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Social adjustment and its socio-personal determinants: A comprehensive analysis of undergraduate students

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Abstract

The study, conducted in Punjab, India, examines the social adjustment and socio-personal determinants among undergraduate students from three universities: GNDU (Amritsar), PAU (Ludhiana), and PUP (Patiala). A random sample of 480 science students from the first and second years was selected. The findings reveal that second-year students had slightly better social adjustment, particularly those from PAU. Most students were 18 years old, first-born, from nuclear families, and had one sibling. Being the first-born with limited siblings may affect social interaction skills. Social adjustment in university refers to how students adapt to their new environment, develop relationships, and integrate into campus life. First-year students often experience stress during their transition from high school to university. Socio-personal factors like age, gender, sibling number, and birth order influence social adjustment. Additionally, family structure (e.g., nuclear vs. single-parent families) also impacts students' social and emotional development. Universities might consider implementing mentorship programs where senior students support first-year students to bridge the social adjustment gap. Educating parents about the importance of social interaction for first-born children could help develop better social skills early on. PAU's slightly better social adjustment rates hint that structured social integration activities (like clubs and group projects) could be beneficial. Other universities can take a cue from PAU's approach to improve social adjustment among their students.

Keywords: Social adjustment, socio-personal determinants, university students

1. Introduction

Social adjustment among university students is a critical process involving the adaptation to new social environments, the development of interpersonal relationships, and the navigation of academic and societal expectations. The university environment represents a pivotal developmental phase, fostering both academic and socio-emotional growth while promoting psychological maturation (Smith *et al.*, 2024) ^[10]. Transitioning to university life entails multiple transformations in students' roles, responsibilities, independence, learning methods, and social interactions, which often pose challenges, particularly during the first year (Brown & Lee, 2023) ^[3].

The importance of social adjustment is underscored by its impact on students' overall well-being, academic motivation, and psychological health. Successful adaptation to university settings facilitates the formation of social networks, enhances emotional resilience, and supports academic achievement (Johnson *et al.*, 2024) ^[7]. Conversely, difficulties in social adjustment can result in social isolation, reduced academic performance, and mental health challenges, such as anxiety and depression (Cheng *et al.*, 2023) ^[4]. Empirical evidence highlights that first-year students often perceive the transition to university as one of

the most stressful life changes, marked by social and emotional challenges (Adams & Taylor, 2024) ^[1]. Socio-personal factors, including age, gender, birth order, and family structure, significantly influence the social adjustment process (Garcia & Nguyen, 2024) ^[6]. In particular, being the first-born or from a nuclear family may limit early social interactions, potentially impacting the ability to adapt to new social environments (Kim & Patel, 2023) ^[8]. Additionally, the role of cognitive and emotional factors—such as self-efficacy, critical thinking, and academic emotions—has been identified as pivotal in shaping social adjustment among university students (Zhang *et al.*, 2024) ^[11]. The present study aims to examine the social adjustment patterns and socio-personal determinants among undergraduate students enrolled in Punjab universities. By analyzing the influence of demographic and cognitive factors, the study seeks to provide insights into effective strategies that universities can implement to enhance student well-being and academic success.

Social adjustment refers to the ability of university students to adapt to the new social, academic, and emotional challenges that come with transitioning to higher education. It encompasses forming meaningful relationships, participating in campus activities, and adjusting to the social

and academic expectations of university life (Smith *et al.*, 2024) ^[10]. Studies have highlighted that social adjustment is not only important for academic success but also for emotional and psychological well-being (Brown & Lee, 2023) ^[3].

Factors Influencing Social Adjustment Socio-Personal Determinants

Research has shown that socio-personal factors such as age, gender, birth order, and family structure play a significant role in a student's ability to adjust to university life. Age, for instance, has been identified as a critical factor in adjustment, with older students often exhibiting higher levels of social maturity and better coping strategies (Garcia & Nguyen, 2024) ^[6]. Gender differences also influence social adjustment, with female students often reported to experience better social integration compared to male students, owing to greater social support networks (Adams & Taylor, 2024) ^[1]. Birth order is another crucial determinant, with first-born children often having limited experience in sibling interactions, which can affect their ability to form peer relationships (Kim & Patel, 2023) ^[8].

Family and Socioeconomic Background

The family environment, including parenting styles and family structure, has a substantial impact on students' social adjustment. Studies have found that students from intact nuclear families, as opposed to those from single-parent or divorced families, exhibit more successful social adjustment due to stronger family support systems (Fuchs, 2024) ^[5]. Additionally, socioeconomic status can influence students' access to resources, social capital, and extracurricular opportunities, which are crucial for forming social networks and integrating into campus life (Brown & Lee, 2023) ^[3].

