

Homesickness, Self-Esteem, and College Adjustment among Students Living in Hostels

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Abstract



The current study investigated the relationship between homesickness, self-esteem, and college adjustment in students living in hostels. A Correlational research design was employed and a sample of $N=300$ undergraduates and postgraduate students living in hostels were selected with an age range of 16-25 years ($M_{age} = 22.15$, $SD=1.83$) using a non-probability purposive sampling strategy. The measures included a Demographic sheet, Homesickness Questionnaire (HQ), Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (RSES), and College Adjustment Test (CAT). To assess the relationship between homesickness, self-esteem, and college adjustment: Pearson Product Moment Correlation, Multiple Hierarchical Linear Regression, and Independent sample t -test were run. The results showed that one subscale of homesickness i.e. attachment to old home had a significant negative relationship with self-esteem and positive affect (subscale of college adjustment). Findings showed that there was a strong significantly positive relationship between disliking the new place (subscale of homesickness) and negative affect (one subscale of college adjustment) in students living in hostels. Overall, two subscales of homesickness i.e. attachment to the old home and dislike of the new place are significant negative predictors of college adjustment. Moreover, self-esteem was a significant positive predictor of college adjustment in students. Findings have implications for future comparative research direction on students.

Keywords: Homesickness, Self-Esteem, College Adjustment, Educational Institutes

The present society is in a race of competition and the transition from home to college demands students to leave behind the accommodations, luxurious facilities, and familial identities to groom in the new environment. During such a transition people experience homesickness, especially college students face more challenges in educational institutes. These changes made them vulnerable to external competition (Sun et al., 2016).

Homesickness

Homesickness is an intense feeling of separation from family and home while physically far away from them. The dominant miserable feelings associated with separation negatively affect a person's ability to function normally in daily life routines (Thurber and Walton, 2012). Homesick people report intense longing for home and declared depressive mood in addition to somatic complaints such as lack of sleep, appetite, feelings of unacceptable, and crying spells. The most reported forms of homesickness include colonial, modern, global, and radical homesickness (Van Tilburg, 2005; Thurber & Walton, 2012; Sun et al., 2016).

In history, it was found that homesickness is not only a topic of interest for theorists and psychologists but also for poets, writers, and scientists at a mild rate. In the 16th century, when Europeans migrated to America, people openly discussed the feeling of pain they felt when they thought about their home and burst into tears. In the 17th century, studies revealed that homesickness was most common in young people who lived separately in different countries for the sake of work. In the late 18th century and early 19th century, homesickness was considered nostalgia, a disease for certain ethnic groups in Western, Central, and Southern Europe (Van Tilburg, 2005).

Theoretical Background

According to Bowlby (1969), attachment is defined as the profound and permanent emotional link between people about the time and place. People who leave their native lands demand attachment in

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search of comfort and if they cannot find it, they experience loneliness and discomfort (Bowlby, 1969). Furthermore, Fisher elaborated five different theoretical explanations of homesickness. The five dimensions include loss, lifestyle interruption, reduction in control, change of role, and role of conflict (Van Tilburg et al., 1996). According to the Fisher model, attachment and loss play significant roles in developing homesickness. The individuals who are separated from home may suffer from loss and experience distress. Additionally, it is also associated with distress, neurotic symptoms, and obsessive thoughts about home, adjustment difficulties, and lack of decision-making, and poor control over situations. It is episodic and usually occurs in the early morning and late at night (Fisher et al., 1985).

Self-esteem

Overall individual's perception or opinion about self-worth, perception of self-confidence, the feeling of self-respect, and to some extent the idea of people's view of an individual's self lies under the category of self-esteem (Kent, 2019). It is a sort of personality trait that means self-esteem is consistent and enduring and comprised of various beliefs about self-including subjective appraisal, emotions, and behavior (Abdel-Khalek, 2016).

Theoretical background

Rosenberg's self-esteem theory contains two dimensions: reflected appraisal and social comparisons. Reflected appraisal explains that people observe the situation from the perspectives of others. Additionally, individuals realize that they are objects of people's attention and evaluation. Social comparison explains self-esteem as a process of comparison with competitors and makes positive and negative consequences about self. A study's result shows that people with low self-esteem found difficulty in leading happy and easy lives in society as compared to those who have high self-esteem. All in all, low self-esteem leads to poor college adjustment (Chang, & Suttikun, 2017).

