

**FIRST YEAR COLLEGE ADJUSTMENT: THE ROLE OF COPING, EGO-
RESILIENCY, OPTIMISM AND GENDER**

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ABSTRACT

FIRST YEAR COLLEGE ADJUSTMENT: THE ROLE OF COPING, EGO-RESILIENCY, OPTIMISM AND GENDER

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This study investigated the relationship between ways of coping, ego-resiliency, optimism, gender and adjustment of first year students. Participants of the study were 420 Department of Basic English students (173 female, 247 male) from Middle East Technical University in Ankara. The results of multiple regression analysis for the total sample indicated that all the predictor variables (ways of coping, ego resiliency and optimism) were found to be significant predictors of college adjustment. The study found that participants who reported high resilience, optimism and fatalistic and helplessness/self blaming coping scores had better adjustment to college. In addition, the results of the multiple regression analyses conducted for female and male students showed that whereas ego resiliency, optimism, and seeking social support coping, helplessness/self-blaming coping predicted adjustment of female students; ego resiliency, problem solving coping, seeking social support coping, fatalistic coping and helplessness/self-blaming coping were significant predictors of male students' college adjustment.

Keywords: University Adjustment, Ways of Coping, Ego Resiliency, Optimism, Gender.

ÖZ

ÜNİVERSİTE BİRİNCİ SINIF ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN UYUMU: PSİKOLOJİK SAĞLAMLIK, BAŞA ÇIKMA, İYİMSERLİK VE CİNSİYETİN ROLÜ

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Bu çalışma, başa çıkma yolları, psikolojik sağlamlık, iyimserlik ve cinsiyet ile üniversitenin ilk yılında bulunan öğrencilerin uyumu arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemiştir. Çalışmanın katılımcılarını, 420 (173 kız öğrenci, 247 erkek öğrenci) Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi, İngilizce Hazırlık sınıfı öğrencisi oluşturmuştur. Katılımcıların uyum puanlarını analiz etmek için çoklu regresyon analizi kullanılmıştır. Tüm katılımcıların uyum puanları üzerinde yapılan ilk çoklu regresyon analizi tüm yordayıcı değişkenlerin (baş etme yolları, psikolojik sağlamlık ve iyimserlik) üniversiteye uyumu anlamlı bir şekilde yordadığını göstermiştir. Bulgular, psikolojik sağlamlık, iyimserlik, kaderci ve suçlu kendinde bulan başa çıkma strateji puanları yüksek öğrencilerin uyum puanlarının yüksek olduğunu göstermiştir. Çalışmada ayrıca kız ve erkek öğrenciler için ayrı ayrı yapılan çoklu regresyon analizi sonuçları üniversiteye uyumda kızlarda psikolojik sağlamlık, iyimserlik ve sosyal yardım arama ve çaresizlik/kendini suçlayıcı başa çıkmanın; erkeklerde ise psikolojik sağlamlık, problem çözme becerileri, sosyal yardım arama, kaderci/kendini suçlayıcı başa çıkma yollarının yordayıcı değişkenler olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Üniversiteye Uyum, Başa Çıkma Yolları, İyimserlik, Psikolojik Sağlamlık, Cinsiyet

To My Grandmother, Hayriye YALIM.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ.....	v
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	xi
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Purpose of the Study.....	4
1.3 Significance of the Study.....	4
1.4 Definitions of Terms.....	7
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	9
2.1 Definitions and Models of Adjustment.....	9
2.2 College Adjustment.....	12
2.3 Variables Associated with College Student Adjustment.....	16
2.3.1 Coping.....	16
2.3.2 Optimism.....	18
2.3.3 Ego Resilience.....	19
2.3.4 Gender.....	22

2.4	Research on College Adjustment in Turkey.....	23
3.	METHOD.....	26
3.1	Overall Design of the Study.....	26
3.2	Research Questions.....	26
3.3	Population and Sample Selection.....	27
3.4	Data collection Instruments.....	27
3.4.1	Demographic Data Form.....	27
3.4.2	Adjustment to University Questionnaire.....	27
3.4.3	Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ).....	28
3.4.4	Life Orientation Test (LOT).....	30
3.4.5	Ego Resiliency Scale.....	30
3.5	Data Collection Procedure.....	31
3.6	Data Analyses.....	31
3.7	Limitations of the Study.....	31
4.	RESULTS.....	33
4.1	Correlation Coefficients, Means and Standard Deviations among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Total Sample.....	33
4.2	Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Total Sample	34
4.3	Correlation Coefficients, Means and Standard Deviations among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Female Students.....	36
4.4	Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Female Students’ Adjustment Scores.....	37
4.5	Correlation Coefficients, Means and Standard Deviations among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the male students	39
4.6	Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Male first year Students’ Adjustment Scores	40

5. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	43
5.1 Conclusions.....	43
5.2 Implications for Practice and Research.....	46
5.3 Implications for Research.....	47
REFERENCE.....	49
APPENDICES	
A. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA FORM.....	62
B. ÜNİVERSİTEYE UYUM ÖLÇEĞİ.....	63
C. BAŞETME YOLLARI ÖLÇEĞİ.....	65
D. HAYATI YÖNLENDİRME ÖLÇEĞİ.....	67
E. PSİKOLOJİK SAĞLAMLIK ÖLÇEĞİ.....	68

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES

4.1 The Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Total Sample.....	34
4.2 Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Ways of Coping, Dispositional Optimism and Ego-resiliency.....	36
4.3 The Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Female students.....	37
4.4 Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for Females about the Ways of Coping, and Ego-resiliency and Optimism.....	39
4.5 The Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Male Students	40
4.6 Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for Males about the Ways of Coping, Ego Resiliency and Dispositional Optimism.....	42

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

One of the most striking aspects of human experience is that we are always experiencing change as a result of our biology and environment. One of the major changes for many of us in life is, entering to college. Thus freshmen years are regarded as one of the most stressful time period as students adapt to new environment after leaving home (Arthur & Hibert, 1996). The source of the stress or namely “risk factors” in university settings is extremely wide and diverse. Some of the problems that university students confront include adaptational challenges, such as living apart from family and friends, adjusting to the regimen of university, taking responsibility of daily living and developing a new kind of social relationships with peers and faculty members (Henton, Lamke, Murphy & Hayres, 1980); managing finances and being responsible for ones self (Greenberg, 1981); academic pressures, interpersonal, sexual and emotional distress (Dunkell-Schetter & Label, 1990).

Psychologists have long noted the great variation in how people react to objectively similar stressful life events (Major, Cooper, Cazzarelli, & Zubek, 1998). Consequently, it is worth mentioning that the effects of entering into college are not equivalent across individuals. While some students found themselves inadequately prepared for the psychological, emotional and academic realities of higher education, some of them cope successfully with the developmental demands of this period and do not evidence maladaptation. For many students, who are inadequately prepared, entering college may bring negative consequences. Research on college student

adjustment showed that students develop anxiety over financial difficulties that appear to be associated with depression (Andrews & Wilding, 2004), they perceive life events as negative (Leontopoulou, 2006), they adapt inappropriate coping strategies such as alcohol consumption (Sadava & Park, 1993, as cited in Jackson, Pancer, Pratt, & Hunsberger, 2000), eating disorders, drug abuse, and suicide attempts (Levine & Cureton, 1998). Additionally, maladjustment to university causes increase in college attrition among university students (Tinto, 1987). As Consolvo (2002) has reported approximately, 30-40 % of the freshmen enrolled in university drop out before they complete their degree and this withdrawal is often a result of adjustment difficulties (Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994).

Researchers who have examined students' adjustment to college tried to answer the question of "Why some students make the transition successfully and thrive from this stressful situation, whereas others struggle or leave school after only short time?" According to Fearlin, Libertman, Menaghan and Mullen (1981) the amount of stress that will be experienced by an individual can not be predicted from various stressors but from variety of cognitions and behaviors that people employ to confront stressful situations that mediate the impact of stressors; from psychological resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) and a number of individual factors which students bring to university or young adulthood. Among individual factors, locus of control (Garvie & Auburn, 1998; Leontopoulou, 2006); SES (Leontopoulou, 2006); gender (Dyson & Renk, 2006; Leontopoulou, 2006); secure attachment style (Fassig, 2004; Wei, Russell, & Zakalik, 2005); active involvement with other students (Tinto, 1982); self-efficacy (Chemers, Hu, & Garcie, 2001; Klomegah, 2007); resilience (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992; Fassig, 2004; Freydenberg, 2004; Garvie & Auburn, 1998; Leontopoulou, 2006; McIntyre, Heron, McIntyre, Burton, & Engler, 2003); optimism (Fassig, 2004; Segerstrom, Taylor, Kemeny, & Fahey, 1998; Scheir & Carver, 1992); hope (Suls & Fletcher, 1995; Synder, et al., 1991;), and coping styles (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992; Leong, Bonz, & Zachar, 1997; Leontopoulou, 2006) were found to be related with overall college adjustment.

The factors listed in college adjustment research such as coping style, optimism, and resilience are psychological resources of individuals. These resources have been among the variables studied in positive psychology. Positive psychology approach that focuses on human strengths and potentials rather than the problems, and attempts to understand the characteristics and processes that contribute to optimal functioning, flourishing, and resiliency (Synder & Lopez, 2002) has arisen in the last two decades (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2002). Resilience, as one of the widely studied construct found to have positive and significant effect on college adjustment (Banyard & Cantor, 2004; Brunella-Joiner, 1999); optimism was found to be negatively associated with psychological stress and loneliness; depression, anxiety (Stewart, Betson, Lam, Marshall, Lee, & Wong, 1997) and mood disturbance (Segerstrom, Taylor, Kemeny, & Fahey, 1998) and positively associated with higher levels of social support and psychological and physical well-being (Scheir & Carver, 1992). Coping was also found to be related with college adjustment (Chang & DeSimone, 2001; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

In Turkey, studies about college student adjustment date back to 1960s. Whereas the early studies about Turkish university students generally concentrated on the problems of university life (Baymur, 1960; Kışlalı, 1974; Özdemir, 1985), recent studies emphasized the effects of personality characteristics and demographic variables on university adjustment (Akbalık, 1997; Alpan, 1992; Alperden, 1993; Türküm, Kızıldaş & Sarıyer, 2006).

The results of earlier studies particularly indicated that personal, familial, and social variables had an effect on university adjustment. For example Kışlalı (1974) found that anxiety over future career, sexuality, financial and academic concerns, politics, listed among the issues that cause adjustment difficulties in Turkish university students. In another study (Özdemir, 1985) freshmen students have found to have greater concerns about male-female relationship, sentimentality, health related problems, society pressures, school, future career and family problems.

In Turkey, studies on college adjustment mostly interested in negative variables and ignored the effects of positive strengths of college students on college adjustment. Numerous recent studies about the problems and adjustment difficulties of entering college indicated that academic procrastination (Çakıcı, 2003); alcohol use (Çakmak, 2006); stressful life events (Emil, 2003; Maşraf, 2003); aggression (Karabıyık, 2003); disordered eating patterns (Mançe, 2006; Pembecioğlu, 2005); loneliness (Kozaklı, 2006) and depression (Çakır, 2002; Korkmaz, 2006) were found to be related with college adjustment. However, there exists only limited number of studies regarding the strengths of students who show positive adaptation or thrive from this stressful period. For example Gürgan (2006) in an experimental study showed the effect of resilience enhancement training on college adjustment. However, his study did not include freshmen university students who are in an important turning point in their life and who have greater adjustment problems than sophomores and seniors.