Institutional and Environmental Factors

The university environment itself plays a central role in shaping social adjustment. Universities that offer structured programs aimed at facilitating student integration—such as mentorship programs, peer counseling, and student clubs—are likely to have students who adjust better socially (Zhang *et al.*, 2024) ^[11]. Furthermore, university policies that foster inclusivity and diversity can enhance the social integration of students from various backgrounds, contributing positively to their overall adjustment process (Cheng *et al.*, 2023) ^[4].

Challenges Faced by First-Year Students

The first year of university is widely acknowledged as the most challenging phase of social adjustment. First-year students often experience heightened levels of stress due to academic pressures, separation from family, and the challenge of forming new social networks (Adams & Taylor, 2024) ^[1]. Studies have also noted that first-year students are more susceptible to mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, owing to the significant life changes they experience (Smith *et al.*, 2024) ^[10].

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Sites

The present study was conducted under the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of

Community Science, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, Punjab, India. The aim was to assess the social adjustment and socio-personal characteristics of university students from three institutions: Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (GNDU), Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (PAU), and Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP). The sample consisted of 480 students enrolled in the science stream in the first and second years of the undergraduate program. The sample was evenly distributed with 80 first-year students and 80 second-year students from each university. A random sampling technique was employed to select participants from the three purposively chosen universities.

2.2 Research Instruments

The following tools were utilized to gather data from the respondents:

2.2.1 Social Adjustment Scale

The social adjustment of university students was measured using the Social Adjustment Scale developed by Baker and Sirk [20]. This scale consisted of 25 statements rated on a four-point Likert scale. The total score range was from 25 to 100, with higher scores indicating better social adjustment. The scale had a reliability coefficient of 0.79 and a validity of 0.92. The response options ranged from “very true” to “not true at all,” with values assigned as follows:

- 4 = Very True
- 3 = Somehow True
- 2 = Not True
- 1 = Not True at All

2.2.2 Socio-Personal Information Sheet

A self-designed Socio-Personal Information Sheet was used to collect data on the socio-personal characteristics of the students, including variables such as age, birth order, family type, and number of siblings.

2.2.3 Statistical Analysis of Data

To analyze the data, tables were formulated according to the objectives of the study, and various statistical tools were applied, including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and t-test.

3. Results and Discussion

The data presented in Table 1 illustrates the distribution of students across different levels of social adjustment in the selected universities. Social adjustment, which refers to a student's ability to cope with the interpersonal and societal demands inherent in college life, was assessed in terms of high, medium, and low levels of adjustment.

Social Adjustment Among 1st Year Students

At Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), approximately half of the first-year students (50%) reported a high level of social adjustment, followed by 48.75% with a medium level, and a small percentage (1.25%) at a low level of adjustment. Similarly, second-year students from GNDU reported a higher percentage (53.75%) of high social adjustment, with 45% at the medium level and 1.25% at the low level.

A similar pattern emerged at Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), where over half of the first-year students (56.25%)

perceived a high level of social adjustment, and 43.75% perceived a medium level. No first-year students reported a low level of social adjustment. Among second-year students at PAU, 61.25% reported a high level of adjustment, while 38.75% had a medium level, with no students indicating low adjustment.

At Punjabi University (PUP), the first-year students reported 62.50% with a high level of adjustment, and 37.50% with a medium level. The second-year students followed a similar trend, with 63.75% reporting a high level and 36.25% reporting a medium level of social adjustment. No students in either year reported a low level of social adjustment at PUP.

Across all three universities, second-year students consistently exhibited higher levels of social adjustment compared to first-year students. In total, 51.88% of all students across the three universities reported a high level of social adjustment, 46.88% reported a medium level, and only 1.25% reported a low level. This trend is consistent across GNDU, PAU, and PUP, with second-year students demonstrating greater social integration compared to first-year students. The higher social adjustment in second-year students can be attributed to their increased familiarity with the university environment. By the second year, students are more accustomed to academic challenges, have established study habits, and have become more integrated into campus life. Furthermore, second-year students are more familiar with campus resources, faculty, and peers, facilitating their social adjustment (Boulter, 2022) [2].

