



Psychological Stress and Academic Adjustment: A Descriptive Correlational Study among Female College Students at Al-Taif University

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between psychological stress and academic adjustment among female students at the University College of Bernie, Al-Taif University. A sample of 354 students from various academic years and disciplines was selected, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The results indicate that, on moderate, the levels of psychological stress and academic adjustment among the students were moderate, with notable differences across academic years and fields of study. Third-year students experienced the highest levels of psychological stress, likely due to the increasing demands of their coursework. In contrast, second-year students showed the highest levels of academic adjustment, possibly reflecting their adaptation to the university environment after their initial year. The analysis revealed a clear negative relationship between psychological stress and academic adjustment. As psychological stress increased, students' ability to adapt academically tended to decline, highlighting the negative impact of stress on their academic performance and overall well-being. Additionally, the findings showed slight differences between academic departments. Students in science and technology fields faced more significant challenges in adjusting academically compared to their peers in the humanities, suggesting that the specific demands of these fields may contribute to different stress levels and adjustment difficulties. Based on these findings, the study recommends developing targeted support programs, including workshops focused on coping strategies and stress management. These initiatives aim to enhance students' academic adjustment and improve their overall university experience, providing a more supportive environment for female students at Al-Taif University

Keywords: Psychological Stress, Academic Adjustment, University College, Academic Achievement.

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Introduction

Psychological stress is a common phenomenon that affects the lives of individuals, especially in higher education environments where academic requirements and social pressures are increasing. Many female students in university colleges suffer from increased levels of psychological stress as a result of academic challenges, competitiveness, and personal requirements. This pressure is manifested in difficulty concentrating, low academic achievement, and a sense of constant anxiety, which negatively affects academic adjustment.

Psychological stress is one of the negative factors that may affect the experience of undergraduates. When students face increased stress as a result of study requirements or social pressures, they may be exposed to psychological stress that affects their psychological health and academic performance. The inability to manage time well, and the lack of social support, can exacerbate stress levels, which negatively affects academic adjustment. Therefore, improving students' relationships with teachers and colleagues, and enhancing their time management abilities, are effective strategies for coping with psychological stress, which contributes to enhancing academic adjustment and enhancing their general well-being in the university environment (Mahidat, 2021).

Shuwaikh (2021) pointed out that psychological stress is one of the most prominent topics that have received great attention in the current period, due to its profound impact on human health, both psychological and physical. Among the symptoms associated with psychological stress are acting very nervous, frequent forgetfulness, loss of emotional balance, as well as difficulty returning to normal psychological state when faced with unpleasant experiences, as well as a feeling of indifference.

Psychological stress also leads to one or all of the disorders: psychological, physical, and behavioral. These disorders include a constant feeling of fatigue, insomnia, migraine, and back pain. Psychosomatic disorders may also appear, such as gastric ulcers, high blood pressure, arthritis, and colon diseases, in addition to heart disorders and loss of sexual appetite. In addition, stress can lead to premature aging, which appears in the form of graying hair and wrinkled skin. All this is due to the weakness of the nervous system and the immune system (Alves, et al., 2019).

Psychological stress is a pervasive issue that significantly impacts individuals, particularly in higher education settings where academic demands and social pressures are intensifying. Female university students, in particular, often encounter heightened levels of psychological stress due to the rigors of academic challenges, increased competitiveness, and personal obligations. This stress frequently manifests in symptoms such as impaired concentration, diminished academic performance, and persistent anxiety, all of which adversely affect their ability to adjust academically.

In higher education, psychological stress stands out as a critical negative factor influencing the undergraduate experience. Students confronted with mounting study requirements and social expectations may experience elevated stress levels, which can detrimentally affect both their mental health and academic outcomes. Factors such as poor time management skills and insufficient social support networks can exacerbate stress, further impeding students' academic adjustment. Consequently,

enhancing interpersonal relationships with faculty and peers, alongside improving time management abilities, are essential strategies for mitigating psychological stress. These interventions contribute to better academic adjustment and promote overall well-being within the university environment (Mahidat, 2021).

Shuwaikh (2021) emphasizes that psychological stress has become a focal point of contemporary research due to its profound effects on both mental and physical health. Common symptoms associated with psychological stress include heightened irritability, frequent forgetfulness, emotional instability, and difficulty recovering from negative experiences, as well as a general sense of apathy.

Moreover, psychological stress can precipitate a range of disorders encompassing psychological, physical, and behavioral aspects. These may include chronic fatigue, insomnia, migraines, and back pain. Psychosomatic conditions, such as gastric ulcers, hypertension, arthritis, and irritable bowel syndrome, may also emerge, in addition to cardiovascular issues and decreased libido. Notably, chronic stress can accelerate signs of premature aging, evident in graying hair and the appearance of wrinkles, primarily due to the weakening of the nervous and immune systems (Alves et al., 2019)

While both *stress* and *psychological stress* describe states of fatigue and mental strain, they differ significantly in intensity and impact. Stress refers to a broad range of pressures that individuals experience in response to challenging situations. In contrast, psychological stress represents an escalated stage of stress, characterized by chronic exposure to stressors without adequate social support or effective coping mechanisms. This persistent inability to manage ongoing stress can evolve into psychological stress, highlighting that while the two concepts are related, psychological stress is a more severe, advanced manifestation of prolonged stress exposure (Hassan, 2020).

The nuanced relationship between these concepts underscores that stress serves as a precursor to psychological stress. As stressors persist and the individual's capacity to cope diminishes, the situation may escalate into a state of psychological stress. Thus, psychological stress can be viewed as an intensified response to the same underlying factors that cause general stress, with the key difference lying in the chronicity and lack of effective coping strategies.

Psychological stress profoundly influences students' ability to adjust academically. Academic adjustment is a critical determinant of students' success, encompassing their capacity to meet academic demands, effectively manage time, and engage positively with peers and faculty members (Baish & Ismaili, 2022). The ability to adapt to the academic environment directly correlates with academic performance and overall well-being, making it a vital component of the educational experience.

Academic adjustment is a multifaceted concept that has been defined in various ways. It involves establishing healthy interpersonal relationships with fellow students and faculty, fostering a positive attitude towards coursework, and optimizing time management according to the changing demands of the educational context. Al-Shaer (2017) emphasizes that academic adjustment reflects a psychological state of equilibrium, where students achieve a sense of balance and harmony within their educational environment. This equilibrium is evidenced by

strong social connections and active participation in academic and extracurricular activities, signifying the student's successful adaptation to university life.

In essence, academic adjustment requires students to navigate the complexities of the educational setting effectively, balancing social and academic demands. Failure to manage psychological stress can disrupt this balance, leading to difficulties in academic performance and reduced overall well-being. Thus, enhancing students' coping mechanisms and resilience is essential for fostering effective academic adjustment and improving their overall university experience.

Bensalah (2015) emphasized that academic adjustment forms the cornerstone of a productive relationship between students and their educational environment, significantly contributing to their academic progress and holistic personal development. This relationship manifests in several key indicators, such as enhanced educational achievement, satisfaction with academic standards, and adherence to the guidance and instructions provided by the institution.

