

Living in a College Environment or Staying Off-Campus? A Qualitative Assessment of Students' Life at the Mawar College, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)

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Abstract

The article examines the students' life at the Mawar College, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and their intention to stay off-campus. Students' profile exhibits differences in composition by family background, ethnicity, academic programme, level of studies and secondary schooling. In-depth interviews with college officials, college representatives committee and observations of general college environment provide insights into the way in which students adapt themselves into college life. Results illustrate that adaptation of Mawar students, in the light of their previous education (schooling) (and earlier stay in College during the school time), support the gross observation of a stronger chance of their adjustment into college life. The potential to thrive by Mawar students appears to be related to their secondary schooling as well as their previous level of studies that contribute to the familiarity with campus environment. Little direct evidence is found, however, to explain variations of adjusting to the college life and staying off-campus by family background, ethnicity, and academic programme. A tentative suggestion is proposed however that marginal composition of students based on their academic programme might account for these variation rate of thriving in college environment. It is recommended that future research should use different methods, such as experiments or detailed observations, to gain a better viewpoint on students' level of adaptation in a college environment. The article concludes by considering implications for designing the practical programmes at college level thereby maximising their potential to excel.

Keywords – College, Transition, Adaptation, Campus life, Off Campus

Preface

The Mawar College is the largest college and also known as the *premier college*² in the UiTM's system. The all-female residents of this College enjoy numerous facilities, including gymnasium, spacious IT labs, and huge Seminar rooms, among others. Being the largest, the College can accommodate over 3, 500 students and nine college resident staff - SRK (mostly academicians) to assist the College office particularly in developing students'

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² The Star Rating System (STAR) was built by the University in 2011 for assessing the status of the colleges in terms of the provision of facilities and services, set targets for moving forward, and measure progress along the way. It represents a milestone in the University's effort to create more livable college for all students. The rating system's evaluation measures 1 star as "Basic" to 5 stars as "Premier".

soft skills. In addition, Mawar college always recorded notable achievement in many events such as Inter-College Sports Tournament, Best College Award and others. As a matter of fact, the College has become a preferred choice among students who intend to stay within campus.

In the wake of growing demands for quality college life among students, limited space available in College as opposed to the application rate, and the choice to stay off campus, there is potential that the student life at Mawar College is of a great subject to be studied. If the concern pertaining to adaptation to college life is true, it can be speculated that students who are coming from various background, may find it tough to meet the expectation of the College while at the same time, thriving the college life. Qualitative studies offer rich descriptions of the experience of higher education applicants (Gambetta, 1987; Archer *et al.*, 2003; Reay *et al.*, 2005, Reay, 2006), certainly to a some extent life in college.

The issue of choosing between one's life at the 'premier college', ie Mawar, and staying off-campus provides interesting opportunity for scholarly debate and empirical inquiry. For instance, it could be interesting to assess whether the level of studies impacted students' desire to excel at the college level. It is inadequate to merely gauge the opinion of the College officials while disregarding the views from the students themselves. All the more important is the role of College Representative Committee (JPK) who are the driving force for all students' activities at the College level. Unfortunately, previous studies overlooked the role of this important group of students, instead focusing too much on getting the view of students at large. This study therefore takes steps towards examining the perspective of students' adaptation in college life by assessing the perspective of both the students representatives as well the college officials through the accounts of family background, ethnicity, academic programme, level of studies and secondary schooling.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Researchers have emphasized that students must learn to adapt themselves in college environment, for instance, to participate in college activities and relate well with their fellow colleagues (see for instance, Boyle, 1966; Hansen *et al.*, 1972; Bain & Anderson, 1974; Alwin & Otto, 1977). The extent to which students view place and place attachment as favourable or not, appears to vary with socio-spatial context, as the relationship between places, relationships and identities "vary over contexts and over time" (Søndergaard, 2002, p.199). The 'adaptability' of student in college is anchored in five subjects: family background, ethnicity (including religion), academic programmes, level of studies and the secondary school (including their past experience staying in college). These impact of background factors constitute both a specific world and a shared understanding, thereby shaping the epistemological foundation of students level of adaptation in higher education and college life (see for example Smyth & Hannan, 2007; Shavit & Blossfeld, 1993). On the other hand, students may based their decision on factors such as college regulation, cost-saving, and safety issue that occur, diminishing or undermining potential decision to stay off campus through its impact on academic achievement (Boyle, 1966).