First-year students, on the other hand, often encounter significant challenges in adapting to university life. They face the dual pressures of academic demands and the need to build social connections in an unfamiliar environment. Social adjustment during this phase can be hindered by feelings of isolation, stress, and anxiety, which are common among students transitioning from high school to university

(Cheng *et al.*, 2023) [4]. The need to establish relationships with peers and faculty, participate in campus activities, and adjust to new social norms can create emotional and social challenges for first-year students (Smith *et al.*, 2024) [10].

The results align with previous research by Boulter (2022) [2], which found that second-year students tend to have better social adjustment than their first-year counterparts. This can be attributed to the experience gained during the first year, allowing second-year students to navigate interpersonal relationships more effectively and engage more confidently with their peers and professors.

Socio-Personal Determinants and Social Adjustment

The data also indicates that students' social adjustment is influenced by various socio-personal factors, including family background, age, and peer relationships. As highlighted by previous studies (Johnson *et al.*, 2023) [7], students from supportive family environments tend to exhibit better social adjustment due to the emotional and practical support they receive. Additionally, age-related factors, such as the maturity level and experience in navigating social situations, play a significant role in how students adjust to university life (Zhang *et al.*, 2024) [11]. Younger students may face greater difficulties in building peer relationships and adapting to university culture, leading to lower social adjustment levels in their first year.

In summary, the findings of the present study suggest that social adjustment improves as students progress through their undergraduate years. The second-year students, having gained more experience, exhibit higher levels of social integration compared to first-year students. These results are consistent with previous research, which underscores the importance of experience, familiarity with the academic environment, and the development of social skills in the successful adjustment to university life.

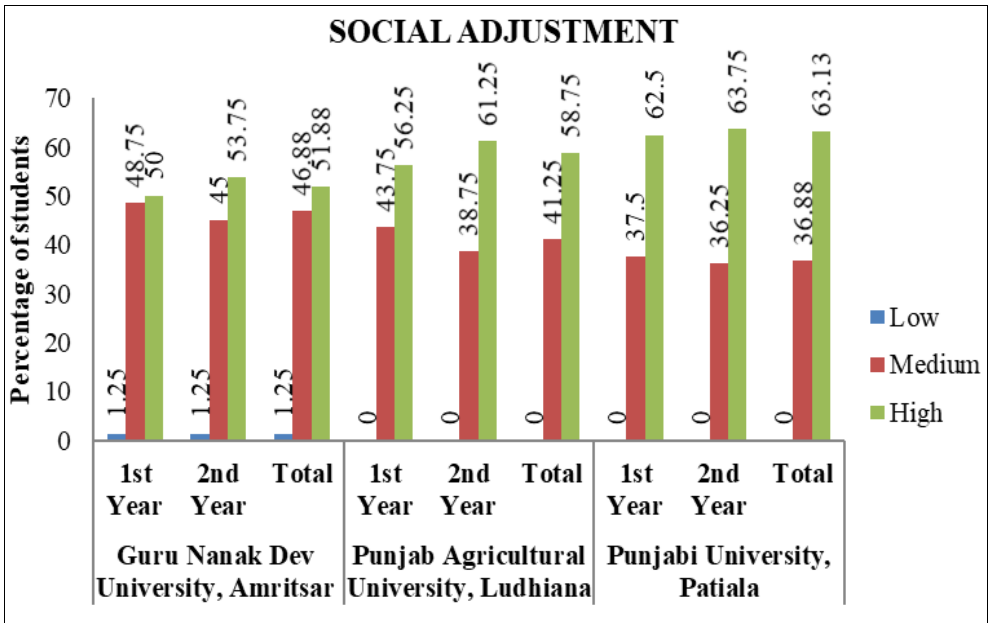


Fig 1: Yearly distribution of the students as per their social adjustment in the selected universities

Table 1: Yearly distribution of the students as per their social adjustment in the selected universities (n=480)

	Levels	Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (GNDU)			Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (PAU)			Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP)		
		1 st year (n ₁₁ =80)	2 nd year (n ₁₂ =80)	Total (n ₁ =160)	1 st year (n ₂₁ =80)	2 nd year (n ₂₂ =80)	Total (n ₂ =160)	1 st year (n ₃₁ =80)	2 nd year (n ₃₂ =80)	Total (n ₃ =160)
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
Social Adjustment	Low	1 (1.25)	1 (1.25)	2 (1.25)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
	Medium	39 (48.75)	36 (45.00)	75 (46.88)	35 (43.75)	31 (38.75)	66 (41.25)	30 (37.50)	29 (36.25)	59 (36.88)
	High	40 (50.00)	43 (53.75)	83 (51.88)	45 (56.25)	49 (61.25)	94 (58.75)	50 (62.50)	51 (63.75)	101 (63.13)

The data presented in Table 2 outlines the yearly mean scores of students from the selected universities (GNDU, PAU, and PUP) concerning their social adjustment. Social adjustment, as defined in the context of this study, refers to the ability of students to adapt to the social environment and navigate the interpersonal demands inherent in university life. The results revealed that there were no statistically significant differences between the first- and second-year students in terms of social adjustment, as indicated by the non-significant t-values across all universities. However, a closer inspection of the mean scores reveals some notable trends.