College adjustment

Arkoff defines college adjustment as the accomplishment received by an individual. It also involves the level of adjustment in college and pursuing higher academic goals. Additionally, college adjustment requires adjustment for all students. The level of adjustment depends on the background and previous experiences of the students. Students who leave school attend college full time and live in hostels experience a dramatic adjustment. Adjustment to college not only includes academic adjustment but also social adjustment and emotional adjustment (Von et al., 2018). It is an interaction between individuals and their environment. (Hassan et al., 2017).

Theoretical perspective

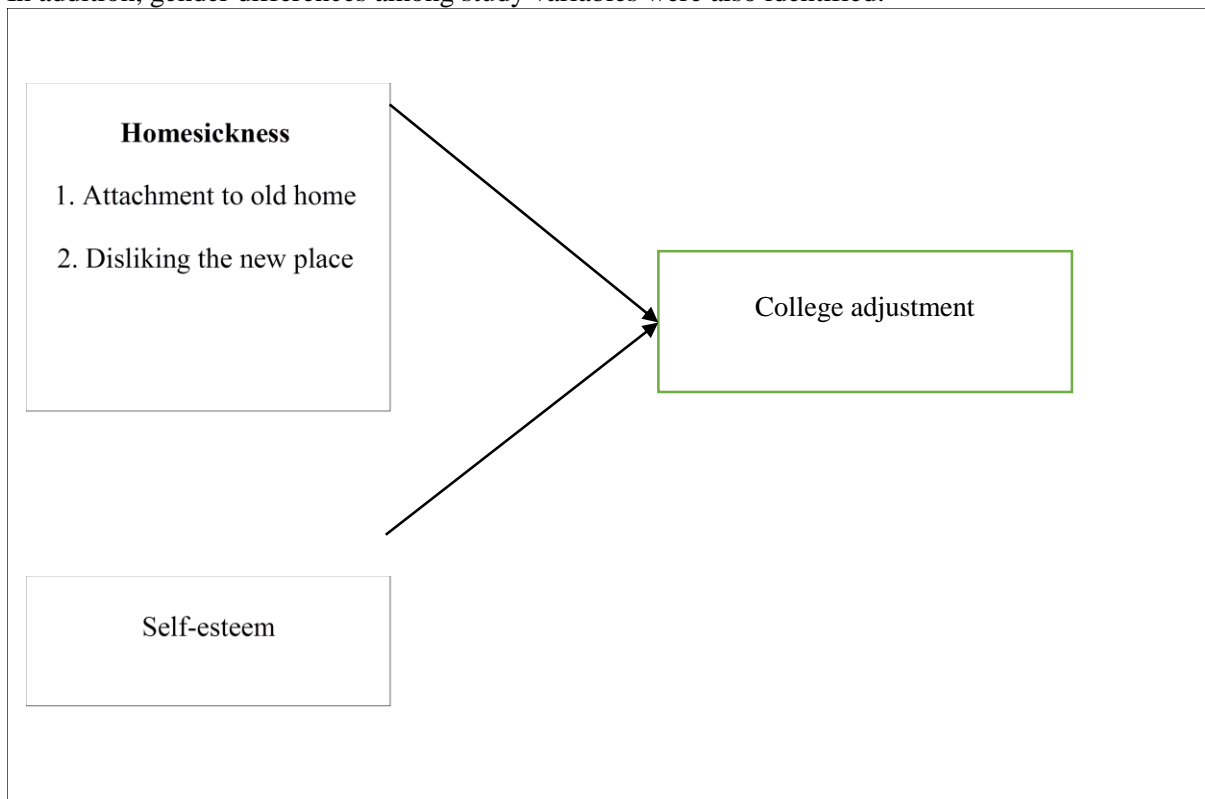
Nicholson invented a transition cycle that focuses on resolving the issue of transition. According to Nicholson, the successive achievement during transition can be determined by four forms such as preparation, encounter, adjustment and stabilization (De-Clercq, 2018).

In the **preparation stage**, the individual starts preparation for core tasks, getting ready for changes, developing realistic expectations, and motivating the self and others for productive change. Some researchers relate the preparation stage with self-efficacy as a crucial predictor of academic achievement. If an individual is confident about their capabilities, then it helps in adaptation to college via a positive impact on self. In the **encounter stage**, an individual starts making sense of the environment. This stage is for a shorter period. Some researchers connected this stage with competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The experience of competence will help in academic achievement. In the **adjustment stage**, the main goal of this stage is making the connection of self with the environment. When a person connects the self with the current environment, the adjustment occurs and the desire to return home is ruled out. On the contrary, when the experience of self and environment become mismatched it results in grieving and homesickness. In the **stabilization stage**, an individual demands to maintain an equilibrium between the environment and academics (Nicholson, 1990).