Mirroring on the proposition of the relationship between aspects of human background and behaviour and attributes of place (Baum *et al.*, 1993; Gerst & Sweetwood,

1973; Sommer, 1968, “sense of place is associated with activities, relationships and memories that link personal identity and self-efficacy with physical setting” (Low, & Lawrence-Zúñiga, 2003; Stedman, 2002) simultaneously aimed at inclusiveness and balancing interests of the student life at college. This article proposes, first, that perceived inclusivity through environmentally-balanced living increases a students’ likelihood of overall adaptation to college environment. For example, the JPK worked together with the SRK as well as college management on the various college activities towards creating conducive college life for all. Second, the study argues the longer the student stays in college, the better they are in adapting to the college environment (Brooks, 2003). On the flipside, student miss out on the socio-cultural attachment with home and family (Lee & Bowen, 2006), and the emotional support provided by contact with family members (Herndon & Hirt, 2004). Meanwhile, favourable family background, i.e. general profile of wealthy or average, convenient or easy access to Faculty, cost saving, safety issues are arguably among important indicators to examine the readiness of students to stay and adapt to the college life.

In summary, Figure 1 below provides the proposed model of this study:

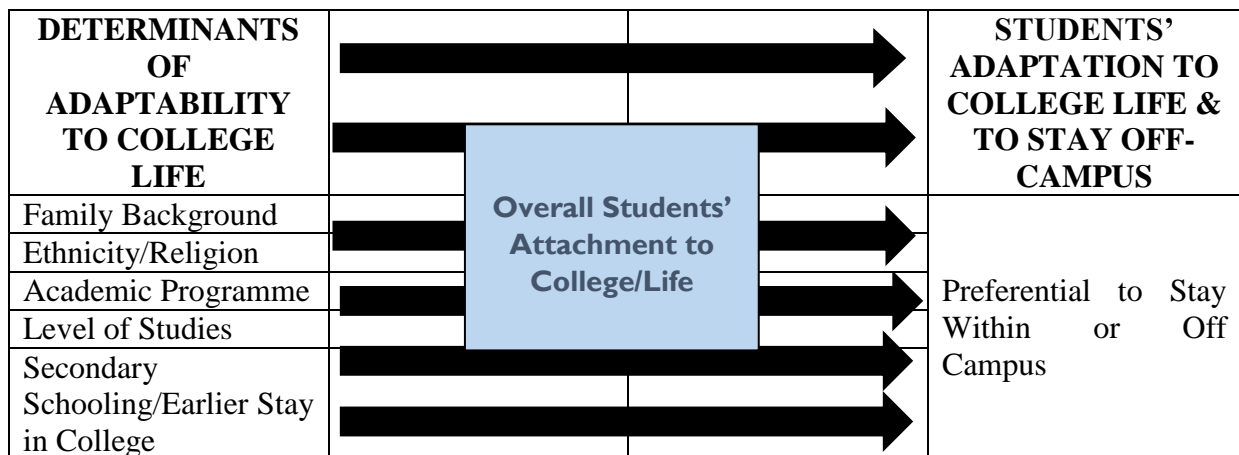


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Determinants of Adaptation to College Life and Decision To Stay in College or Off-Campus

Becoming the Collegians

Campus life takes two important aspects – one centred on the faculty and the other on the college. It is always contended that both play an equally critical role and complement each other in the context of intellectual and social developments of students. The residential college system in UiTM is clustered into few categories –the premier status – at the pinnacle of the hierarchy. The UiTM’s Policy on Residential Colleges developed in 2008 has clearly stipulated that the admission to college give preferences to those who are in the first year of their studies. Within Mawar, the physical facilities are designed to support the deliberate and systematic effort of building up the personal characteristics of the students. In addition to the distinctive features of these are close collaborations between students and the office staff and the collegiate system that emphasising on the great freedom given to students to organise their own student development activities at the college level. Previous research has indicated significant variation between schools in the proportion of their students who go on to higher education (Ianelli, 2007; Pustjens *et al.*, 2004). However, relatively little attention has been

given to the specific variables in terms of understanding their influence in transition and adaptation to college life. This paper sets out to analyse the individual factors which influence transition and adaptation to college life. We subscribe to the view that the impact of background factors such as family background, ethnicity, academic programme, level of studies and secondary schooling are particularly significant on students' level of adaptation to the college life.