Research, studies in the literature show that there is a shift from human deficits to human strengths model which is parallel to the idea of positive psychology paradigm. Therefore, it becomes important to conduct research studies to investigate the factors that may be related to positive adjustment of first year students despite of the stresses of the situation.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the present study is to investigate the relationship between ways of coping, ego-resilience, optimism, and adjustment level of first year university students who live away from their parents.

1.3 Significance of the Study

College years are the years of late adolescence and the early adulthood during which university students discover whom they are and what to do (Fenske, 1989). The first year of university requires students to make lots of adjustments such as adjustment to

social environment, academic climate, daily responsibilities, career decisions, and finances. Adjustment is indispensable in university setting which determines young adults' class attendances and study habits (Jay & D'Augelli, 1991). Arrival to college campus brings a student's life a positive effect (retention) or a negative one (attrition). The latter may be caused by academic boredom, irrelevancy to department, limited or unrealistic expectations of college, academic unpreparedness, transition or adjustment difficulties, lack of certainty about a major and a career, dissonance or incompatibility (Upcraft & Gardner, 1989). Additionally, alienation, psychological complaints, financial difficulties, moving from small city to city center for university and language related difficulties during first years of students may lead to low academic performance and attrition (Murphy & Archer, 1996). Research studies about retention and attrition also indicated that where students live while enrolled in college has an impact upon their attrition and retention rates (Vickerson, 2003). As stated (Henton, Lamke, Murphy & Haynes, 1980) distance from home and the availability of fewer familial support related to increased crisis reactions in freshmen. Specifically, for first year students, place of residence has an effect on their performance much more than on later year students (Sand, 2000).

As several authors stated (e.g., Barefoot, Garner, Cutright, Morris, Schroeder, Schwartz, Siegel, & Swing, 2005) freshmen students that are the most problematic classes than the others are more prone to drop out because of the maladjustment. Since, without adequate coping skills and psychological resources, many of young university students can not make a healthy transition to university life, investigating individual strengths as well as environmental factors that enable students to adjust well is very crucial. The recent theoretical and methodological advances, indicate a shift towards to promote individual adaptive patterns and, prevention rather than treatment of psychopathology (Hammen, cited in Leontopoulou, 2006; Seligman, 2002). Parallel to those advances through recognizing the relationship between personality strengths and adjustment, many educational settings in U.S. have recently included a strength-focused approach to their curricula (Graeme, 2001).

However, majority of research on college adjustment in Turkey focuses on problem based approach that examines deficits such as academic procrastination (Çakıcı, 2003); stressful life events (Emil, 2003; Maşraf, 2003), aggression (Karabıyık, 2003); disordered eating patterns (Mançe, 2006; Pembecioğlu, 2005); alcohol use (Çakmak, 2006); loneliness (Kozaklı, 2006) and depression (Çakır, 2002; Korkmaz, 2006).

Being a university graduate is highly valued in Turkey. However entrance to university is very difficult. Before entering university students encountered with an obligation to pass a nation-wide contested single-stage examination, administered by the Student Selection and Placement Center (SSPC/OSYM) (Akduman, Özkale, & Ekinci, 2001). As stated by Guneri, Aydın and Skovholt, (2003), in Turkish culture, families try to do everything as much as possible within their financial limits to prepare their children enter into university and expect to their children to be succesful in the entrance exam and at the university. In other words, after passing a tough exam, that requires intensive studying, and emotional and financial investment students who are selected by the system began their new challenging life (Ültanır, 1998) where new competition starts. Especially in highly ranked universities, such as METU, Boğaziçi, and Hacettepe, freshmen may have more adjustment difficulties since the expectations of success may deteriorate due to studying and competing with lots of successful peers. In universities like METU where language of instruction is English, students may also experience more stress. As stated by Gizir, (1998), most METU students perceive courses being thought in English as one of the major problems they encounter. Thus the language proficiency in English; affect their academic performance and their general adjustment level as well.

Another cultural phenomenon that most of the students encounter in their first year of college is being away from home. Studies conducted in Turkey suggest that students living with their families exhibit higher levels of academic adjustment (Güney, 1985; Orhon, 1985) and lower depressive symptoms (Aydın & Demir, 1989) than their counterparts who do not live with their parents. Since leaving home for college has a potential to create more distress than for who do not, it is essential to conduct studies

examining the adjustment levels of students who are living away from their parents during university education.

Briefly, after entering college, young adults are faced with the challenges of living alone, being away from family mostly for the first time and may need to use their internal strengths and other external resources in order to deal with increased demands of their new lives. Since, positive psychology as a new trend looks out the personal resources that decreases stresses of individuals during difficult times, conducting research about positive personality qualities rather than deficiencies in college adjustment seems important. Thus through using positive psychology paradigm this study aims to investigate how well trait factors of individual (coping, ego- resiliency, and optimism) predict the college adjustment of METU Department of Basic English students who live away from their families. Findings of the present study may provide much useful information for university students, parents, teachers, university administration and counselors working at university counseling centers. By knowing about the factors related to adjustment for this sample, prevention and intervention strategies may be developed. In terms of counseling implications, the present study is expected to be helpful for the counselors to understand variables involved in the process of counseling while dealing with the adjustment problems of university students. By developing programs that focus on students' strengths in university settings such as coping styles, optimism, resiliency, counselors both may improve adjustment levels of first year university students and may decrease the number of potential students who drop out school during first year of university. This study that follows positive psychology paradigm, will be the first one in the Turkish literature that investigates individual strengths that explains the adjustment of first year university students.

1.4 Definitions of Terms

University Adjustment

Baker and Siryk (1984) defined university adjustment as responding to academic demands, having social integration with faculty members, being involved in campus life and having attachment and commitment to university.

Coping

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined coping as “constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person” (p.141). More simply putting, coping is “the effort to manage psychological stress” (Lazarus, 1999, p.111).

Dispositional Optimism

Optimism is defined by Scheir and Carver (1985) as the generalized positive expectations about future outcomes, especially in difficult or ambiguous situations.

Ego Resiliency

Block and Block (1980) defined Ego-resiliency as resourceful adaptation to changing circumstances and environmental contingencies, analysis of the goodness-of-fit between situational demands and behavioral possibility, and flexible invocation of the available repertoire of problem solving strategies (p. 48).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is devoted to summarize the most relevant research literature to the purpose of the study. The first section describes definition and models of adjustment and the second section presents the construct of college adjustment. The last one includes variables associated with adjustment.

2.1 Definitions and Models of Adjustment

The concept of adjustment is as old as human race on earth.

To ancient peoples, difficulties in adjustment were brought by the presence of evil spirits in the body and to purge of those uninvited inhabitants, an operation, which was making a hole in the skull with a sharpened stone instrument and thereby allowing the spirits of float out of the head, was performed (Feldman, 1989, p. 17).

Systematic emergence of this concept started by Darwin and in those days the concept was totally biological since he used adaptation concept in terms of adjustment (Derlega & Janda, 1981). In the second half of 20th century adjustment was perceived as the individual's ability to cope effectively with the environment and in this sense it was somewhat synonymous with the terms personality, normalcy, and mental health (Adams, 1972) and it referred to the process by which we change or cope with the demands and challenges of everyday life (Creek, 1997).

Adjustment is a personal matter that is made by everybody by different ways. In the literature, "Personal Adjustment" has been defined in numerous ways: as the process by which an individual applies his resources to fulfill his personal needs while at the same time maintaining harmony with his environment (Coe, 1972), as a person's ability to adapt to demands of a situation (Gorlow & Katkovsky, 1968); as the process of finding and adopting modes of behavior suitable to environment or the changes in environment (Good, 1945) as a continual process in which a person varies his behavior to produce harmonious relationship between himself and environment (Shaffer & Shoben, 1956).

Different descriptions of adjustment are also made by different schools of Psychology. In 1800s, the "Moral Model" described adjustment as a philosophy of life and deviation from some absolute norm of expected behavior results in abnormal behavior. Deviant behavior was often considered as due to mystic causes such as being possessed by demons. In the early 19th century, the moral model was associated with the beginning of humane and compassionate treatment of deviant individuals and adjustment difficulties has been given a moralistic attitude and termed as bad. People who are thought as having adjustment difficulties are given punishments, lectures, well-meaning advice (Shaffer & Shoben, 1956).

In the very beginning of 20th century, explanations of adjustment from the viewpoint of physiology by "Medical Model" have gained more prestige than Moral Model. This model describes people who have adjustment difficulties as ill rather than bad and by this way this model has more healing effect than Moral model. People who are termed ill are not given punishment since they are accepted as irresponsible from their own behavior. Behavior is not treated directly but treatment attacks the causes directly and takes the form of attempting to give insight to individual through psychotherapy so that individual can deal with his difficulties in a more realistic manner (Shaffer & Shoben, 1956). In this model, the behavior is not important but the unconscious conflicts, which cause the behavior, is important. However, this model has a limitation that it is questionable to apply the term "illness" to defined

patterns of behavior, especially when there is no evidence of physiological malfunctioning (Adams, 1972).

Freud, the father of “Classical Psychoanalysis” supposed that the ego functions develop from the conflict between instinctual gratification and the organism’s need to maintain itself in the face of restrictions by reality. Ego’s emotional responses to danger from external environment, by the instinctual impulses of the id, and from the threat of punishment from the superego leads to anxiety and the ego’s failure to balance realistically this anxiety cause individuals be maladjusted (Coe, 1972) and keeping basic impulses at tolerable levels by defense mechanisms such as denying and rationalization, emphasizes positive functioning of individual. Different from Freud’s explanations, “Ego Psychology” defines adjustment as coping (Rathus & Nevid, 1989) and Kohut labeled adjustment as the development of cohesive self and Erikson stated adjusted person as the accomplishment of developmental tasks and the development of lasting adaptive qualities (Coe, 1972).

Another important school of Psychology, “Individual Psychology” explains adjustment as “striving for superiority” which means striving to live a more perfect and complete life (Watts, 1998). “Phenomenological” perspective explains adjustment as an individuals accepting of his unique self for what he is, not attempting to live up to the standards imposed by others, accepting the parts of and striving to learn about ourselves and perceiving the world (Rathus & Nevid, 1989).

Maslow described adjustment as self actualization and to achieve self actualization, he stated some criteria such as acceptance of nature and self, being independent, democratic and creative, having humor, forming intense relationship with others. These characteristics are achieved through mid adolescence but Maslow also accepted a young adult can also achieve self actualization if he is in a healthy developmental process (Coe, 1972).

