Gender Differences In Adjustment Issues, Quality Of Life And Psychological Resilience Among Hostel Students

Daniya Hasan
Umm E Rubab Kazmi
&
Kanzal Jawahir
Department of Applied Psychology
Lahore College for Women University

Abstract

The present study explores gender differences in adjustment issues, quality of life and psychological resilience among hostel students. Purposive sampling was used and 400 hostel students (female=183 and male=217) were taken from public and private sector colleges/universities. Students from 1st year, BS (year1) and MS (year1) with 18-25 years were taken. The College Adjustment Test CAT was translated in Urdu language and administered on the students along with PR, Short form survey (SF-36) and demographic form. Results show that reliability of the scales was found to be significant CAT α=0.72, SF-36 α=0.80 and PR α= 0.62. The first hypothesis showed significant result (*p = 0.03)* that 1st year students tend to face more adjustment issues rather than BS (year 1). The second hypothesis verified that female students encounter more adjustment problems as compared to male students. Male students show higher psychological resilience (PR) as compared to female students. While there are no gender differences found on the variable of QOL which was assessed through SF-36. PR showed negative correlation with adjustment issues r=-0.11and SF-36 r=0.20. This research will help university administrators, counselors and student affair officers to design appropriate policy/ programs with varieties of support packages to address the needs of the students.

Keywords: Adjustment Issues, Quality of Life, Psychological Resilience.

تلخیص

زیر نظر مطالعے کا مقصد طلبا اور طالبات کے مطابقت کے مسائل، زندگی کے معیار اور نفسیاتی لچک کے تعلق کو جانچتا ہے۔ مقصد کی مناسبت سے ۴۰۰ طلبا کے نمونہ جات لاہور پاکستان کے سرکاری اور پرائیوٹ یونیورسٹیوں سے اکھٹے کئے گئے۔ طلبا کا تعلق (فرسٹ ائیر، بی ایس ائیر I اور ایم ایس ائیر I) سے تھا اور عمر ۱۸ سے ۲۵ سال کے درمیان تھی۔ زیر نظر / موجودہ مطالعے میں کالج ایڈجسٹمنٹ ٹیسٹ، سائیکلوجیکل ریزیلینس پی آر کا اردو زبان میں ترجمہ کیا گیا اور SF-36 کے ساتھ تشخیص کے لئے استعمال کیا گیا ہے۔ نتائج سے معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ تمام پیمانہ جات کا بھروسہ کا درجہ اس طرح سے پایا گیا CAT=0.72, SF-36 =0.80 and PR = 0.62۔ مزید گیارہویں جماعت کے طلبا۔ اس کے طلبا کی نسبت مطابقت کے مسائل کا زیادہ شکار ہوتے ہیں۔ دوسرا مفروضہ ثابت ہوتا ہے کہ طالبات، طلبا کی نسبت زیادہ مطابقت کے مسائل کا شکار ہوتی ہیں۔ جبکہ طلبا، طالبات کی نسبت زیادہ نفسیاتی لچک کا مظاہرہ کرتے ہیں۔ نتائج سے نفسیاتی لچک کا مطابقت کے مسائل اور زندگی کے معیار سے منفی تعلق ظاہر ہوتا ہے۔ یہ نتائج یونیورسٹی

انتظامیہ، نفسیاتی مشیر اور طلبا معاملہ افسران کو طلبا اور طالبات کے مسائل حل کرنے کیلئے موثر طریقہ کار بنانے میں مدد فراہم کریں
گے۔

کلیدی الفاظ: مطابقت کے مسائل، معیار زندگی، نفسیاتی لچک

Introduction

Transition from school to college is difficult and has an impact on the adjustment of student. There are many factors that influence the students adjustment whether they are living with parents and residing in hostels e.g. loneliness, freedom, confusion, competition, homesickness (Dennis, Phinney & Chuateco, 2005; Moore, 2006, & Tuna, 2009) student teacher interaction, difficulty in concentrating (Yalew, 2003) feeling oneself inferior from other classmates, feeling anxious (Fischer, 2009).

Students in hostels are more affected by these adjustment challenges as compared to students living with parents. Homesickness is the most common problem faced by students who are residing in hostels. A research indicated that more or less 90% of the students usually experience some sort of homesickness (Urani, Miller & Johoson, 2003). Watton (2001) reported that students residing with their families tend to adjust more rather than students who reside in hostels. All of these above mentioned factors have an impact on one`s quality of life (QoL). QoL is defined as one`s subjective view about positive and negative dimensions of life (WHO, 1998). It includes psychological and physical aspects which combine have an impact on satisfaction with life (Diener, 1984; Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999).

