

# **Analysis Of Adaptation Challenges Of New Students Faculty Of Economics, Jakarta State University To The Campus Environment**

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## **Abstract**

This study aims to analyze the adaptation challenges faced by new students in the Faculty of Economics at Jakarta State University towards the campus environment. This research employs a qualitative method with descriptive and analytical approaches, involving new students as the primary participants. The findings reveal that adaptation challenges are multidimensional, encompassing academic, social, cultural, and financial aspects. Campus orientation programs play a significant role in assisting students' adaptation, particularly through campus culture introduction, social networking, and financial management. Students' adaptation strategies include time management, building social connections, and exploring local culture. This study concludes by highlighting the importance of university support in facilitating new students' adaptation to ensure their academic and social success.

**Keyword:** Student adaptation; campus challenges; campus orientation; adaptation strategies; new students.

## 1. Introduction

Human beings are inherently social creatures, constantly evolving and adjusting to the social environments they inhabit. As individuals enter new social spheres, the need to adapt becomes crucial for survival and development. This process of adaptation is a fundamental aspect of human life, beginning in childhood within the family environment, which serves as the first learning ground for social integration. However, as individuals progress into adolescence, the challenges of adaptation intensify, particularly during the transition from childhood to adulthood. As Hurlock (1980) notes, the developmental tasks of adolescence are particularly difficult, with social adjustment being one of the most complex aspects.

The first year of college is considered a critical phase in a student's academic journey, serving as the foundation for their overall university experience. From a developmental perspective, this transition marks a significant shift from adolescence to adulthood, where internal skills such as self-regulation, responsibility, decision-making, and independence become paramount (Arnett, 2001). Thus, the ability to adapt during the first year of college is a key indicator of academic success throughout the entire university period. College adjustment, as defined by Stoklosa (2015), encompasses a range of interactions between students and their surrounding environment, including student achievement and social growth.

Adaptation in college is multifaceted, involving not only academic challenges but also personal, emotional, and social adjustments. Researchers such as Abdullah et al. (2009) highlight the complexity of this process, which requires effective support and guidance to ensure students adapt healthily and productively. Studies have shown that successful adaptation in the first year is strongly linked to academic achievement in subsequent years (Crede & Niehorster, 2012). As such, understanding the factors that influence college adaptation is crucial for developing effective student support systems.

In this context, the researcher conducted a pre-survey among first-year students at the Faculty of Economics, Universitas Negeri Jakarta, to explore the challenges they face in adapting to the campus environment. The survey results revealed that 60% of students experience stress or anxiety related to academic and social pressures, with 70% identifying difficulties in forming social relationships, and 90% attributing their challenges to cultural and social background differences. Furthermore, time management and adjusting to new learning styles were also noted as significant adaptation challenges. These insights provide a foundation for examining the various obstacles that students encounter in their adaptation process.

This study aims to address several critical questions regarding the adaptation challenges faced by first-year students at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. The first question explores the specific obstacles students encounter while adjusting to their new campus environment. These challenges may include academic pressures, social integration, cultural differences, and personal development. The second question investigates whether the university's campus orientation program effectively supports students in overcoming these challenges, helping them acclimatize to both the academic and social demands of university life. Finally, the third question seeks to uncover the strategies students employ to overcome the difficulties they face in adapting to their new environment. By examining these areas, the research will provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing students' ability to successfully transition to university life.

The primary objective of this study is to identify and understand the main challenges that first-year students face when adapting to the campus environment at Universitas Negeri Jakarta. This includes both academic and non-academic challenges, such as forming social relationships and managing personal well-being. A secondary goal is to explore the experiences of students as they navigate the transition from high school to university, focusing on how they adjust to the social and cultural dynamics of campus life. Additionally, the research aims to examine the various strategies that students utilize to overcome these adaptation challenges, such as seeking peer support, utilizing campus resources, or developing personal coping mechanisms. Through these objectives, the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the adaptation process and offer practical insights for improving student support programs.

This research offers significant value both to the author and to the broader academic and educational community. For the author, the study will provide a rich understanding of the adaptation process, offering insights into the difficulties and strategies that first-year students face in university. These findings will serve as a valuable contribution to academic literature, particularly in the fields of student development and higher education. Furthermore, the research will be instrumental in guiding future studies that seek to enhance student experiences in higher education settings.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 College Adaptation**

The transition from high school to university is a significant life event that brings about various challenges for students, necessitating a process of adaptation. The concept of college adaptation refers to how students adjust to the new academic, social, and personal demands of university life. Over the years, numerous theoretical frameworks have been proposed to understand the factors influencing student adaptation, shedding light on both individual and institutional components of the adaptation process. Tinto's (1993) theory of student departure is one of the most widely cited frameworks in the study of college adaptation, focusing on the integration of students into the academic and social systems of higher education. According to Tinto, student persistence and success are largely dependent on their academic and social integration, with students who become more engaged with both academic and social communities being more likely to remain in university and achieve academic success.