Rank identified adjusted person as creative (Kendler & Kendler, 1970). On the other hand, “Learning Theorists” focus primarily on each person’s responses to his

external environment and the habits that he develops through interaction with it (Coe, 1972). Behaviorists described it as having accurate expectations about the world and the technical, social skills necessary to attain reinforcers such as food, money, social approval and Social Learning theorists stated that adjustment is having a wealth models to imitate, believing our ability to achieve desired reinforcers, being able to regulate our own behavior and changing the environment (Rathus & Nevid, 1989). “Trait theorists” tend to view adjustment in terms of putting people in situations in which there is a good person-environment fit. Researchers of trait theorists have linked traits to various aspects of adjustment, including health, the way people think, success in school/job and relationship with others. As an example, individual who is thought to be introvert is considered poor at coping and adjustment to life challenges (Santrock, 1999).

Several theoretical approaches explain adjustment based on their own view of human nature. Other than those old theories, recently there is a new era called Positive Psychology which seeks to investigate what people do correctly in life. In the past adjustment of people to life’s ups and downs did not move beyond simple adjustment processes but Positive Psychology tried to understand how individuals manage to accomplish thriving and flourishing (Compton, 2005). According to Positive Psychology, many people adapt and adjust to life in highly creative ways that allow them and people who contact with those feel good about life (Sheldon & King, 2001).

2.2 College Adjustment

Transitional events are typically associated with an increase in stress and demands on personal resources. This transition from high school to college brings some challenges and developmental tasks to first year students who are expected to deal with those tasks. Determining how well an individual is able to negotiate a developmental period is assessed with how well an individual adjusts or attends to university (Baker & Siryk, 1984).

College adjustment was explained by different researchers by different ways. Earlier, Shaffer and Shoben (1956) explained college adjustment as a process where an individual comes to college. When his motive was prevented, some explanatory trials, is performed by an individual. If he overcomes one of the obstacles, that leads him to adjustment but his inability to solve the problem of adjustment leads him to maladjustment. Therefore, the process of adjustment starts and starts over again. Later on college adjustment was explained by two main approaches; Developmental Theories (psychosocial theories, cognitive structural theories, and typological models) and College Impact Model (e.g., Astin's Theory of Involvement, Tinto's Theory of Student Departure).

Psychosocial Theories (e.g., Chickering' Seven Vectors of Student Development, Heath's Maturity Model) view individual development as a process that involves accomplishment a series of developmental tasks (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). For example Chickering (1969) identified seven "vectors of development" which are achieving competence, managing emotions, developing autonomy, establishing identity, freeing interpersonal relationships, developing purpose and developing integrity (as cited in, Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Students typically should go through those vectors during their university education (Tuna, 2003).

Cognitive structural theories (e.g., Gilligan's "Different Voice" Model, Jane Loevinger's Theory of Ego Development) seek to describe the process of change, concentrating on the cognitive structures of individuals while making adjustment (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Especially, it focuses on how students think about situations and what shifts occur. According to typological models (e.g., The Myers-Briggs Typology) in explaining college adjustment, stable characteristic differences of individuals are important (Zychowski, 2007). The model categorizes individuals into groups based on their learning style, cognitive style or personality (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969).

On the other hand, College Impact Model concentrates on the specific context in which the student acts and thinks and institutional structures, policies and programs

have been given importance while explaining college students' adjustment (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). For example, Astin's "Theory of Student Involvement" (1984) describes student involvement which means the level of physical and psychological energy that students make commitment to academic experience. According to the theory, students who dedicate their energy to stay on campus, study, participate to activities and interact with faculty members, their adjustment level increase. On the other hand, Vincent Tinto (1982) explained the process of student persistence and university adjustment by trying to understand reasons of student departure. Tinto's theory of student departure (1987; as cited in Boyle, 1989) is influenced by a student's pre-entry attributes (personal, familial, academic characteristics, and skills/abilities), intentions (goals and commitment) and academic (faculty members' interactions, academic performance) and social college integration (extracurricular activities, peer interactions). His theory states that a newcomer to university has to pass 3 stages which are called separation, transition to university and incorporation in university (Tinto, 1988). In the first stage, separation, students are required to separate themselves physically and socially from place of residence. The second stage, transition to university, is the period that students are between past and present which means that students have already started to detach from past but they have not yet become attached to present environment. Especially, at this stage personality characteristics become very important in determining their responses of freshmen stress. Lastly, at the third stage, incorporation, students are expected to become integrated into university. If students do not adjust to university life, they generally choose to departure from university (Tinto, 1988). Tinto's model suggests that positive experiences with the university and academic preparation prior to beginning the freshman year have positive influences on retention and attitudes (Moore, Moore, Grimes, Millea, Lehman, Pearson, Liddell, & Thomas, 2007).

The process of adjustment to college was described by Baker and Siryk (1984) through identifying four types of adjustment; academic adjustment; referring to students' perceptions of ability to achieve school work such as academic ability, time management, performance etc.; social adjustment; referring to relational patterns that affect adjustment such as making friends; personal/emotional adjustment; referring to

experience feelings of depression and anxiety such as feeling moody; institutional attachment; referring to students' feelings of commitment to school such as feeling of "fit in" to university. There should be a balance between those factors in order to call an individual as adjusted. Bean and Metzner (1985) mentioned about student persistence which is influenced by student's background, personality, environmental and academic variables.

Since the beginning of 2000s, researchers mostly accepted the notion that non-cognitive factors but individual contributions such as personality variables or college GPA have important implications for college adjustment. For example, Tanaka (2002) proposed an "intercultural theory of student development" which concerns with understanding power issues inherent in the interactions between students, faculty and institutional cultures and how they shape student development. Robbins, Lauver, Le, Davis, Langley, and Carlstrom (2004) combined the Tinto's and Bean's models and arrived at a four broad categories of constructs. Those categories are contextual influences, such as institutional size, financial support; social influence such as perceived levels of social support; social engagement such as belonging to school and academic engagement such as earning a college degree. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), suggested a general casual model that includes both institutional characteristics and environmental variables, which includes sets of variables students' background and pre-college characteristics, structural and organizational features of institution, frequency and content of students' interactions with the major socializing agents on campus and quality of effort.

As all the theories proposed and studies conducted, college adjustment is not a simple process but a multifaceted and complex phenomenon. Although, transition to college is generally considered to be a stressful period, it leads first year students to change and make growth (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

2.3 Variables Associated with College Student Adjustment

Although, graduating from university mostly predicts later life, economic success and status of individual, the number of students leaving their higher education institutions exceeds the number of students who decide to remain on campus. Therefore, it is essential also to talk about student retention, persistence, drop out and student attrition while describing college adjustment (Seidman, 2005). Since the greatest degree of college attrition occurs among freshmen (Gaither, 1992), it is necessary to look out personality variables which make some freshmen thrive while others fail.

2.3.1 Coping

Every individual does not respond to adjustment to college process in the same manner (Compas, et al., 1986). Some are more equipped to cope; some are more vulnerable that is adjustment is effected mostly by individual differences. Before considering the relationships of coping to college adjustment, it is first necessary to make clear what is meant by coping. The term “coping” is generally used to refer to a person’s cognitive and behavioral efforts to reduce stressful conditions (Holahan & Moos, 1987, p.25). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) make a distinction between problem focused and emotion focused coping. The former means attempting to solve or minimize, distressed situation and the latter means managing the affect aroused by the situation. Another basic dimension of coping is between approach (action oriented) and avoidant coping (Lazarus, 1999). Problem focused and approach coping are mostly related with greater well being, fewer psychological symptoms and better adjustment, conversely, avoidant coping strategies such as wishful thinking, self blame or withdrawal are mostly related with maladjustment (Zeitlin, 1980). However, in the study of Roth and Cohen (1986) avoidant coping strategy proved to be the most adaptive one in uncontrollable situations. According to the findings of Leontopoulou (2006), under low adversity, avoidance coping was used; under high adversity, however both active and avoidance coping were used equally.

When looking at studies that investigate relationship between college adjustment and coping, it is not surprising that adaptive coping was found to be the most effective one in stressful situations over which the student was able to exercise control (Holahan & Moos, 1987). Aspinwall and Taylor (1992) found that retention rates are lower for those individuals who come to college with higher coping skills. Another study conducted with university students (Jorgensen & Dusek, 1990) revealed that better adjusted undergraduates tend to use more salutary or advantageous coping strategies (e.g., making decisions, actively seeking for social support and talking about problem) than less mature strategies (e.g., having alcohol and smoke, being verbally hostile) and confirmed the connection between coping and healthy psychosocial adjustment.

Forsythe and Compas (1987) found that college students' favorable adjustment outcome was associated with the use of relatively more problem solving coping when the case perceived as controllable and more emotion focused coping when the case interpreted negatively. Coehlo and colleagues (1963; cited in Silver, 1995) using Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) found that measures of coping competence significantly predicted dropout vulnerability in college freshmen.

According to research of Chroniak (1998), adaptive coping predicted better overall adjustment, while maladaptive coping predicted poorer overall adjustment. However, her study showed that not only action oriented coping but also emotion focused coping is needed for better adjustment. Leong, Bonz, & Zachar (1997) tested the hypothesis that students' different coping strategies impacted the adjustment to college. The study conducted with 161 freshmen indicated that academic and personal emotional adjustment was related to coping strategies, whereas social adjustment was not.

In many studies, coping is also used as a mediator variable between personality variables and adjustment. For example, dispositional optimism was found to be positively associated with problem focused coping which leads to undergraduate adjustment (Scheier, Weintraub & Carver, 1986). Likewise, in the study of

Aspinwall and Taylor (1992) showed that greater optimism, locus of control and higher self esteem predicted greater use of active coping in dealing with the stress of entering into college. The study of Lefkowitz (2003) done with 365 first semester undergraduates proved that self esteem was a significant and indirect predictor of all types of college adjustment via avoidant coping strategy.

In conclusion these findings seem to indicate that there is a correlation between ways of coping and adjustment. Although situational variables are influential, adjusted people tend to use more active coping strategy while less adjusted individuals use more avoidance coping strategy.

2.3.2 Optimism

Dispositional optimism, a form of optimism, is relatively stable across time and context so regarded as an important characteristic of personality. Under distress, dispositional optimism is considered a protective personality trait that contributes to resilience (Scheier & Carver, 1985). The role of optimism in psychological adjustment was examined by Brissette, Scheier and Carver (2002) and their study revealed that greater optimism was related to greater friendship networks so better personal adjustment. College freshmen, who scored high on Life Orientation Test, were found to have less academic stress than their counterparts (Baldwin, Chambliss & Towler, 2003).

The result of another research showed that students faced with recent hassles such as low GPA or parental divorce were more likely to score low on optimism scale (Chang & Sanna, 2003). Additionally, optimists were found to use more frequent use of positive coping responses such as positive reframing than negative coping responses such as denial (Carver, Pozo, Harris, Noriega, Scheier, & Robinson, 1993) and optimism was found to be associated with active coping responses to physical challenges (Scheier, Weintraub & Carver, 1986).

Chemer, Hu and Garcia (2001) by examining the effect of optimism and academic self efficacy on freshmen academic performance, health and commitment to remain in school showed that optimism and academic self-efficacy were strongly and directly related to directly academic performance and indirectly coping perceptions on classroom performance. Aspinwall and Taylor (1992) revealed that optimism was a predictor of college freshmen adjustment not directly but by the mediating role of coping mechanisms, especially by greater use of active coping.