Al-Namlah and Al-Suhaibani (2021) further elaborated on the dimensions of academic adjustment among university students, identifying several critical aspects. The first dimension, *academic seriousness and diligence*, reflects a student's commitment to managing their time effectively and actively engaging in academic pursuits, which in turn facilitates higher levels of scholastic achievement. The second dimension, *school satisfaction*, encompasses a student's sense of comfort with various components of the educational process, including curriculum content and positive interactions with professors and peers. Thirdly, *discipline and compliance* are exhibited through the student's adherence to university policies and regulations, fostering a structured and conducive learning environment.

Moreover, the *relationship with faculty members* is highlighted as a pivotal factor, underscoring the importance of a respectful and constructive interaction between students and their instructors, which significantly enhances the academic experience. Lastly, the *relationship with peers* is characterized by cooperation, camaraderie, and mutual support, which collectively enrich the university experience and help build a robust social support network among students.

Gharaibeh (2016) expands on these aspects, outlining several essential elements of academic adjustment. Firstly, a positive attitude towards learning is reflected in a student's diligence and perseverance in academic tasks, leading to improved performance across subjects. Secondly, a respectful and collaborative relationship with faculty members enhances the effectiveness of the educational process. Thirdly, positive peer interactions and active participation in university activities help create a supportive and motivating learning environment. Students who exhibit strong academic adjustment skills can effectively balance their time between academic, social, and recreational activities, thereby mitigating psychological stress. Ultimately, a well-adjusted student is likely to excel academically, demonstrating the profound impact of comprehensive academic alignment on scholastic success and personal growth.

Shuwaikh (2022) identifies a broad range of symptoms associated with psychological stress, encompassing psychological, physical, behavioral, and emotional dimensions. Psychologically, individuals may experience heightened anxiety, persistent stress,

depression, and difficulties in concentration and decision-making. Physical symptoms often include frequent headaches, muscle or back pain, sleep disturbances such as insomnia, chronic fatigue, and unexplained fluctuations in weight. Behaviorally, individuals may exhibit increased irritability, avoidance of social interactions, and a higher reliance on stimulants like caffeine, all of which can impair academic and professional performance. Emotionally, feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and diminished interest in previously enjoyed activities may arise. When such symptoms persist or substantially disrupt daily functioning, it is advisable to seek professional psychological support.

Numerous studies have explored the interplay between psychological stress and academic adjustment. For instance, a recent study by Abdel Amir (2024) aimed to investigate the relationship between these two variables among students from the Department of Physical Education and Sports Sciences at the Faculty of Basic Education, University of Diyala, during the 2023-2024 academic year. Utilizing a sample of 90 randomly selected students, the researcher employed a descriptive correlational design to examine the scales of academic adjustment and psychological stress.

The findings indicated that the students experienced varying levels of psychological stress, with an inverse correlation observed between academic adjustment and psychological stress. Specifically, as students exhibited higher levels of academic adjustment, their experiences of psychological stress decreased. This correlation persisted across different levels of student performance, suggesting that academic adjustment plays a protective role against the adverse effects of psychological stress, regardless of individual differences in students' abilities.

The research conducted by Momani et al. (2023) aimed to assess the level of academic adjustment among students at Al-Balqa Applied University, exploring its relationship with various demographic and academic variables. The study utilized a stratified random sample of 625 students during the second semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. Employing a descriptive research design and a 40-item questionnaire based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature, the findings revealed a high level of academic adjustment among the students, with an arithmetic mean of 3.83. The results indicated no statistically significant differences in academic adjustment related to variables such as gender, academic degree, field of specialization, academic performance, and academic standing.

Al-Sawi (2023) focused on identifying the primary coping strategies employed by university students in response to psychological stress and examined differences across gender and age groups. The study, involving a sample of 150 students aged 16 to 40, utilized the Coping with Stress Scale and applied a comparative descriptive approach for analysis using SPSS. The findings highlighted that family pressures were the most significant source of psychological stress, followed by work-related and social relationship pressures. The study also revealed gender-based differences in the impact of these stress sources and variations across age groups in stress levels. The most prevalent coping strategy among university students was emotional venting, underscoring the importance of addressing emotional responses in stress management.

The research by Baish and Ismaili (2022) investigated psychological stress and academic adjustment among final-year secondary school students at Fayed Al-Saeed High School in Hammam Al-Dhalaa, Wilayat of Messila. The study sought to explore the relationship between these variables across gender and specialization (scientific versus literary). Utilizing various statistical methods to validate its hypotheses, the study found a high level of psychological stress and a correspondingly low level of academic adjustment among the participants. No significant differences were observed based on gender or field of specialization. However, a weak but statistically significant inverse relationship between psychological stress and academic adjustment was identified, indicating that higher stress levels negatively impact students' ability to adapt academically.

Mahaydat (2021) aimed to explore the relationship between perceived stress management and future anxiety among Yarmouk University students. The study sample consisted of 1,084 randomly selected students, employing the Stress Management Scale and the Future Anxiety Scale specifically developed for this research. The results indicated moderate levels of perceived stress management and future anxiety. Furthermore, the study demonstrated a predictive relationship, where effective stress management was associated with a reduction in future anxiety levels, highlighting the potential benefits of enhancing stress management skills to alleviate anxiety among students.

Ermasova et al. (2020) investigated psychological stress and coping mechanisms among university students, analyzing the influence of gender and marital status on academic and personal stressors. The study surveyed 539 students using a stress and coping questionnaire. The findings indicated that female students were more susceptible to stress compared to their male counterparts, and unmarried students reported higher levels of academic and personal stress than married students. The study also revealed gender differences in coping preferences; male students tended to perceive seeking psychological help as a sign of vulnerability, preferring to confide in friends, whereas female students often relied on family support. Unmarried students were more frequently affected by periods of intense stress compared to their married peers.

Boke et al. (2019) examined the relationship between perceived stress and substance use (alcohol and drugs) among a large sample of 5,917 university students. The study employed a survey to assess the link between stress levels and unhealthy coping behaviors. The results indicated a positive correlation between higher stress levels and increased reports of substance use, with stress and substance abuse rates being higher in later academic years. This suggests that as academic pressures intensify, students may resort to maladaptive coping strategies, exacerbating the risks associated with substance abuse.

Saleh and Sharif (2017) explored the prevalence of psychological stress among middle school students, focusing specifically on female participants. Utilizing a descriptive-analytical approach, the study identified school-related and emotional factors as the primary sources of stress. The results highlighted varying levels of psychological stress among students, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to address the specific stressors faced by this demographic.

The present study offers a focused examination of psychological stress and its relationship to academic adjustment among female students at the University College of Bernie, providing a nuanced understanding of the experiences specific to this group. Unlike previous studies, such as that of Momani et al. (2023), which included a diverse student sample, this research narrows its focus to female students, allowing for a deeper analysis of their unique stressors and academic challenges. Additionally, the study proposes practical recommendations, such as enhancing psychological support and academic guidance, aligning with the findings of Mahaydat (2021) on the benefits of effective stress management in reducing anxiety.

This research also addresses the contemporary context of increasing psychological pressures on students, as noted by Ermasova et al. (2020), and underscores the need for continuous exploration of psychological stress in the educational setting. The study's findings contribute to filling the knowledge gap in understanding how psychological stress specifically impacts academic adjustment among female university students, reinforcing the importance of ongoing research to inform targeted support strategies and interventions.

