

Difficulties when studying away from home

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Abstract

This study points out the difficulties of being away from home and shows that going away from home is not easy, showing the importance of homesickness and the challenges of going away. We divide each other to collect data from 416 out of 735 students far away from home, such as Van Lang students University and other universities, especially college freshmen, to survey and analyze. Finally, through research, we find that there are some differences between male and female, between first-year college students living in dormitories located inside the campus and those living in boarding houses outside the campus, between freshman and university students of other courses about homesickness levels, score achievements and other issues. However, most of the students away from home miss their friends and family very much. The financial, environmental, social issues show that they all think that studying away from home is not easy as they thought.

Keywords: away from home, difficulties, studies

Background of the study

Getting a college degree is essential, especially in today's competitive world, which is why everyone wants to go to college and get a desirable degree. It is considered a developmental milestone that marks the transition expected in adulthood (Thurber & Walton, 2012). In particular, going to college was an enjoyable experience (Abdullah, Elias, Mahyuddin & Uli, 2009) cause that changes people's lives. However, it is natural to start college life with excitement and anxiety (University Counseling Services, 1998) because a transition to college can be considered an event major in life (Klingensmith, 2010) and the most demanding of all transitions (Farris, 2010).

The purpose of the study

There are many ideas about when studying far away from home is not difficult, so why is it difficult? Some people say that studying away from home is difficult. We have to face it is not as easy as we think it is not easy like that. The first difficulty we face is financing when you want to study abroad or go to university. It would help if you had good finance. Otherwise, it will be challenging. You have to pay for renting a house, travel expenses, living expenses, utility bills, etc., some do not have good finance, they have to work part-time to cover their living. Learning and working are hard. Students could fall into debt because the students can borrow money from the student financial aid agency to cover all their living and tuition. The second challenge is social problems to a new environment, a new country, a completely different life from home, social problems are very likely, and your child is at risk of others bully. Also, it is necessary to learn

to get used to a new school to catch up with the pace of life in the place. Otherwise, it will be pushed back, poor results. Not only that, when away from home, some people cannot gain any more knowledge because their abilities are not suitable for that level. Although the feeling of homesickness can be generally considered mild, for some, the distress level can be extreme (Thurber & Walton, 2007). The strong need for support is evident among persons who experience homesickness but lack the necessary social skills to acquire much-needed support (Van Tilburg, Vingerhoets & Vam Heck, 1996). Also, in the study, we found that the biggest thing is that homesickness is a lot of students who rarely power their families, but when they go to school far away, on average, they will power back to their families every six weeks. Some people even miss their parents' tears; they think that the feeling of homesickness is terrible, some people fall into depression because no one is around, feelings of homesickness rise very high. Not only that but also many other problems have similar problems as well.

Give everyone a different perspective on studying away from home, and we want to learn about the difficulties when the students are away from home and what is the problem you think is the most difficult, when away from home like that, family what does it mean to them, and Do they want to go back when there are so many difficulties? Or accept biting for a good future, and why should they try so hard?

The significance of the study

Learning is considered an important issue, not only parents but also by the State investing in modern facilities, equipment, etc... to recognize the importance. Despite the difficulties of long-distance study, parents accept to let their children go away from home to a new environment, a new country. The parents and the children also accept that going away from home will all in return that their children will have a better future and the students themselves will have good high-paying jobs. The meaning of this study is to make people have different perspectives on distance learning, and it is very difficult, not easy at all. Besides, the meaning of the two words 'family' studying far away helps you realize your father's love. Your mother gave you more than the love that you were near you said they were very troublesome, only wished to go as far as possible, but when you go to school far away you miss them, cry, want them to be here with you. Also, it shows you the loneliness when studying far away. The loneliness is terrifying. So, the family is the most important and most significant meaning in our research.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to research the experience of homesickness among first-year college students. Specifically, it sought to answer the subsequent questions:

1. Is there a difference in the experience of homesickness between male and feminine college freshmen?
2. Is there a difference in the experience of homesickness between first-year college students living in dormitories on the campus and first-year college students living in boarding houses outside the campus?
3. Is there a difference in the experience of homesickness between younger and older first-year college students?