Statistics of Mawar occupants is stratified with a group of predominantly science and technology (S&T) Faculties showed a total of 2,748 students as of September 2015, out of 18 Faculties with Architecture, Planning and Surveying is the most with 726 students. Further distinctive features of Mawar college includes are the presence of a very small group of professional, post graduate students and the group of non-Muslim students (see Table 1 and Table 3 below):

Table 1:
Mawar Student as of Sept 2015, by Faculty (Source: Mawar College, 2015)

NO	FACULTY CODE	FACULTY'S NAME	STUDENT NUMBERS
1	AD	Arts & Design	12
2	AM	Administrative Science & Policy Studies	1
3	AP	Architecture, Planning & Surveying	726
4	APB	Academy of Language Studies	277
5	AS	Applied Science	285
6	BM	Business Management	1
7	CS	Computer Science & Mathematics	11
8	EC	Civil Engineering	92
9	ED	Education	225
10	EE	Electrical Engineering	308
11	EH	Chemical Engineering	393
12	EM	Mechanical Engineering	35
13	IC	Academy of Cotemporary Islamic Studies	4
14	IM	Information Management	1
15	LW	Laws	230
16	MC	Communication & Media Studies	28
17	MU	Music	0
18	SR	Sport Science & Recreation	119
TOTAL			2,748

As to the breakdown of part of studies (see Table 2 below), Part 1 student found to be the majority with 772 students, indicating the Part 1 students are given the priority compared to much senior students (Part6 to Part 9). Interview with the College official found that roughly 65% of students successful in their application to Mawar based on merit. The more students get involved in College activities (determine through their activities coupon) and their active involvement in curricular activities, ie. Sports will increase their chances of admission to Mawar. While merit is the main criteria for admission to Mawar, about 15% to 20% manage to get their place through appeal cases.

Table 2:
Mawar Students by Part (Semester Studies), as of Sept 2015
(Mawar College, 2015)

NO	PART	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
1	0	0
2	1	772
3	2	137

4	3	520
5	4	338
6	5	525
7	6	126
8	7	212
9	8	113
10	9	5
TOTAL		2,748

Net differences in composition of students by religion at Mawar clearly favour Islam as opposed to other religion (see Table 3 below). This inequality of religion is not deliberate or in any way reflecting the policy, but rather the overall numbers of Muslim students in the University itself are by default the majority (more than 90%).

Table 3:
Mawar Student by Religion, as of Sept 2015 (Mawar College, 2015)

RELIGION	NUMBERS
Islam	2,676
Christian	61
No Religion	6
Others	5
TOTAL	2,748

The qualitative data shown in this section is to put things into perspective regarding the kind of college environment exist at Mawar.

Research Design and Methods

The study adopts qualitative methods utilising researchers' experience in managing student affairs at the college level. A total of five interviews were conducted with college administrators and representatives of SRK. In addition, as all researchers are also staff and resident staff of Mawar observations were made particularly while performing official duties. From an academic perspective, the researcher's "insider" role represent a potential source of bias interpretation of findings but can also be regarded as "useful and positive" (Cresswell, 2003, p.200). Informal discussions with students' parents and College staff as 'peer debriefing to enhance the accuracy of the account' (Ibid, p.196). Interview participants were chosen under the basis that they were able to furnish the breadth of college experiences and to identify themes that are relevant to the area of study.