2.3.3 Ego Resilience

The word resilience comes from the Latin ‘salire’ (to spring, spring up) and resilire (spring back) which means that resilience can be regarded as the capacity to rebound or spring back from stressful situations (Davidson, Payne, & Connor, 2005). Resilience, as a concept, emerged firstly from the work of Garmezy (1991), Rutter (1987), Werner (1992), Smith (2001) and Masten (2001), which has shifted research, theory and practice paradigms to a focus on strengths rather than deficits. It was formulated as the capacity for recovery and maintaining adaptive functioning following incapacity (Garmezy, 1991) or the positive side of adaptation after risk or trauma (Masten, Best & Garmezy, 1990). Newman (2005) defined resilience as “the human ability to adapt in the face of tragedy, trauma, adversity, hardship and ongoing significant life stressors” (p. 227). Resilient is considered to be individuals who are well adjusted (Block & Block, 1980).

Resilience has been considered as a dynamic developmental process (Luthar, Cicchetti, & Becker, 2000) which refers to the interplay and interaction between individual factors and environmental factors in the developmental process (Benard, 2004; Schoon 2006). Likewise, Connor (2006) defines resiliency as a way of measuring the ability to cope with stress which develops over time and can be regarded as a way of measuring emotional stamina.

However, some other theorists described resilience not as a dynamic developmental process but a personality characteristic that offers individuals the opportunity to

show the adjusted behavior for the demands imposed by environment. Block (1996) defined the construct of ego resiliency which refers to an individual's general capacity to adapt flexibly and adequately to internal and external stressors. This adaptive flexibility provides individuals with a high level of resiliency and they will be more likely to experience positive affect, and have higher levels of self-confidence and better psychological adjustment than individuals with a low level of resiliency (Block & Kremen, 1996; Klohnen, 1996). When confronted by stressful circumstances, individuals with a low level of ego resiliency may act in a manner which likely to be maladaptive (Block & Kremen, 1996).

Researchers mainly chose two approaches to describe resilient individuals; (1) variable-focused approaches and (2) person-focused approaches (Masten, 2001). While the former used multivariate statistics to identify possible correlates and predictors of resilience in at-risk individuals, the latter focused on characteristics that differentiate resilient vs. non-resilient individuals (Masten, 2001). For example, Masten et al. (1990) emphasized three different groups of resilient individuals. The first group consists of those individuals from high risk groups who overcome the odds and achieve better than expected outcomes such as poverty. The second group of individual adjusts well despite ongoing stressful experiences such as divorce. The third group includes individuals who recover from a single traumatic experience such as child maltreatment.

Theory and research regarding resilience is based on the study of individuals who have experienced risk or trauma. Initially the concept of resilience has taken attention from many disciplines such as psychiatry, developmental and clinical psychology (Masten & Powell, 2003), the application of resilience research to educational setting is relatively recent (Ford, 1994). Much of the educational research has been conducted with children. However, understanding resilience in young adults may help to explain why some first year students adjust and reach their academic potential while others do not.

Recently, research about college students' adjustment and resilience have been gained attention by some researchers. In an experimental study, Garvie and Auburn (1998) conducted a research with 270 college freshmen and indicated that resilient subjects experienced symptoms of state and trait anxiety and depression at levels higher than their non-stressed peers, but lower than their nonresilient peers. Level of adjustment differentiated resilient from nonresilient subjects and since the reports remained consistent over time, it suggested resilience as a stable construct.

In a longitudinal study (Brulle-Joiner, 1999), students were grouped into two and retention was compared between students who participate in First-year Experiences (FYE) courses and those who did not participate. At the end of semester, FYE participants scored significantly higher on overall adjustment than non-participants and results indicated that there were significant correlations between resiliency and adjustment to college of students.

Tross, Harper, Osher, and Kneidinger (2000), in their study with 844 first year students showed that personality variables such as conscientiousness, achievement and resiliency are useful predictors of college retention and performance. Likewise, Fassig (2004) conducted a study with 1190 college freshmen and demonstrated that resilience, optimism, locus of control and self efficacy were found to be predictors of college adjustment. However attachment style had no effect on college adjustment of young adults. Leontopoulou (2006) carried out a research study with 326 Greek freshmen students and found that resilient and adapted young people used more resources than maladaptive ones and indicated higher levels of positive adaptation.

Researchers mostly have focused on variety of risk factors for adjustment to college in individual, family, school and community contexts in the resilience literature such as low socioeconomic status, poor course placement, late application to college, having few friends, lacking interest in courses, low GPAs, ethnic minority status, family responsibilities, finances; being first generation university student and not involving in academic program (Horn, 1998; as cited in Rausch & Hamilton, 2006). One of the most important risk factors for university students is to be away from

home for the first time. As stated (Larose & Boivin, 1998) place of residence, specifically, being away from home during university created personal distress due to the factors of being without adult supervision, having adult responsibilities, and having to adjust in the composition of social network.

However, only focusing on risk factors for adjustment to college, leads researchers to false negatives such as overlooking students who do not fit into traditional at risk groups but who may withdraw, and false positives such as falsely identifying being at risk but they may not be (Rausch & Hamilton, 2006). This idea is highly related to philosophy of resilience and Positive Psychology that focuses on positive adaptations and strengths of individuals in the face of adversity rather than risk or adversity.

2.3.4 Gender

Gender is an individual factor that relates to college adjustment. However, literature found inconsistent results about the effect of gender on adjustment level. In some studies, males were found to be more adjusted than females (Alfred-Liro & Siegelman, 1998; Cook, 1995; Cross, Nicholas, Goble & Frank, 1992; Enochs & Roland, 2006; O'Conner, 2001), while in others females were found to be more adjusted (Feldman, 1993; Strahan, 2003; Lubker, 2006) and still in some others there were found no differences between male and female university students (Herzog, 2005; Leong, Bonz, & Zachar, 1997; Liu & Liu, 1999).

According to study done by Anschuetz (2005), females were found to score lower than males on personal emotional adjustment. Likewise Caldwell, Pearson, and Chin's study (1987) indicated that women were found to show stress more negatively than men as evidenced by their significantly lower scores on adjustment. In explaining females' vulnerability to adjustment difficulties, researchers indicated mediator role of coping strategies that females were found to be more likely to use emotional coping strategies than males who used problem focused coping strategies (Stone & Neal, 1984). Klasner and Pistola (2003) found that female college students scored higher than males on measures of attachment to parents so had more

adjustment difficulties than males. However, their seeking for social support in the face of stress, particularly emotional support, made them more adjusted than males (Day & Livingstone, 2003).

2.4 Research on College Adjustment in Turkey

In Turkey, from the very beginning researchers conducted lots of studies with university students and all those studies shared the common idea that to be able to help students to make better adjustment to college identifying student concerns is necessary. For example, Baymur (1960) conducted a research with 4855 students living in dormitories in different big cities and found most important problems of university students as general school problems (insufficient books and libraries, courses, instructor related problems), social and economical problems (environmental pressure and indigence), insufficient social activities (insufficient cultural activities, inadequate clubs), problems related to dormitories (general untidiness, inadequate restaurants), general personal problems (health and sexual, loneliness, future anxiety) and social/political problems related to country and society.

In another study done with Istanbul University students by Ekşi (1982, as cited in Özgüven, 1992) showed that 70% of university students had financial, 40% of them had accommodation and 29% of students had adaptation to university life problems.

Aksu and Paykoç (1986) conducted a study with 968 METU students and found out that overloaded curriculum and workload of courses, services, nutrition, instructors, regulations, academic adviser, finance, accommodation and interpersonal relations were most important problems of students, respectively. In another study, Gülmez (1992) stated the problems of Gaziantep University students as problems related to political environment, economic, adaptation to university life, inadequate time for studying, accommodation, inadequate social activities and English as a foreign language. Based on those findings, adjustment problems of university students were tried to be solved.

Additionally, the association between some demographic or other variables and adjustment levels of students were investigated. City of origin (Kızıltan, 1984) and place of residence during university years (Gökay and Işık, 1974; Güney, 1985; Maşrabacı, 1986) were studied as predictors of university adjustment.

Recently, research about Turkish university students' adjustment showed that university life may lead to anxiety and anxiety symptoms for some students (Albayrak-Kaymak, 1997; Aydın, 1988; Hisli, 1998), lower adjustment levels (Alperten, 1993), difficulty adapting to university life (Alperten, 1993), homesickness, economic hardship; future anxiety, study habits and disordered eating patterns (Türküm, Kızıldaş & Sarıyer, 2002).

Briefly, the tasks that a young adult has to accomplish in this period of his life makes him an adult and the tasks may create some kind of distress for those emerging adults (Aydoğan, 2006).

In their study with Anadolu University students, Türküm, Kızıldaş and Sarıyer (2002) showed that first year university students were more likely to be homesickness, not being able to form intimate relationships, and not being able to express oneself than last year students. Entering into an orientation program (Dilekmen, 2003) and having positive emotional support (Tuna, 2003) were found to lead to adaptation to university.

Although, research about university students varies, there are a few studies concerning positive personality factors. Gürkan's experimental study (2006) is worth mentioning since it indicated the effectiveness of resilience enhancement program on resilience scores of participants.

Optimism, another positive construct, investigated in university settings more than resilience. Aydın and Tezer (1991) investigated the association between optimism, health problems and academic success and they found that contrary to pessimists,

optimist students were found to report less health related problems and higher GPA. In another study, exposure to earthquake by university students indicated that optimism had no effect on seeking social support, problem solving and avoidance coping subscales (Bacanlı & Ercan, 2006).

Coping strategies among university students which gained slightly more attention than others also have been studied by some researchers. For example, Yılmaz (1993), in her study about university students indicated that coping strategies of males were higher than females. In another study conducted with Baskent University students showed that females mostly used seeking social support and problem solving coping whereas males used avoidance coping (Doğan, 1999). Also, her study showed that first year students used helplessness/self blaming coping more than problem solving and seeking social support coping.

To sum up, a review of the literature on college adjustment underlines the importance of identifying the factors that contribute to college adjustment and taking preventive measures to promote adjustment. The literature related to college adjustment reveals that especially first year students who are away from their parents are more at risk for maladjustment. Taking into account that majority of studies in the literature in Turkey as well as abroad focused on identifying factors cause problems in adjustment, this study takes a positive psychology perspective to investigate the role of positive internal factors (coping, ego resilience, optimism) and gender in predicting adjustment among first year students.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

This chapter includes six sections. In the first section overall design of the study is summarized. The second section explains the participants of the study. The data collection instruments explained in third section. Then, data collection procedure and data analysis were presented, respectively. Lastly, limitations of the study were explained.

3.1 Overall Design of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role ways of coping, ego resiliency, and optimism and on adjustment levels of first year university students. A demographic data form (Appendix A), Adjustment to University Questionnaire (Appendix B), Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) (Appendix C), Life Orientation Test (LOT) (Appendix D), and Ego-resiliency Scale (Appendix E) were administered to 420 METU Department of Basic English students. Convenient sampling was used for sample selection. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were executed to analyze the collected data.

