called cultivation with the host country. As a result, the student's academic engagement will be weak, and this may be a barrier to good psychological health of the student and may hinder him/her from continuing his/her studies. However, in another aspect of diversity, religious beliefs can hinder adjustment, whereby Suseela Malaklolunthu a * and Poovaikarasi Sateyen Selanb (2011) in their studies involving private universities in Malaysia recommended that institutions must pay attention to adjustment issues for international students because their studies' result indicated maladjustment among international students, and that religious belief is one of the factors that influence students' environment.

In addition to the mentioned points, a sense of belonging to group and society is important as it helps students to accept their environment and adapt with it; it is a psychological need to be able to adjust to college (Osterman, 2000). A sense of membership in academic institute and support from the colleagues are linked to positive academic engagement while the rejection from colleagues is linked to the low level of integration that can lead to dropping out (Osterman, 2000).

Psychological adjustment among international students has been linked to external factors and personal characteristics (Fatma Nihal Oflu, 2010) which include a set of factors including gender, cognitive skills, acculturative stress, cultural distance and perceived social support. This study showed similar results to a study done in Turkey by using SACQ, which revealed positive coping skills. The study supported that age, academic level, self-respect and physical health offer more comprehensive perspective with respect to factors of student's international adaptation.

A research done by Freeman, Nga and Mathews (2017) suggest that socio-cultural adjustment does not significantly affect the academic adjustment of international students in Malaysia. Most of the international students in the country are from the Asian region and eastern countries. This finding found that students who came from similar environments with the host country find it easier to adjust and tend to form groups as the social and cultural

challenges they face are minimal. This makes cultural adaptation easier for international students. Research evidence suggests that cross-cultural motivation can become a factor that enhances adjustment and adaptation to a foreign culture (Templer et al., 2006; Ang et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2010). Therefore, cultural adjustment is clearly a factor that leads to social and personal adjustment. Ssekamanya Siraje Abdallah (2012) in his study done by utilizing SACQ involving IUM international students stated that there are no significant differences between age, gender, marital status, social support, prior cross-cultural experience and cultural distance, and personal-emotional adjustment. In other words, the study found that IUM international students' characteristics and background did not affect their emotional adjustment.

4. OUTCOMES OF ADJUSTMENT TO COLLEGE

There has been a focus on the relationship between adjustment and continuation in college due to the high percentage of students who continue their study, where from the beginning they have engaged or pulled out. Poor academic performance may occur, and this might lead the affected students to drop out. This may arise from students or campus, as students tend to leave campus for reasons which are not academic, and they may be more frequent for some academic resonances (Rummel et al., 1999). However, self-growth represents one of the most important aspects of efficient psychological functioning. Indeed, much of research reveals that happy people experience a number of benefits, ranging from physical health to better relationships to high-level performance (Hupert, 2009; Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). The concept of a good feeling does not only comprise the positive emotions of happiness and contentment, but also emotions as engagement confidence, affection, concept of functioning effectively in psychological sense which involves the development of one's potential, having a sense of purpose and experiencing positive relationships. Psychological adjustment has been found to be related to many outcomes related to job performance, academic engagement and academic achievement.

5. FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

College supports students by providing a good academic environment, offering a fair organizational culture that respects students from different cultural background with services and embracing international students as a value can promote a sense of belonging and identification Tyler and Blader (2003, p. 356). In a previous research by Fujita, Harrigan and Soutar (2017) in Australia among international students, the researchers suggested that students' engagement with the university's social media improve their social identification with the university as well as promote their acculturation and as a sense of pride and belonging, which is associated with affective commitment (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

When the university provides an appropriate climate, it will affect student involvement. (Suarez-orocho, Pimentel & Martin), In addition to this, students with self-efficacy characteristics and English language skills were shown to have more satisfaction on their academic performance. Sakurai, Pyhalto and Lindblom-Ylanne (2012) opined that the supervision of the academic environment is positively connected with student satisfaction

and their continuous enrolment with the university. In same context, academic engagement among international doctoral students has a significant relationship with dropping out, as found by Sakurai, Pyhalto and Lindbolom-Ylanne (2012). However, in Malaysian context, (Fauziah et al., 2016), examined the significance differences between gender in the dimensions of student engagement among undergraduates of Utara University based on Astin's student involvement theory. The survey research method was applied, and the finding showed significant differences in the engagement with academic staff and engagement in communities between male and female students even though no significance engagement was found with peer.