Literature review

Colleges and universities today are faced with a growing problem of maintenance. Retention is taken into account to be an increasing problem because more and more college students are leaving universities and colleges per annum for a spread of reasons. This results in high rates of attrition and low rates of retention

(Farris, 2010). The problem of retention is often attributed to adjustment issues. Generally, the transition to school requires adjustment among college students (Roring II, 2008), and lots of students experience difficulties with the method of adjustment. Adjustment difficulty is manifested by problems associated with involvement, making new friends, being far away from home, and therefore the like (Farris, 2010).

It is important to notice that an individual leaving home is placed during a novel or maybe strange situation that entails a new living environment with the strong possibility of the need to organize new friendships and social support (Roring II, 2008). This is due to the very fact that being in college requires one to experience a transformative time where one is required to work out who he/she is and what is necessary for him/her to require care of himself/herself (Farris, 2010). And because of the numerous changes simultaneously happening during a college freshman's life, the transition can cause the event of latest relationships with peers, romantic partners, and even professors (Roring II, 2008).

One common concern experienced by college freshmen during their period of evolution is homesickness. Homesickness can refer to the feeling of wanting to come back home, especially among those who left their homes for the first time (Duru & Balkis, 2013). It can lead a student back to the adjustment process because the most focus will be the missing of one's home (Farris, 2010). Several changeable are often taken into consideration when researching the experience of homesickness like that of gender, place of residence, and age.

First-year students' main factor is the first time away from home, a new place to set foot. Therefore, when studying, research shows that they have many difficulties to face for first-year students, such as getting used to a new environment, making friends, learning with results or not. And more than that is the anxiety and anxiety of freshman students that are homesick. Research also shows that they need some time to adapt to it. Similarly, Rooney and Reardon (2009) affirms that it is relatively fine for some students, while for others, more self-awareness and self-study skills are necessary because the university requirements are very different from most high schools. Difficulty and corrections, especially in the early months of college, depending on background and personality traits (Feldman & Newcomb, 1994).

There is a significant difference in the homesickness experience between younger and older college students presents the difference in homesickness experience between college freshmen living in on-campus dormitories and those who live in off-campus homestays. Klingensmith (2010) assumes that college students are faced with the challenge of giving up old friendships and creating new ones. Also, going to college creates new family relationships, especially when one chooses to move away from home. And the challenge of leaving your ex-boyfriend and family and making new connections often creates a feeling of homesickness.

Parental protection affects students when transitioning to college life away from home. According to Hale (1939), overprotective parental protection has a variety of adverse effects on a student's transition to college. They have to find it very difficult to adapt to the unsupervised life of their parents while studying away from home. Students can email their parents on average six times per week, and female students tend to send emails more often than males (Trice, 2002). Feel lonely and shy at first, but after a while in other social relationships, that feeling of loneliness will decrease. Homesickness is inevitable. However, students can go home to rest on holidays. Relationships also change gradually. There will be other social relationships in the environment you live in. The family subsidizes some people, and with regular family contact, live better lives than those that are independent and have little contact with their families. General,

maternal participation appears to profit student efficiency and facilitate a flatter conversion to school studies. The gap doesn't hinder interactions.

Studying at university is that students are often given a certain experience by providing them a big opportunity to attach and meet with many new people, more creative ideas, begin to get older, and make an advanced future for themselves among their educational qualifications. However, the abroad students have had homesickness; they're different from home students; they need to leave home to go to another country to review. International students can easily take psychological state issues with different levels of influence (Rahat & Ilhan, 2016).

The previous research indicated an alliance between leave home to review or work and negative psychological state outcomes, like hopelessness and homesickness (Andrade, 2006; Chen, 1999). All pessimistic psychological and physical outcomes are associated with moving far away from home when everyone can't adapt to a replacement life, a replacement environment. They need to rebuild all new life contacts.

In the main, the reviewed literature provided a construction from which the study at hand can be researched. Retention concerns are a reality as recognized by (Farris, 2010). One very possible reason for the low retention of first-year school students had something to try to do with adjustment (Farris, 2010; Roring II, 2008). Homesickness can be associated with poor adjustment (Farris, 2010). And to be ready to have a thorough understanding of homesickness, variables like gender, place of residence, and age are often investigated since extant literature claimed that the mentioned variables play significant roles within the experience of homesickness (Downs, 2002; Edwards et al., 1998; Farris, 2010; Robbins, 2003; Thurber & Walton, 2007; Thurber & Weisz, 1997).

