

# AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM ON ASSISTING TRANSITION FOR THE FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



MARC JACOBS, DR. SHENGLI DONG  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND LEARNING SYSTEMS



## Abstract

- The goal of the research is to evaluate the way to empower college students with disabilities to have a successful start to their educational career. The Engage 100 course designed for students with disabilities was evaluated to determine how students felt before and after compared to those who did not take the course. Regarding the participant pool, there were fifty participants all of whom were first year students of a diverse background. In this study, there were thirty-six students in the control group and fourteen in the experimental groups. All students self-identified as having disabilities, registered with the OAS office, and gave informed consent to participate. Students that participated in the Engage 100 course were found to score higher in all areas of wellbeing and social success. The results show that the Engage 100 model is successful. Connecting students with disabilities to resources and support early in their educational career was instrumental in their success.

## Background Info

- Throughout the history of education, students with disabilities have frequently been underrepresented, received less resources or services, and have generally had a much more difficult time than those without. (Houtenville & Rafal, 2020; Marshak et al., 2010; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). The basis of this research is to see if early interventions through pre-existing systems could be useful in better integrating students into higher education communities and helping them find more success. The specific hypothesis of the research was to determine if enrolling students in an Engage 100 course specifically designed to connect students with disabilities to resources would prove to show success, personal senses of wellbeing, and formed connections more-so than with those who chose to forego this opportunity.