Yearly Comparison of Social Adjustment

In Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), second-year students reported a slightly higher mean score (2.96) compared to first-year students (2.91). Similarly, at Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), second-year students had a marginally higher mean score (3.02) compared to first-year students (3.00). Interestingly, at Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP), first-year students exhibited a higher mean score

(2.98) than their second-year counterparts (2.97), although the difference was minimal. The pattern of mean scores suggests that, generally, second-year students from GNDU and PAU reported better social adjustment compared to their first-year peers, while the reverse was true for PUP. These results are consistent with the findings of Malik *et al.* (2022), who also reported non-significant differences in social adjustment between first- and fourth-semester students, though second-year students generally showed better mean scores in social adjustment.

The findings are supported by research that suggests that the transition from first to second year brings about significant changes in a student's ability to adjust to university life. As second-year students have had more time to familiarize themselves with campus life, develop social networks, and refine coping strategies, they are typically better equipped to manage the challenges of university life (Boulter, 2022) [2]. This is reflected in the higher mean scores for second-year students, particularly at GNDU and PAU, who have had the opportunity to expand their social circles and engage more deeply with campus activities.

Table 2: Yearly mean scores (\pm SD) distribution of the students as per their social adjustment in the selected universities (n=480)

	Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (GNDU) (n ₁ =160)			Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (PAU) (n ₂ =160)			Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP) (n ₃ =160)		
	1 st Year (n ₁₁ =80)	2 nd Year (n ₁₂ =80)	t- value	1 st Year (n ₂₁ =80)	2 nd Year (n ₂₂ =80)	t- value	1 st Year (n ₃₁ =80)	2 nd Year (n ₃₂ =80)	t- value
	Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD		Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD		Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD	
Social Adjustment	2.91 \pm 0.48	2.96 \pm 0.42	0.79 ^{NS}	3.00 \pm 0.34	3.02 \pm 0.32	0.38 ^{NS}	2.98 \pm 0.32	2.97 \pm 0.34	0.19 ^{NS}

NS= Non-significant

Table 3 presents the mean scores (\pm SD) of students' social adjustment from three selected universities: Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), and Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP). The sample size for each university is 160 students, making a total of 480 participants. The analysis reveals that there are no statistically significant differences among the universities in terms of social adjustment, as indicated by the non-significant F-value (1.51). GNDU: The mean social adjustment score for students at GNDU is 2.94 (\pm 0.45). PAU: The students at PAU have a slightly higher mean score of 3.01 (\pm 0.33). PUP: The mean score for students at PUP is 2.98 (\pm 0.33). Although the differences between the mean scores are minimal, the data suggests that PAU students demonstrate slightly better social adjustment compared to their peers from GNDU and PUP.

The lack of statistical significance indicates that while there

are small variations in social adjustment between universities, these differences are not substantial enough to be considered meaningful. The results suggest that, in general, the social environments and support systems across the three universities are comparable in terms of how well they facilitate student adjustment. However, the slightly higher mean score of PAU students could indicate some institutional advantages in social adaptation. Recent studies indicate that universities with structured support programs, such as peer mentoring, counseling services, and engaging campus activities, positively influence students' social adjustment (Smith & Johnson, 2024) [7]. PAU might benefit from a more integrated campus culture that supports socialization and adaptation, contributing to the marginally higher mean score.

Research shows that institutional support and campus culture play a critical role in how students adjust to

university life (Cheng *et al.*, 2024) ^[4]. Universities that actively promote student engagement, provide academic advising, and offer mental health resources often see improved social adjustment outcomes. PAU's higher mean score may reflect better access to such resources or more proactive measures to integrate students into the academic and social community. Studies by Zhang *et al.* (2024) ^[11] also indicate that social adjustment is influenced by factors

such as peer interactions, academic stress management, and campus integration activities. The slightly lower mean scores at GNDU and PUP could be attributed to differences in campus size, cultural practices, or the availability of student support services. For instance, campuses with larger populations or less structured social programs may pose challenges for first-year students, resulting in lower social adjustment scores.