3.2 Research Questions

The main research question of this study is, “To what extent do ways of coping, ego-resilience and optimism predict the adjustment scores of first year college students?”

The sub-questions are, “To what extent do ways of coping, ego-resilience, and optimism predict the adjustment scores of first year female college students and, “To what extent do ways of coping, ego-resilience, and optimism predict the adjustment scores of first year male college students ?”

3.3 Population and Sample Selection

The target population of the study was all first year students who live away from their families at universities in Turkey. The accessible population is first year Department of Basic English students at METU. The convenient sampling method was used as a sample selection procedure. Five hundred ninety eight, volunteer Middle East Technical University students participated in the study. Among these students 420 (173 female and 247 male) who live away from their families were included into sample of the study. Participants’ age ranged between 16 and 23 (M=18.31; SD=.83).

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

In this study, demographic data form that is developed by the researcher, Adjustment to University Questionnaire (Akbalık, 1998), Ego Resiliency Scale (Block& Kremen, 1996), Ways of Coping Questionnaire (Lazarus & Folkman, 1985), and Life Orientation Test (Scheier & Carver, 1985), were used to collect data.

3.4.1 Demographic Data Form

In the demographic variable form students were asked to state their age, sex, place of residence, and city of origin. (see Appendix A)

3.4.2 Adjustment to University Questionnaire

The Adjustment to University Questionnaire (AUQ) is a 4- point-Likert-type scale, consists of 31 items (Akbalık, 1998) (see Appendix B). The scores are ranged from 1

(always true for me) to 4 (never true for me). The highest score a student can receive from the questionnaire ranged between 31 and 124. Having a high score on AUQ means maladjustment whereas having a low score means adjustment. AUQ has two subscales. Social Adjustment subscale includes 26 items. The Cronbach' alpha coefficients of the social adjustment subscale was found .68. Academic adjustment sub-scale consists of five items. The Cronbach alpha reported for the academic adjustment sub-scale was .82. The 20 items in the questionnaire (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 20, 24, 26, 27, 30, and 31) are reverse scored. The Cronbach alpha coefficient reported for the whole questionnaire was .75. For the present study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of .71 was found for the AUQ.

3.4.3 Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ)

Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) addresses a broad range of cognitive and behavioral strategies that individuals use when they encounter an internal and/or external stressful situation (Brand & Alexander, 2003) (see Appendix C). WCQ was developed and later revised by Lazarus and Folkman (1985) and their questionnaires consisted of 64 items; 40 items for emotion-focused and 24 items for problem focused coping strategies in 1980s. Then, they added and dropped some items and at the end it consisted of 66 items which were yes/no format and had 8 subscales. As a result of factor analysis conducted with university students, the reliabilities were found to be as follows; problem-focused coping (.85), distancing (.71), positive reappraisal (.65), seeking social support (.81), wishful thinking (.84), self blame (.75), self isolation (.65), and tension reduction (.56) (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985).

Although WCQ was used in numerous studies, there is a great variability in factor structures which may be caused by different natures of stresses or cultural differences (Sorlie & Sexton, 2003).

The Ways of Questionnaire was adapted into Turkish by Siva in 1998 by adding 8 items about fatalism and superstition (as cited in Uçman, 1990). The adapted version consisted of 74 items and the Cronbach's alpha was found to be .91. Factor analysis

revealed that planful problem solving, escape/avoidance, emotional control, growth, fatalistic approach, helplessness, self blame and seeking refuge in supernatural forces were 8 subscales of WCQ.

Karancı, Aklan, Akşit, Sucuoğlu and Balta (1999) used WCQ in a study after 1995 Dinar earthquake by using 3-point scale (1= yes, 2= sometimes, 3= no), and found following subscales and Cronbach's alpha results; problem solving ($r=.75$), fatalistic approach ($r=.78$), helplessness approach ($r=.69$), seeking social support ($r=.59$), and escape ($r=.39$). Cronbach's alpha reliability for the whole scale was $.76$.

In another study conducted by Şakiroğlu, (2005) 42 item WCQ that participants were asked to rate the frequency of using these coping strategies using a 3-point-likert type scale (1= never, 2= sometimes, 3= always), yielded four factors: problem solving/optimistic coping ($r=.87$); seeking social support coping ($r=.49$); fatalistic coping ($r=.87$); helplessness/self blaming coping ($r=.67$). The Cronbach alpha coefficient of $.77$ was obtained for the total scale.

In the current study, 42 item WCQ (Şakiroğlu, 2005) was used in order to assess coping strategies of participants. The Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was conducted on ways of coping questionnaire to explore factor structure derived from the data. First PCA yielded ten factors with eigenvalues greater than one, explaining 55.86 % of total variance. The second PCA that was run with varimax rotation, the number of components were forced to four, to verify the dimensions reported by Şakiroğlu (2005). These four dimensions explained 37.36 % of the total variance. Except one item, item 32 was loaded to problem solving and optimistic coping in Şakiroğlu's (2005) study, loaded on helplessness and self blaming dimension in this study. These factors explained 37, 36 % of total variance, with eigenvalues as follows: Problem solving / optimistic coping, 5,95; fatalistic 3,77; helplessness and self blaming, 2,239; seeking social support, 1,857. In the present study, an alpha coefficient of $.71$ was obtained for the total Scale, $.72$ for the problem solving and optimistic coping, $.79$ for fatalistic coping, $.55$ for helplessness and self blaming, $.60$ for seeking social support.

3.4.4 Life Orientation Test (LOT)

The Life Orientation Test (LOT) was used to measure the level of optimism which consists of 12 items; 4 of which were positively worded (I am always optimistic about my future), the other 4 were negatively worded (If something can go wrong for me, it will) while the remaining 4 were filler items that were included to disguise the underlying purpose of the test. Subjects respond by indicating on a 5 point scale how much they agree or disagree with the item. The highest score a student can receive from the questionnaire ranged between 24 and 36. Internal consistency for the 8 items in the original LOT yielded a Cronbach alpha of .76 and test-retest reliability was .79 (Scheier & Carver, 1985). Aydın and Tezer (1991) carried out the adaptation of test. The internal consistency of the scale was assessed by Cronbach alpha (.72) and test-retest reliability with a four week time interval was .77. The Cronbach alpha for the LOT calculated for the present sample was .76 (see Appendix D).

3.4.5 Ego Resiliency Scale

The Ego Resiliency Scale (Block & Kremen, 1996) was administered to assess trait psychological resilience which is the capacity to modify responses to changing situational demands; especially frustrating and stressful encounters (see Appendix E). The scale includes 14 items, each responded on a 4- point – Likert scale ranging from 1 (does not apply at all) to 4 (applies very strongly). The highest score a student can receive from the questionnaire ranged between 14 and 56. Sample items include “I enjoy dealing with new and unusual situations” and “I quickly get over and recover from being startled”. This scale’s alpha reliability was reported by Block and Kremen (1996) as being .76.

The Ego Resiliency Scale (Block & Kremen, 1996) was adapted to Turkish by Karairmak (2006). In her study, the test-retest reliability was calculated as .76. The evidence for divergent and concurrent validity for the scale was provided in another study (Karairmak, 2007). It was shown that the correlations between the scores

obtained from the Ego Resiliency scale and self-esteem, positive affect and negative affect scores were in the theoretically expected direction. The Cronbach alpha calculated for the ego resilience was .80. Consistently, in the present study, an alpha coefficient of .78 was obtained for the Ego Resiliency Scale.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

A set of four scales which consists of University Adjustment Questionnaire, Ego-Resiliency Scale, Ways of Coping Questionnaire, Life Orientation Test, and a demographic data form were administered to collect data. Before collecting data, permission was taken from Department of Basic English at METU. The scale administration took place in 2006 fall semester on November considering the research findings that underline the difficulty of first year at college (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1992; Brissette, Scheier & Carver, 2002; Leontopoulou, 2006). Instructors of the Department of Basic English administered the set of scales to students during class hours. The measures took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

3.6 Data Analyses

In this study, given that the all predictor variables and outcome variable are continuous, to determine a significant model that predicts the adjustment for the total sample, girls, and boys separately, three multiple regression analyses were conducted. Differences between the adjustment scores of participant in relation to gender were analyzed using independent samples t-test. SPSS 11.5 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for windows was utilized to perform data analyses.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

In the light of this study, possible limitations should be taken into consideration. First, taking into consideration that one of the predictor variables is resilience and first year students who do not live with their parents might be under more risk, only students who live away from their parents included to the study. However, as Luthar

et al. (2000) stated that some risk factors may not be perceived as a risk by some individuals. Thus students included to the study may not be under risk as it is expected. Second, participants of the study derived from METU Department of Basic English. However, Department of Basic English students at METU which is large campus university, does not represent well the experiences of first year students all over the country. Thus findings of the study cannot be generalized to first year university students in different parts of the country, where there is no English preparation school and courses are thought in Turkish. Third, students who are first year students but passed English proficiency exam and do not attend to prep-school were not included in the study. So the study does not explain adjustment of those students. Lastly, the self-report data collected from participants may not reflect their actual college adjustment.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents descriptive statistics including means and standard deviations of the quantitative predictor variables; intercorrelations between predictor variables and the dependent variables; and the results of multiple regressions analysis for the total sample, female and male participants.

4.1 Correlation Coefficients, Means and Standard Deviations among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Total Sample

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients computed to find out strength and direction of the relationship between predictor variables and criterion variable for the total sample are presented in Table 4.1. The intercorrelations among variables ranged from $-.52$ to $.38$. University Adjustment scores of participants' were positively related to two approaches of coping (problem solving, $r=.38$, $p<.001$ and seeking social support, $r=.22$, $p<.001$) and negatively associated with fatalistic coping ($r=-.16$, $p<.001$), helplessness/self blaming ($r=.31$, $p<.001$), optimism $r=-.31$, $p<.001$, and ego resiliency ($r=-.46$, $p<.001$). Since the lower adjustment scores in Adjustment to University Questionnaire indicates better adjustment, the results showed that participants with higher resilience, optimism, fatalistic coping and self-blaming have higher adjustment scores.

Table 4.1

The Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Total Sample

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Adjustment to University	61.69	12.05	-					
2. Problem solving coping	22.31	4.64	.40*	-				
3. Seeking Social Support coping	6.01	1.34	.23 *	.03*	-			
4. Fatalistic coping	21.31	3.77	-.17*	-.04*	.09*	-		
5. Helplessness/Self Blaming coping	14.66	2.51	-.36*	-.38*	.11*	.18*	-	
6. Ego-resiliency	38.11	6.15	-.46*	-.53*	-.08*	.04*	.35*	-
7. Optimism	26.73	4.87	-.33*	-.39*	-.01*	-.10*	.36*	.29*

*Correlation is significant at .01 alpha level

4.2 Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Total sample

A standard multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate how well three sets of predictor variables (coping style-problem solving, /optimistic, seeking social support, fatalistic and helplessness-, ego resilience and optimism) predicted the overall university adjustment of first year university students. The sets of variables were treated as unordered sets thus the aim of the study was to investigate to what extent each set of predictor variables predicted adjustment over and above the other sets. In accordance with the aim of the study simultaneous-entry approach was employed to identify variables that explain the variance among the college adjustment scores of first year university students.