Methodology

Research context & sampling methods

Education is so important that many parents choose to let their children go away from home, but students also choose the same way for their future, but going away is also very difficult, causing students to face to face. To find out what those difficulties are, the most difficult problems students face, and what benefits the students do not, our team surveyed to investigate those issues.

The subjects we choose for this survey are far from school as students in other provinces or students abroad who come to our countries to study. A total of 416 first-year college students, including 165 males and 251 females living in dormitories within the campus and boardinghouses located outside the campus, served as the respondents of this study. Of which has 258 students living in dormitories situated inside the campus and 158 those living in boarding houses outside the campus. The 416 first-year students questioned were all students from different universities in Ho Chi Minh City in the first academic year of the 2019-2020 semester.

The procedure of the study

We will choose subjects for our research, and discuss questions together, create questions to interview, including Vietnamese and English; when identifying the subjects to interview and having questions, we divided the survey into three ways that are direct interviews, print out the paper, and each member in our group will distribute to them for their evaluation. In these two ways, we will survey first-year students from college from the same school. In a final course, we also create the same questions on the google form. Next, we copy the link and post them on social networking sites such as Facebook, confession groups of

universities in Ho Chi Minh City with the hope that the first-year university students of other universities will also participate in the survey to us obtain more data to help us can evaluate and analyze the results more accurately.

Instrument

First, we use a questionnaire with a total of 20 statements and some questions. To give feedback, students work by writing answers or selecting the available ones that match their thinking. Questionnaires are the popular choice for most large-scale surveys. It's fast, economical, and efficient.

We then divided into two small groups to conduct face-to-face interviews to gather the best feedback for the research. We searched and directly interviewed 25 students with the same type of questions repeatedly asked in sequence. The responses are recorded and all data stored on the smartphone. Face-to-face interviewing is conducive to flexibly developing ideas, exploring answers to become more active to find, analyze, and clarify information quickly.

The third tool is social networking sites. The advancement and popularity of modern technology applications make it easier to survey when survey conductors want to gather a wide variety of responses from people, places, and genders that are not in the area where we can hand out questionnaires or interview directly.

Data collection

After more than two weeks of the continuous survey from October 7, 2020, to October 23, 2020, using the three methods above, we distributed a total of 420 questionnaires, interviewed 25 students directly, and had 78 students from other universities participated in the survey on social networking sites that we posted earlier. However, after examining all the results collected, only 416 were matched. Specifically, 336 out of 420 votes were collected by our team members, of which 80 students submit blank papers and four students carelessly corrupt the ballots. 25 out of 25 students directly interviewed completed the questions posed by our team members and finally has had 59 out of 78 students surveyed on social networking sites took the on-demand survey, 19 students whose results were not accepted.

Data analyze

To test the hypotheses of the study, independent samples t-test was used. The independent samples t-test is employed when one wants to look at the mean difference between two exclusive or independent groups (Hyman & Sierra, 2010). Concerning the quantitative data, SPSS 18.0 was employed to analyze data. The descriptive statistic was calculated to determine the Number (N), the Mean (M), and the Standard Deviation (SD). The range means for the six-point Likert scale is applied as follows: low level is less than 2.66, medium level is from 2.67 to 4.33, and the high level is from 4.34 to 6 (Pham, 2010). During this study, these independent groups were the male and feminine college freshmen, college freshmen living in dormitories within the campus, people living in boarding houses outside the campus, and younger and older college freshmen.

Results

In our research, we obtain 416 people, mostly college freshmen. We survey some key issues such as the difference in the experience of homesickness between first-year college students living in dormitories located inside the campus and those living in boarding houses outside the campus is presented in Table 1, the difference in the experience of homesickness between male and female college freshmen is presented in Table 2, the difference in the experience of homesickness between younger and older first-year college students is presented in Table 3, and have financial difficulties and feel lonely without a family is presented

in charts. Table 1 presents the difference in the experience of homesickness between college freshmen living in dormitories located inside the campus and those living in boarding houses outside the campus.

Table 1.
Students' accommodation

	N	M	SD	T	Df	Sig.
Living in dormitories located inside the campus.	258	23.62	5.89	1.18	375.92	.24
Living in boarding houses outside the campus.	158	23.02	5.32			

Table 1 presented the difference in the experience of homesickness between first-year college students living in dormitories located inside the campus and those living in boarding houses outside the campus. It was no significant difference in the experience of homesickness between first-year college students living in dormitories located inside the campus and first-year college students living in dormitories outside the campus. But with those living in dormitories within the campus slightly scored higher than the mean scores.