The literature indicated that the aspect of homesickness and friend-sickness as predictors of loneliness and found a significant relationship between homesickness and loneliness. This association might impact on college adjustment (Anike & Nwankwo, 2019). Kent (2019) found that the effects of homesickness on college adjustment are highly significant. English et al., (2017) researched examining the relationship between homesickness and college adjustment in 1st-year students but it lacks implication of the study on all undergraduate students living in hostels.

In Pakistan, studies primarily focus on psychological resilience and adjustment issues in association with quality of life with no interest in the third variable of the current study (Hassan, 2017). Zafar et al., (2018) further explained the academic performance of International students in Pakistan and suggested that academic progress has declined due to homesickness and lack of communication. Using this research, light could be shed upon aspects to reduce the inconsistencies present in past studies. Numerous studies have been conducted on homesickness but other variables including self-esteem have distinctive features and vary from one person to another. Furthermore, self-esteem and college adjustment in combination with homesickness have not been studied. So, it would be motivating to determine the role of homesickness and level of self-esteem at college adjustment in students living in hotels. Moreover, shifting from home to a new city is here to stay, not only because of higher education but also for the betterment of self, therefore this study will highlight the relationship between homesickness and self-esteem in the context of college adjustment. Based on the theoretical perspective and literature review, the following model has been proposed:

The main hypothesis of the study is to assess the relationship between homesickness, self-esteem, and college adjustment among hostel students. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that Homesickness and Self-esteem will likely predict college adjustment among students living in hostels. In addition, gender differences among study variables were also identified.



Method

The correlational research design was used in the present study and a purposive sampling strategy was employed for the selection of the sample. A sample of 300 students (150 females, 150 males, M.age=22.15 years, SD=1.83) was included in this study. This sample was approached from undergraduate and postgraduate students of government and private universities. Only those participants were included who were enrolled in under graduate and post graduate and lived in public sectors or privately affiliated with academic institutes were included. In addition, participants who had a visual impairment or any other physical impairment were diagnosed with psychological impairment, and third-gender participants who lived in the hostel were excluded. Furthermore, all those students who were living in a hostel such as practitioners, house officers, mentors, and those who were living in a hostel for job purposes were also excluded. The following table shows the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1
Participants' characteristics of the demographic variables (N=300)

Sample characteristics	N	%	M	SD
Age			22.15	1.83
Gender				
Male	150	48.5		
Female	150	48.5		
Medium of college				
Urdu	64	20.7		
English	236	76.4		
Hostel sector				
Public	136	44.0		
Private	164	53.1		
Number of friends				
1 friend	19	6.1		
2 friends	38	12.3		
3 friends	52	16.8		
4 friends	57	18.4		
5 friends	48	15.5		
6 friends	30	9.7		
7 friends	19	6.1		
8 friends	4	1.3		
9 friends	2	.6		
10 friends	30	9.7		
Relationship with friends				
Congenial	194	62.8		
Non-congenial	106	34.3		
Duration in hostel				
1 year	41	13.3		
2 years	45	14.6		
3 years	74	23.9		
4 years	113	36.6		
5 years or more	27	8.7		
Birth order				
Firstborn	81	26.2		
Second born	85	27.5		
Third born	64	20.7		
Last born	59	19.1		
Only child	11	3.6		
Family system				
Nuclear	200	64.7		
Joint	100	32.4		

Measures

The participant's demographic characteristics were obtained through bio data form. Furthermore, the Homesickness questionnaire developed by Archer and was used to assess homesickness consisted of 28 items with a 5 5-point Likert scale. It has two subscales attachment to the old home and disliking the new place. The current study showed that the reliability coefficient of attachment to an old home through Cronbach's alpha is $\alpha=.88$ and the reliability of disliking a new place is $\alpha=.91$. Rosenberg self-esteem scale was employed through 10 statements that check global self-worth by measuring the positive and negative viewpoints about self. This scale is one-dimensional with 4 point Likert scale higher score indicates high self-esteem among students living in hostels and a poor score indicates low self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965).

Penne baker in 1990 developed a college adjustment short version consisting of 19 items to assess adjustment issues of college among students living in hostels. This scale contains three subscales that were positive affect, negative affect and homesickness. All the items were measured on 7 point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7. The internal consistency of the full scale is 0.72.