Tinto's (1993) model of student integration posits that students' ability to adjust to university life is influenced by their academic and social integration. Academic integration refers to the degree to which students are able to meet academic expectations and feel connected to their academic environment. Social integration involves students' ability to form relationships with peers, faculty, and staff, which helps them establish a sense of belonging within the campus community. Tinto argues that students who experience high levels of both academic and social integration are more likely to stay in university and succeed academically. Conversely, students who struggle with either academic or social integration are at greater risk of leaving higher education prematurely. This theory has been instrumental in understanding the importance of social support, involvement in campus activities, and the establishment of meaningful academic relationships for promoting student success and retention.

## **2.2 Social Support Theory**

The role of social support in college adaptation has been a focal point in several theoretical perspectives. Social support, in the context of college life, refers to the emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance that students receive from their social network, including family, peers, and faculty. According to Cobb (1976), social support serves as a protective buffer against the negative effects of stress, which is particularly relevant for students as they navigate the academic and personal pressures of university life. Theories of social support, such as the Stress and Coping Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), suggest that individuals rely on their social networks to cope with stressors and challenges. For university students, social support is essential in mitigating the stress associated with academic workload, social integration, and personal adjustment. Research has shown that students with stronger social networks tend to report higher levels of satisfaction with their university experience and are more likely to perform well academically (Pancer et al., 2000).

Furthermore, the concept of "social capital," as introduced by Bourdieu (1986), highlights the value of social networks and relationships in the process of adaptation. Social capital theory suggests that students who actively engage in building social relationships, whether through academic groups, social clubs, or extracurricular activities, are better equipped to navigate the social landscape of university life. These social networks provide access to resources, information, and emotional support that enhance students' ability to adapt successfully to the academic and social demands of university.

## **2.3 Self-Determination and Motivation Theory**

In addition to social support, motivational factors play a significant role in college adaptation. Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that motivation is critical for individuals to achieve personal growth and adapt to new environments. SDT distinguishes between intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing an activity for its inherent satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation, which involves performing a task to attain an external goal. According to SDT, students who are intrinsically motivated—those who engage in academic and social activities because they find them fulfilling—are more likely to succeed in their adaptation process. In the context of university life, intrinsic motivation leads to greater engagement in learning, increased persistence in the face of challenges, and higher levels of overall satisfaction. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation, while effective in achieving short-term goals, may not foster long-term academic success or social integration if students lack a sense of personal purpose or connection to their studies.

The concept of autonomy, which is central to SDT, is also crucial in understanding college adaptation. Autonomy refers to the degree to which students feel that their actions are self-directed and aligned with their personal values. Students who perceive their academic and social activities as self-chosen are more likely to experience a sense of ownership and commitment to their university experience. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), fostering students' autonomy through supportive teaching practices, opportunities for self-directed learning, and involvement in decision-making processes can enhance their motivation and, in turn, facilitate successful adaptation.

## **2.4 Stress and Coping Theory**

Theories of stress and coping provide a useful lens through which to understand how students manage the challenges of college life. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) Stress and Coping Theory posits that individuals evaluate stressors based on their perceptions of threat and their available resources for coping. In the context of college adaptation, students face multiple stressors, such as academic pressure, social challenges, and financial concerns. According to this theory, students who perceive these stressors as manageable and who possess adequate coping resources—such as problem-solving skills, emotional regulation, and social support—are more likely to adapt successfully. Conversely, students who feel overwhelmed by stress and lack effective coping strategies may experience negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and academic failure.

Stress management strategies, such as time management, mindfulness, and relaxation techniques, are commonly employed by students to cope with the pressures of university life. According to Misra and McKean (2000), students who engage in proactive coping strategies tend to report lower levels of academic stress and better overall adjustment. Institutions that provide resources to help students develop coping skills, such as counseling services, workshops on stress management, and peer support networks, can enhance students' ability to handle stress and adapt more effectively to university life.

## **3. Material and Method**

### **3.1 Design Study**

This study employs a qualitative approach that focuses on descriptive and analytical methods. In qualitative research, the descriptive aspect involves providing a detailed portrayal of the events, phenomena, and social situations being investigated. The analysis focuses on understanding the meanings, interpretations, and comparisons of data derived from the research findings. Another perspective on qualitative research is that it is a method for discovering meanings, understanding, concepts, characteristics, symptoms, symbols, and descriptions of phenomena. It is a multi-method, focused, naturalistic, and holistic approach that prioritizes quality and uses dual approaches, all presented in a scientific narrative format (Sidiq & Choiri, 2019). The researcher is the primary instrument in qualitative research, analyzing and giving meaning to each unique phenomenon, symptom, or social situation. To test the gap between theoretical ideas and actual reality, researchers need to be proficient in theory.