Saeed and Zyngier (2012) investigated how student motivation influences student engagement in a qualitative case study. They used self-determination theory to understand which type of motivation is closer to engagement, in line with the result of Zyngier's (2008) study, this study established that substantial motivation helps veritable student engagement in learning and that external motivation aid to develop engagement of ritual in students, and student who had both of motivation types showed different engagement types in learning.

Zhao, Carini and Kuh (2005) reported that there is no clear relationship between student engagement and gender, whereby the score of male student engagement was sometimes higher than female, while female engagement in other times was more significant. Hu and Kuh (2002) suggested a relationship between male and engagement level because they disengage or are highly engaged compared to females, in this context, Teoha, Chong Abdullah *, Samsilah Roslan and Shaffe Daud (2012) investigated student engagement in Malaysian public universities. The study found a difference in the average student engagement for females, while the independent T-test indicated a significant difference in the average student participation for females, showing that females are more engaged than males.

6. OUTCOMES OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

It has been shown that student engagement has an effect on several educational retention and persistence (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Horstmanshof & Zimitat, 2007) as well as growth and academic competence, and students find an orientation on their future life, goals and careers after graduation and the possibility to continue study for a long term (Reason, Terenzini & Domingo, 2006). From the National Survey of Student Engagement, Kuh et al. (2008) identified positive outcomes of engagement as well as student continuation between first and second academic year.

7. THE GAP OF THE CURRENT RESEARCH

In student retention and achievement across Malaysia and Islamic institutions and how to bridge them is also one of the major interests of higher education in the country. These gaps may be attributed to factors such as student adjustment and involvement in students' education environment, culture, socioeconomic and language, where student adaptation is a way to bridging the involvement and achievement gap. Researchers have indicated that social and psychological adjustment can predict student academic involvement and performance.

Students who have higher psychological adjustment have higher college satisfaction (Maddux, 1995). Researches have indicated that the relationship between adjustment, academic performance and engagement is more important in academic environment. Mostly, the category of students who faces psychological and social problems is the first-year students. Students of the first year have lower level of psychological and social adjustment and they are not inclined to do well in their academic performance compare students with higher level of psychological adjustment. Rice (1992) claimed that a student who enjoys a good level of adjustment is willing to continue studying in university, and personal adjustment and social integration play an important role in student retention. As mentioned earlier, studies on student engagement and adjustment to college in IIUM have been dealt with separately or linked to other variables.

8. METHODOLOGY

8.1 Participants

This study was conducted in International Islamic University of Malaysia, in this study, the population identified comprised two groups of IIUM students: undergraduates of both male and female genders among local and international students. It is not practical to include the entire IIUM student population in this study because it could hinder the study. Therefore, the target population chosen was derived from faculty of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences RKHS and faculty of Engineering, to determine the simple Krejcie and Morgan's table was utilized suggesting 426 responders ...selected as a sampling of this study from 7329.

8.2 Instrument

The instruments used in this study included: Demographic Sheet, Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire SACQ (Baker & Siryk, 1989) and selected survey Questions from National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2011. The original Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire comprises 67 items and this makes the questionnaire too long and difficult for the participants to answer honestly. To avoid this, the researcher reduced the items of SCAQ to 24 items while keeping all the subscales: Academic Adjustment – 11 items, Social Adjustment – 9 items, and Personal-Emotional Adjustment – 4 items, except for the Attachment subscale because the items were almost incompatible with the context of International Islamic University of Malaysia. Each item was measured with a five-points Likert scale, ranging from (1) for Strongly Disagree to (5) for Strongly Agree.

The second construct of NSSE 2011 contained in the indicators of this study covered Active and Collaborative Learning (ACL), Student-Faculty Interaction (SFI) and Supportive Campus Environment (SCE), based on a thorough review of literature on materials relevant to this study while keeping the similar points in Likert scale, in which each item was measured with four-points Likert scale, from (1) for Never to (4) for Very Often. The items in the NSSE are proportionate with the conceptual definition of peer-to-peer student

engagement (9 items), student with faculty engagement (6 items) and student to university engagement (5 items), bringing to a total of 20 items for this study.

8.3 Data analysis

The data of this research were analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Science SPSS were used to answer the research question of the study.