Procedure

Initially, ethical approval was obtained, from the Department of the affiliated university. Then permission was taken from the authors of the scale and participants who met the inclusion and

exclusion criteria of the study were provided with written informed consent ensuring all ethical concerns. Then the questionnaires were administered individually. All the participants were undergraduate students and were living in hostels either affiliated with institutes or private sectors. The time duration to complete the scale was 15-20 minutes and it took 1 and a half months for data collection. All the participants were thanked for their input for research purposes.

Results

Firstly, reliability analysis was run to determine the questionnaire's psychometric properties including mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach alpha. Secondly, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed to find out the relationship between homesickness, self-esteem, and college adjustment in students living in hostels after that Multiple Hierarchical Linear Regression Analysis was run to analyze the predictor of college adjustment in students.

Table 2

Psychometric Properties of Study Variables

Variables	K	M	SD	α	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. Attachment to old home	20	3.01	0.47	0.88	0.28	-0.17
2. Disliking the new place	8	2.60	0.83	0.91	-.57	-1.03
2. Self-esteem scale	10	1.4	0.67	0.85	0.74	-0.49
3. Positive affect	6	21.2	10.92	0.93	0.34	-1.38
4. Negative affect	9	50.7	10.63	0.90	-0.79	-0.32
5. Homesick CAT	6	37.7	3.01	0.74	-0.31	-0.58
6. Overall adjustment	19	93.0	10.02	0.59	0.42	-1.14

Note: k = Total no of items, α = Cronbach's alpha, M= Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The reliability analysis was employed to assess the reliability of the scales used in the current study. The values of skewness and kurtosis are within range (under 1.96) so the normality can be assuming

Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient among Homesickness, Self-Esteem, and College Adjustment in Hostel-Living Students (N = 300)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	M	SD
1 Gender	---	.14**	.46***	.46***	-.30***	-.52***	.32***	.18***	.49***	1.50	1.83
2. Age		----	.06	.08	-.01	-.13*	.03	-.02	-.08	22.15	1.83
3.AOH			----	.75***	-.56***	-.59***	.63***	.64***	-.72***	3.01	.47
4.DNP				-----	-.73***	-.80***	.66***	.55***	-.83***	2.80	.83
5.SE					-----	.71***	-.65***	-	.76***	1.43	.67
6.PA								.44***			
7.NA						-----	-.61***	-.42***	.87***	3.54	1.82
8.								-----	.59***	5.64	1.18
Homesick CAT									-----	6.29	.50
9. Overall adjustment										51.80	23.37

Note: CAT = College Adjustment Test, AOH= attachment to the old home, DNP=dislike the new place SE = self-esteem, PA= positive affect, NA= negative affect. *p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001

Table 3 indicated that there was a moderately significant negative relationship between attachment to an old home (subscale of homesickness), self-esteem, and positive effect of college adjustment in students ($r = -.56***, -.59***$); showing that students who had more attachment to old home were likely to have poor self-esteem and less positive affect in college adjustment. Results showed that there was a significant strong relationship between attachment to an old home, negative affect, and homesickness of college adjustment ($r = .63***, .64***$). The results also indicated that a highly significant negative relationship between disliking the new place (one subscale of homesickness), self-esteem, 2 subscales of college adjustment i.e. positive affect and the overall adjustment ($r = -.73***, -.80***, -.83***$); indicating that students who dislike the new place are more homesick and likely to have poor self-esteem, less positive affect in college adjustment and less overall adjustment during living in a hostel. Further results illustrated that there was a strong significantly positive relationship between disliking the new place (subscale of homesickness) and negative affect (one subscale of college adjustment) in students ($r = .66***$), implying that hostilities

who dislike the new places were likely to have more negative affect in college adjustment. Moreover, there was a moderately significant positive relationship between disliking the new place (subscale of homesickness) and homesickness in college adjustment (subscale of college adjustment) in students ($r=.55^{***}$ indicating that those who dislike the new places are likely to have homesickness.

Furthermore, there was a significantly positive relationship between self-esteem and two subscales of the college adjustment test (positive affect and overall adjustment) in students ($r = .71^{**}$, $.76^{**}$); illustrating that students who had high self-esteem were likely to have more positive affect in college adjustment and overall adjustment during a stay in hostel. In addition, results elaborated that there was a moderately significant negative relationship between self-esteem and one subscale of the college adjustment test (negative affect) in students ($-.65^{**}$); indicating that those who had more self-esteem were likely to have less negative affect in college adjustment.

