

CORRELATES OF COLLEGE ADJUSTMENTS AND PARENTING STYLE AMONG FRESHMEN STUDENTS IN DE LA SALLE LIPA

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Abstract

This study is a quantitative descriptive research with the main objective of finding out the relationship between college adjustment and the perceived parenting style. The results showed that the students are too much attached with their High school friends but remain positive and confident in the university they are into. This has been related to their perceived parenting style which Authoritative i.e. parents consistently gave children direction and guidance in rational and objective ways. The Higher the scores in parenting styles the higher the college adjustments are.

The researcher in the effort of assisting in the improvement of the students' behaviour and performance recommend that through this the institution may design program for improving college adjustments and for parents to be guided in their duty of raising their children.

INTRODUCTION

The increasing number of college students in De La Salle Lipa posted a question to the researcher about the factors that might greatly affect or influence their struggle to finish a degree in college. Many of the High school graduates around region 4-A chose this institution to have their college formation.

Entering college requires multiple transitions. It includes changes in their environment, academic and friendship network. . Self- esteem and personality are the most frequently studied dispositional variable influencing freshmen adjustment (Devonport & Lane, 2006) Most students experience greater independence and responsibility. However, others experience emotional maladjustment and anxiety.

The freshman year is one of stressful transition for college students as many report it is the most stressful adjustment phase of their lives. Common student experiences include developing and maintaining goals, expectations, identities, roles, and social networks. The complexity of these experiences and the steps to handle them are perceived at

times as an overwhelming task to first year students (Lu, 1994).

Adjustment is a complex and multi-faceted concept. It refers to the dynamic processes that can ultimately lead to achievement of appropriate fit between the person and the environment. It involves ongoing learning cycles, which are usually triggered by significant, often negative experience (Kim, 2003). The transition that students make from high school to college is important and relevant with regard to student retention. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2003), 55 percent of students who begin their education at a 4-year institution complete their bachelor's degree within 6 years at the institution in which they first enrolled. When individuals who transfer schools at some point during their undergraduate work are included, this rate increases to 63%. However, this still leaves a significant number of individuals who do not complete their bachelor's degree. Studies have suggested that when students withdraw from universities it is often for personal reasons, including adjustment to college (Toews & Yazedjian, 2007). Given that incoming college freshmen are exposed to new surroundings indicative of increased freedom and responsibility (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 1997), it seems natural that college students might experience some levels of stress and emotional turmoil previously not encountered in their lives.

The nature of parenting style involves a child-rearing practices and interactive behaviours which have been developed and implemented by parents. Parenting style will be considered in reference to three general categories: authoritative, authoritarian and permissive (Schwartz & Scott, 2003).

Previous research suggested that parents who exercised the Authoritative parenting style provided their child with appropriate discipline and uniformity along with affection and warmth. Parents who practiced the Authoritarian parenting style tended to be more discipline-oriented rather than showing affection. Parents who practiced the Permissive parenting style provided warmth and affection but little discipline and uniformity. It was found that parents that provided warmth and affection along with discipline and uniformity, Authoritative parents were associated with having children who overall had less depression, higher self-esteem, and higher life satisfaction (Milevsky et al., 2006; Luyckx et al., 2007).

It has been explained as parents encourage adolescents to be independent but place limits and controls on their actions. They allow extensive give and take and are warm and nurturing in order to make them socially competent, self-reliant/confident and pro-social adolescents (Cheryl, 2005). Parental Warmth refers to the degree in which parents

display involvement, responsiveness, and support (Hart, Newell, & Olsen, 2003).

Baldwin, D. McIntyre, A., & Hardaway, E.. (2007) conducted a study to explore the correlation of undergraduate college students' levels of 185 optimism f-esteem, and higher life satisfaction (Milevsky et al., 2006; Luyckx et al., 2007). Based on perceived parenting styles, specifically the Authoritative and Authoritarian styles. Baldwin found that students who have Authoritative parents were more likely to have better psychosocial skills, focusing primarily on dispositional optimism, than students who grow up in families who chose to implement different parenting styles.

Tinto (2005) theorizes the adjustment to college involves psychosocial interactions between the student and his or her college environment. Student attributes such as personal characteristics, personal experiences, and familial dynamics influence the adjustment period which occurs after the student enters college.