The information collected from interviews and analysis of documents was organized and rigorously interpreted to extract the key findings using the content analysis method. We analyzed the information using spiral steps for data analysis as proposed by Creswell (2009). First, we organized the collected data into several forms (i.e. database, sentences, or individual word). Second, we scrutinized the collected data sets several times to obtain a complete picture or overview of what it contains as a whole by taking notes and summarizing the key points that suggested categories or themes related to the research. Third, the researchers identified and classified the general categories or themes accordingly. The themes that are applicable to this study are Family Background, Ethnicity, Academic Programme, Level of Studies, and, Previous Schooling/Education, among others. Finally, we integrated and summarized the data to describe the relationship between the categories or themes.

Pertaining to the limitation of the study, as it was confined to the context of Mawar College and the study sample was small and purposely selected, findings were suggestive rather than conclusive. Therefore further extensive research is needed.

The Research Sample, Interviews and Observation

A total of three students representing the SRK participated in the study based on their active and direct involvement in organising student activities at college level. All participants have sound command of both Malay and English language. All of these students have been staying in Mawar College for at least two semesters (equivalent to roughly one year) and have first-hand experience in managing college activities. On the other hand, two administrators at Mawar's office who heavily involved in College activities were also participated in the study. Interviews were semi-structured and lasted between half to an hour. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Questions in the interview covered students' life at college and their expectation, and what they thought the factors that contributing or dampening their chances of thriving in the college as well as the perception of staying off-campus. Some secondary data are checked against the College office. Observation are also made against the critical incidences for instance participation in the college activities, level of interaction, dealing with office staff and others. The purpose of the interview and observation was to assess students' transition into college environment, so that new data gathering provide refined analysis. Interviews transcripts were analysed using the coding and thematic approach aided by NVivo software (Ahmad Naqiyuddin, *et al.*, 2013). To protect the confidentiality of the respondents, the subsequent analyses only identify respondents by their code numbers and their field of studies.

Results

This section seeks to tabulate the findings of this study in the following orders: family background, ethnicity, academic programme, level of studies, and previous schooling/education.

Family Background

Counting on her observation, JPK 1 explained that:

“if students are coming from a wealthy family, it affects the way they socialised in College.. they will be particular about so many things in College..”

JPK 2's comment illustrates that regulations and the easiness of moving around were among important consideration students' decision to stay off-campus:

“they have less freedom in coming in and out due to College's regulation, also access find to eateries places at any time..”

They feel a lot free to stay as non-resident as stay within will restrict them in many ways. The college administrator describe this in detail:

“.. the students from wealthy family reject the offer made to stay in College. They refuse to be subjected to College regulation which are rather restrictive. They find it more easy to socialise when they stay off-campus..”

Some would prefer stay within, even if they can afford to stay outside. Most would rather stay within College for the reason to save cost. Parent from wealthy family may find it easy to make a frequent visit to College to meet up with their children.

Notions of the dependency of students with their parents, however, were not straightforwardly connected with the family status, rather it all boils down to how much close the students were with their family.

Students from wealthy family were described by JPK 2 as ‘different’ from the fellow collegians:

“the way they dress up, the way they carry themselves would be different..”

She added that distance and cost of travel were the issue for less wealthy family but not the wealthier one.

The college administrator when probed replied that wealthy students are more willing to participate in college activities as opposed to those who are less wealthy. There were also some evidences, through interview and observation, that showed how some parents prefer their children to stay in College despite the fact that they can afford to support them financially to stay off campus:

“It is important to give due consideration on the family’s financial situation of students because the cost of renting outside is just too much for many students”

It is not an issue regarding segregation as it all up to individuals to decide whom they want to mix with.

Observation found that some parents insist their children to stay in the College sometimes against the wish of the students. The students, though not a majority, tend to bend the College Regulation by committing disciplinary problems. The taste of a bit of a freedom for some students can be seen from cases for instance coming back late to the room (after 11.00 pm), hanging clothes on the windows, create nuisance through loud music and others. Most of these things are less likely to occur at home when the parents are with them. It is not clear whether the parents transfer the duty of looking after the children to the College or students see it as the opportunity to do things they probably never get a chance to do it at home. Researcher can count on some cases of students who came from a rather wealthy family yet deliberately applying for exemption from paying college fees. With various provision of ‘stimulus of financial packages’, i.e. PTPTN, Zakat, book voucher, etc. offered to students, regardless of their family background – incentives are being indistinguishable to receivers.