Table 1 Research question and statistical technique used in analysis

N.	Research questions	Statistical technique
1	Is there any significance difference between gender, nationality and faculty in adjustment to college among undergraduates at IIUM?	Independent sample <i>t</i> -test & ANOVA
2	Is there any significance difference between gender, nationally and faculty and student engagement among undergraduates at IIUM?	Independent sample <i>t</i> -test & ANOVA
3	Is the relationship between adjustment and engagement among undergraduates at IIUM?	Correlation Pearson-Product Moment Correlation

9. RESULT

9.1 Analyses on difference in adjustment based on gender, age, nationality and Faculty

9.1.1 Gender

The results of the *t*-test indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in scores for male and female undergraduate students in the level of their adaptation to college, there was no significant difference in scores for male respondents ($M = 74.2467$, $SD = 9.15715$) and female respondents ($M = 73.5862$, $SD = 8.29745$; $t = -.777$, $p = .437$ (two-tailed)).

9.1.2 Nationality

The results of the *t*-test on the level of adjustment showed that no significant. As well as social adjustment In contras *t*-test result of personal and emotional adjustment for Malaysian students were $M = 14.1067$ and $SD = 2.39$, while for international students, the results were

M = 14.6190 and SD = 2.35, with $t = -2.040$, $p = .042$, therefore, which indicated a significant difference in the level of personal-emotional adjustment between Malaysian and international undergraduate student at IIUM.

9.1.3 Faculty

The results of the t -test on the degree of academic adjustment for IRKHS students were $M = 33.7613$ and $SD = 4.07$, while for ENGIN students, the results were $M = 32.7596$ and $SD = 4.05$, with $t = 2.519$ and $p = .012$, meaning that there is a significant difference in terms of the academic adjustment between the undergraduate students from faculty of IRKHS and ENGIN at IIUM ($p < .05$). However, the test did not record any statistical significance between IRKHS students and ENGIN students' in their degree of social adjustment and personal-emotional adjustment.

9.2 Analysis on difference in student engagement based on gender, nationality and Faculty

9.2.1 Gender

The results of the t -test on the level of peer-to-peer active and collaborative learning for males were ($M=25.9731$; $SD=4.42$), while for females, the results were ($M=24.7685$; $SD=4.48$), with $t = 2.785$ $p = .006$. The independent t -test above showed that there is a significant difference between males and females stress factors because the relationship is significant, in the contrast of the t -test on the level of student-faculty engagement for male students well as student-university engagement.

9.2.2 Nationality

According to the following table, the results of t -test on the level of student-university engagement for Malaysian students were ($M=11.4067$; $SD=3.03$), while for international students, the results were ($M=12.55$, $SD=3.19$), with $t = -3.435$, $p = .001$. The results suggest that there is a significant difference between Malaysian students and international students only in the level of student with university engagement.

9.2.3 Faculty

The results of the t -test on the level of student-faculty engagement for IRKHS students were ($M=16.6240$; $SD = 3.03$), while for ENGIN students, the results were ($M=15.61$; $SD= 3.22$), with ($t=3.286$; $p=.0001$). The results suggest that there is a significant difference between IRKHS students and ENGIN students' level of SFE, but no significant showed in the result of peer-to-peer active and collaborative learning for IRKHS were ($M=25.12$; $SD=4.21$), while for ENGIN, the results were ($M=25.76$; $SD=4.81$), with ($t=-14$; $p=.15$), as well as student university engagement showed ($M=11.62$; $SD=3.16$), with ($t= -89$; $p=.37$).

9.3 The correlation analyses between adjustment to college and student engagement

The result of Pearson product-moment correlation between adjustment to college and student engagement showed that there is a relationship between psychological adjustment and academic engagement among the undergraduate students of IIUM. This relationship between psychological adjustment and academic engagement of the undergraduate students of IIUM was investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation in the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity occurs. A positive correlation between the two variables was found ($r = .487$).

Table2: Pearson’s correlation between adjustments and engagement among undergraduate student at IIUM

Person correlation	P. Adjustment	1.000	.487
	A. Engagement	.487	1.000
Sig. (2 tailed)	P. Adjustment		.000
	A. Engagement	.000	
N	P. Adjustment	426	426
	A. Engagement	426	426

$P < .0.0001$

9. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Previous literature had shown that international students can suffer from several types of personal adjustment issues such as depression, anxiety, and over-similarity with the home country, loneliness and homesickness (Thomas & Althen, 1989). This finding is unlike those found in a study done by Malaklolunthu, S., & Selan, P. S. (2011) involving a private university in Malaysia.