Methodology of the study

Problem of the study

Psychological stress has become an endemic feature of contemporary life, driven by rapid changes and increasing demands across various domains. Within the context of higher education, stress is particularly pronounced due to the multifaceted challenges faced by students as they navigate the rigorous demands of academic and social life. Higher education institutions, being pivotal societal structures, depend heavily on the academic and personal development of their student bodies. According to Char Khwily (2015), the constant pursuit of knowledge and the acquisition of theoretical and practical skills necessary for academic success can inadvertently become a source of psychological stress for students.

The issue of psychological stress stands out as a fundamental problem that directly influences students' academic adjustment. When students experience heightened stress levels, it significantly impairs their cognitive functions, concentration, and academic achievement. This, in turn, hampers their academic progress and performance. Moreover, stress can alter students' learning styles and interactions within the university environment, affecting their relationships with peers and faculty members. The result is a suboptimal learning environment that lacks the necessary components for effective academic engagement.

Given the evident negative impact of psychological stress on students' ability to adapt academically, there is an urgent need to strike a balance between academic demands and students' mental well-being. Addressing this balance is crucial for fostering effective academic adjustment and enhancing overall academic performance. This highlights the necessity for educational institutions and researchers to devote special attention to exploring methods for alleviating psychological stress and promoting positive student interactions within the academic environment.

Questions of the study

To address this problem, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of psychological stress among the students of Bernie University College?
2. What is the level of academic adjustment among female students at Bernie University College?
3. Are there statistically significant differences (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the levels of psychological stress among students based on variables such as academic year and academic department?
4. Are there statistically significant differences (at $\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the levels of academic adjustment among students based on variables such as academic year and academic department?
5. Is there a statistically significant correlation (at $\alpha = 0.05$) between psychological stress and academic adjustment among female students at Bernie University College?

Objectives of the Study

The current study aims to:

1. Identify the levels of psychological stress and academic adjustment among female students of Bernie University College.
2. Examine differences in the levels of psychological stress and academic adjustment based on specific variables (academic year, academic department) among these students.
3. Analyze the correlation between psychological stress and academic adjustment, providing insights into how these factors interact within the university context.

4. Significance of the Study

• Practical Significance:

This study addresses a crucial issue prevalent within higher education environments—psychological stress. It is well-established that psychological stress adversely affects students' academic performance and overall mental well-being. By examining this phenomenon in detail, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by students, thereby facilitating improved academic outcomes. By identifying the levels of psychological stress and assessing academic adjustment, targeted intervention strategies can be developed to support students in better adapting to the rigors of academic life. These strategies are expected to contribute significantly to enhancing students' academic performance and overall experience in higher education.

• Scientific Significance:

From a scientific perspective, the findings of this study will offer valuable insights and recommendations to key stakeholders, including university administrations and faculty members. The goal is to foster an improved learning environment and bolster psychological support

mechanisms for students, thereby enhancing the overall quality of higher education. Furthermore, this research will enrich the academic literature on the intricate relationship between psychological stress and academic adjustment. By shedding light on this dynamic, the study may serve as a catalyst for future research in this field, stimulating further investigations into effective strategies for mitigating psychological stress in educational contexts.

Terminology of the Study

- **Psychological Stress:**

Psychological stress is defined as "a reaction to various intense stimuli, which may result in alterations in mental processes, emotional fluctuations, shifts in motivational dynamics, and impairments in verbal and motor behavior" (Elsayed, 2001, p. 18). Procedurally, in this study, psychological stress is quantified through the student's score on the psychological stress scale utilized as a measurement tool.

- **Academic Adjustment:**

Academic adjustment refers to the outcome of an ongoing and constructive interaction between the university student and their academic environment, which significantly contributes to the student's intellectual, personal, and professional growth. This relationship is evidenced by several positive indicators, such as consistent diligence in studies, high academic performance, satisfaction with educational standards, and the ability to adapt effectively to academic demands. A student who is well-adjusted academically demonstrates a readiness to fulfill academic obligations in a structured and coordinated manner, thereby enhancing their overall educational experience and facilitating the achievement of both academic and professional objectives. According to Rabeh (2018), a positive relationship between the student and the academic environment is fundamental in promoting academic success and personal development. Procedurally, this concept is measured by the student's score on the academic adjustment scale used in this study.

Limitations of the Study

1. **Spatial Limitations:**

The study was conducted at Bernie University College, a constituent of Taif University, providing a localized context within the higher education landscape.

2. **Temporal Limitations:**

The study was carried out during the first semester of the academic year 2024-2025, providing a snapshot of the phenomena under investigation within this specific timeframe.

3. **Objective Limitations:**

The focus of this study is on exploring the relationship between psychological stress and academic adjustment among female students at Bernie University

College. The scope is confined to examining these specific constructs without extending to other potential psychological or academic variables.

The research employed a **descriptive correlational approach** aimed at elucidating the relationship between the key variables of interest: psychological stress and academic adjustment. This methodological framework was selected for its efficacy in analyzing the associations between variables and determining the extent to which psychological stress is linked with academic adjustment among female students at Bernie University College.

Sample of the study

The target population for this study comprised all female students enrolled at Bernie University College, totaling **4,211** students across various academic disciplines. The distribution of students across different faculties is as follows:

- **Humanities Studies:** 1,808 students
- **Administrative Sciences:** 1,713 students
- **Science and Technology:** 690 students

To ensure a representative sample that encapsulates diverse academic backgrounds and study levels, a **random sample** of **354** students was selected. This sampling strategy was designed to achieve a comprehensive reflection of the broader student population. The questionnaires were disseminated electronically, which facilitated easier access for the respondents and aimed to enhance the overall response rate. The table below shows the distribution of the sample by demographic variables:

Table (1): Frequencies and Percentages of Study Variables

VARIABLE:	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SCHOOL YEAR	FIRST YEAR	105	29
	SECOND YEAR	71	20.1
	THIRD YEAR	93	26
	YEAR 4	85	24
TOTAL		354	100%
ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT	HUMANITIES STUDIES	138	39
	ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES	122	34
	SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	94	26
	TOTAL		354

Study Tools

The primary instruments employed in this study consisted of a structured questionnaire, meticulously developed to measure two critical variables: **psychological stress** and **academic adjustment**. The questionnaire was divided into two main sections:

1. Psychological Stress Scale:

This section comprised **20 items** designed to assess the level of psychological stress experienced by students. The items covered various scenarios that students might encounter in both their academic and personal lives, aiming to capture the multidimensional aspects of psychological stress, including emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses.

2. Academic Adjustment Scale:

Similarly, this section consisted of **20 items** focusing on evaluating students' ability to adapt effectively to the academic environment. The items assessed various indicators of academic adjustment, such as time management, satisfaction with academic performance, engagement in academic activities, and relationships with peers and faculty members.

Validity of the Study Tools

The validity of the questionnaire was rigorously assessed through two primary measures: **Face validity** and **Construct validity**.