Table 2.
The difference in the experience of homesickness between male and female college freshmen is presented.

	N	M	SD	T	Df	Sig.
Male	165	21.72	5.85	5.02	326.05	.00
Female	251	24.55	5.29			

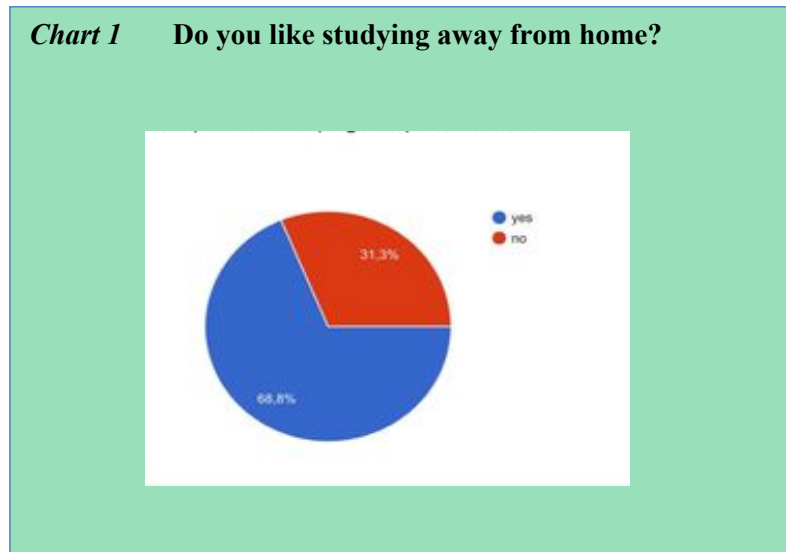
Table 2 present the difference in the experience of homesickness between male and female college freshmen. As can be seen, in general, Female college freshmen scored higher than male. This indicates that more female students experienced homesick than male students.

Table 3.
The difference in the experience of homesickness between younger and older college freshmen.

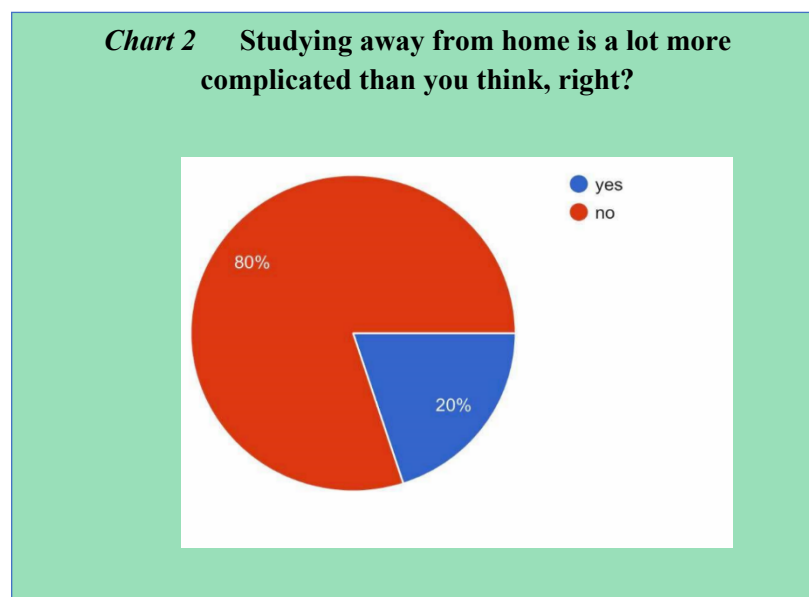
	N	M	SD	T	Df	Sig.
Younger	227	24.82	4.96	5.58	362.89	.00
Older	189	21.76	6.05			

Table 3 presented the difference in the experience of homesickness between younger and older first-year college students. There was a significant difference in younger first-year college students. The mean scored higher. The following sections presents some questions directly interview about financial difficulties and feel lonely without a family.

- **Financial difficulties**



- 17 out of 25 students said they like to study away from home, equivalent to 68.8% of the total 25 students interviewed directly by our team members, as shown in chart 1.