The previous research has something to say about parenting style and college adjustment. Kuczynski (2003) defines this parenting style as one in which parents imply low demands "related to either child-centered indulgence toward the child's self-direction or parent-centered inattentiveness and neglect of the child" (p. 58). When parents are neglectful rather than indulgent, the style is often referred to as a neglectful or uninvolved parenting style. The parent may be permissive by showing warmth and responsiveness or may be uninvolved by remaining cold and distant, depending on the nature of the parent. Previous studies have been devoted to exploring different parenting styles and the related outcomes for children, as specific parenting styles have been associated with children's levels of well-being (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991). Diana Baumrind spearheaded research on control within different parenting styles, and is responsible for the most widely-used and accepted conceptualization of parenting styles (Hickman, Bartholomae, & McKenry, 2000).

Evidence showed the effects of authoritative parenting on Chinese-Americans' academic pursuits yielded the same results as authoritarian parenting. First generation students' grades and overall academic abilities did not differ based on parenting style used by parents. Second generation students showed slightly higher grades and academic abilities when reared in an authoritative household; however, the finding was not significant enough to suggest authoritative parenting is truly more effective than authoritarian parenting (Chao, 2001). For example, authoritative parenting is related to children's achievement, social development, mental health and self-esteem (Lamborn et al., 1991) as well as

higher life-satisfaction and lower scores on a depression scale (Milevsky, Schlechter, & Netter, 2007). Simons and Conger (2007) investigated parenting styles between mothers and fathers in two-parent families and found that having two authoritative parents was associated with the best outcome for adolescents (lowest levels of depression and greatest commitment to school), though even having just one authoritative parent seemed to buffer the adolescent against negative consequences.

Baldwin et al. (2007) conducted a study to explore the correlation of undergraduate college students' levels of optimism based on perceived parenting styles, specifically the Authoritative and Authoritarian styles. Baldwin found that students who have Authoritative parents were more likely to have better psychosocial skills, focusing primarily on dispositional optimism, than students who grow up in families who chose to implement different parenting styles. These students also seemed to illustrate more prosocial behaviors and fewer behavioral problems throughout their adolescence and demonstrated more academic success than other students. Although the primary focal point of this study was optimism and not parenting style, optimism has been found to be a key factor in a person's overall well-being. Increased levels of optimism have been found to positively influence a person's physical health as well as mental health.

Milevsky et al. (2006) focused on the adjustment of an adolescent and how a mother or father participates in a child's development. The parenting styles were divided into: Authoritative, Authoritarian and Permissive. In the results, Authoritative parenting scored above average on both set of questions and was linked to higher self-esteem and life-satisfaction and lower depression. This study supported the claim that adolescent satisfaction is linked to parenting methods.

A relationship clearly exists between parenting style and a child's ability to adjust to and meet academic, emotional and social challenges. Parenting style is related to a child's ability to successfully adjust to university culture and demands. Students from authoritative households consistently earned higher grades and showed higher overall ability at approaching challenges presented by academia than those from authoritarian households (Chao, 2001). Children of authoritative parenting tend to be self-reliant, self-controlled, secure, popular, inquisitive, joyful, satisfied, trusting, loved and hopeful. They are trustworthy and not threatening and dangerous for other people. Authoritative parenting style is also associated with the development of autonomy in their children (Peggy, 2000).

Chao et. al (2001) noted the generalization that an authoritative parenting style is superior to an authoritarian parenting style in its ef-

fects on academic success for university students is not true for all ethnic groups. This study implies the child's perception of parenting style is culturally based and cultural perception largely impacts whether a parenting style is considered effective or positive by the child, family and society.

The current study would help the researcher as new member of the faculty of college department in De La sale Lipa. This has been initiated because the researcher wanted to trace and identify factors which influence the behaviors of the students as they start their academic journey. Addressing the needs of students especially in terms of emotional and social aspects is the personal concern of the researcher. As part of the teaching force of the institution, this study may also be utilized to have further research with regards the concern on and for the students. The need to understand the students in order to avoid prejudices as they perform in college is another reason why such study is conducted.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study was to determine the relationship between college adjustment and the perceived parenting style of selected freshmen in De La Salle Lipa. More specifically, this research discussed the level of adjustments freshmen students are experiencing. It aims to establish the perceived parenting styles among parents of college students.

METHOD

Research Design

This study utilized the quantitative research design. This determines the relationship between one thing (an independent variable) and another (a dependent or outcome variable) in a population.

Participants

Participants of this study were selected freshmen students enrolled in De La Salle Lipa. 50 freshmen students were randomly selected to answer a quantitative tests namely the College Adjustment Test and the Parental Authority Questionnaire.