To have better quality of life, a person must be resilient. Mowbray (2011) defined resilience as the bouncing back from a dreadful event, i.e., to have the potential to deal with or the capability of a person to look at things through the end. According to him, resilience is all about the survival, endurance and growth from the situation. Psychological resilience among students refers to the ability to cope or fight the difficulties and complications such as notes taking, preparation for exams, presentation anxiety etc related to academic life (Wasonga, Christman & Kilmer, 2003). It is a mechanism that works or survives in the presence of stressful event (Bonanno, 2004 & Masten, 2001). All these factors significantly contribute to student adjustment to college.

This area has not been explored in Pakistan especially with reference to hostel students. This research will be helpful for university administration/campus counselors to assess the problems of hostel students and to provide them counseling regarding their problems.

Literature Review

Adjustment problems occur when students are unable to deal with societal, educational and psychological burden successfully. There are gender differences seen in this regard

as Lama (2010) reported that the female students have greater tendency to encounter adjustment problems than the male students. It is seen that students reside in hostels experience more adjustment problems because they are far away from their homes. Hostel students experience many adjustment issues such as new setups, security problems, accommodation issues, transport system, loneliness, difficulty to interact with new people (Berry & Sam, 2006).

Adler, Raju, Beveridge, Wang, Zhu and Zimmermann (2008) assumed that students' poor performance in their later life correlated with adjustment problems experienced in their student life. The inability to cope or adapt to these stressors and responds negatively to these stressors linked with bad quality of life.

The quality of life is affected by several factors such as physical or psychological health concerns, sleep problems, homesickness, social issue, relational problems, education, accommodation problems, personal beliefs and other environmental features (Ruzevicius, 2006; Juozulynas & Cemerych, 2005). Madhuchandra and Srimathi (2017) conducted research on psychological health and illness among college students. Results reveal that female college students are more socially dysfunctional as compared to male students while male students are more severely depressed than female students.

Academic performance and psychological resilience are correlated with each other. This connection is seen through the research carried out by Allan (2014). On the sample of 1534 students it was concluded that there is a link between academic performance and resilience. He further revealed that female students have more resilience power than male students.

It was seen that students having no/low resilience power were more prone to adjustment problems as compared to those with resilient capabilities (Rouse, Ingersoll, & Orr, 1998). Contradictory findings of another study by Erdogan, Ozdogan and Erdogan (2015) highlighted gender differences that male students are more resilient than female students.

The objective of the study is to explore the gender differences in adjustment problems, quality of life and psychological resilience among hostel students. The study is significant in a sense that it will assess and rule out some implications/recommendations so that hostel students may get assistance.

Hypothesis

It was hypothesized that
- First year students would face more adjustment problems as compared to BS (year 1) students.

- Female students would face more adjustment problems, poor quality of life
  and psychological resilience as compared to male students.
- There would be negative correlation between psychological resilience and
  adjustment problems.

Method
Research design

Cross sectional research design was used.

Sampling strategy

Purposive sampling strategy was employed.

Sample

Sample was consisted of 400 hostel students. Total 52% were residing in private hostels while 48% were from university hostels. Intermediate students were 36.5%, BS 31.5% and from 32.0% MS.

Criteria of inclusion

Hostel students of 1st year, BS (year 1) and MS (year 1) with age range of 18-26 years.

Measures

Following were the measures of study.

Written Consent Form: Was duly filled and signed by all participants of the study.

Demographic Sheet: It includes age, gender, hostel details, occupation of parents, whether living or dead, names of friends or hostel inmates, name of home-town, marital status, education and so on.

PR Scale: Urdu translated version of PR scale was used (Jawahir & Kazmi, 2013). The scale was originally developed by Windle, Markland and Woods (2008). This scale is made up of mutual control taken from Paulhaus Spheres of Control, self esteem extracted from Rosenberg Self Esteem scale and personal competency/efficacy scales extracted from Wagnild and Young Resilience Scale respectively. Three scales were picked from the aforesaid scales i.e Competence (consists of 6 items), interpersonal Control (consists of 5 items) and self-esteem (consists of 8 items). In total, It consists of 19 variables which

employ a 5 point Likert rating, starting from 1(strongly agree) to 5(strongly disagree). The reliability of the final scale is 0.83.

CAT: This test was created by Pennebaker (1990) which ascertains a person's stage in life, mood, shyness/confidence and assumptions of personality to improve coping process in college i.e. college adjustment. It comprises of 19 variables which quantify the number of students who felt ad reflected in different manner as far as college attended in the prior week was concerned. positive effect, negative effect and homesickness were the principal characteristics that were visible. 0.79 is the internal consistency of the full scale with 0.65 test retest reliability and Lexicon equivalence method was used for translation of this scale into urdu language.