Extensively results showed that there was a weak significant negative relationship between self-esteem and one subscale of the college adjustment test (homesickness subscale) in students ($r = -.44^{**}$); indicating that high self-esteem was likely to have less homesickness while living in a hostel.

Table 4

Multiple Hierarchical Linear Method showing homesickness and self-esteem as Predictors of positive affect in college adjustment among Students living in hostels (N= 300)

Predictors	B	95% CI for B		SE B	β	R ²	ΔR^2	
		LL	UL					
Step I							.27***	.27***
Constant	7.58	5.42		9.74	1.10			
Gender	-1.86	-2.22		-1.50	.18	-.51***		
Age	-.06	-.15		.04	.05	-.06		
Step 2							.67***	179.70***
Constant	9.43	7.80		11.08	.83			
Gender	-.70	-.97		-.42	.14	-.19***		
Age	-.04	-.11		.02	-.03	-.04		
AOH	.24	-.15		.64	.20	.06		
DNP	-1.66	-1.88		-1.44	.11	-.75***		
Step 3							.71***	42.16***
Constant	7.20	5.52		8.88	.85			
Gender	-.76	-1.01		-.50	.13	-.21***		
Age	-.06	-.11		.01	.03	-.06		
AOH	.30	-.07		.67	.19	.08		
DNP	-1.19	-1.44		-.94	.13	-.54***		
Self-esteem	.80	.56		1.04	.12	.30***		

Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .00$

Three separate Multiple Hierarchical Linear Regression was run to test the predictors of different dimensions of college adjustment in students. The two demographic features of students i.e. gender and age were entered as covariates. Two dimensions of homesickness i.e., attachment to the old home, disliking the new place, and self-esteem were entered as predictor variables in the regression model. Positive affect in College adjustment was entered as an outcome variable.

In the model I, two covariates were added, i.e. gender and age, and the regression model was significant, $R^2 = .27$, $F(2, 297) = 55.80$, $p < .000$. In model II, two dimensions of homesickness i.e. attachment to the old home and disliking the new place were entered as predictors along with gender and age, and the model turned out to be significant, $R^2 = 179.70$, $F(4, 295) = 151.31$, $p < .000$. As far as the individual contribution of each predictor is concerned for College Adjustment, disliking the new place was a significant negative predictor of college adjustment. In model III, self-esteem was added as a predictor along with two dimensions of homesickness and two covariates (gender and age) and the model turned out to be significant. $R^2 = .71$, $F(5, 294) = 146.37$, $p < .000$. As far as the individual contribution of each predictor is concerned for College Adjustment, self-esteem was a significant positive predictor of college adjustment. When the effect of Model I and II is excluded from Model III, the model remains significant $R^2 = .41$, $F(1, 294) = 42.19$, $p < .000$. Among all the predictor variables, disliking the new place emerged as a significant negative predictor whereas self-esteem was turned out as a significant positive predictor of college adjustment. In other words, those who dislike the new place more are likely to have a less positive effect in adjustment to college.

Table 5

Multiple Hierarchical Linear Method showing homesickness and self-esteem as Predictors of negative affect in college adjustment among Students living in hostels (N= 300)

Predictors	B	95% CI for B		SE B	β	R ²	ΔR ²
		LL	UL				
Step 1							
Constant	4.77	3.20	6.32	.79		.10***	.10***
Gender	.77	-2.22	-1.50	.13	.32***		
Age	-.01	-.08	.06	.03	-.02		
Step 2							
Constant	1.95	.61	3.29	.68		.49***	105.46***
Gender	-.04	-.27	.18	.11	-.02		
Age	-.01	-.07	.03	.02	-.02		
AOH	.81	.48	1.13	.16	.32***		
DNP	.61	.42	.79	.09	.42***		
Step 3							
Constant	3.68	2.29	5.06	.70		.53***	36.63***
Gender	-.00	-.22	.20	.10	-.00		
Age	-.00	-.06	.04	.02	-.01		
AOH	.77	.46	1.07	.16	.30***		
DNP	.25	.45	.46	.10	.18**		
Self-esteem	-.61	-.82	-.41	.10	-.35***		