1. Face Validity:

Face validity, refers to the extent to which the instrument appears suitable and relevant for measuring the intended constructs, as perceived by experts in the field. In this study, the face validity of the questionnaire was established through the following steps:

- **Expert**

Review:

The questionnaire was presented to a panel of specialized arbitrators and experts in educational psychology and research methodology. These experts evaluated the instrument based on several criteria, including:

- **Clarity of Wording:** Ensuring that the language used in the items was precise and easily understandable by the target population.
- **Relevance to Objectives:** Assessing the appropriateness of each item in relation to the study's goals, ensuring that the items effectively measure the constructs of psychological stress and academic adjustment.
- **Comprehensiveness of the Tool:** Reviewing the scope of the items to confirm that all relevant aspects of psychological stress and academic adjustment were adequately covered.

The feedback from the experts was used to refine the wording and content of the questionnaire, enhancing its apparent validity and ensuring its alignment with the study's objectives.

2. Construct Validity:

Construct validity, assesses the extent to which the instrument accurately measures the theoretical constructs it is intended to evaluate. In this study, structural validity was confirmed by examining the **internal consistency** of the questionnaire. This process involved analyzing the correlation between individual items and their respective overall scales (i.e., psychological stress and academic adjustment).

The following procedures were undertaken to verify the instrument's internal consistency:

- **Item-Total Correlation Analysis:**

The correlation coefficient between each item and the total score of its corresponding scale was computed. This analysis aimed to determine the degree of alignment between each item and the overall construct being measured.

- **Statistical Significance of Correlation Coefficients:**

The significance of the correlation coefficients was assessed at a confidence level of ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). Items that demonstrated positive and statistically significant correlations with the total score of their respective scales were retained, indicating that they effectively measured different facets of the intended constructs.

- **Revision of Inconsistent Items:**

Items that did not show a statistically significant correlation with the overall scale were carefully reviewed. Based on the analysis, such items were either modified to enhance their clarity and relevance or excluded to ensure the coherence and reliability of the instrument.

Results of Construct Validity Analysis

The analysis of structural validity revealed a high level of **internal consistency** across the items in both scales. The majority of the items exhibited strong positive correlations with the overall scale scores, signifying the instrument's robust capability to measure the constructs of psychological stress and academic adjustment accurately.

- **Table (2):** Displays the correlation coefficients for the **Psychological Stress Scale** items, indicating their contribution to the overall measurement of psychological stress.
- **Table (3):** Presents the correlation coefficients for the **Academic Adjustment Scale** items, demonstrating their alignment with the overarching construct of academic adjustment.

The findings affirm the sound structural validity of the questionnaire, establishing it as a reliable tool for assessing psychological stress and academic adjustment among the female students at Bernie University College.

Table (2): Correlation coefficients of psychological stress items

ITEM	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT	ITEM	CORRELATION COEFFICIENT
1	.385**	11	-.574**
2	.410**	12	.726**
3	.506**	13	.628**
4	.575**	14	.568**
5	.526**	15	.595**
6	.673**	16	.579**
7	.612**	17	.714**
8	.528**	18	.608**
9	.639**	19	-.664**
10	.653**	20	.661**

Table (3): Correlation coefficients of academic adjustment items

Item	Correlation coefficient	Item	Correlation coefficient
1	* *0.856	11	* *0.849
2	* *0.792	12	* *0.855
3	* *0.837	13	* *0.792
4	* *0.824	14	* *0.836
5	* *0.869	15	* *0.626
6	* *0.765	16	* *0.743
7	* *0.810	17	**0.750.
8	* *0.855	18	* *0.767
9	* *0.446	19	* *0.671
10	* *0.879	20	* *0.664

It can be observed from **Table (2)** that the correlation coefficients for the individual items in the **Psychological Stress Scale** ranged from **0.385 to 0.726**. These values are considered **educationally acceptable** according to established standards of reliability and construct validity. As a result, all items in the scale were retained, confirming their ability to effectively measure the construct of psychological stress.

Similarly, **Table (3)** indicates that the correlation coefficients for the items in the **Academic Adjustment Scale** ranged from **0.446 to 0.879**. These values also meet the threshold for **educational acceptability**, and, therefore, all items in the scale were considered valid and retained.

Reliability of the Study Tools:

To further verify the reliability of the study instruments, a pilot test was conducted using a **exploratory sample** selected from outside the main study sample. This was done to assess the **reliability** of the tools and ensure their consistency over time. The **Cronbach's Alpha coefficient** was calculated for both scales, as it is a widely accepted measure of internal consistency.

The following table presents the **Cronbach's Alpha values**, which demonstrate the reliability of the study tools

Table (4): Internal Consistency Coefficient (Cronbach Alpha)

TOOL	Cronbach Alpha
Stress	.747
Academic Alignment	.935

Table (4) demonstrates that the **Cronbach's Alpha** coefficient for the **Psychological Stress Scale** is **0.747**, while the **Academic Adjustment Scale** has a higher coefficient of **0.935**. Both values are considered **highly reliable**, providing sufficient confidence in the stability of the instruments for the purposes of this study. These reliability coefficients affirm that the tools are suitable for measuring the constructs they aim to assess and are robust enough to support generalization of the study’s findings.

Questionnaire Scoring and Methodology:

To assess participants' responses, a five-point Likert scale was used, with the following options: **Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, Never**. The Likert scale was processed based on the following equation to calculate the category length:

$$\text{Category Length} = \frac{\text{Largest Value} - \text{Smallest Value}}{\text{Number of Categories}} = \frac{5 - 1}{3} = 1.33$$

The following statistical criterion was used

Table (5): The Statistical Criterion For Interpreting The Mean Scores Of The Study Sample Estimates

MEAN SCORES	LEVEL.
1.00 - 2.33	LOW
FROM 2.34 – 3.66	MODERATE
3.67 – 5.00	HIGH

The following procedures were implemented throughout the study:

1. **Reviewing the Theoretical Literature:** This step was crucial for forming a comprehensive understanding of the study's subject, identifying the problem, research questions, and study variables.
2. **Utilizing Previous Studies:** Previous research was consulted to inform the construction of the study's tools, ensuring alignment with established methodologies and ensuring the tools were conceptually valid.
3. **Ensuring Validity and Reliability:** Various methods were employed to ensure the validity and reliability of the research tools.
4. **Identifying the Study Population:** The study focused on the female students of the **University College of Bernie**, with a total of **4,211 students** in the **2024-2025 academic year**.
5. **Selecting the Study Sample:** A random sample of **354 female students** was selected to ensure the sample was representative of the target population.
6. **Administering the Tools:** The tools measuring **psychological stress** and **academic adjustment** were administered to the selected sample.
7. **Data Analysis:** The responses from the study sample were analyzed using the **SPSS** system, and appropriate statistical procedures were applied to answer the research questions and draw conclusions.

Statistical Methods:

To achieve the study's objectives, the **SPSS** software was used for data analysis. The following statistical methods were employed:

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** This included calculating **frequencies, percentages, and mean scores** with **standard deviations** to describe the characteristics of the study sample and analyze the responses to the study's tool.

2. **Cronbach's Alpha:** Used to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the study tools.
3. **Pearson Correlation Coefficient:** Employed to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between the questionnaire items and the study's constructs, particularly between psychological stress and academic adjustment.
4. **One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA):** Conducted to test for statistically significant differences between the mean scores of the study sample based on variables such as **academic year** and **academic department**.
5. **Scheffé Test:** Used for post-hoc analysis to examine differences between the responses of study participants across **academic year** and **academic department**.