SF-36: Short Form Survey (SF) developed by Ware (1993) which is a short, multi-purpose survey comprising of 36 queries in Urdu language. It has 8-scale sketch of a person's well-being and basic health which assess mental and physical well-being. It is a general measure and does not cater to a particular age, illness or group under treatment. This scale was used to assess quality of life of students.

Procedure

Permission was requested from the Department of Applied Psychology, Lahore College for Women University. In addition to this, approval was also taken from authorities of the hostels. Total five (5) hostels permitted for data collection in which three (3) were university and two (2) were private hostels. Data was gathered by the kind cooperation of the staff of the hostels. Written consent was taken from students. Assurance was also given that the information taken would be solely used for research purposes. Demographic sheet along with CAT, SF 36, PR Scale were given to the participants. They were duly filled in, in about half an hour after giving them the requisite guidance. At the end, participants were acknowledged and thanked for their time, effort and providing the necessary data.

Results

The data of the study was statistically analyzed by using SPSS (20.00 version for windows). Demographic results of the sample are as follows. Age categories were made according to Erikson stages of adolescent with *M=20.6, SD=2.59.* Furthermore, the participants for the study were female students (54.3%) and male students (45.8 %) with 36.5% in Intermediate, 31.5% in BS and 32.0% in MS residing in three (3) university (48.0%) and two (2) private hostels (52.0%). The percentage of students from university hostels was 30%, 15% and 15%. About 98.5% of the students were single and 1.5% was married. Moreover, most of the participants were from Punjab (80.8%), 13.5% from Sindh, 4.8% from KPK and 1.0% from Baluchistan.

Reliability of the Scales Used in the Study

Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the internal consistency of the scales that were translated into Urdu language which is shown in Tb 2. This analysis revealed that CAT was highly significant (19 items: $\alpha = 0.72$) with its sub scales revealing significant reliability i.e. homesickness consisting of 6 items ($\alpha = 0.54$), negative affect involving 9 items ($\alpha = 0.81$) and positive affect with 6 items ($\alpha = 0.53$). Moreover, PR also showed significant reliability ($\alpha = 0.62$) along with SF-36 ($\alpha = 0.80$) which reports highly significant internal consistency.

Table: 1
Correlation between CAT, SF-36 and PR

Scales	1	2	3
CAT	_____		
SF-36	0.20**	_____	
PR	-0.11*	-0.10	_____

***P<0.01,   *P<0.05*

The analysis revealed positive correlation between CAT and SF-36 $r = 0.20$, and a negative correlation between CAT and PR $r = -0.11$ as well as between SF-36 and PR $r = -0.10$.

Table: 2
Correlation among subscales of SF-36, CAT and PR

Subscales	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
PCS	_____							
MCS	-0.13**	_____						
Homesickness	-0.21**	0.04	_____					
Positive affect	0.10	-0.10	0.01	_____				
Negative Affect	-0.20**	0.15**	0.60**	0.05	_____			
Self esteem	0.10	0.24**	-0.01**	0.14**	- 0.10	___		
Inter personal control	-0.20**	-0.04	0.10	-0.12*	0.14**	-0.20**	___	
Competence	-0.21**	-0.10	0.20**	-0.12*	0.10	-.03**	0.40**	

**P<0.01, *P<0.05

It revealed that there is significant positive relationship between negative affect and homesickness *r = 0.60* as well as between positive affect and physical component *r = 0.10.* Significant negative relationship was found among interpersonal control, physical component *r = -0.20* and self esteem *r = -0.20.*

Table 3
Comparison of means of male students and female students on CAT, SF-36 and PR

Measures	Male Students[a]		Female Students[b]		df	t	p	95% CI		*Cohen's d*
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**				**LL**	**UL**	
CAT	66.24	12.04	73.82	14.74	398	5.66	.000	-10.21	-4.95	.30
SF-36	83.93	9.60	84.54	9.68	398	0.62	.532	-2.51	-1.29	0.3
PR	51.83	6.72	40.72	5.58	398	3.40	.001	0.90	3.33	.90

*Note.*CI= Confidence Interval; LL= Lower Limit; UL= Upper Limit
[a]n=217, [b]n= 183

There is a significant difference between male and female students on mean scores of CAT. This shows that adjustment problems prevail more in females than males which proves hypothesis of the study. However, results also show that male students are more resilient than female students. While there are no gender differences found on SF-36.