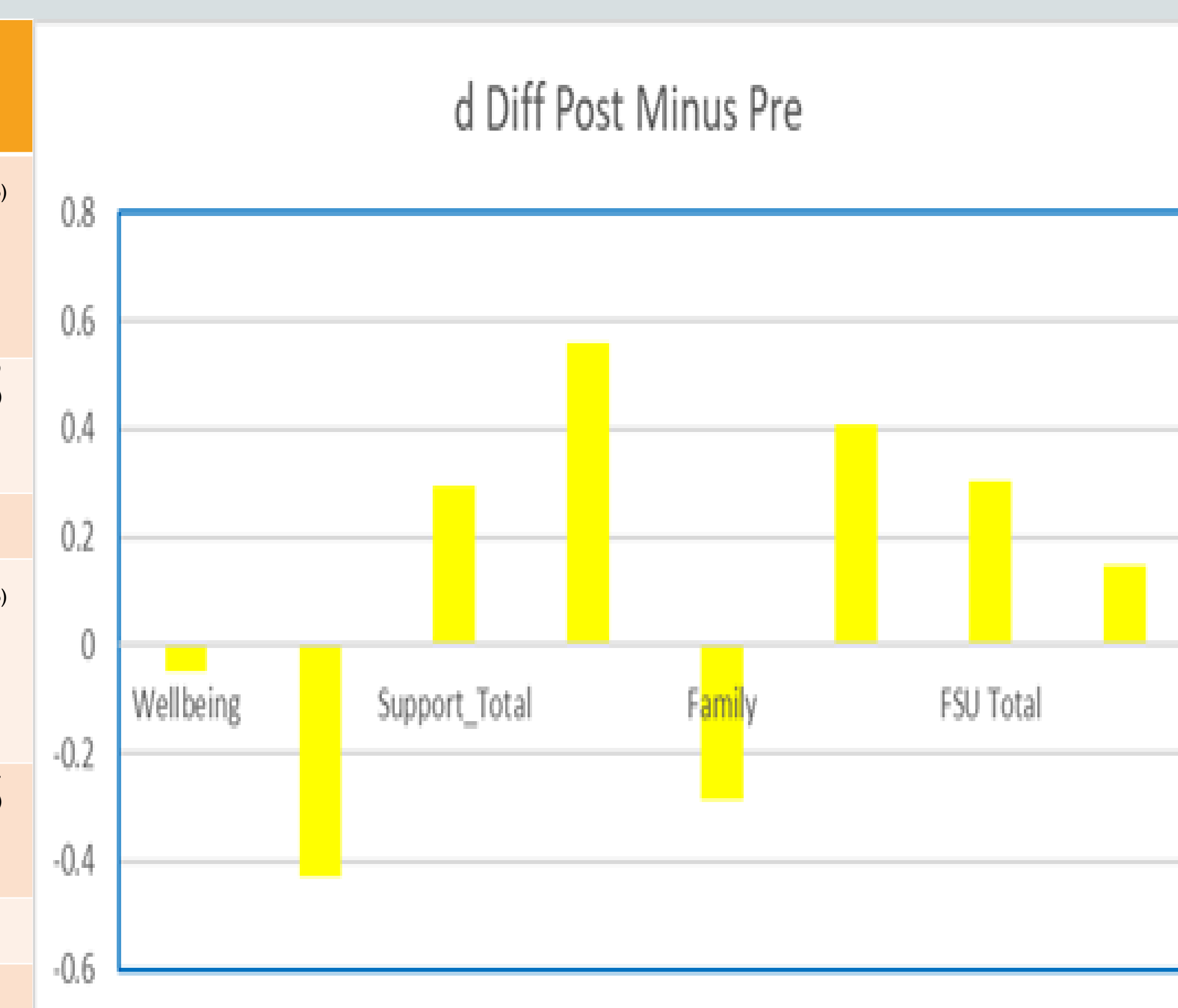
## Methods

Fifty college students with disabilities participated in the study. The participation in the study was voluntary, and students were notified through the Office of Accessibility Services of the opportunity to participate in the study through their initial services intake. Of the students selected, 14 participated in the experimental group, while the remaining 36 were in the control group. Those in the experimental group participated in the Engage 100 course while those in the control did not. After the students had completed their first semester, they were asked multiple questions regarding their wellbeing, perceived social support, and mindfulness. The results between the two groups were compared.

## Results

	WB	SE	SS_T	SS_Sig	SS_Fam	SS_Fri	SAI	MF
Control	16.58 (3.86)	35.36 (6.07)	47.83 (7.86)	15.92 (3.24)	15.53 (3.82)	16.39 (2.83)	62.67 (6.14)	39.83 (12.46)
Experimental	16.21 (3.66)	34.36 (7.07)	44.86 (8.7)	14.36 (4.34)	15.57 (3.72)	14.93 (3.6)	58.93 (6.15)	40.79 (9.21)
d_Pre								
Control	-.10 16.86 (3.71)	-.16 36.44 (6.25)	-.37 47.89 (8.53)	-.44 15.64 (3.84)	.01 16.39 (3.3)	-.48 15.86 (2.96)	-.61 60.97 (8.08)	-.08 38.5 (11.66)
Experimental	16.29 (4.7)	32.43 (8.22)	47.21 (10.94)	16.14 (4.66)	15.43 (3.92)	15.64 (3.71)	58.57 (7.02)	41.14 (11.4)
d_Post								
d_post-pre	-.14	-.59	-.07	.12	-.28	-.07	-.31	.15

Table 3  
Group Means (SDs) and Standardized Mean Differences  
d: standardized mean differences



## Results Explained

The Engage 100 course was found to be very effective in increasing the general wellbeing, self-esteem, and support from others in students with disabilities. Students enrolled in this course tended to score higher in all categories compared to those in the control group. Specifically, students that took the course tended to score higher in total support, support from significant others, support from friends, and support from FSU. These results are similar to previous research and papers regarding the wellbeing of students with disabilities. Essentially what was confirmed here is that connecting students with disabilities to resources early in their educational career proves to be effective in ensuring success.

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## Implications

- The Engage 100 model is successful!
- When support is provided early in one's educational career, they are more likely to be successful.
- FSU can continue to capitalize on these findings through not only providing this opportunity to new students with disabilities, but maybe take an extra step and make the class opt-out.

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