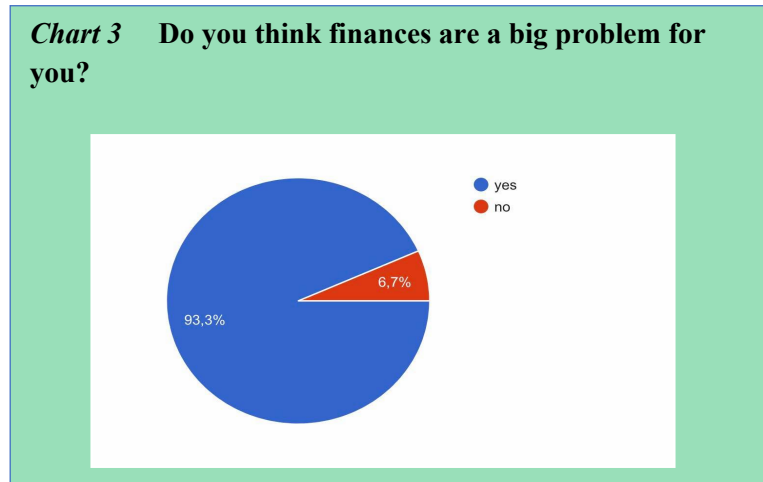


- 23 out of 25 students interviewed face-to-face shared that everything went against what you thought before (in charts 2). It doesn't look easy.

Respondent Ha Van Ty said that *"Going to school away from home is tough, and in my opinion, the most difficult one is financial and not having parents."*

Linh Chi pointed out that *"It was awful. I never thought that studying away from home had had so much pressure. When I first moved here, I was sick continuously for more than two weeks because of the sudden change of environment, so I have not adapted to the weather here. After almost a year of living and studying here, I realized that it was more difficult than I thought, academic pressure, study costs, new friends, new teachers, living expenses, connections the surrounding relationship gradually disappeared, the more the absence of a parent by my side, the sick times there was no caregiver like before, everything I had to do by myself made me feel more and more stressed."* And The rest of the students were interviewed face-to-face with similar responses.

In chart 3 answers the question Do you think finances are a big problem for you?



My Hanh reported that *"Sure, anything I can say is that the money because if you would like to eat good food you've got to possess enough money to urge. Everything needs money. That is my view."*

About Cong Vinh, he said that *"I think finance is the biggest challenge for students away from home."* And other similar opinions as above.

After the investigation was released, we all felt it extremely meaningful. Nearly 69% of respondents said that they enjoyed studying away from home and even expected it. But 80% of students admit that life away from home is too difficult for them. It is entirely unlike what they think. More surprisingly, more than 93% of them said that they were all in financial trouble. Some even say that this was the first time they left their families to go somewhere else for first-year students college away from home. They have to study by themselves, learn by themselves how to survive without their parents. They have to learn how to be independent, economical, and time management to work part-time to support their family and ensure that they complete their studies well. According to My Kien (a first-year student of TDTU), they also need to learn how to adapt to a new life, new friends and finds it very difficult. Old relationships are fading because there is no time to chat or keep in contact as often as before. The few remaining students do not have financial difficulties because their parents support them.

- **Loneliness/ Homesickness**

On loneliness and homesickness, we received various opinions through the survey, as follows: 17 out of 25 students answered that they were homesick and they even felt very lonely application. The remaining eight students said they did not miss home much (in charts 4).

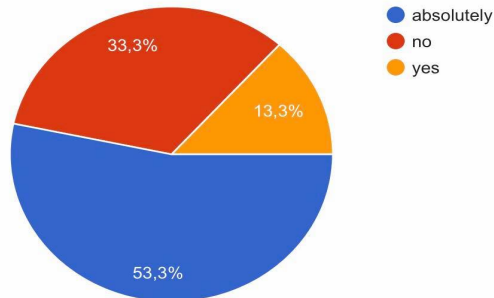


Chart 4 Do you feel lonely when you go to school far away with no one beside you?

Thu Huong reported that *"When I'm away from my relatives, my friends are not beside me, I learning to do everything on their own, so I feel very lonely and miss my family very much."*

Kim Ngan shared that *"When we are near family, we do not feel the love from our family, but when we are away, we only wish to eat a meal cooked by the mother. Going to school far away helps me to realize that I love my family more. I need to be more mature. I love my family."*

Besides sharing that they miss their family very much, some opinions say no to this.