Note: *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001

In the model I, two covariates were added, i.e. gender and age, and the regression model was significant, R² = .10, F (2,297) = 17.47, p<.000. In model II, two dimensions of homesickness i.e. attachment to the old home and disliking the new place were entered as predictors along with gender and age, and the model turned out to be significant, R² = .49, F (4, 295) = 67.60, p< .000. As far as the individual contribution of each predictor is concerned for negative affect in College Adjustment, attachment to the old home and disliking the new place both were a significant positive predictor of college adjustment. In model III, self-esteem was added as a predictor along with two dimensions of homesickness and two covariates (gender and age) and the model turned out to be significant. R² = .53, F (5, 294) = 67.94, p< .000. As far as the individual contribution of each predictor is concerned for a negative effect on College Adjustment, self-esteem was a significant negative predictor of college adjustment. When the effect of Model I and II is excluded from Model III, the model remains significant R² = .06, F (1,294) = 36.63, p< .000. Among all the predictor variables, attachment to old home and disliking the new place emerged as significant positive predictor whereas self-esteem was turned out as significant negative predictor of negative affect in college adjustment. In other words, hostilities who have poor self-esteem are more likely to have more negative affect in adjusting to college.

Table 6

Multiple Hierarchical Linear Method showing homesickness and self-esteem as Predictors of college adjustment homesickness among Students living in hostels (N= 300)

Predictors	B	95% CI for B		SE B	β	R ²	ΔR ²
		LL	UL				
Step 1							
Constant	6.28	5.60	6.97	.34		.03***	.02***
Gender	.19	.08	.30	.06	.19***		
Age	-.01	-.04	.01	.01	-.04		
Step 2							
Constant	4.68	4.09	5.27	.30		.44***	107.79***
Gender	-.17	-.27	-.07	.05	-.17***		
Age	-.01	-.03	.01	.01	-.05		
AOH	.60	.45	.74	.07	.56***		
DNP	.12	.04	.20	.04	.21***		
Step 3							
Constant	4.79	4.14	5.43	.32		.44***	.76
Gender	-.16	-.26	-.06	.05	-.16***		
Age	-.01	-.03	.01	.01	-.04		

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AOH	.60	.45	.73	.07	.56***
DNP	.10	.00	.20	.05	.17*
Self-esteem	-.04	-.13	.05	.04	-.05

Note: *p<.05. **p<.01 ***p<.001

Multiple Hierarchical Linear Regression was used to test the predictors of college adjustment in students. The two demographic features of students i.e. gender and age were entered as covariates. Two dimensions of homesickness i.e., attachment to the old home, disliking the new place, and self-esteem were entered as predictor variables in the regression model. College Adjustment Homesickness was entered as an outcome variable.

In the model I, two covariates were added, i.e. gender and age, and the regression model was significant, $R^2 = .03$, $F(2,297) = 5.52$, $p < .000$. In model II, two dimensions of homesickness i.e. attachment to the old home and disliking the new place were entered as predictors along with gender and age, and the model turned out to be significant, $R^2 = .44$, $F(4, 295) = 58.64$, $p < .000$. As far as the individual contribution of each predictor is concerned for College Adjustment Homesickness, attachment to the old home and disliking the new place both were a significant positive predictor of college adjustment homesickness. In model III, self-esteem was added as a predictor along with two dimensions of homesickness and two covariates (gender and age) and the model turned out to be significant. $R^2 = .44$, $F(5, 294) = 47.03$, $p < .000$. As far as the individual contribution of each predictor is concerned for College Adjustment homesickness, self-esteem was a negative predictor of college adjustment homesickness. When the effect of Model I and II is excluded from Model III, the model turned out to be non-significant $R^2 = .00$, $F(1,294) = .76$, $p > .05$. As far as individual contribution of each predictor is concerned, self-esteem emerges as a negative predictor in predicting college adjustment homesickness.

Table 7

Independent Sample t-test showing Gender Differences in Homesickness, Self-esteem, and College Adjustment in Students living in hostels

Variables	Males		Females		t(pdf)	p	95% CI		Cohen's d	
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL		
1. AOH	3.22	.47	2.79	.36	-9.02(279)	.000***	-.52	-.33	1.02	
2. DNP	3.18	.63	2.41	.82	-9.03(280)	.000***	-.93	-.60	1.05	
3. Self-esteem	1.23	.52	1.63	.74	5.39(269)	.000***	.25	.54	0.62	
4. Positive affect	2.59	1.49	4.48	1.62	10.50(295)	.000***	1.53	2.24	1.21	
5. Negative affect	6.02	1.02	5.26	1.20	-5.90(290)	.000***	-	-.50	0.68	
6. College adjustment homesickness	6.38	.52	6.20	.47	-3.22(298)	.001***	1.01	-.30	-.07	0.36