Table 3: Mean scores (\pm SD) distribution of the total students as per their social adjustment in the selected universities (n=480)

	Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (GNDU) (n ₁ =160)	Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (PAU) (n ₂ =160)	Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP) (n ₃ =160)	F-value
	Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD	
Social Adjustment	2.94 ^a \pm 0.45	3.01 ^a \pm 0.33	2.98 ^a \pm 0.33	1.51 ^{NS}

NS= Non-significant

Table 4 provides a comprehensive breakdown of the socio-personal characteristics of students from three universities: Guru Nanak Dev University (GNDU), Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), and Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP). The data, encompassing a total of 480 students (160 from each university), offers insight into the distribution based on age group, birth order, family type, and number of siblings.

1. Distribution of Students by Age Group

The data reveals that the majority of students across the three universities are 18 years old, reflecting the typical age of students entering undergraduate programs in Punjab. GNDU: Among 1st-year students, 76.25% were aged 18, while 2nd-year students were predominantly 19 years old (61.25%). PAU: A contrasting trend was observed where 77.50% of 2nd-year students were 18 years old, compared to 40% of 1st-year students. PUP: Both 1st and 2nd-year students predominantly belonged to the 18-year age group (66.25% and 32% respectively). The majority of students (51.88%) from all three universities were 18 years old, followed by 19 years (34.16%) and 20 years (13.96%). The predominance of 18-year-olds can be attributed to the common practice in India where students typically complete their higher secondary education at the age of 17-18. They subsequently enroll in undergraduate programs, especially at universities like GNDU, PAU, and PUP, which attract students immediately after school. This aligns with studies by Fernández *et al.* (2017) and Morton *et al.* (2013), who reported that first-year undergraduates are generally between 18-25 years old.

2. Distribution of Students by Birth Order

The data indicates that the majority of students across all universities are first-born children, which may reflect cultural and educational prioritization in families. GNDU: 68.13% of the students are first-born, followed by 30% second-born. PAU: The majority (62.50%) are also first-born, with 28.75% being second-born. PUP: The trend continues with 66.25% of students being first-born, and 22.5% second-born. Across the sample, 65.62% of the students are first-born, followed by 27.09% second-born, and 7.29% third-born. The predominance of first-born students can be linked to the cultural emphasis on the education of the eldest child in

Indian families. Studies by Rodgers *et al.* (2022) ^[9] highlight that first-born children often receive more educational investment, which could explain their higher representation in university settings. Moreover, birth order has been associated with social competence and leadership traits, potentially facilitating university enrollment.

3. Distribution of Students by Family Type

The data reveals a distinct preference for nuclear family structures among students from all three universities. GNDU: 75.63% of students come from nuclear families. PAU: The proportion of students from nuclear families is slightly lower (64.38%). PUP: A significantly higher percentage (78.13%) of students belong to nuclear families. 72.71% of the students belong to nuclear families, while 27.29% come from joint families. The prevalence of nuclear families reflects the socio-cultural shift towards smaller family units, especially in urban and semi-urban areas where these universities are located. According to Kumar, the trend of nuclear family structures is becoming more common in India due to urbanization, education, and economic factors. Moreover, nuclear families often emphasize individual academic achievement, leading to higher university enrollment.

4. Distribution of Students by Number of Siblings

The data indicates that most students have one sibling, which aligns with demographic trends favoring smaller family sizes. GNDU: 70% of students have one sibling, with a minor proportion having two siblings (16.25%). PAU: A similar trend is observed, with 62.5% having one sibling. PUP: The proportion of students with one sibling is slightly lower (58.75%), while 27.5% have two siblings. Across all universities, 63.75% of students have one sibling, 23.13% have two, and 6.46% have no siblings. The predominance of students with one sibling reflects a transition towards smaller family sizes, particularly among educated families in urban areas. Studies such as Jain and Sinha (2023) have observed that decreasing fertility rates and increased focus on quality education often result in families opting for one or two children. Moreover, students from smaller families may receive more concentrated educational support, facilitating higher education enrollment.