This reinforced the limits of looking at family background as a proxy for determining students' level of adaptation in college environment. However, it is worth noted that even though family status were then 'not part of the admission criteria' to Mawar, those who are in rather poor family background can be exempted from paying college fees through relevant Panel's decision on case by case basis.

Ethnicity

Despite the overwhelming numbers of Malay students as in the statistics previously stated, students' ethnic origin were not considered in admission procedures. From researchers' observation, it was often difficult to differentiate whether students at Mawar are of which particular origin, race or religion. At the day of the registration, the standing practice is that 'first come, first serve' basis that everyone has an equal chance to find anybody as their roommates. Regarding this, the Mawar officer stated that it's a conscious effort that Mawar welcomes diversity. When interviewed, the college administrator said:

“we have no problem at all dealing with the minorities. They mixed rather well with everyone and are nice when dealing with office too..”

The College hopes that through this effort, students who mixed well across ethnicities or religious background will be more open and tolerant towards one another. However, due to the fact that the Malay-Muslim group of students far outnumber the other Bumiputeras and non-Muslim students, it is difficult to square any critical incidences on the basis of racial or religious issue. For example, the Bumiputera students from Sabah and Sarawak consists less the 10% of the total population at Mawar at the time of this writing. Students are all encouraged to attend all College activities, failing which may risk their chance of getting place in the College in the future. Ironically, At the same time, there was no clear attempt to justify whether the activities organised at the College level fits everyone's needs and sensitivity. It is difficult to tell whether students were motivated by their personal interest on the programme, or they have no other option in order to avoid demerits of points. It is even harder to link the attitude of non-Malay or non-Muslims to racial or religious prejudice as some of the College programmes are clearly religious rituals in nature, i.e. prayer congregation, religious talks, programmes that only targeted for Muslim students.

Reflecting on her personal experience, JPK 3 explained that:

“Yeah, it takes a bit of time to adapt because for instance, rituals performance are unique to one's believe. But it is not really an issue.”

It is good to mix them up. Otherwise, it will not be healthy if they are just mix within them in a same group. The privilege enjoyed by the majority, nonetheless, has raised the concerns of inequalities –offering more chances for those who found relevant to attend the programme but marginalising those who come from minority religious group. But, the issue is not regarded as too serious though.

JPK 2 commented that:

“The issue more of religious understanding – not really on adaptation itself.. even among Malays, some don’t relate well, some can..”

Overall, no big issue pertaining to the diversity of ethnicity or religion.

Academic Programme

Observation found that students who are taking Architecture have less time to involve in College activities particularly during night time due to their programme requirements. As most College activities are running in the night, when these students are needed to stay back until late night restrict them from participating in the College activities. Similarly, the college administrator also indicated that Sport Science students were not able to take part in some of college activities as most of them were having tight training schedules with National Sports Council. Another evidence conceivable from observation was that most creative arts or performance are monopolised by students of Arts and Education programme. To some extent, the JPK need to invite participation of group of students who are not the residents of Mawar in some of the activities.

When confronted with issues regarding students’ academic achievement at Mawar, the motivation of students to work harder to score better grades was not there. JPK2 argued:

“.. not really, as we don’t really put Academic as a criteria to admit student to College. Unlike during the time when I did my Diploma, you have to have Dean’s List or active in college activities were given the priority”

Academic achievement will be determining factor to address the issue of too many applicants yet inadequate spaces to accommodate them. Its gonna be less hassle for students in College compared to those stay outside to go to classes, but it is not clear to conclude if staying in College will have strong influence on their academic achievement.

When asked why general observation show a similar students from a potentially similar programmes join the College activities, JPK 1 replied:

“Its up to them whether they want to attend or not, not really due to their course or programmes”.

Only minority of them will be in the disadvantaged as they cannot collect the maximum coupon, such as Architecture students. Therefore, academic programmes does not really influence majority of Mawarians.