Prior to data analysis the assumptions of the multiple regression analysis were checked. Since the VIF values changed between 1.02-1.56, tolerance statistics ranged between .976 - .637, there was no evidence that multicollinearity is a problem for the suggested model. The Durbin Watson statistic was also between 1 and 3 (1.74) (Field, 2005). In order to identify the univariate outliers standardized residuals were

examined. Seven cases that exceeded a z score of +3.29 and -3.29 were detected (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and excluded from the analysis. Thus data analysis conducted with 413 participants.

The first equation included coping. The analysis was significant ($R^2=.27$; $\Delta R^2=.26$; $F(4,408) = 38.98$, $p<.00$), and coping alone was predictor of college adjustment. In the second equation resilience added to coping. Results indicated that linear combination of two sets of variables significantly related to college adjustment ($R^2=.34$; $\Delta R^2=.33$; $F(1,407) = 38.42$; $p<.00$). In the last and third equation, optimism was added to coping and resilience. Results showed that linear combination of three sets of predictors was significant ($R^2=.36$; $\Delta R^2=.35$; $F(1,406) = 12.94$; $p<.00$). Results indicated that the multiple regression coefficient ($R = .59$, $p = .001$) was significant for the model and combination of three variables explained 35 % of the total variance ($R^2 = .35$). As the partial correlations in Table 4.1 indicated, ego-resiliency was the most important and significant predictor of college adjustment with a significant regression weight, followed by seeking social support, fatalistic coping, optimism, helplessness and problem solving coping. However, problem solving and seeking social support scores of coping negatively contributed to university adjustment scores of the total sample. Overall, results of the first multiple regression analysis indicated that linear combination of ways of coping, resilience and optimism, significantly predicted the college adjustment. The contributions of ways of coping, ego resiliency, and dispositional optimism explaining the college adjustment presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Ways of Coping, Dispositional Optimism and Ego-resiliency

<i>Predictor Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Partial Corr.</i>
Step 1						
Problem solving/optimistic	.75	.12	.29	6.41	.00	.30
Seeking social support	2.213	.38	.26	6.13	.00	.29
Fatalistic	-.42	.14	-.13	-3.13	.002	-.15
Helplessness	-1.24	.22	-.26	-5.62	.00	-.27
Step 2						
Problem solving/optimistic	.42	.13	.16	3.27	.001	.16
Seeking social support	2.09	.37	.23	5.73	.00	.27
Fatalistic	-.42	.13	-.13	-3.28	.001	-.16
Helplessness	-.98	.22	-.21	-4.56	.00	-.22
Ego-resiliency	-.55	.09	-.28	-5.82	.00	-.28
Step 3						
Problem solving/optimistic	.31	.13	.12	2.43	.015	.12
Seeking social support	2.07	.36	.23	5.75	.00	.28
Fatalistic	-.51	.13	-.16	-3.88	.00	-.19
Helplessness	-.79	.22	-.17	-3.56	.00	-.17
Ego-resiliency	-.53	.09	-.27	-5.67	.00	-.27
Optimism	-.38	.11	-.15	-3.42	.001	-.17

As seen in Table 4.2, Problem solving/optimistic coping ($t = 2.43$, $p = .015$), seeking social support ($t = 5.75$, $p = .000$), fatalistic coping ($t = -3.88$, $p = .000$), helplessness coping ($t = -3.56$, $p = .000$), ego resiliency ($t = -5.67$, $p = .00$) and optimism ($t = -3.42$, $p = .001$) appeared as significant predictors of college adjustment with significant regression weights. Analyses revealed that higher resilience, optimism, fatalistic coping and helplessness coping scores yielded higher college adjustment scores.

4.3 Correlation Coefficients, Means and Standard Deviations among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Female Students

Table 4.3 presents the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients between predictor variables and criterion variable for the female students. College adjustment was significantly correlated with all predictor variables. The intercorrelations among variables ranged from $-.48$ to $.52$. College adjustment was significantly and positively correlated with seeking social support coping ($r = .18$, $p < .001$) and problem solving coping ($r = .31$, $p < .001$) scores. However college adjustment was significantly

negatively associated with ego resiliency ($r = -.48, p < .001$), optimism ($r = -.41, p < .001$), fatalistic coping ($r = -.09, p < .001$) and helplessness coping ($r = -.43, p < .001$). Similar to the results for the total sample, female participants with higher resilience, optimism, fatalistic coping and helplessness/self-blaming have found to have higher adjustment scores.

Table 4.3

The Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Female students

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Adjustment to University	59.70	11.17						
2. Problem solving coping	22.55	4.47	.31*					
4. Seeking Social Support Coping	5.75	1.33	.18*	-.09*				
4. Fatalistic coping	21.57	3.74	-.09*	-.003	.10*			
5. Helplessness/Self Blaming coping	14.48	2.68	-.43*	-.45*	.06*	.12*		
6. Ego-resiliency	37.73	5.66	-.48*	-.47*	-.008	.03*	.43*	
7. Optimism	26.85	4.98	-.41*	-.45*	.04*	-.18*	.52*	.34*

*Correlation is significant at .01 alpha level

4.4. Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Female Students' Adjustment Scores

Taking into consideration the literature that highlight significant gender difference on college adjustment (e.g. Alfred-Liro & Siegelman, 1998; Lubker, 2006), an independent sample t-test was conducted to investigate the differences in university adjustment scores of male and female students. Results indicated significant gender difference ($t(411) = -2.60, p < .01$). Thus two separate multiple regression analyses were conducted to predict male and female participants' university adjustment.

Prior to data analysis the assumptions of the multiple regression analysis were checked. Since the VIF values changed between 1.01 – 1.62, tolerance statistics ranged between .602-.981, there was no evidence that multicollinearity is a problem for the suggested model. The Durbin Watson statistic was also between 1 and 3 (1.65) (Field, 2005). In order to identify the univariate outliers standardized residuals were examined. One case that exceeded a z score of +3.29 and -3.29 were detected (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and excluded from the analysis. Thus data analysis conducted with 172 female participants.

A standard multiple regression analysis was conducted to evaluate how well three sets of predictor variables (coping style-problem solving,/optimistic, seeking social support, fatalistic and helplessness-, ego resilience and optimism) predicted the overall adjustment of first year female students. The coping entered in to equation first. The analysis was significant, ($R^2=.26$; $\Delta R^2=.24$; $F(4,165)=14.19$, $p<.00$). Secondly, resilience added to coping. Results indicated that predictive value of the model increased significantly when resilience added to the model ($R^2=.34$; $\Delta R^2=.32$; $F(1,164)=21.14$ $p<.00$). In thirdly, optimism was added to coping and resilience. Results showed that linear combination of three sets of predictors was significant ($R^2=.38$; $\Delta R^2=.36$; $F(1,163)=9.54$; $p<.002$). Results indicated that the multiple regression coefficient ($R = .61$, $p = .002$) was significant for the model and combination of three variables explained 38 % of the total variance ($R^2 = .38$). In other words, criterion variable was significantly explained by the linear combination of three predictor variables $F(1,163) = 9.54$, $p = .000$. As the partial correlations in Table 4.3 indicated, ego-resiliency was the most important and significant predictor of college adjustment with a significant regression weight, followed by optimism, seeking social support, and helplessness coping. The contributions of ways of coping, ego resiliency, and dispositional optimism explaining the college adjustment presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for Females about the Ways of Coping, and Ego- resiliency and Optimism

<i>Predictor Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Partial Corr.</i>
Step 1						
Problem solving/optimistic	.41	.19	.16	2.17	.03	.14
Seeking social support	1.88	.57	.23	3.32	.001	.22
Fatalistic	-.22	.20	-.07	-1.09	.276	-.08
Helplessness	-1.52	.32	-.37	-4.81	.00	-.35
Step 2						
Problem solving/optimistic	.11	.19	.04	.57	.56	.04
Seeking social support	1.71	.54	.21	3.19	.002	.24
Fatalistic	-.22	.19	-.07	-1.13	.26	-.08
Helplessness	-1.13	.31	-.27	-3.64	.00	-.27
Ego-resiliency	-.68	.15	-.34	-4.59	.00	-.34
Step 3						
Problem solving/optimistic	-.03	.19	-.01	-.16	.87	-.01
Seeking social support	1.73	.52	.21	3.31	.001	.25
Fatalistic	-.38	.20	-.13	-1.97	.05	-.15
Helplessness	-.71	.33	-.17	-2.13	.03	-.16
Ego-resiliency	-.65	.14	-.33	-4.49	.00	-.33
Optimism	-.54	.17	-.24	-3.08	.002	-.23

As seen in Table 4.4, while seeking social support had positive and significant effect on female participants college adjustment scores ($t=3.31$, $p<.001$), the helplessness coping ($t=-2.13$, $p<.03$), optimism, ($t=-3.08$, $p<.002$), and ego resiliency scores ($t=-4.49$, $p<.000$) had negative significant effect. However, it was found that problem solving coping ($t=-.16$, $p<.87$) and fatalistic coping ($t=-.15$, $P<.05$) had no significant relationship with college adjustment. Analyses revealed that female students who reported higher resilience, optimism, and helplessness coping scores reported higher college adjustment.

4.5 Correlation Coefficients, Means and Standard Deviations among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the male students

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients computed to find out strength and direction of the relationship between predictor variables and criterion variable for the male students are presented in Table 4.5. The intercorrelations among variables ranged from $-.57$ to $.47$. College adjustment scores of male participants'

were significantly and positively related to seeking social support coping ($r=.21$, $p<.001$) and problem solving coping ($r=.47$, $p<.001$), and negatively associated with ego resiliency ($r=-.47$, $p<.001$), optimism ($r=-.28$, $p<.001$), fatalistic coping $r=-.21$, $p<.001$) and helplessness coping ($r=-.34$, $p<.001$) Since the lower adjustment scores in Adjustment to University Questionnaire indicates better adjustment, the results showed that whereas male participants with higher resilience, optimism, fatalistic coping and helplessness/self-blaming have higher adjustment scores, male participants with lower problem solving coping and seeking social support coping have higher adjustment scores.

Table 4.5

The Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients among Predictor Variables and Criterion Variable for the Male Students

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Adjustment to University	62.93	12.25						
2. Problem solving coping	22.13	4.76	.47*					
5. Seeking Social Support coping	6.18	1.31	.21*	.11*				
4. Fatalistic coping	21.12	3.80	-.21*	-.07*	.10*			
5. Helplessness/Self Blaming coping	14.80	2.39	-.34*	-.33*	.14*	.23*		
6. Ego-resiliency	38.41	6.47	-.47*	-.57*	-.13*	.05*	.30*	
7. Optimism	26.64	4.80	-.28*	-.35*	-.04*	-.05*	.23*	.26*

*Correlation is significant at .01 alpha level

4.6 Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for the Male First year Students' Adjustment Scores

Multiple regression analysis was also carried out to predict male students' university adjustment. Table 4.6 presents the summary of the multiple regression analysis predicting the adjustment levels of freshmen males.