Instrument

The study used College Adjustment Test (CAT) as the main instrument. This is a 19- item survey taps the degree to which students have experienced a variety of thoughts and feelings about college life. This was used by Pennebaker, J.W., Colder, M., & Sharp, L.K. (1990) in their research entitled Accelerating the Coping Process.

The determination of perceived parenting styles is based on the quantitative tool called Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ). A questionnaire was developed for the purpose of measuring Baumrind's (1971) permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parental authority prototypes. Scores are derived from the phenomenological appraisals of the parents' authority by their sons or daughter. The results of several studies have supported the parental Authority Questionnaire as a psychometrically sound and valid measure of Baumrind's parental authority prototypes. 30 questions are designed to determine three common parental styles that are perceived by each student namely parents who are permissive, authoritarian and authoritative. For the PAQ, the result came from gaining the mean after the result has been consolidated. For Permissiveness, the average of items 1, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24, 28 was gained. For Authoritarian style we got the mean of items 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 25, 26, 29 and for Authoritative style, the average was gained from items 4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22, 23, 27, 30.

Procedures

The participants at the same time were given the two questionnaires namely the college adjustment test and the parental authority questionnaires. No time limit were given, the students took time in answering the questions.

The college adjustment test (CAT) and Parental Authority Questionnaires (PAQ), students answered by choosing between 5 -point scale that is with a given statement, they have to mark the point according to their experiences and feelings. The 5 point scale is 5 = Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= Uncertain, 2= Disagree and 1= Strongly Disagree.

Data analysis

The data that were taken from the freshmen college students of De La Salle Lipa were analyzed and tabulated using the mean and percentile ranks. In order to determine the level of adjustments that are common among college students and their perceived parenting style, mean and percentile rank has been utilized. The Pearson r correlation coefficient was utilized to determine the relationship between the two variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that great percentage of freshmen students missed their friends in high school. It has been very noticeable that upon starting the academic year the students went through the adjustment of meeting new people. Freshmen College students in De La Salle as determined by the Guidance office would take some time before they enrich

their social skills for they were used to be with their former classmates and friends. The reason is that their high school friends and classmates have been their company for the past four years. A study conducted by Brier and Paul (2001) looked at friend sickness as a determinant of one's adjustment to college. They established from previous studies that when people lose their familiar groups of friends, and are put into an unfamiliar environment, emotional triggers of grief and mourning can be prompted. Great adjustment shall be experienced for they are in a new environment.

Table 1. Level of adjustment among first year students of De La Salle Lipa

College Adjustment	WM	VI	Rank
Missed your friends from high school	4.76	Strongly Agree	1
Missed your home	3.74	Agree	10
Missed your parents and other family members	4.12	Agree	5
Worried about how will you perform in college	4.34	Agree	2
Worried about love and relationship	3.06	Uncertain	15
Worried about the way you look	3.8	Agree	9
Worried about the impression you make on others	4.12	Agree	5
Worried about being in college	4.02	Agree	7
Like your classes	3.72	Agree	11
Like your roommates	3.72	Agree	11
Like being away from your parents	2.14	Disagree	19
Like your social life	3.98	Agree	8
Like college in general	3.72	Agree	11
Felt angry	2.42	Disagree	18
Felt lonely	2.64	Uncertain	17
Felt anxious or nervous	3.16	Uncertain	14
Felt depressed	2.72	Uncertain	16
Felt optimistic about your future	4.22	Agree	3
Felt good about yourself	4.20	Agree	4

The results show that most of the students who started college are worried on how they are to perform in college. Starting the new level of academic challenge has been the problem of most students this is so because college is a new environment. They are yet to adjust in the existing system of learning procedures and processes. In De La Salle Lipa, Students who came from the different parts of region 4, experienced relative

high school formation therefore adjustment in performing in college is very noticeable. On an individual note, students are worried about their academic standings since they will attend college with initial desire to finish the course they started. Thus, Academic adjustment must take into consideration by every student. Baker & Siryk (1989) proposed that Motivation to learn, taking action to meet academic demands, a clear sense of purpose, and general satisfaction with the academic environment are important components of academic adjustment.

It appears that the students of the institution experienced initial difficulties and worries though are very positive and optimistic about their new academic endeavor. Since the college institution are meant to train students with their preferred specialization, students feel that they in the right university. It also revealed that students liked college in general. It was suggested that the degree of affiliation that the student feels toward the university is linked to better adjustment (Pittman and Richmond 2008). Most of the students are confident that as time passed they will able to cope up and adjust well as they will develop more their social and academic skills.