In terms of the study design, the research takes place at the Faculty of Economics, Universitas Negeri Jakarta (UNJ), which is located on Jl. Rawamangun Muka Raya No. 11, Rawamangun, East Jakarta. This university campus serves as the main hub for the institution's administrative activities. The campus is equipped with essential facilities, including a central library, an auditorium, and multiple lecture halls serving various faculties. Transportation to this campus is easily accessible through public transportation, particularly the TransJakarta Corridor 4, which stops at the UNJ Rawamangun station.

### **3.2 Data Analysis**

Data analysis in qualitative research is a process of organizing, categorizing, grouping, coding, or labeling data to produce conclusions that focus on addressing the research questions or issues under investigation (Saleh, 2021). The primary goal of this analysis is to extract critical information that can guide decision-making for addressing the research problem. The process of data analysis is divided into four main stages.

The first stage of data analysis is Data Collection, where analysis is performed in tandem with the data collection process. Information gathered through observation, document review, and interviews is used to facilitate the research process. The data from interviews and observations are subsequently expanded to identify relevant additional information.

Following data collection, the second stage is Data Reduction. Field data are typically diverse and require careful recording. Reducing data involves filtering and summarizing the data, focusing on the essential elements, and identifying patterns and themes. This process helps the researcher gain a clearer understanding, simplifying the process of collecting further data and facilitating easier access to important information when needed.

The third stage, Data Presentation, involves organizing and presenting the reduced data. In qualitative research, data are typically presented in the form of simple narratives, diagrams, category relationships, flowcharts, and the like. Miles and Huberman (1994) often employ narrative text as the main method for data presentation. Additionally, data can be presented in other forms, such as graphs, matrices, networks, or diagrams, to support the descriptive text.

Finally, the fourth stage is Verification or Conclusion Drawing. The final phase of qualitative data analysis involves forming and testing conclusions. Initial conclusions may be tentative and subject to change until sufficient strong evidence is gathered. However, when the researcher returns to the field and obtains valid and consistent evidence, these conclusions can be considered reliable. In qualitative research, the conclusions offer new insights, whether in the form of clearer descriptions of the object of study, causal relationships, hypotheses, or even new theories.

The data analysis process described here is vital for understanding and interpreting the experiences of new students adapting to the academic and social environment at the Faculty of Economics at UNJ. It allows the researcher to extract meaningful insights that can contribute to a deeper understanding of the adaptation challenges faced by these students.

#### **4. Result**

The interviews provided valuable insights into the adaptation challenges that new students faced at the university. According to Participant A, one of the biggest challenges was adjusting to the new learning style in university. He noted that in high school, learning was more teacher-directed, whereas university demanded a more independent approach to studying. This included managing time effectively, studying on one's own, and handling a heavier and more complex workload. He also mentioned the difficulty of balancing academic and extracurricular activities, which required greater self-discipline and prioritization.

Participant B, a student from outside Jakarta, highlighted the challenges of adapting to a new city, including the local language, the fast-paced lifestyle of Jakarta, and the higher cost of living. She mentioned feeling self-conscious about using the local slang and worried about misunderstandings. The rapid pace of life in Jakarta, along with the pressure of managing time and finances, was another significant challenge she faced. Moreover, she experienced culture shock due to the openness and diversity in Jakarta's social norms, which were quite different from her hometown.

Table 1. Participant Demographic

No	Participant	Age	Sex	Status
1	Participant A	18	L	New Student
2	Participant B	18	P	New Student

#### 4.1 Campus Orientation and Adaptation

Both participants expressed that the campus orientation program was very helpful in their adaptation process. Participant A shared that the orientation helped him adjust to the independent learning environment by providing information on time management and study resources like the campus library. Additionally, the opportunity to meet new friends and senior students during the orientation allowed him to gain valuable tips on how to cope with academic challenges. For Participant A, the orientation offered a comprehensive introduction to the academic culture at UNJ, making him feel more prepared for university life.

Participant B also found the orientation helpful, particularly in navigating the cultural differences as a student from outside Jakarta. Through the program, she met other students from different regions, which made her feel less isolated. The orientation introduced her to the university's culture, values, and rules, helping her understand the new environment better. Practical tips on navigating the campus and using public transportation in Jakarta also contributed to her smoother transition.