Table: 4
Comparison of means of first year and BS (year 1) students on CAT

Measures	1st Year[a]		BS (year 1)[b]		df	t	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**				**M**	**SD**	
CAT	71.15	14.97	67.19	14.43	270	2.21	0.03	4.27	7.47	0.13

n=146, n=126

This difference shows that adjustment issues are more faced by Intermediate students than BS students (Year 1).

Table 5
Comparison of Means of University hostel and Private hostel students on CAT

Measures	University Hostel[a]		Private Hostel[b]		df	t	p	95% CI		Cohen's d
	M	**SD**	**M**	**SD**				**LL**	**UL**	
CAT	67.27	13.37	71.96	13.94	398	-3.42	0.001	-7.37	-1.99	.17

n[a]=192, n[b]= 208

Table 5 shows that there is significant difference between means of private and university hostel students on CAT. Private hostel students tend to face more issues (M=71.96,

SD=13.94) as compared to university hostel students (M=67.27, SD=13.37), t (398) = .001, 95% CI (-7.37, -1.99), d= -0.17

Discussion

Stepping into the college life is a significant period of life in anyone's life. Students confront a lot of issues pertaining to education and friendships especially adjustment issues in hostel. The current research explores the various adjustment problems, quality of life, and resilience level in Pakistani population that aids students in adjusting to the novel environment.

The study in question concludes that the adjustment problems are usually found in students in their first year of college instead of BS students in year one. This is because students confront more drastic change from school to college life and more problems are encountered in the very first year. As mentioned in earlier researches, students of 1st year find college more problematic (58%) as compared to those in their 3rd year of college life (39%). Main causes could be absence of social support and lack of emotional immaturity (Sharma, 2012). According to Enochs and Roland (2006), those pupils who lack social support are unable to make better adjustments to college life as compared to those who make new friendships and engage in social activities. Research also suggests that students who have the potential to engage in social groups have the ability to make adjustments in a better way and perform well in academics (Yau, 2012). Apart from this, there can be other factors like issues with mates, material sharing, and financial constraints that lead towards poor adjustments (Kabtamu, 2009). Mao and Mei (2008) concluded that major adjustment issues were seen among freshmen upon stepping into college life. Kabtamu (2009) found out that students during their first year are likely to confront more problems and some problems can be overwhelming such as interpersonal issues, academic problems, and poor teacher student bonding. These findings match to those found by Wang (2006) and Chong (2009) that state that family, society, and college life affects the adjustment during the first year. Mudhovozi (2012) found out that first year pupils are likely to have issue pertaining to families, social ties, food, and loss of contact with school friends and many more.

These problems of the students in the hostel result in disturbed patterns of living making the quality of life poor. In the present study, a positive correlation was seen among these variables and the hypothesis was thus accepted. As said in literature review, poor adjustment results in increased stress and makes adjustment more complicated (Wintre &Yaffe, 2000). Peer and parental support aids students to make better adjustments but lack of such support results in issues in making adherence to new life around college. All this makes a student more anxious, depressed, and stressed (Cutrona, Cole, Colangelo, Souline & Russel, 1994; Holahan, Valentiner, & Moos, 1995). Another study states that homesickness is a major issue in a student's life and nearly 90% of the students face this problem (Urani, Miller & Johnson, 2003). Other major factors that contribute in poor

adjustment level include irregular sleeping patterns that also result in depression and less satisfaction with life activities (Pilcher & Ott, 1998; Brown, Buboltz & Soper, 2002). Students who are unable to make better social adjustments have low levels of self-esteem (Rice, 1999).Sharda (2003) when exploring relationship among student adjustment and mental health stated that positive perceptions of surroundings aid them to make better adjustments as compared to those having negative perceptions. Students who live in hostels are usually not satisfied with their lives and the major cause behind this could be that they are not adjusted to their environments and confront issues which act as obstacles in their way of having a quality life including non cleanliness, absence from classes, learning problems, and conveyance issues (Abolfotouh, Baasiouni, Mounir and Fayyad, 2007). Such adjustment issues are more common among female students as compared to male students.

The current study states that adjustment problems are more prevalent in females as compared to males, p = 0.000. This statement is well supported by literature. Lama (2010) mentions female students face more hassles in way to adjustment than males. According to Enochs and Renk (2006), male pupils have the ability to make better adjustments than females and one major reason for this could be that women are more reliant on support and social groups. Likewise, Mudhovozi (2012) stated that majority of the females have feeling of loneliness. They also mentioned having more communication barriers and financial issues. Jemal (2012) confirmed that female students face more adjustment issues and are unable to make social participations.