Results of the Study:

First: Results Related to the First Question: *"What is the level of psychological stress among female students of the University College of Bernie?"*

To answer this question, the mean scores and standard deviations for the responses to the items of the **psychological stress scale** were calculated. The following table presents the results of the responses from the study sample.

Table (6): Means Scores and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample Responses on the Stress Scale

Rank	Item No.	Items:	Means Scores	Standard Deviation	Level.
1	16	I have good social relationships with my college classmates	3.86	1.11	High
2	15	I can adapt to different academic requirements.	3.81	1.22	High
3	17	I receive sufficient guidance and direction from my professors.	3.55	1.14	Moderate
4	10	I have more anxiety the more academic responsibilities I have.	2.78	1.47	Moderate
5	6	The lack of diversity in the content of the courses makes me bored.	2.64	1.47	Moderate
6	7	Comparing myself to my outstanding colleagues makes me feel even more anxious.	2.44	1.2	Moderate
7	19	I feel unable to cope with daily stresses	2.4	1.12	Moderate
8	18	I experience negative emotions due to financial problems	2.37	1.3	
9	2	I have difficulty adjusting my studies to my family responsibilities.	2.34	1.12	Moderate
10	14	I don't find it quiet enough to study on campus.	2.29	1.23	Low
11	20	I feel that my living environment affects my academic achievement.	2.23	1.25	Low

12	5	Prolonged absence from home due to school increases my stress.	2.2	1.14	Low
13	8	I feel nervous when there is a lot of inconvenience while studying.	2.13	0.88	Low
14	11	I lack motivation due to lack of academic challenges.	2.13	1.12	Low
15	13	The study environment in the college lacks facilities that help focus (such as libraries, quiet study places).	2.12	1.1	Low
16	1	I feel under-appreciated for my school efforts.	2.05	1.2	Low
17	12	I am thinking of dropping out of school because I feel incompetent.	0.03	1.02	Low
18	3	The impact of family stress affects my concentration in the study	2.02	0.92	Low
19	9	I feel increasingly pressured as deadlines for task handovers approach.	1.99	1.01	Low
20	4	I am stressed by the large amount of coursework required in limited time	1.8	0.98	Low
Tools Total			2.46	0.48	Moderate

Table (6) reveals that the mean scores for the items on the psychological stress tool ranged from **1.80** to **3.86**. Certain items were classified at a high level of impact, such as **Item 16**, which states, "I enjoy good social relations with my colleagues in college," receiving the highest mean score of **3.86**, indicating a high level of satisfaction in this regard. In contrast, **Item 4**, which reads, "I face pressure because of the large amount of schoolwork required in a limited time," ranked the lowest in terms of negative impact, with a mean score of **1.80**.

The overall mean score for the psychological stress tool was **2.46**, falling within the **moderate** range, which suggests that the level of psychological stress experienced by the study participants is moderate. These results indicate variability in the levels of psychological stress based on the types of pressures encountered by students. Specifically, pressures related to academic assignments and deadlines were identified as the most significant contributors to increased psychological stress, while social support and good relationships with peers were found to alleviate this stress.

This finding can be attributed to the nature of the psychological pressures faced by students, where academic-related stress, such as the burden of assignments and deadlines, predominantly contributes to their feelings of stress and fatigue. On the other hand, positive social relations appear to act as a protective factor, helping to mitigate this stress. When students feel supported by their peers, they are better equipped to manage daily pressures, facilitating their adjustment to academic life. These findings underscore the importance of fostering social connections, as they play a vital role in enhancing mental well-being and reducing stress.

This finding can be interpreted in the context of the significant role academic adjustment plays in managing psychological stress. The results align with the studies conducted by **Abdul Amir (2024)** and **Mahidat (2021)**, which established an **inverse relationship** between academic adjustment and psychological stress. Specifically, their research suggests that improving academic adjustment can effectively reduce students' levels of psychological stress.

However, the findings of **Baish and Ismaili (2022)** present a contrasting view. Their study revealed a high level of psychological stress alongside a low level of academic adjustment, indicating a **weak inverse relationship** between the two variables. This suggests that in certain contexts, academic adaptation may not be sufficient to mitigate the effects of psychological stress. The disparity in these results highlights the complexity of the relationship between academic adaptation and stress, suggesting that while academic adjustment can be a helpful factor, it may not be a comprehensive solution for all students. This dynamic illustrates the multifaceted challenges students encounter in striving for the necessary adjustment to alleviate stress.

Second: Results Related to the Second Question:

"What is the level of academic adjustment of the female students of the University College of Bernie?"

To address this question, the mean scores and standard deviations of the items from the **Academic Adjustment Tool** were calculated. The following table presents the results of the responses provided by the study sample.

Table (7): Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample Responses on the Academic Adjustment Scale

Rank	Item No.	Item	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	Level
1	17	I achieved the grades I expected in most subjects.	3.82	1.16	Moderate
2	6	I use effective strategies that help me achieve academic success.	3.77	1.19	Moderate
3	11	I have positive and constructive relationships with my professors and classmates.	3.66	1.35	Moderate
4	3	I apply what I learn in school to my working life.	3.64	1.33	Moderate
5	15	I find in academic challenges opportunities for personal growth and development.	3.60	1.28	Moderate
6	20	I always strive to improve my academic skills through new experiences and challenges.	3.58	1.35	HIGH
7	12	I always strive to improve my level of study by participating in academic	3.55	1.21	Moderate

Rank	Item No.	Item	Mean Scores	Standard Deviation	Level
		activities.			
8	16	I can effectively manage my time to achieve the required academic performance	3.53	1.44	Moderate
9	13	I feel proud when I can successfully complete difficult study assignments.	3.52	1.35	Moderate
10	14	I actively participate in student or university activities that interest me.	3-48	33	Moderate
11	8	I feel like I'm striking a good balance between studying and my personal life.	3.47	1-32	Moderate
12	10	I can identify my academic goals and work to achieve them effectively.	3.47	1.48	Moderate
13	1	I am able to pass the exams successfully and feel satisfied with my performance.	3.46	1.40	Moderate
14	4	I enjoy participating in lessons and lectures and find them useful.	3.44	1.40	Moderate
15	2	I feel a lasting accomplishment when I successfully complete school assignments..	3.43	1-31 1.13	Moderate
16	5	I participate in new experiences and activities to enhance my academic skills and knowledge.	3.42	1.46	Moderate
17	18	I am confident in my ability to face and overcome the upcoming academic challenges..	3.41	1:30	HIGH
18	7	I choose subjects that I think will benefit me in the future.	3.40	1.19	Moderate
19	19	I am able to complete the required coursework on time.	3.40	1.42	Moderate
20	9	I can organize my time between study and other activities in a balanced way	3.22	1.46	Moderate
Tool's Total			3.51	0.896	Moderate

Table (7) shows that the mean scores of the items on the **Academic Adjustment Tool** ranged between **3.22** and **3.82**, reflecting medium to high levels of academic adjustment. **Item (17)**, which stated, "I achieved the grades I expect in most subjects," ranked highest with a mean score of **3.82**, while **Item (9)**, which stated, "I can organize my time between study and other activities in a balanced manner," ranked lowest with a mean score of **3.22**. The overall mean score for the academic adjustment tool was **3.51**, indicating a moderate level of academic adjustment.