According to Duc Think (a first-year student in the public relations department at VLU), shares that study far away is an excellent opportunity for him to train himself better, to learn how to be independent, not dependent on his parents. Going far is an opportunity and a challenge that helps him learn new things from everyone around him, get to know more places, and make new friends. Sometimes it was difficult, tiring, and stressful, but it also made him stronger. So, he knows that nothing was easy. Besides, his hometown is not very far. When he can arrange a time, he often returns to his family. So, when asked about homesickness, he has very little and almost no. He feels that experiencing a new study environment in a new city, making new friends, and being exposed to a new lifestyle is truly an enjoyable experience.

Chart 5 Studying away from home has many difficulties, so why do you still choose to study far away?

Because I want to study well to get a good job with a high-salary. And then, I can support my family in my conditions

change life

i think it's good for the future

because i want to be independent, have more experience life also challenge myself

Because i like VLU

cause my family they want the best for me even far but we have no choose

Chart 5 is a summary of a few ideas to the question of why you still decided to choose to study away from home despite so many difficulties?

Nhat Khoa replied that *"It will help my future be better, have a degree, and be in a better working environment too I can take care of my family. So, although I don't like to study far away, for myself, for the family, I must strive."* And many others ideas like that.

Discussion

According to the results of other studies and based on the results of our research, the results are similar in terms of homesickness. The problem of homesickness is considered to be the most common in the world. Psychological help, support, and supervision are purposed at lessening the feeling of homesickness (Duru & Balkis, 2013). Homesickness is a common symptom among students studying away from home, especially for freshman college students. But excessive homesickness leads to increasingly negative conditions in students, so there is more support and support in terms of psychology so that students can separate from their families, preparing to nurture relationships new and developing resilience to the outside society paving the way for future success. And since more and more college students are looking to study away from home, healthy modification to separation is necessary (Thurder & Walton, 2012). That's why our analysis of freshman college freshman's homesickness experience is so valuable. The study aims to uncover the inadequacies of first-year college students so that the school and parents can take timely support measures. As the studies found, there was no difference between males and females in homesickness. Although females tend to be homesick than males because males have more opportunities to establish social relationships than females, have more communication opportunities, and are not limited in activities because they think they can protect themselves. The marginally higher mean score of those living in dormitories on the campus is often explained by the fact that life in dormitories between the campus is more structured compared to those in boarding houses outside the campus. Also, stringent policies like earlier time limits are instrumented in campus dormitories, so lesser time to roam around and socialize (Van Tilburg et al., (1996)). About older college, first-year students are better ready for the circumstances they encounter since their focus is more on finishing their respective degrees instead of being far away from home. Thinking about the good side of things to feel better was admitted by Thurber and Walton (2007) as a thinkable treatment to homesickness.

Summary

In the survey, we found no difference between first-year college students living in dormitories located inside the campus and those living in boarding houses outside the campus because it only shows that homesickness is generally being experienced by college students who have been away from their homes.

According to the survey, homesickness is the problem that both sexes are most talked about, especially females. Because men have more opportunities to establish social relationships than women, have more communication opportunities, and are not limited in activities because they think they can protect themselves.

There is a significant difference between the mean scores of younger and older first-year college students, with younger first-year college students scoring higher.

And then, finances are the next challenging issue that you guys talk about, and finances are considered the most difficult.

Conclusion

Based on research also shows that there are 80% of students think that studying away from home makes them face many difficulties, and more than 31% do not like to learn far away, but because of the future, they still choose to study far away even if they do not like.

Going to school away from home means leaving our old friends, leaving the family to create new relationships, new friendships, and new experiences. Going to school away from home gives us real experiences of homesickness, loneliness, and even hard times.

Therefore, women and younger college freshmen have higher homesickness intensity than men and older first-year college students. Learning away from home helps us improve our social communication skills, increase our independence and save money.

Implications

This study focused on homesickness among first-year college students. It mainly investigated the intensity of the experience of homesickness among first-year college students, the difference in the experience of homesickness between male and female college freshmen, the difference in the background of homesickness between first-year college students living in dormitories within the campus and first-year college students living in boarding houses outside the campus, and thus the difference in the experience of homesickness between younger and older first-year college students. Also, this study was only limited to 416 college freshmen respondents that came from some university. So, the results of this study cannot be generalized to other colleges or universities either in the Philippines or abroad. Despite the many limitations of this study, the results of this study proved that homesickness is a reality and truly being experienced by college freshmen. For that reason, our study proposes to replicate the scope of the survey, expand the research object to see the difference in homesickness between freshman and previous year students.

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