Table 2. Perceived Parental Styles

Perceived Parental Styles	Average Mean	Rank	Verbal Interpretation
Permissive	3.31	3	Uncertain
Authoritarian	3.33	2	Uncertain
Authoritative	3.64	1	Agree

Table 2 shows common parenting styles classified in three kinds, the permissive, the authoritarian and the authoritative. Parental style classification is based on two dimensions, warmth and involvement and monitoring and discipline. The result made clear that most of the students of De La Salle Lipa have Authoritative parents as they perceived it. In one of the group discussion with the freshmen students they were asked about the concrete behaviour and parenting styles of their parents. Mostly answered that their parents especially mothers are so supportive and very particular about their initial college concerns. The parents are strict in terms of monitoring whether the students are attending the class. The office of the guidance with the data they have given determined that 65% of attendance follow up are from the parents of freshmen students. This has been affirmed by students but they were very vocal about enough nurturance and support their parents are showing them. The result of PAQ matches on the general parenting styles perceived by the students. Authoritative way of parenting is perceived by the students because their parents consistently gave them direction and guidance in rational and objective ways. Seifert, Hoffnung & Hoffnung

(2000) affirmed that Authoritative parenting is characterized by a high degree of control and monitoring, nurturance and warmth and maturity demands.

Using the Parental Authority Questionnaires (PAQ) the researcher determined the top parenting styles that the freshmen college students perceived in De La Salle Lipa, As the children in the family were growing up, parents consistently gave direction and guidance in rational and objective ways, the students perceived with 3.84 as the mean, making it the top perceived parenting style of the students. The mean of all the questions pertaining to authoritativeness is 3.64. The style is referred to as authoritative, especially the mothers which by nature have a high degree of warmth and nurturance.

Table 3. Relationship between College Adjustment & Parenting Styles

	r-value	p-value	I	Decision
Parenting styles and College Adjustment	0.337	0.017	S	R

The table shows that with an $r_{xy} = 0.337$ and a p-value of 0.017 – which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$, there exists a significant relation between Parenting Styles & College Adjustment. The existing relationship is positive, which indicates that the higher the scores in Parenting Styles, the higher college adjustment is.

The results of finding a significant relation between college adjustment and parental style is positive, meaning the transition that the students are undergoing may be difficult but would always be mended by the presence of the parents who are forming them. Students who perceived their parents as authoritative can adjust easily in terms of academics, social challenge and psychodynamic aspects. The parents who exercised the authoritative parenting style provided their children with appropriate discipline and uniformity along with affection and warmth. The students with authoritative parents have overall had less depression, higher self-esteem, and higher life satisfaction (Milevsky et al., 2006; Luyckx et al., 2007). The results in their college adjustment, those with high self- esteem and higher life satisfaction are those people who look at themselves and at life positively. Strage and Brandt (1999) examined the role of parenting styles in the lives of college students and found that previous parenting behaviors continue to be important in the lives of college students as with children and adolescents. They found that the more autonomy, demand, and support parents provided, the more students were confident and persistent academically. In other words, authoritative parenting was found to continue having an influence on

students' academic performance.

The result of current study established that there is a relationship between perceived parenting style and college adjustment of freshmen college students of De La Salle Lipa. It can be validated that the characteristics of parents such as supportiveness and warmth are essential in the positive adjustment that they are undergoing. The enthusiasm and positivity despite the fact that they are feeling detached from people and the university, uncertain of the performance are because of being authoritative of most of the parents. Other students perceived parenting styles as permissive and authoritarian that will lead to negative relation to college adjustments, it will appear that the difficulties of developing academic and social aspect of college life are caused by the negative styles of parenting.

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the participants of the study strongly agreed that the greatest adjustment in starting college is the attachment they had with their friends and classmates during High school. In De La Salle Lipa, the perceived parenting style is Authoritative. Most students perceived that their parents consistently gave them direction and guidance in rational and objective ways. College adjustments and Perceived parenting style of freshmen students in De La Salle Lipa is significantly related.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Office of the Guidance and Counseling Office may include adjustment strategies among first year students during their annual freshmen orientation. They may administer relevant seminars and workshops for parents to adapt more suitable parenting styles. Results of this study may be a reference for instructors and educators as they apply different strategies in guiding students attain their goal of pursuing college education. Orientation and training seminars may be permitted to parents toward the enhancement of parenting styles. More follow up studies may be conducted for continual improvement.

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