This result can be explained by the general satisfaction that students feel with their academic performance, yet they face challenges in managing their time effectively between studies and other activities. These challenges may be attributed to several factors, including academic pressures, the high volume of tasks, and additional material requirements such as textbooks and other university-related demands.

This finding aligns with the study by **Momani et al. (2023)**, which reported a moderate level of academic adjustment (**mean = 3.83**), indicating that students are generally able to adapt to the academic environment despite facing challenges. Similarly, **Abdel Amir (2024)** found that academic adjustment is positively correlated with psychological stress, suggesting that students' ability to adjust academically plays a significant role in managing stress and achieving academic success.

In contrast, these results differ from those of **Baish and Ismaili (2022)**, whose study indicated a low level of academic adjustment despite the students experiencing high levels of psychological stress. Additionally, **Al-Sawi (2023)** emphasized the impact of family and social pressures on students' ability to adjust academically, suggesting that these external factors might contribute to poor academic adjustment, even when students report success in achieving expected grades.

Third: Results Related to the Third Question:

"Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the responses of the study sample members attributed to the variables (school year, academic department)?"

To answer this question, the mean scores and standard deviations of the study scales were calculated based on the variables of **academic year** and **academic department**. The following tables illustrate the results for these variables, providing insights into how academic year and department may influence the levels of psychological stress and academic adjustment among the study participants.

Table (8): Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample Responses on Psychological Stress among Female Students of The University College Of Bernie

Variable:	Variable Levels		Value
SCHOOL YEAR	FIRST YEAR	Mean Scores	2.44
		Standard deviation	0.33
	SECOND YEAR	Mean Scores	2.34
		Standard deviation	0.47
	Third Year	Mean Scores	2.55
		Standard deviation	0.55
	Year 4	Mean Scores	2.48
		Standard deviation	0.55
Academic Section	Humanities Studies	Mean Scores	2.43
		Standard deviation	0.50

Administrative Sciences	Mean Scores	2.59
	Standard deviation	0.52
Science and Technology	Mean Scores	2.32
	Standard deviation	0.34

Table (8) reveals that the levels of psychological stress among female university students vary according to both **academic year** and **academic department**.

- By Academic Year:**
 It appears that **third-year students** experience the highest level of psychological stress, with a mean score of **2.55** and a standard deviation of **0.55**. This heightened stress can be attributed to the increased academic requirements and more intensive evaluation projects typical at this stage of their studies. Following third-year students, **fourth-year students** report a mean score of **2.48** with a standard deviation of **0.55**, reflecting significant stress, likely due to graduation requirements. In contrast, **first-year students** show a moderate level of stress, with a mean of **2.44** and a standard deviation of **0.33**, which is indicative of the challenges they face in adapting to the new university environment.
- By Academic Department:**
 When considering **academic departments**, students from the **Administrative Sciences** department reported the highest level of psychological stress, with a mean score of **2.59** and a standard deviation of **0.52**. This could be attributed to the intensity of academic subjects and projects within this specialization. On the other hand, students in **Science and Technology** reported the least amount of stress, with a mean of **2.32** and a standard deviation of **0.34**, which may suggest a more supportive study environment or a curriculum perceived as less stressful compared to other departments.

To verify the statistical significance of the apparent differences in psychological stress based on the **academic year** and **academic department**, a **one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA)** was conducted. While there are observable differences in the mean scores across both variables, a deeper statistical analysis is required to determine whether these differences are statistically significant. This analysis will help confirm if the variations observed are due to the variables under consideration or if they may have occurred by chance.

Analysis of variances based on the school year

Table (9): One Way Anova Test Results According To The School Year Variable

Variable:	Variance	Squares Total		Squares Mean	F	Statistical Significance
Stress	Inter-Group	1.956	3	0.652	2.860	0.037
	Within Groups	79.782	350	0.228		
	TOTAL	81.738	(353)			

The results of the One-Way ANOVA test, as shown in Table (9), reveal statistically significant differences in the levels of psychological stress based on the **academic year** variable. The F-value was calculated to be 2.86, with a significance level of 0.037. This indicates that the academic year has a significant effect on the levels of psychological stress among the students. To further explore these differences and identify where they specifically exist, the **Scheffe test** was applied, as detailed in the following table.

Table (10): The Schffe test results of the stress tool

Category	year.	Sec	Year 3	Fourth year
Year. 1	-	0.097	0.118	0.097
Year. 2	-	-	0.214*	0.144
Year 3	-	-	-	0.071
Year 4	-	-	-	-

Table (10) presents the results of the **Scheffe test** used to compare the differences in the level of psychological stress among female students of Bernie University College across different academic years (first, second, third, and fourth). The results reveal a **statistically significant difference** between the second and third years, with a mean difference of 0.214, indicating that the level of psychological stress in the third year is significantly higher than that in the second year. However, no statistically significant differences were found between the other academic years. Specifically, the comparisons between the first year and the second, third, and fourth years showed mean differences of 0.097, 0.118, and 0.097, respectively, suggesting that the levels of psychological stress are relatively similar across these years with no significant variation.

Analysis of variances based on academic department

Table (11): One Way Anova Test Results According To Academic Department Variable

Variable	Variance	Squares Total		Squares Mean	F	Statistical Significance
Stress	Inter-Group	4.238	2	2.119	9	0.00
	Within Groups	77.500	351	0.221		
	TOTAL	81.738	353			

Table (11) demonstrates that there are **statistically significant differences** in the mean scores of the psychological stress tool based on the academic department variable. The **F-value** of 9.597, with a significance level of 0.00, indicates that the academic department significantly influences the levels of psychological stress experienced by the students. To further explore the nature of these differences, the **Scheffe test** was applied, as shown in the subsequent table.

Table (12): Scheffe Test Results for the Stress Tool

Category	Humanities Studies	Administrative Sciences	Science and Technology
Humanities Studies	-	0.160*	0.117
Administrative Sciences	-	-	0.278*
Science and Technology	-	-	-

The results presented in **Table (12)** indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the level of psychological stress between certain academic departments. Specifically, a significant difference of **0.160** was observed between the **Humanities Studies** and **Administrative Sciences** departments, with **Administrative Sciences** students experiencing a higher level of psychological stress. Additionally, a statistically significant difference of **0.278** was found between **Administrative Sciences** and **Science and Technology**, again in favor of **Administrative Sciences**, suggesting that **Administrative Sciences** students report higher levels of psychological stress compared to their counterparts in **Science and Technology**. However, no statistically significant differences were found between **Humanities Studies** and **Science and Technology**, indicating that the psychological stress levels between these two groups were similar. Overall, the findings suggest that students in **Administrative Sciences** experience the highest levels of psychological stress among the academic departments studied.