Level of Studies

The degree of maturity are visibly seen among students of first degree. This is due to two reasons, first, most of them are former UiTM’s graduates of Diploma, and second, even if they are not coming from UiTM, they have been studying in different institutions thereby been exposed to the life at university or college. First degree students are generally able to

make the most of college life. They are 'smarter' in findings ways to cope with the demand of quality college life as opposed to their juniors doing Matriculation or Diploma. The latter appears to be more obedient and follow instructions given on them.

“PG students can not really be seen in the programme”. It is more of they need college facilities. Masters have night classes therefore they find it difficult to come. Diploma students always distracted by the academic calendar as normally programmes were organised at the time they are sitting their exam”

When asked about which level of studies that students mostly participated in college universities, the college administrators were quick in pointing out that it is the degree students. He further explained that it is mainly they will risk losing the chance of getting the college if they do not participate in the college activities.

“Most students come because they want collect activities coupon – not because they like the programme”

This contention would mean that looking at merely the numbers of crowd were not necessarily the best predictor of students sincere admiration to the specific college activities. JPK 2, and 3 explained:

“Some of them only come in towards the end of the programme, unless they really like the programme.

We don't have such a programme at the College level that is customised to gather students from the same programme.. even if there is, most will first ask what they can get from attending the programme”

But it is common to mix with juniors from other programmes as they are normally in the committee for SRK, and dealing with college activities. The college administrator interviewed also contended that the relationship between juniors and seniors were really fine.

But, generally there was no strong link found in the interview between the level of studies that really impact the way in which students' adaptation to the College's life.

Previous Schooling/Education

In the observation by researchers, previous schooling even though was not important in the selection to Mawar, provides smooth transition of students' life at the College. However, a piece of evidence that emerged from the observation and interview was that a student who has experienced life at a boarding school (normally stay in the hostel for a solid five years) and continue their studies to Diploma and later first degree, adjust faster in the College environment. Students who stay in College for the first time, are generally associated with loneliness, homesickness, feeling of culture shock and less independent at least at the initial stage of their stay.

JPK 2 pointed out her own personal experience as well as her observation for those who have experienced staying in College previously:

“.. it has some influence, especially during the initial stage of staying in College – the feeling of homesickness, or loneliness. It takes some time. We are quite independent on what to prepare or buy without relying too much with parents’ help.”

“A lot easier to adapt with my previous experience during Diploma time staying in college..

“Most of my friends never been staying in College before.. and as such, they take time a bit to adapt... to get more organised...”

However, JPK 1 contended that it is noteworthy that individual character has strong propensity on one’s life at college, rather than their previous schooling:

“it really also influence the student’s attitude or character. If they are clumsy at home, they will be mostly likely the same at College”

JPK 1 describe this in some detail:

“Students who have been staying in College will be inclined to apply again to stay in the College, if they are willing to join the activities, and be willing to collect tickets. Likewise if they feel they don’t want to be restrictive with Colleges’s regulation, they may opt not to stay..”

But when asked the major factor students consider to stay in College, all respondents make a resounding yes to cost saving, i.e. easy access to free bus services from College.

The longer students stay in College, the maturity level increased and make them more adjustable well with the conditions in College, including any limitations as they get to use with things such as toilet overflow, blackout.. we don’t really bother to lodge complaint in Facebook and all that..”.

Thus, while the interviews and observations may not have found any strong and direct evidence between family background, ethnicity, academic programme and level of studies, it is possible that previous secondary education and stay in college might form part of the reasons for student in adapting with college’s life. In addition, the research suggest that consideration on economic factors (ie. cost saving) in turn is positively associated with the perceived degree of staying and adapting to college life rather than off-campus. Furthermore, the perception of safety issue in relation to high risk criminal incidences off campus might thus also increase the propensity for one to choose staying in college.

Discussion

The Mawar College constantly strives to provide the best college environment for its residents. College – forms substantial part of students' life for intellectual growth and social development. Students enjoy great discretion in what they want in organising their activities at the College level. This article has found that prior admissions factors to college with regard to family background, ethnicity, academic programme, level of studies and secondary schooling bears some influence on the students' level of adaptation.