Abdallah (2012) stated that there are no significant differences between independent variables (age, gender, marital status, social support, prior cross-cultural experience and cultural distance) and personal-emotional adjustment by using SACQ. Similarly, IIUM international student characteristics and background were found to not affect their emotional adjustment. In parallel, the result of the research done by Freeman, Nga and Mathews (2017) suggest that socio-cultural adjustment does not significantly affect the academic adjustment of international students in Malaysia.

The impact is typically higher for international students than for local students. Yeh (2003) found that European students studying in the UK reported experiencing less acculturative stress than those from Asia and Africa. Meanwhile, Results also indicate that the faculty influences academic adjustment, whereby IRKHS students showed a little higher degree of

adjustment compared with IRKHS students. This result is unlike the study done by Gaalswyk (2014) which compared academic adjustment of students with non-STEM and those with STEM majors

In terms of male student's engagement with peer, findings of this indicated a varying statistical degree, in line with what Carini and Kuh's (2005) study which reported that the degree of male students' engagement is sometimes higher than female students. In contrast, this finding a study carried out by Hee et al. (2013) found that females showed significantly more engagement than males in Malaysian public universities, conversely, Krause et al. (2003) pointed out that there were no significant gender differences in peer out-of-class interactions, while Jafaar et al. (2016), found in a study involving University Utara Malaysia students that both males and females were similar in their engagement with peers. The gender gap in active and collaborative learning varies slightly, depending on different types of institutions. It is noted that this gender gap is not only found in peer engagement, but also in teaching style and classroom climate, which points out that teachers can use problem-solving strategies to address them, parallel to findings in previous studies (Poter, 2006; McInnis, 2003). When college supports students by providing a good academic environment and having a fair organizational culture to respect students from different cultural background with services. This finding supports the study done by Marzukieir (2011) which found that the majority of international students at IIUM are generally satisfied with the different aspects on campus life such as their academic experience, campus environment and interpersonal relationship.

A significant effect was observed in student engagement with faculty students of faculty of Engineering were found to have lower engagement with faculty in this step in engagement is setting how faculty factor in the student engagement neutralization. Although literature suggests that faculty and academic staff play an essential role in student engagement, Umbach and Wawrzynski (2005) study suggests that faculty have different approaches to student engagement. However, women undergraduates have been found to show an inclination to spend more time preparing for class and they read and write more (Hu & Kuh, 2002, 2003), women tend to be overrepresented in areas that demand more writing than others, such as the humanities and social sciences compared with science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

This study concludes that a moderate relationship between college adjustment and student engagement was found in this research. The present study confirms that adapted and engaged students learn better and show best prospective outcomes in their academic performance. Moreover, by providing psychological services and facilities that help students to adapt better, institutions can make both the classroom and campus environment to become a more engaging place for students to learn.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The interest in this topic emerged through the researcher's curiosity towards teachers' development theory in challenging the existing learning environment and helping and supporting students to move to higher levels of psychological and intellectual growth (Becker, 1964; Perry, Kitchener, 1994; Berry, 1970). Moreover, student engagement has

emerged as one of the most important indicators linked to student success (Hatch, 2012; Pascarella & Terenzini 2005; Ward & Kinzie 2009; Zhao & Kuh, 2004). This study targeted undergraduate students of International Islamic University of Malaysia, as an educational establishment with Islamic values, therefore, investigations which involves institutions with different types of culture could yield different perceptions about psychological adjustment and student engagement among their undergraduate students, this study used the quantitative research method. Therefore, future research could add a qualitative dimension into the study in order to gain a richer description of the student engagement experience, To proceed toward a more generalizable model, future research could use NSSE data sets with the four engagement types by selecting undergraduate students from different universities in Malaysia to form the sampling at national level and compare the results between Islamic universities and non-Islamic universities. This study concentrated on the relationship between psychological adjustment as the independent variable and student engagement as dependent variable. Thus, there is a need for another moderating variable, such as specialization of the undergraduate students to refine the findings.