These results can be attributed to several factors. First, the nature of the increasing academic requirements faced by students in the third year, where academic projects and assessments become more intensive, significantly contributes to heightened psychological pressure. In the fourth year, students experience stress related to graduation requirements. Conversely, first-year students are primarily faced with the pressures of adapting to a new university environment. Additionally, students in the **Administrative Sciences** department are exposed to higher levels of psychological stress, likely due to the dense workload and the complexity of academic projects. In contrast, students in **Science and Technology** seem to benefit from a relatively less stressful academic environment. These findings highlight the need for targeted psychological and academic support for students in particularly stressful academic years and disciplines, such as **Administrative Sciences**.

The findings of this study align with the research of **Mahidat (2021)**, which emphasized the importance of effective stress management in alleviating anxiety, particularly among women, and underscored the role of positive academic adaptation in reducing stress. However, these results diverge from those of **Al-Sawi (2023)**, whose study revealed high levels of psychological stress coupled with low academic adjustment, suggesting that academic adaptation alone may not be sufficient to alleviate stress. This contrast emphasizes the complexity of the

relationship between academic adaptation and stress, and the necessity for a multi-faceted approach to supporting students' well-being.

Fourth: results related to the fourth question: "Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) in the academic adjustment of the study sample based on academic level and academic department, the mean scores and standard deviations of the academic adjustment tool were calculated. The following tables provide the results based on the variables of academic year and academic department:

Table (13): Mean Scores and Standard Deviations of the Study Sample Responses on The Academic Adjustment of Female Students of The University College Of Bernie

Variable:	Variable Levels		Value
SCHOOL YEAR	YEAR 1	Mean Scores	3.64
		Standard Deviation	0.647
	YEAR 2	Mean Scores	3.70
		Standard Deviation	0.807
	Year 3	Mean Scores	3.46
		Standard Deviation	1.065
	Year 4	Mean Scores	3.27
		Standard Deviation	0.977
Academic Section	Humanities Studies	Mean Scores	3.38
		Standard Deviation	1.00
	Administrative Sciences	Mean Scores	3.52
		Standard Deviation	0.71
Science and Technology	Mean Scores	3.73	
	Standard Deviation	0.91	

Table (13) reveals that there are apparent differences in the mean scores of academic adjustment among female students based on their academic year and academic department. Specifically, when comparing academic years:

- **First-year students:** Mean Scores = 3.64, Standard deviation = 0.647
- **Second-year students:** Mean Scores = 3.70, Standard deviation = 0.807
- **Third-year students:** Mean Scores = 3.46, Standard deviation = 1.065
- **Fourth-year students:** Mean Scores = 3.27, Standard deviation = 0.977

This data indicates that second-year students exhibit the highest level of academic adjustment, with a slightly higher mean than the first-year students. However, there

are noticeable differences in adjustment levels among the years, particularly between the second-year students and the third and fourth-year students, where adjustment appears to decline slightly in later years. Despite these variations, the differences across the years are not large but may have significant implications for understanding students' experiences across their academic journey.

This information suggests that second-year students might be in a phase of better adaptation to their academic environment, whereas third and fourth-year students could be facing more challenges in maintaining or improving their academic adjustment, possibly due to increased academic demands or pressures related to graduation.

The data for the academic department variable shows the following mean scores and standard deviations for academic adjustment:

- **Humanities students:** Mean Scores = 3.37, Standard deviation = 1.12
- **Administrative science students:** Mean Scores = 3.51, Standard deviation = 0.711
- **Science and technology students:** Mean Scores = 3.73, Standard deviation = 0.912

This suggests that while there are differences between students from the different academic departments, these differences are relatively small. In fact, the results indicate a significant convergence in the level of academic adjustment across the disciplines, with science and technology students exhibiting the highest adjustment, followed by administrative sciences and humanities students. However, the disparity is minimal, indicating that academic adjustment is fairly consistent across the various departments.

Given these apparent differences, ANOVA was used to assess the statistical significance of these differences based on academic year and department. Despite slight apparent variations, a deeper statistical analysis is required to determine whether these differences are statistically significant.

Analysis of variances based on the school year

Table (14): One Way Anova test results according to the school year variable

Variable	Variance	Squares Total	Degree of Freedom	Squares Mean	F	Statistical Significance
Academic Adjustment	Inter-Group	9.407	3	3.136	4.005	0.008
	Within Groups	274.010	350	0.783		
	TOTAL	283.417	353			

he results in Table (14) indicate that there are statistically significant differences in academic adjustment based on the variable of academic year, with an F-value of 4.005 and a significance level of 0.008, which is below the threshold of 0.05. This

suggests that the academic year has a significant effect on the level of academic adjustment among the study sample.

To further explore the nature of these differences, the Scheffe test was applied. The Scheffe test is commonly used after ANOVA to identify which specific groups have significant differences. It compares the mean scores between different groups to determine which pairs of academic years (first, second, third, or fourth) exhibit statistically significant differences in terms of academic adjustment.

The results of the Scheffe test, shown in the following table, would provide further insight into which specific academic years have differences in academic adjustment levels.

Table (15): Scheffe test results for the academic adjustment tool

Category	Year. 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Year. 1	-	0.066	0.180	0.364*
Year. 2	-	-	0.246	0.431*
Year 3	-	-	-	0.185
Year. 4	-	-	-	-

The results from Table (15) based on the Scheffe test provide insight into the differences in academic adjustment across different academic years. It is clear from the findings that there are statistically significant differences in the level of academic adjustment between certain academic years:

1. **First-Year vs. Fourth-Year Students:** There is a significant difference (0.364) in favor of the first-year female students, indicating that first-year students experience better academic adjustment than fourth-year students.
2. **Second-Year vs. Fourth-Year Students:** A significant difference (0.431) is observed, with second-year students showing better academic adjustment compared to fourth-year students.

However, the table also shows that there are **no significant differences** between other years (i.e., between first-year, second-year, and third-year students). The differences between these groups (0.066, 0.180, 0.246, and 0.185) are small and statistically insignificant, indicating a similar level of academic adjustment among these groups.

In general, the findings suggest that **first- and second-year students** tend to have better academic adjustment compared to those in the final years (third and fourth years). This could be attributed to factors such as the transition into more complex academic challenges as students advance in their studies, possibly leading to greater stress and difficulty in adjustment as they approach graduation.

Analysis of variances based on academic department

Table (16): (one way Anova) test results according to the academic department variable

Variable	Variance	Squares Total	Degree Of Freedom	Squares Mean	F	Statistical Significance
Academic Alignment	Inter-Group	7.06	2	3.53	4.483	0.012
	Within Groups	276.307	351	0.787		
	TOTAL	283.417	353			

The results from **Table (16)** indicate that there are statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level in the academic adjustment scores based on the **academic department**. The **F-value** is **4.483**, with a significance level of **0.012**, suggesting that academic department is a significant factor influencing the level of academic adjustment among the students.

To further explore these differences, the **Scheffe test** was applied, which helps determine where the specific differences lie between the various academic departments. This test allows for pairwise comparisons between the departments, providing insight into which specific departments show significant differences in academic adjustment levels.