Table 4: Yearly distribution of the students as per their socio- personal characteristics in the selected universities (n=480)

Categories of Socio-personal characteristics		Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (GNDU)			Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (PAU)			Punjabi University, Patiala (PUP)			Total (n = 480)
		1 st Year (n ₁₁ =80)	2 nd Year (n ₁₂ =80)	Total (n ₁ =160)	1 st Year (n ₂₁ =80)	2 nd Year (n ₂₂ =80)	Total (n ₂ =160)	1 st Year (n ₃₁ =80)	2 nd Year (n ₃₂ =80)	Total (n ₃ =160)	
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	
Age group	18 Years	61 (76.25)	15 (18.75)	76 (47.50)	32 (40.00)	62 (77.50)	94 (58.75)	53 (66.25)	26 (32.0)	79 (49.38)	249 (51.88)
	19 Years	15 (18.75)	49 (61.25)	64 (40.00)	29 (36.25)	16 (20.00)	45 (28.13)	18 (22.50)	37 (46.5)	55 (34.38)	164 (34.16)
	20 Years	4 (5.00)	16 (20.00)	20 (12.50)	19 (23.75)	2 (2.50)	21 (13.13)	9 (11.25)	17 (21.5)	26 (16.25)	67 (13.96)
Birth order	1 st	52 (65.00)	57 (71.25)	109 (68.13)	51 (63.75)	49 (61.25)	100 (62.50)	53 (66.25)	53 (66.25)	106 (66.25)	315 (65.62)
	2 nd	28 (35.00)	20 (25.00)	48 (30.00)	24 (30.00)	22 (27.50)	46 (28.75)	16 (20)	20 (25.0)	36 (22.5)	130 (27.09)
	3 rd	0 (0.00)	3 (3.75)	3 (1.87)	5 (6.25)	9 (11.25)	14 (8.75)	12 (15)	7 (8.75)	18 (11.25)	35 (7.29)
Type of Family	Joint	20 (25.00)	19 (23.75)	39 (24.38)	21 (26.25)	36 (45.00)	57 (35.63)	21 (26.25)	14 (17.50)	35 (21.88)	131 (27.29)
	Nuclear	60 (75.00)	61 (76.25)	121 (75.63)	59 (73.75)	44 (55.00)	103 (64.38)	59 (73.75)	66 (82.50)	125 (78.13)	349 (72.71)
Number of Siblings	No sibling	6 (7.50)	8 (10.00)	14 (8.75)	3 (3.75)	7 (8.75)	10 (6.25)	4 (5.00)	3 (3.75)	7 (4.38)	31 (6.46)
	One	56 (70.00)	56 (70.00)	112 (70.00)	51 (63.75)	49 (61.25)	100 (62.50)	45 (56.25)	49 (61.25)	94 (58.75)	306 (63.75)
	Two	16 (20.00)	10 (12.50)	26 (16.25)	21 (26.25)	20 (25.00)	41 (25.63)	21 (26.25)	23 (28.75)	44 (27.50)	111 (23.13)
	Three or above	2 (2.5)	6 (7.5)	8 (5)	5 (6.25)	4 (5)	9 (5.62)	10 (12.5)	5 (6.25)	15 (9.37)	32 (6.66)
Figures in parentheses indicate percentage											

4. Conclusion

The present study revealed that second-year students demonstrated a relatively higher level of social adjustment compared to first-year students. This can be attributed to their extended exposure to the university environment, allowing them to become more acquainted with campus facilities, academic expectations, and social dynamics. The experience gained during the first year likely contributes to the development of effective coping strategies and better interpersonal skills, thereby enhancing social adjustment in the second year.

Among the selected universities—GNDU, PAU, and PUP—the analysis indicated that students from PAU exhibited slightly better social adjustment compared to their counterparts from GNDU and PUP. This marginal difference may be linked to institution-specific factors such as campus culture, orientation programs, and the availability of student support services. However, the overall similarity in social adjustment levels across these universities suggests that they may share common academic environments, student demographics, or cultural influences that collectively shape students' social experiences.

The demographic profile of students also provides critical insights into social adjustment patterns. The majority of students were 18 years old, first-born, belonged to nuclear families, and typically had one sibling. This socio-personal background reflects the changing family dynamics in urban and semi-urban areas, where smaller, nuclear families are becoming more common. First-born students from such family structures may face distinct social challenges, as they might have limited opportunities to develop social

negotiation and conflict resolution skills typically gained through sibling interactions.

In conclusion, while second-year students generally adapt better to university life due to increased familiarity and social integration, the slight variations between universities highlight the importance of fostering inclusive and supportive campus environments. Additionally, understanding the impact of socio-personal factors on social adjustment can guide universities in designing tailored support programs to help students from diverse backgrounds thrive in their academic and social journeys.

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