REFERENCES

- Alaa El Din, & Mohamed, J. (2009). Gender differences in coping strategies during university life: the role of personality dimensions. *Dirasat: Educational Sciences*, 36(2).
- Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of management review*, 14(1), 20-39
- Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25(4), 297–308.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ, US: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Baker, R. W., & Siryk, B. (1984). Measuring adjustment to college. *Journal of counseling psychology*, 31(2), 179.
- Berman, S. M., Strauss, S., & Verhage, N. (2000). Treating Mental Illness in Students: a New Strategy. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 46(41), B9-B9
- Brooks, J. H., & Dubois, D. L. (1995). Individual and environmental predictors of adjustment during the first year of college. *Journal of College Student Development*.
- Carini, R. M., Kuh, G. D., & Klein, S. P. (2006). Student engagement and student learning: Testing the linkages. *Research in higher education*, 47(1), 1-32.
- Center, S. (2017). Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, 2006-2008.
- Smither, R. & Khorsandi, A.(2009). The Implicit Personality Theory of Islam. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 81–96
- Smither, R., & Khorsandi, A. (2009). The implicit personality theory of Islam. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*, 1(2), 81.

- Chen, J. (2016). Multidimensional approach to predicting freshman college adjustment (Doctoral dissertation, Fairleigh Dickinson University).
- Fiorini, S., Liu, T., Shepard, L., & Ouimet, J. (2014). *Using NSSE to understand student success: A multi-year analysis*. In annual conference of the Indiana Association for Institutional Research, Indianapolis, IN (Vol. 5).
- Credé, M., & Niehorster, S. (2012). Adjustment to college as measured by the student adaptation to college questionnaire: A quantitative review of its structure and relationships with correlates and consequences. *Educational Psychology Review*, 24(1), 133-165.
- Mohamed El Azayem, G. A., & Hedayat-Diba, Z. (1994). The psychological aspects of Islam: Basic principles of Islam and their psychological corollary. *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, 4(1), 41-50
- Fiorini, S., Liu, T., Shepard, L., & Ouimet, J. (2014). *Using NSSE to understand student success: A multi-year analysis*. In annual conference of the Indiana Association for Institutional Research, Indianapolis, IN (Vol. 5).
- Fujita, M., Harrigan, P., & Soutar, G. N. (2017). International students' engagement in their university's social media: An exploratory study. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 31(7), 1119-1134.
- Freeman, K, Nga, E. & Mathews. M. (2017). international students' challenges and academic adjustment in higher education in Malaysia. *Sci.Int.(Lahore)*,29(1),131-134, ISSN 1013-531
- Gaalswyk, T. B. (2014). Predicting transfer students' selection of a STEM major and academic adjustment: A study of community college students at a Midwestern University.
- Horstmanshof, L., & Zimitat, C. (2007). Future time orientation predicts academic engagement among first-year university students. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 77(3), 703-718.
- Hu, S., & Kuh, G. D. (2002). Being (dis) engaged in educationally purposeful activities: The influences of student and institutional characteristics. *Research in Higher Education*, 43(5), 555-575.
- <https://www.cas.edu/>
- Ishitani, T. T. (2006). Studying attrition and degree completion behavior among first-generation college students in the United States. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 77(5), 861-885.
- Jaafar, F. M., Osman, R., & Yusof, F. M. (2016). Student Engagement among University Students in Malaysia. *The Social Sciences*, 11(31), 7433-7437
- Katrina A. Korb (2012) The Relationship between Academic Motivation and Psychosocial Adjustment Among University Students: The Validity of Self-Determination Theory in the Nigerian Context. *The Educational Psychologist*, 6, 188-197.
- Kinzie, J., Gonyea, R., Kuh, G. D., Umbach, P., Blaich, C., & Korkmaz, A. (2007). *The relationship between gender and student engagement in college*. In 32nd annual conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Louisville, KY.