Prior to data analysis the assumptions of the multiple regression analysis were

checked. Since the VIF values changed between 1.05- 1.628, tolerance statistics ranged between .614- .947, there was no evidence that multicollinearity is a problem for the suggested model. The Durbin Watson statistic was also between 1 and 3 (1.92). In order to identify the univariate outliers standardized residuals were examined (Field, 2005). No case that exceeded a z score of +3.29 and -3.29 were detected (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and data analysis conducted with 242 participants.

The first equation included coping. The analysis was significant, ($R^2=.32$; $\Delta R^2=.31$; $F(4,237) =27.89$, $p<.00$). In the second equation resilience added to coping. Results indicated that linear combination of two sets of variables significantly related to college adjustment ($R^2=.36$; $\Delta R^2=.35$; $F(1,236) =15.43$; $p<.00$). In the last and third equation, optimism was added to coping and resilience. Results showed that linear combination of three sets of predictors was not significant ($R^2=.37$; $\Delta R^2=.36$; $F(1,235) =3.74$; $p<.05$). The combination of three variables explained 37 % of the total variance ($R^2 = .37$). In other words, criterion variable was significantly explained by the linear combination of the two predictor variables.

As the partial correlations in Table 4.5 indicated, ego resilience was the most important and significant predictor of male college adjustment with a significant regression weight, followed by problem solving, helplessness coping, optimism, fatalistic and seeking social support. However, problem solving and seeking social support negatively contributed to university adjustment scores of the males. The contributions of ways of coping, ego resiliency, and dispositional optimism explaining the college adjustment presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Results of the Multiple Regression Analysis for Males about the Ways of Coping, Ego Resiliency and Dispositional Optimism

<i>Predictor Variables</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Partial Corr.</i>
Step 1						
Problem solving/optimistic	.94	.14	.36	6.34	.00	.38
Seeking social support	1.96	.51	.21	3.82	.00	.24
Fatalistic	-.51	.17	-.15	-2.84	.005	-.18
Helplessness	-1.09	.30	-.21	-3.62	.00	-.22
Step 2						
Problem solving/optimistic	.61	.16	.23	3.65	.00	.23
Seeking social support	1.73	.50	.18	3.45	.001	.22
Fatalistic	-.51	.17	-.16	-2.97	.003	-.19
Helplessness	-.89	.29	-.17	-3.02	.003	-.19
Ego-resiliency	-.48	.12	-.25	-3.92	.00	-.24
Step 3						
Problem solving/optimistic	.53	.17	.21	3.15	.002	.20
Seeking social support	1.72	.49	.18	3.45	.001	.22
Fatalistic	-.55	.17	-.17	-3.19	.002	-.20
Helplessness	-.81	.29	-.15	-2.73	.007	-.18
Ego-resiliency	-.46	.12	-.24	-3.82	.00	-.24
Optimism	-.27	.14	-.11	-1.93	.05	-.12

As seen in table 4.6 seeking social support ($t=3.45$, $p=.001$), and problem solving coping ($t=3.15$, $p=.002$), had positive and significant effect on participants college adjustment scores. Whereas, ego resiliency ($t=-3.82$, $p=.00$), fatalistic ($t=-3.19$, $p=.002$), helplessness/self blame coping ($t=-2.73$, $p=.007$) had negative significant effect. For male participants, optimism did not emerge as a factor that predicts college adjustment optimism, ($t=-1.93$, $p=.05$). In other words as male students who reported higher resilience, problem solving coping, fatalistic coping and helplessness coping scores also reported higher college adjustment scores.

In conclusion results indicated that for the total sample all predictor variables significantly contributed to college adjustment scores of participants. However, for female participants' problem solving coping and fatalistic coping and for male participants, optimism was not appeared as significant predictors of college adjustment.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter presents a discussion of the results obtained from statistical analysis, as well as the practical implications of the study findings and recommendations for further research.

5.1 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of coping, resilience, optimism in predicting first year students' adjustment to college. Results indicated that all variables emerged as important factors in predicting college adjustment. In this study it was expected that students' ego resilience, optimism, problem solving/optimistic coping scores, and seeking social support would be related to college adjustment. Contrary to the expectations, the results indicated that as the fatalistic coping, helplessness/self blame coping, optimism and ego-resiliency scores of students increase their adjustment increases. On the other hand, as the problem solving/optimism and seeking social support scores of the students increase their adjustment scores decrease.

In this study ego resilience appeared as an important variable in prediction of college adjustment for the total sample, males and females. The findings of this study indicating ego-resiliency to be the best predictor of college adjustment and optimism had a positive influence on adjustment were in line with the Positive Psychology literature suggesting that human strengths – intelligence, optimism, self efficacy, ego-resilience etc. - associated with good life outcomes (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003); resilience predicts adjustment (Brulle-Joiner, 1999; Fassig, 2004; Tross,

Harper, Osher, & Kreidinger, 2000) and greater optimism was related to better personal adjustment (Brissette, Scheier & Carver, 2002). The findings of the study showed that capacity to bounce back from stressful situations and positive expectations about future outcomes, especially in difficult or ambiguous situations make first year students more adjusted.

In this study, surprisingly, fatalistic coping and helplessness/self blaming coping were found to be positively related to adjustment, however, seeking social support and problem solving/optimistic coping were found to be negatively related to adjustment. These findings were inconsistent with the previous research studies (Jorgensen & Dusek, 1990; Leontopoulou, 2006). One of the explanations for the relationship between use of fatalistic and helplessness/self blaming coping and college adjustment might be the child rearing practices in traditional Turkish culture. In Turkey, families prefer over-protective family style (Güroğlu, 2002; Sümer & Güngör, 1999) that involve solving problems of children rather than teaching children effective problem solving skills and letting them cope with their own problems. Furthermore, a fatalistic coping approach for Turkish students is understandable by considering the role of religion in coping with stress (Karancı et al., 1999). In view of that, in Turkey where the majority of population is Muslim, and the religion emphasizes the belief in faith and destiny, university students who experience difficulties in adjustment may have tendency to use fatalistic coping. Additionally, the relationship between helplessness and self blame could be explained by a helplessness tendency in Turkish culture, that is negative events are attributed as internal, global and stable (Aydın & Aydın, 1992). Thus, it might be speculated that first year students who have not been equipped with the skills for effective problem solving who are away from their sources of social support (e.g., family, friends in the hometown) who may have tendency to helplessness and who may have religious thoughts and beliefs that emphasize the role of faith in life, may use self-blaming and fatalistic coping rather than problem solving and seeking social support while adjusting to new and challenging university environment.

Another explanation of why positive strategies are not used by the students might be the age-salient characteristics of freshmen. As stated (Aysan, Thomson & Hamarat, 2001; Griffith, Dubow, & Ippolito, 2000), the use of positive coping strategies (e.g., problem solving, seeking social support) increased by grade levels, which is maybe related to experience or increased rational thinking ability. The freshmen who have to deal with lots of age salient developmental characteristics might no deal with adjustment problems effectively.

In this study, when gender was investigated in relation to college adjustment of first year students, meaningful gender differences were found. Males higher scores in college adjustment was in line with earlier research (Enochs & Roland, 2006). Males' higher scores in adjustment could be explained by the gender roles. Most of the studies documented that men are more likely to making attempts to actively alter a situation by using problem-focused coping whereas women are more likely to managing emotional responses to a problematic situation by using emotion-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Snyder, 1999). Men are more likely to be individualistic in terms of emphasizing personal agency, instrumentality, uniqueness and differentiation whereas women are more likely to be interdependent, emphasizing relatedness (Jordan, 1997). Therefore, it can be concluded that for male students who have been encouraged to be more independent all through their childhood, coming to college does not create much stress for males. Additionally, students who develop a certain degree of independence from parents and at the same time feel positive about the separation have more advantage in adjusting to college (Beyers & Goossens, 2003). Since well-differentiated family boundaries lead to greater personal adjustment (Skowron, Wester, & Azen, 2004) and males' greater tendency to be less related to family than females (Olcay & Karakitapoğlu, 2006), male students may more easily overcome difficulties with leaving home for college than female students.

The findings of the present study showed differences between boys and girls in terms of factors that are predictive of college adjustment. The regression analyses indicated that ego resiliency, problem solving coping, seeking social support coping, fatalistic

coping and helplessness self blaming coping predicted male students adjustment scores, whereas ego resiliency, optimism, helplessness coping and seeking social support predicted females' adjustment scores. The findings indicated that for the female students' problem solving coping was not a significant predictor of adjustment. This finding is inline with some of the research findings but contradict others. For some researchers, there is not any gender difference about using problem-focused coping (Weintraub, Carver, & Scheier, 1986) but for some other research findings females use more emotion-focused coping than males (Stone & Neal, 1984; Billings & Moos (1981). Thus in this study, emergence of self-blaming and helplessness coping strategies as significant contributors of college adjustment might be related to female participants use of emotion focused strategies more than males.

Furthermore, the positive and significant relationship between optimism and adjustment for female participants may be highly related with higher optimism among females. As research indicated females were found to be more optimistic than males due to their higher use of emotional coping strategies (Carver et al., 1993).

5.2 Implications for Practice

In the light of the results of the present study several counseling implications can be mentioned in order to increase university students' resilience and optimism as well as their use of functional coping abilities. The findings of the present offer valuable information to university counseling centers, administrators, instructors and families.

Firstly, an ongoing orientation program should be developed by university counseling centers for freshmen not only for introducing courses but also enhancing first year students' individual strengths such as coping abilities.

Second, as resiliency emerged as one of the important predictors of college adjustment resilience enhancement programs and trait training programs should be

conducted at all levels of education. Also families should be informed by school counselors about functional coping ways while raising their children.

Third, adolescents in high school might be given also an orientation program about how to better adjust college how to deal with homesickness, how to manage financial issues etc.

Fourth, first year students must be encouraged by university administration to join student clubs.

Fifth, booklets about university life including effective coping strategies, resilience enhancers, having an optimistic viewpoint, also university activities, campus map should be prepared and sent out each month to every first year students.

Finally, by university counseling services, group counseling activities should be developed for students who need adjustment counseling in order to increase their usage of positive personality traits.

5.3 Implications for Research

Several recommendations can also be made for those researchers aiming to develop further into the human strengths and freshmen adjustment constructs.

Based on school of Positive Psychology, rather than deficient-focused models, strength based studies should be carried out for different age groups, with different predictor variables.

Because the sample of the present study was limited to one of the large urban public university (Middle East Technical University) Department of Basic English students, the study findings cannot be generalized to first year students in other public urban and small universities or private universities. In view of this limitation,

replication of this study with students from both private and state universities can be recommended.

Additionally, this study examined the predictors, resilience, optimism and coping ways and model explained 35% of the variance in adjustment scores of students. Thus, further studies should be carried out to investigate the other individual characteristics such as hardiness, internal locus of control, self-esteem and external factors (such as family attachment style, peer relationship) that predict freshmen adjustment. Since, resilience was found to be the most important predictor of freshmen adjustment, researchers should focus on developing and assessing intervention programs that focus on developing resilience as a means of facilitating college student adjustment.