The study had found that most success factors explaining the degree of adaptation to college life is the previous studies that provide them with the familiarity of campus life which can be traced back through the students' schooling type – whether they were staying in hostel or not. Conversely, we found that the factors pertaining to family background, ethnicity, and academic programme were less significant in affecting their transition and adaptation in college life. College officers described how they were putting due considerations in giving weight to information furnished by applicants to Mawar. Later, the information about the students are cross-checked with the previous record of stay (if any), along with the information provided by the Mawar's JPK. This practice may have impacted the level of transition and support of increased adaptation of students, particularly those with prior exposure to the campus life.

Furthermore, research in the US has revealed that students who are like previous students might be perceived less risky and more admissible; while more unusual students have to be truly exceptional rather than merely very good to gain admission (Stevens, et al., 2008). The adaptation among students of this groups are better as they have the advantageous position of staying in Mawar previously.

The study design may not exclude other possible explanations for the remaining family background, ethnicity, and academic programme. For instance, it also emerged that staying in college is preferred as it reduced the perceived risk of safety, a lot of financial saving (as renting outside is very costly), easy access to Faculty and plenty of friends to consult for any academic matters. Much as student want to stay off campus, there were many that would be willing to go at great length to get admitted to College, ie. parents seeking help from somebody they know that can count on their appeal process. If anything, parents are often ambivalent about children having to stay off campus.

Finally, the study showed that the focus on past experience staying in college and differentials in secondary schooling may have come at the cost of neglecting other issues of family background, ethnicity, and academic programme. The study suggests that deliberate and systematic efforts would be desirable to increase the level of adaptation to college life which eventually hoped to also increase students' chance for excellence in both academic as well as personal development. Meanwhile, the choice to stay off-campus may count on the factors such as less restrictive to regulations and more of socialisation purposes.

Conclusion

This research has shown the ways in which how factors relating to family background, ethnicity, academic programme, level of studies and secondary schooling affecting students level of adaptation in a college environment. Key findings revealed that student adaptations of college life and their potential to excel varied with their different profiles. The previous experience of learning and staying College are mostly affecting their expectation and readiness to adapt and excel. What is needed is a pragmatic place (college) which provides a blend of harmonious environment to promote the strong college identity with reasonable degree of trust and confidence among its community – staff and students. In this regard, the practical strategies may include the formation of buddy system giving students the opportunity to share unique college life experience with their colleagues whom have been staying in college before and offering individual coaching on the time management, use of college facilities, protection of personal safety, importance of abiding to the College regulations, and even discipline of punctuality and regular attendance to College activities. Also helpful are programmes of peer mentoring in which senior students (under the guidance of college resident staff - SRK) from the upper level of studies support the new students at college and help them acclimatize to the college life. This can be done through introducing them into new collegiality networks and accompanying them to larger scale events (i.e. Sports Carnival or FEMINA³) or organise activities with specially designated programme even at the each level or block (the level's representative should take the lead). The flexibility of allowing them to attend relevant programmes at other Colleges, through recognising the activities coupon from others is proposed. The logic is that some programmes organised at other College of places appear to be more relevant and interesting for them to attend voluntarily.

It is also important to ensure all blocks must be occupied with students who are coming from various programmes and level of studies. The college management should respond to the call for more diversity in college provision and choice in staying on-campus. All of these recommendations require an integrated approach that places emphasis on empowering students, connects them with college staff and officers, promotes their self-esteem, sense of comradeship and identity, while provide them avenue to express constructive ideas and even criticism towards continuous improvement. Despite all these, the choice to stay off campus is open wide for those who want to as much as those who do not intend to becoming non-resident. It is note-worthy that one of the prominent issues running through the whole scenario is the dilemma between conscientious decision of staying in college for some, as much as the choice of deliberately staying off-campus, for others.

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³ A signature programme with wide range of events/activities that has been consistently organised by Mawar College co-organised by SRK, JPK and Mawar College at every Semester, in the duration of one week.

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