- Malaklolunthu, S., & Selan, P. S. (2011). Adjustment problems among international students in Malaysian private higher education institutions. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 833-837.
- Mansor, N., & Khalid, N. S. (2012). Spiritual well-being of INSTED, IIUM Students' and its relationship with college adjustment. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 69, 1314-1323
- Mwita, H. M. (2014). *Academic Self-handicapping Behaviour and Student Engagement Among the Students of the International Islamic University Malaysia* (Doctoral dissertation, Institute of Education, International Islamic University Malaysia).
- Newmark, A. (2016). Student Engagement in Undergraduate Social Work Education Among "at-risk" Students. Virginia Commonwealth University.
- Otlu, F. N. (2010). College adjustment of international students: the role of gender, acculturative stress, coping skills, cultural distance, and perceived social support. URL: <http://etd.lib.metu.edu.tr/upload/12612769/index.pdf> (дата обращения: 28.02.2013).
- O'Keeffe, P. (2013). A sense of belonging: Improving student retention. *College Student Journal*, 47(4), 605-613.
- Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of educational research*, 70(3), 323-367.
- Paulsen, M. B. (2016). Higher education: Handbook of theory and research (Vol. 31). J. C. Smart (Ed.). Springer.
- Parsons, J., & Taylor, L. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current issues in education*, 14(1).
- Pike, G. R., & Kuh, G. D. (2005). A typology of student engagement for American colleges and universities. *Research in higher education*, 46(2), 185-209.
- Pike, G. R., & Kuh, G. D. (2005). A typology of student engagement for American colleges and universities. *Research in higher education*, 46(2), 185-209.
- Plaud, J. J., Baker, R. W., & Groccia, J. E. (1990). Freshman decidedness regarding academic major and anticipated and actual adjustment to an engineering college. *NACADA Journal*, 10(2), 20-26.,
- Ramler, T. R., Tennison, L. R., Lynch, J., & Murphy, P. (2016). Mindfulness and the college transition: the efficacy of an adapted mindfulness-based stress reduction intervention in fostering adjustment among first-year students. *Mindfulness*, 7(1), 179-188.
- Ramirez, V. E. Migrant Education in Philippine Higher Education Institutions: Drivers, Experience and Challenges to Continuous Quality Improvement.
- Reschly, A. L., & Christenson, S. L. (2006). Prediction of dropout among students with mild disabilities: A case for the inclusion of student engagement variables. *Remedial and Special Education*, 27(5), 276-292

- Rienties, B., & Tempelaar, D. (2013). The role of cultural dimensions of international and Dutch students on academic and social integration and academic performance in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37(2), 188-201.
- Rotermund, S. L. (2010). *The role of psychological precursors and student engagement in a process model of high school dropout*. University of California, Santa Barbara.
- Saeed, S., & Zyngier, D. (2012). How motivation influences student engagement: A qualitative case study. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 1(2), 252.
- Sakurai, Y., Pyhältö, K., & Lindblom-Ylänne, S. (2012). Factors affecting international doctoral students' academic engagement, satisfaction with their studies, and dropping out. *International Journal for Researcher Development*, 3(2), 99-117.
- Severiens, S., & Wolff, R., (2008) A comparison of ethnic minority and majority students: Social and academic integration, and quality of learning. *Studies in Higher Education*, 33: 253-266
- Shields, N. (2001). Stress, active coping, and academic performance among persisting and nonpersisting college students. *Journal of Applied Biobehavioral Research*, 6(2), 65-81.
- Ssekamanya, S. A. (2012). Predictors of cultural adjustment among international students in Malaysia: *counseling implications*.
- Suárez-Orozco, C., Pimentel, A., & Martin, M. (2009). The significance of relationships: Academic engagement and achievement among newcomer immigrant youth. *Teachers College Record*, 111(3), 712-749.
- Teoh, H. C., Abdullah, M. C., Roslan, S., & Daud, S. (2013). An investigation of student engagement in a Malaysian Public University. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 90, 142-151.
- Thomas, K., & Althen, G. (1989). Counseling foreign students.
- Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of educational research*, 45(1), 89-125.
- Toews, M. L., & Yazedjian, A. (2007). College adjustment among freshmen: Predictors for white and hispanic males and females. *College Student Journal*, 41(4).
- Trowler, V. (2010). Student engagement literature review. *The higher education academy*, 11, 1-15.
- Umbach, P. D., & Wawrzynski, M. R. (2005). Faculty do matter: The role of college faculty in student learning and engagement. *Research in Higher Education*, 46(2), 153-184.
- Vaux, A. (1988). *Social support: Theory, research, and intervention*. Praeger publishers.
- Willms, J. D., Friesen, S., & Milton, P. (2009). What Did You Do in School Today? *Transforming Classrooms through Social, Academic, and Intellectual Engagement. (First National Report)*.
- Wu, H. P., Garza, E., & Guzman, N. (2015). International student's challenge and adjustment to college. *Education Research International*, 2015
- Yeh, C. J., & Inose, M. (2003). International students' reported English fluency, social support satisfaction, and social connectedness as predictors of acculturative stress. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 16(1), 15-28.

- Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2010). Improving student engagement: Ten proposals for action. *Active learning in higher education*, 11(3), 167-177.
- Zhou, Y., Jindal-Snape, D., Topping, K., & Todman, J. (2008). Theoretical models of culture shock and adaptation in international students in higher education. *Studies in higher education*, 33(1), 63-75.