#### 4.2 Adaptation Strategies

Both participants employed various strategies to adapt to their new environment. Participant A focused on becoming more independent and organized. He created a daily and weekly schedule to manage his academic workload and ensure that he completed assignments on time. Additionally, he made efforts to deepen his understanding of course materials by consulting additional sources, such as books and journals, and by participating in study groups with classmates and seniors. This proactive approach allowed him to adapt to the demanding academic environment of university life.

Participant B's adaptation strategy involved building a social network quickly by participating in campus activities and joining student organizations. This helped her connect with people from diverse backgrounds, making her feel more at home. She also made efforts to understand the local culture, including learning local expressions and adapting to the fastpaced lifestyle of Jakarta. Managing her time and finances became essential as she learned to navigate the higher cost of living in Jakarta. Despite these challenges, she made sure to stay connected to her roots by engaging in activities from her hometown, which helped her maintain a sense of identity while adjusting to her new environment.

### 5. Discussion

The adaptation process of new students at universities, particularly at Universitas Negeri Jakarta, involves a range of challenges that affect their well-being and academic success. These challenges are multidimensional, encompassing academic, social, emotional, cultural, and financial aspects. The interviews with two participants in this study show that while both

students faced different challenges, successful adaptation requires proactive attitudes, openness to change, and support from the campus and social environment.

Participant A, who focused more on academic challenges, highlighted the significant differences in learning styles between high school and university, especially in terms of independent learning and time management. Adapting to a more autonomous learning approach, where students are expected to organize their own time and study materials, was one of the main obstacles they faced. This finding aligns with the theory that the transition from a more structured education system at the high school level to a more flexible system at the university level is often a major challenge for new students. Furthermore, Participant A also struggled with the volume of course material, which was more complex and deeper, requiring them to seek additional learning resources such as journals and books. On the other hand, Participant B faced broader challenges, including cultural differences, language barriers, and financial pressures as an out-of-town student. The differences in communication style in Jakarta, which is more casual and uses local slang, were one of the first obstacles they encountered when interacting with peers.

In terms of adaptation strategies, both participants implemented different approaches depending on their background and specific challenges. Participant A focused on academic and self-management strategies, such as developing independence, organizing study schedules, seeking additional learning materials, and building relationships with classmates and seniors. Participant B, however, concentrated more on social, cultural, and financial aspects, emphasizing the importance of building a social network, understanding the local culture, and managing finances and time to adapt to life in Jakarta. Both participants' strategies align with the broader concept of adaptation, which involves developing independence, social skills, and cultural understanding, combining internal and external efforts to successfully adjust to the university environment.

Overall, the adaptation process for new students is highly dependent on their individual backgrounds and the challenges they face. The support provided by the campus, including orientation programs, is crucial in helping students navigate these challenges. Orientation programs that introduce students to the academic and social culture, as well as provide resources and networking opportunities, play an essential role in easing their transition into university life.

## **6. Conclusion, Implication, and Recommendation**

New students face multidimensional challenges during their adaptation to university life, which include academic, social, cultural, and financial aspects. The transition from high school to university often requires students to become more independent and organized, as the learning environment in higher education demands self-discipline and self-direction. Additionally, out-of-town students encounter extra challenges, such as cultural differences, lifestyle changes, and financial pressures, which can significantly affect their adaptation process.

Orientation programs play a vital role in helping students overcome these challenges. Through orientation, students gain an understanding of the academic system, campus culture, and available resources. These programs also facilitate the development of social networks, help students internalize the university's values, and enable a smoother adjustment to the new environment.

The strategies employed by students to adapt are diverse and tailored to their individual needs and backgrounds. Effective time management, utilizing campus resources, building social connections, and managing finances are key strategies. These approaches not only help students adapt more confidently but also support their integration into campus life.

Future research should aim to involve a broader range of participants, including students from different faculties, universities, or geographic regions. This could provide a more holistic view of the challenges faced by new students across various contexts. Additionally, combining qualitative and quantitative methods in future studies, such as incorporating surveys or questionnaires, could offer a more comprehensive dataset and allow for deeper analysis. Finally, exploring the supporting factors in students' adaptation process, such as the role of family, friends, faculty, and campus programs, could offer valuable insights into how to improve the overall success of new students' transitions.

### **7. Acknowledge (if any)**

This study provides valuable insights into the adaptation process of new students, especially in the context of Universitas Negeri Jakarta. However, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the sample size of this research was limited, involving only two participants from the Faculty of Economics. This limited sample size restricts the generalizability of the findings, as the challenges faced by new students may vary across different faculties or universities. Second, the research was conducted exclusively at Universitas Negeri Jakarta, which means the findings may not reflect the adaptation challenges at other campuses with different social, cultural, or infrastructural conditions. Lastly, the study relied solely on qualitative methods, specifically interviews, without quantitative data to support the findings. A more comprehensive approach could have included surveys or statistical data to enrich the analysis.

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