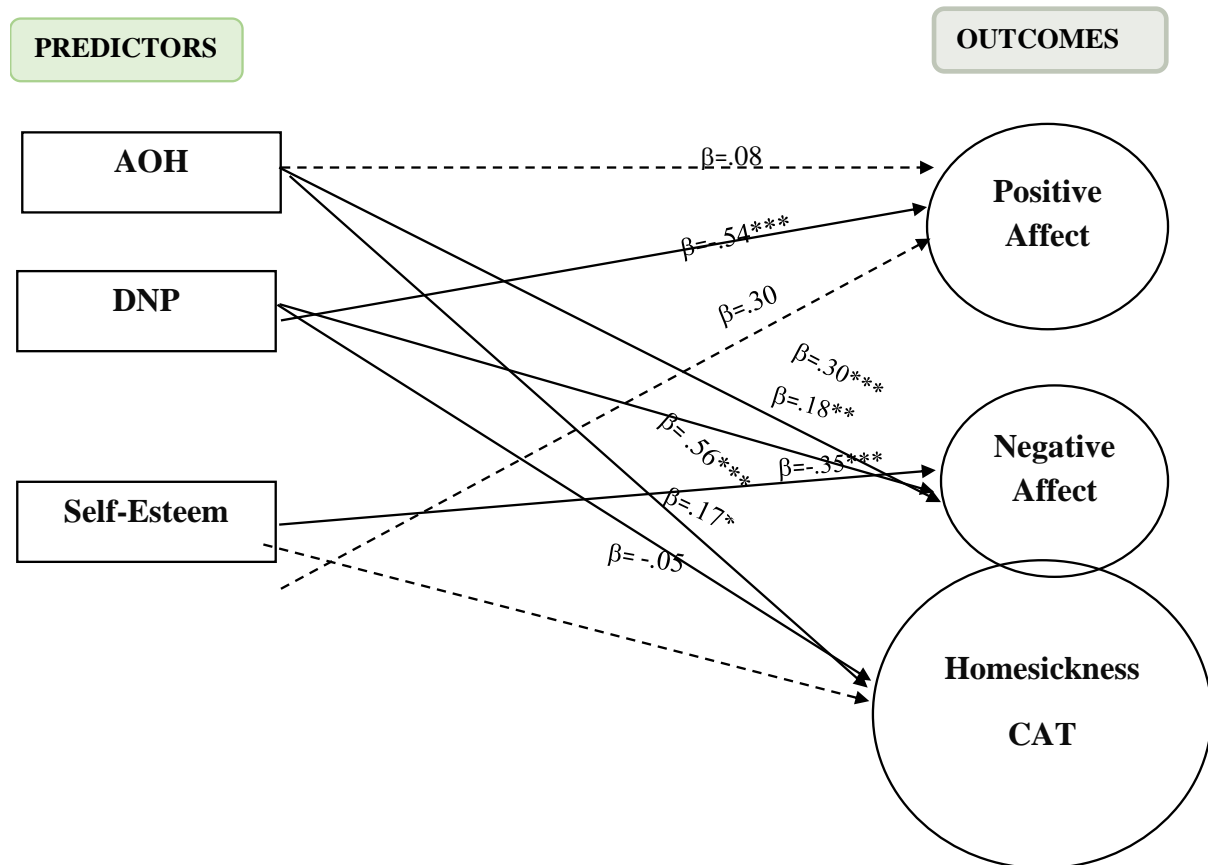
Note: Males = 150; Females = 150; M = mean; SD = standard deviation; CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit. AOH= attachment to the old home, DNP= disliking the new place *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001

Results reveal no significant gender difference in self-esteem and 2 subscales of college adjustment. Results also showed that there is a significant gender difference in the 2 subscales of homesickness. This means that male students show more attachment to the old home and dislike the new place than female students. In simple words male students are more homesick than female students.

Emerg ed Model

Figure I

Emerg ed Model of the Predictors of College Adjustment among Students living in hostels



Discussion

The study aims to examine the role of homesickness and self-esteem as correlates and predictors of college adjustment among students living in a hostel who currently living in hostels.