Abolfotouh et al., (2007) stated that females have more issues when making adjustments to hostel life as compared to males because females face more difficulties to mobilize and are dependent on others for support. Abdullah, Elias, Mahyddin, and Uli (2009) also confirmed that males have the ability to make better adjustments to surroundings and female students have more issues when making social adjustments. They also discovered that males are better adjusted to surroundings as compared to females and this is because males have the ability to manage emotions and make settlements in a better way.

No significant gender differences were found on SF-36 score which was used to assess quality of life. The quality of life was seen to be affected for both female and male students in the same way which contradicts the findings that are present in literature. According to Greblo and Hodak (2012), male students score on health was higher than females. This shows that their quality of living was better than female students. Sabbah, Khamis and Droubi (2013), HRQoL was better for males rather than for females and their score was high on HRQoL. This could be possible because of more males in our society participating in daily households items along with females. Earlier, only females were responsible for every household matters but with passage of time, males support and provide helping hand to females, so the degree of disturbed QOL could be same for both the gender. In order to

overcome these issues, students need to be resilient so they can achieve their tasks more easily and in proper manner.

The present study reveals that male students are more resilient as compared to females. The same findings revealed by Erdogan, Ozdogan and Erdogan (2015). Previous literature shows contradiction in gender differences on resilience. Fishman (2012) stated that female students are likely to have higher score on resilience. Likewise, Allan (2014) reported a correlation among resilience and performance and stated that positive aspects of resilience are more prevalent in female students as compared to male students. The major reason behind this contradiction can be cultural differences. Pakistani population is more emotional and females are likely to show strong emotions and are less exposed to social environments as compared to males that is why the level of resilience is found to be low.

The present research states that there is a negative relation between resilience of students and adjustment issues as well as quality of life. Earlier researches suggest that people who make use of emotion focused plans tend to have lesser achievements as compared to students making use of problem focused plans. So, in order to decrease the level of stress, students have to adapt to an effective technique that is significant for staying resilient (Ward Struthers & colleagues, 2000). Researches have also mentioned that level of resilience in the students has to be updated so that stress factors can be minimized. Likewise, students who are not adjusted to their environment get involved in high risk activities and behaviors and such behaviors are common in non-resilient individuals (Rouse, Orr & Ingersoll, 1998). Another research suggested that there is a relation between task oriented strategies, problem focused plans, and resilience that aids in dealing with various life stressors (Campbell-Sills & colleagues, 2006). Similarly it has been discovered that there is an important relationship between academic behavior and such strategies. If a student tends to adhere to these strategies, it will aid him or her in achieving his goals (Clifton & colleagues, 2004).

Like adjustment problems, QOL is also negatively correlated to levels of resilience. Literature suggests that adjustment to the society, homelessness, social groups, and academics are all components of QOL and all these components affect the academic achievements as well as overall health (Abdullah et al., 2009; Quinn, Madon & Lusting, 2006).

Another analysis was made to see the differences of means on college adjustment for pupils living in university hostels and private hostels. The research reveals that those residing in university hostel face less issue as compared to those living on private hostels. This correlates to the findings in the previously mentioned literature. According to Pike (2009), students in university hostels have the ability to adapt to new changes in their lives. Likewise, another study found that university hostel students are more likely to participate in social activities

and make better adjustments (Lundgren & Schwab, 1979; cited in Rinn, 2004). Besides this, students in university hostels have more facilities and do not have conveyance issues. Such students are more contended. Major reason behind this could be that they reside within university premises and have feelings of association with those around them.

Conclusions

It is concluded on the basis of findings that adjustment problems are more prevalent in 1st year students as compared to 3rd year students. Female students face more adjustment problems as compared to male students. Level of resilience is higher in males as compared to females students. However, the findings of the study did not find gender differences in quality of life among the students.

Limitations and Recommendations

Following are the limitations of the present research and future considerations,

- Equal number of students was not taken from each hostel.
- Hostel environment along with facilities was not taken into consideration while interpreting results.
- The cultural differences bound the findings of this research to Lahore only.
- In future research, large number of hostels should be included for generalization of results.
- Counseling centers within university should be established so that intervening variables and stressors of students may be minimized.

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Daniya Hasan was Student in the Department of Applied Psychology, Lahore College for Women University (LCWU), Lahore.

Umm E Rubab Kazmi is Lecturer in the Department of Applied Psychology, Lahore College for Women University (LCWU), Lahore.

Kanzal Jawahir was Student in the Department of Applied Psychology, Lahore College for Women University (LCWU), Lahore.