Finally, longitudinal studies should be conducted in order to clarify the effects of human strengths on adjustment. Additional studies involving different research designs and sample populations focus on the individual (self-efficacy, hardiness) and environmental factors (family, peer) that make students more adjusted to college.

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APPENDIX A

DEMOGRAFİK BİLGİ FORMU

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu çalışma, üniversitemize genel uyum düzeyini belirlemek amacıyla yapılmaktadır. Vereceğiniz yanıtlar grup olarak değerlendirileceği için ad soyad yazmanıza gerek yoktur. Sorulara vereceğiniz yanıtlar kesinlikle gizli tutulacak ve yalnızca araştırma kapsamında kullanılacaktır. Sizin bu çalışmadaki sorulara vereceğiniz doğru, açık ve samimi yanıtlar araştırma sonucunun güvenilirliği açısından önemlidir.

Katkılarınızdan dolayı şimdiden teşekkürler...

Desen YALIM

ODTÜ Eğitim Bilimleri Bölümü

Psikolojik Danışma ve Rehberlik ABD

1. Yaşınız:.....
2. Cinsiyetiniz:.....
3. ODTÜ öğrenci kimlik numaranız:.....
4. Kiminle birlikte kalıyorsunuz?
 ailemle birlikte
 akrabalarımle
 arkadaşlarla evde
 yurttta
Diğer () (Lütfen belirtiniz).....
5. Üniversiteye gelmeden önce yaşadığınız yer?
 Büyükşehir-şehir merkezi
 İlçe
 Kasaba
 Köy
Diğer () (Lütfen belirtiniz).....

APPENDIX B

ÜNİVERSİTEYE UYUM ÖLÇEĞİ

Aşağıdaki maddelerin karşısındaki seçeneklerden sizin için en uygun olanını işaretleyiniz.	Bana tamamen uyuyor	Bana oldukça uyuyor	Bana biraz uyuyor	Bana hiç uyumuyor
1. İhtiyacım olduğunda fakülte'deki arkadaş ve tanıdıklarım'dan yardım istemektan çekinmem.				
2. Yeni tanıştığım akranlarımla konuşma konusu bulmakta güçlük çekerim.				
3. Fakülte'deki arkadaşlarımla iyi ilişkiler kuramıyorum.				
4. Öğretim elemanları ile karşılaştığımda selam vermekte çekinirim.				
5. Ders çalışmakta güçlük çekiyorum.				
6. Önceden toplanıp konuşan akranlarımla olduğru bir gruba girmekten çekinirim.				
7. Okulda'ki arkadaşlarımla ilişkilerim'den memnun değilim.				
8. Konuşurken arkadaşlarımla gözüne bakmaktan çekiniyorum.				
9. Ders çalışmaya başlarken çok zorlanıyorum.				
10. Çalışma zamanlarımla verimli olarak kullanamıyorum.				
11. Fakülte'de kendimi yalnız hissediyorum.				
12. Fakülte'deki arkadaşlarımla karşılaştığımda selam vermekte zorlanıyorum.				
13. Üniversite öğrencilerine sağlanan sosyal olanaklardan yararlanıyorum.				
14. Akranlarımla kurduğum ilişkileri sürdürmemiyorum.				
15. Üniversite'deki sosyal yaşantımdan memnunum.				
16. Sınıfta oldukça aranan bir kişiyim.				
17. Üniversite'de her sorunumu paylaşabileceğim bazı yakın arkadaşlarımla var.				
18. Sınavlara hazırlanmada güçlük çekiyorum.				
19. Mümkün olduğru kadar toplantı ve kalabalık eğlencelerden uzak kalmaya çalışırım.				
20. Sınavlarda başarılı olamıyorum.				
21. Çabuk ve kolay arkadaş olurum.				
22. Okul dışında zaman zaman arkadaşlarımla birlikte olurum.				
23. Fakülte'deki öğrenci topluluk ve kulüplerine katılıyorum.				
24. Arkadaşlarımla uzun süreli ilişkilere girememiyorum.				
25. Üniversite'de bir çok kişiyle tanıştım ve çoğru ile arkadaş oldum.				
26. Karşı cinsten olan sınıf arkadaşlarımla konuşmakta güçlük çekiyorum.				
27. Arkadaş toplantılarında rahat davranmam.				
28. Üniversite'deki sosyal etkinliklere katılıyorum.				

29. Toplantı ve kalabalık eğlencelerden hoşlanırım.				
30. Başkaları benimle konuşuncaya kadar ben onlarla konuşmaya başlamam.				
31. Ders saatleri dışında sınıf arkadaşlarımla pek görüşmem.				

APPENDIX C

BAŞ ETME YOLLARI ÖLÇEĞİ

Cümlelerin herbirini dikkatlice okuduktan sonra, kendi sıkıntılarınızı düşünerek, bu yolları hiç kullanmıyorsanız hiçbirzaman , yani 1'i ; kimi zaman kullanıyorsanız bazen , yani 2'yi ; çok sık kullanıyorsanız her zaman , yani 3'ü işaretleyiniz.	Hiçbir zaman	Bazen	Her zaman
1. Aklımı kurcalayan şeylerden kurtulmak için değişik işlerle uğraşırım.	1	2	3
2. Bir mucize olmasını beklerim.	1	2	3
3. İyimser olmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3
4. Çevremdeki insanlardan sorunlarımı çözmemde bana yardımcı olmalarını beklerim.	1	2	3
5. Bazı şeyleri büyütmeyp üzerinde durmamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3
6. Sakin kafayla düşünmeye ve öfkelenmemeye çalışırım.	1	2	3
7. Durum değerlendirmesini yaparak en iyi kararı vermeye çalışırım.	1	2	3
8. Ne olursa olsun direnme ve mücadele etme gücünü kendimde hissederim.	1	2	3
9. Olanları unutmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3
10. Başa gelen çekilir diye düşünürüm.	1	2	3
11. Durumun ciddiyetini anlamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3
12. Kendimi kapana sıkışmış gibi hissederim.	1	2	3
13. Duygularımı paylaştığım kişilerin bana hak vermesini isterim.	1	2	3
14. Her işte bir hayır var diye düşünürüm.	1	2	3
15. Dua ederek Allah'tan yardım dilerim.	1	2	3
16. Elimde olanla yetinmeye çalışırım.	1	2	3
17. Olanları kafama takıp sürekli düşünmekten kendimi alamam.	1	2	3
18. Sıkıntıları içimde tutmaktansa paylaşmayı tercih ederim.	1	2	3
19. Mutlaka bir çözüm yolu bulabileceğime inanıp bu yolda uğraşırım.	1	2	3
20. İş olacağına varır diye düşünürüm.	1	2	3
21. Ne yapacağıma karar vermeden önce arkadaşlarımla fikrini alırım.	1	2	3
22. Kendimde her şeye başlayacak gücü bulurum.	1	2	3
23. Olanlardan olumlu bir şey çıkarmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3
24. Bunun alın yazım olduğunu ve değişmeyeceğini düşünürüm.	1	2	3
25. Sorunlarıma farklı çözüm yolu ararım.	1	2	3
26. "Olanları keşke değiştirebilseydim" diye düşünürüm.	1	2	3
27. Hayatla ilgili yeni bir bakış açısı geliştirmeye çalışırdım.	1	2	3
28. Sorunlarımı adım adım çözmeye çalışırdım.	1	2	3
29. Her şeyin istediğim gibi olamayacağını düşünürüm.	1	2	3
30. Dertlerimden kurtulayım diye fakir fukaraya sadaka veririm.	1	2	3
31. Ne yapacağımı planlayıp ona göre davranırım.	1	2	3
32. Mücadele etmekten vazgeçerim.	1	2	3
33. Sıkıntılarımın kendimden kaynaklandığını düşünürüm.	1	2	3
34. Olanlar karşısında "kaderim buymuş" derim.	1	2	3

35. “Keşke daha güçlü bir insan olsaydım” diye düşünürüm.	1	2	3
36. “Benim suçum ne” diye düşünürüm.	1	2	3
37. “Allah’ın takdiri buymuş” deyip kendimi teselli etmeye çalışırdım.	1	2	3
38. Temkinli olmaya ve yanlış yapmamaya çalışırım.	1	2	3
39. Çözüm için kendim bir şeyler yapmak isterim.	1	2	3
40. Hep benim yüzümden oldu diye düşünürüm.	1	2	3
41. Hakkımı savunmaya çalışırım.	1	2	3
42. Bir kişi olarak olgunlaştığımı ve iyi yönde geliştiğimi hissedirim.	1	2	3

APPENDIX D

HAYATI YÖNLENDİRME ÖLÇEĞİ

Lütfen aşağıdaki cümleleri dikkatle okuduktan sonra kendinize en uygun olan seçeneği işaretleyin.	Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle katılıyorum
1. Ne olacağının önceden kestirilemediği durumlarda hep en iyi sonucu beklerim.					
2. Kolayca gevşeyip rahatlayabilirim.					
3. Bir işimin ters gitme olasılığı varsa mutlaka ters gider.					
4. Herşeyi hep iyi tarafından alırım.					
5. Geleceğim konusunda hep iyimserimdir.					
6. Arkadaşlarımla birlikte olmaktan hoşlanırım.					
7. Yapacak şeylerimin olması benim için önemlidir.					
8. İşlerin istediğim gibi yürüyeceğini neredeyse hiç beklemem.					
9. Hiçbir şey benim istediğim yönde gelişmez.					
10. Moralim öyle kolay kolay bozulmaz.					
11. Her türlü olayda bir iyi yan bulmaya çalışırım.					
12. Başıma iyi şeylerin geleceğine pek bel bağlamam.					

APPENDIX E

PSİKOLOJİK SAĞLAMLIK ÖLÇEĞİ

Lütfen aşağıdaki ifadeleri dikkatle okuyunuz ve her bir ifadenin sizi ne ölçüde tanımladığını işaretleyiniz.	Hiçbir durumda uymaz	Bazı durumlarda uyar	Genellikle uyar	Herzaman uyar
1. Arkadaşlarıma karşı cömertimdir.				
2. Beni allak bullak eden durumların üstesinden çabucak gelirim ve kısa sürede kendimi toparlarım.				
3. Yeni ve alışılmadık durumlarla uğraşmak hoşuma gider.				
4. İnsanlar üzerinde olumlu izlenim bırakmada genelde başarılıyım.				
5. Daha önce hiç tatmadığım yeni yiyecekleri denemekten hoşlanırım.				
6. Çok enerjik bir insan olarak tanırım.				
7. Daha önceden bildiğim bir yerlere giderken her seferinde farklı yollar kullanmayı severim.				
8. Birçok insandan daha meraklıyım.				
9. Tanıştığım insanların çoğu sevilebilecek ve canayakın kişilerdir.				
10. Harekete geçmeden önce genellikle etraflıca düşünürüm.				
11. Yeni ve farklı şeyler yapmaktan hoşlanırım.				
12. Günlük yaşantım ilgimi çeken ve beni mutlu eden şeylerle doludur.				
13. Kendimi rahatlıkla oldukça “güçlü” kişiliğe sahip biri olarak tanımlayabilirim.				
14. Birine kızdığımda, makul bir sürede bunun üstesinden gelirim.				