Table (17): Scheffe Test Results for Academic Adjustment Tool

Category	Humanities Studies	Administrative Sciences	Science and Technology
Humanities Studies	-	0.137	0.355*
Administrative Sciences	-	-	0.218
Science and Technology	-	-	-

The results of **Table (17)**, showing the results of the **Scheffe test** to compare academic adjustment levels among female students from three academic departments (Humanities Studies, Administrative Sciences, and Science and Technology), indicate several important points:

1. Significant Differences:

- A statistically significant difference was found between **Humanities Studies** and **Science and Technology** students, with a mean difference of **0.355** in favor of **Humanities Studies**. This suggests that **Science and Technology** students have lower levels of academic adjustment compared to **Humanities Studies** students.

- This indicates that **Science and Technology** students may face more challenges in adjusting to their academic environment compared to their peers in **Humanities Studies**.
2. **Non-Significant Differences:**
- There were **no statistically significant differences** between:
 - **Humanities Studies** and **Administrative Sciences** (mean difference of **0.137**),
 - **Administrative Sciences** and **Science and Technology** (mean difference of **0.218**).

These results suggest that the levels of academic adjustment between **Administrative Sciences** and **Humanities Studies**, and between **Administrative Sciences** and **Science and Technology**, are quite similar and do not show a significant disparity in how students from these departments adjust academically.

Interpretation:

- **Science and Technology** students appear to experience more difficulties with academic adjustment than their peers in the **Humanities Studies** department.
- The **Administrative Sciences** department does not show significant differences in academic adjustment levels when compared to either **Humanities Studies** or **Science and Technology**, suggesting a degree of stability in adjustment across these two groups.

In general, these findings emphasize the need to focus on improving academic adjustment in the **Science and Technology** department, where students face more challenges compared to the **Humanities Studies** group.

These results can be explained by several factors that affect students' academic adjustment:

1. **Year of Study:**

The second-year students show the highest level of academic adjustment, likely due to their improved understanding of university expectations and routines after having navigated the initial adaptation phase in their first year. By this time, they are more familiar with their academic environment and have settled into a rhythm, leading to greater adjustment. On the other hand, **fourth-year students** exhibit the lowest level of academic adjustment, likely due to the increased pressure and stress associated with preparing for graduation. As graduation approaches, students often face heightened academic demands, more complex projects, and the stress of career decisions, which may undermine their overall adjustment.

2. **Nature of the Academic Department:**

The **Science and Technology** students face more difficulties in academic adjustment compared to their peers in other departments, which may be linked to the more **challenging nature of the subjects** they study. The rigor of their coursework, along with the demand for technical and specialized knowledge, likely places additional stress on students. These challenges can affect their ability to adjust smoothly to the academic environment. This is in contrast to students in the **Humanities** and **Administrative Sciences**, where

the workload and content might be perceived as less demanding or stressful, leading to higher levels of academic adjustment.

3. Need for Targeted Support:

Despite the differences in academic adjustment levels between students from different academic years, there is a convergence between departments, suggesting that the primary challenge lies in the specific demands and pressures faced by **Science and Technology** students. The findings imply that **academic and psychological support** targeted specifically at **Science and Technology** students could help address the unique challenges they face. Providing support tailored to their specific academic needs, such as additional resources, counseling, or time-management strategies, may improve their adjustment and overall academic experience.

In conclusion, while second-year students appear to be the most adjusted, the pressures felt by fourth-year students and **Science and Technology** students suggest that addressing these pressures through targeted support systems could significantly improve students' academic experiences across departments and years of study.

The results of the study align with **Momani et al. (2023)**, which found a **high level of academic adjustment** among students, particularly in their earlier academic years. This suggests that the **early years of university** play a crucial role in fostering academic adjustment. During this period, students are better able to adapt to the demands of academic life, likely due to a combination of growing familiarity with the university environment and the gradual acquisition of academic skills. This supports the current study's findings that second-year students, in particular, exhibit the highest level of academic adjustment.

In contrast, the results **disagree with Al-Sawi (2023)**, which identified **high levels of psychological stress** alongside **low academic adjustment** in students, especially in the later years of study. This suggests that as students approach graduation, the **academic pressures**—such as final projects, exams, and career preparation—become more intense, negatively affecting their ability to adjust. This finding aligns with the current study, where **fourth-year students** were found to have lower academic adjustment, likely due to the **stress** associated with graduation requirements and career uncertainties.

Thus, while **early years** contribute positively to **academic adjustment**, **later years**, particularly those approaching graduation, present greater challenges for students, highlighting the importance of providing adequate support during these high-pressure periods.

Fifth: results related to the fifth question: "Is there a correlation at the level of significance ($\alpha=0.05$) between psychological stress and academic adjustment among female students of the University College of Bernie?"

To address this question, the Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the psychological stress tool and the academic adjustment tool. The results, as shown in Table (18), indicate that:

Table (18) Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient Test For the Stress Tool and the Academic Adjustment Tool

	Stress	
	Correlation Coefficient	Statistical Significance
Academic adjustment	-.641	0.00

Table (18) presents the results of the Pearson correlation coefficient test examining the relationship between psychological stress and academic adjustment among female university students. The findings indicate a strong negative correlation between psychological stress and academic adjustment, with a correlation coefficient of (-0.641) and high statistical significance ($p = 0.00$). This suggests that higher levels of psychological stress are associated with lower levels of academic adjustment. In other words, as students experience more psychological stress, their ability to adapt to and manage academic demands diminishes. This emphasizes the need for psychological and academic support for students, as reducing psychological stress can help improve their academic adjustment.

This result can be explained by the impact of psychological stress on academic performance. As psychological stress levels increase, students' capacity to adapt to study requirements decreases. This relationship can be further understood through its effect on concentration, motivation, and attention, all of which hinder the student's ability to meet academic demands. Moreover, it highlights the importance of providing psychological and academic support to enhance students' resilience to stress. Implementing effective stress management strategies can foster better academic adjustment, underscoring the need for psychological support programs within educational institutions to alleviate stress and improve academic performance.

The results align with Al-Sawi's (2023) study, which found that higher levels of psychological stress are linked to lower levels of academic adjustment among university students, thus supporting the negative relationship between these two variables. On the other hand, these findings contrast with those of Mahidat's (2021) study, which suggested that managing perceived stress can reduce future anxiety, indicating that students can employ positive coping mechanisms that enhance their academic performance. While this study confirms a strong negative relationship between psychological stress and academic adjustment, signifying that stress negatively impacts students' ability to adapt, it contradicts findings suggesting that stress management strategies might promote academic adaptation.

Recommendations of the study:

- **Developing Effective Psychological Support Programs:** Establish comprehensive programs that include counseling sessions and workshops aimed at improving students' stress management skills.
- **Organizing Coping Strategy Workshops:** Host workshops focused on practical coping strategies to manage psychological stress, such as relaxation techniques, time management, and personal organization.
- **Encouraging Social and Sports Engagement:** Motivate students to participate in social and extracurricular activities, including sports, to enhance social connections and help alleviate stress levels.
- **Providing Specialized Counseling Services:** Offer personalized academic and psychological counseling services, with a focus on individual support, to assist students in effectively managing stress and improving their academic adjustment.

By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions can foster a more supportive and nurturing environment for their students, effectively mitigating the adverse effects of psychological stress on academic performance and adjustment. Introducing such interventions would not only enhance students' academic success but also promote their overall well-being and emotional health, leading to a more balanced and fulfilling university experience.

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