Previous literature on gender in homesickness revealed that female students were more likely to be homesick as compared to male students. According to Lama, male students are more likely to be adjusted to college problems than female students. The proposed study shows a significant difference in gender on homesickness. The other demographic factors including age, marital status, birth order, and relationship with friends, the family system can influence the role of homesickness and self-esteem on college adjustment in students living in hostels students

It was hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between homesickness, self-esteem, and college adjustment in students but the findings of the results are partially correlated to the hypothesis. Findings reveal that homesickness has a significant negative relationship with one of the subscales of college adjustment (positive affect) and overall adjustment in students. According to Bandura (1977), academic accomplishment is one of the four sources of self-efficacy which can also be applied to a homesick environment. The environment plays a significant role in accomplishing the educational task. The comfortable environment to achieve performance in academics will act as reinforcement to gain college adjustment using a less homesick environment hence increasing comfort environment and thus academic adjustment. Once the student has accomplished the educational task in a comfortable environment, it will boost self-esteem thus leading to better results in the academic field. There are many reasons for this poor college adjustment, according to Epochs and Ronald (2006), students who have poor social support are less likely to make better adjustments in college. Some cultural differences also exist. People who belong to the same culture or mixed culture are more likely to make friendships and feel less homesick as compared to students who belong to completely different cultures.

This can be supported by the previous studies which concluded that students living in students who are poor at academic achievement have high adjustment issues (Nidhi & Kermene, 2015; Sun et al., 2016). These findings are consistent with findings of indigenous studies showing that academic progress has declined due to homesickness in students living in hostels (Hassan and Fatima, 2018; Zafar et al., 2018).

It was hypothesized that homesickness and self-esteem will predict college adjustment among students. According to Nicholson's transition cycle model, the successive achievement during transition can be made through 4 stages that is preparation, encounter, adjustment, and stabilization. Starting from preparation for core tasks, getting ready for changes, developing realistic expectations, and motivating the self, an individual surpasses the encounter phase. If an individual cannot prepare for the initial stages, then it results in a discrepancy in the adjustment phase. On the same note, in the initial stages, the preparation stage, an individual faces attachment to the old home and is unable to do core tasks which ultimately results in disruption in college adjustment (Nicholson, 1990).

Similar to the hypothesis, findings show that homesickness is a significant negative predictor of college adjustment in students. The present study is consistent with the results of previous studies which demonstrate that homesickness was negatively associated with the academic performance of students living in hostels (Sun et al., 2016). Prior literature also supports the hypothesis that homesickness negatively influences the academic performance of students living in hostels (Can, 2015; Sun et al., 2016; English et al., 2017). Indigenous studies also demonstrate that homesick students are more likely to perform poorly in college and have adjustment issues (Kazmi & Muazzam, 2020).

The findings also illustrate that self-esteem is a significant positive predictor of college adjustment among students.

According to Rosenberg (1995), self-esteem is a process of social comparisons and reflected appraisal. Social comparison with competitors has negative consequences about self which basically lowers academic achievement and hence results in college adjustment. The previous literature also supports that self-esteem has a significant influence on college adjustment (Scot & Donovan, 2021). Indigenous literature shows that students who have high self-esteem and satisfaction perform well in academics and have fewer adjustment issues (Hassan & Fatima, 2018).

It was hypothesized that female students will have more homesickness, self-esteem and college adjustment as compared to male students living in hostels. Findings are partially in support of the hypothesis. The finding reveals that there are gender differences among students in terms of homesickness, self-esteem, and college adjustment. As a result males are more homesick than females. These results are contrary to the findings of the previous studies which concluded that females are involved less in socially engaging activities and lack social support which results in homesickness (Hassan et al., 2017). Some prior research shows that there is no gender difference in terms of homesickness, self-esteem, and overall college adjustment in students living in hostels (Biasi et al., 2018; Nidhi & Kermane, 2015).

The present study reveals that there are mild differences exist on gender in terms of the role of homesickness and self-esteem in finding college adjustment in students living in hostels Male students reveal more homesickness which ultimately affects academic performance thus creating college adjustment issues.

Conclusion

The results revealed that significant positive relationship between homesickness and self-esteem in students. The results also demonstrated a significant negative relationship between homesickness and two subscales of college adjustment (positive affect and overall adjustment) and a positive relationship with one of the subscales of college adjustment (negative affect). The results also illustrated that homesickness was found to be a significant negative predictor of college adjustment whereas self-esteem was found to be a significant positive predictor of college adjustment.

Strength of the Study

- The unique models emerged which illustrated the relationship of each subscale with other variables
- Although theories showed more homesickness in females perceived homesickness was found more in males

Limitation

- Other demographics such as age, relationship with friends, family system, duration in the hostel could be taken into consideration

Future implications and recommendations

- College students were taken as a study participants. Researchers should work on the army population, and immigrants to examine homesickness

- Counseling centers and growth programs should be organized for students to nullify the effects of homesickness on college adjustment
Comparative studies should be implemented to check the ratio of homesickness between native and non-native students

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