

EVALUATION OF HAPPINESS AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN URMIA MIDWIFERY STUDENTS

MORAD ALI ZAREIPOUR¹, JALILEH AMIRZEHNI^{2*}, FATEMEH MOHARRAMI³, SARVIN ABBASI⁴

¹Ph.D. student in Health Education and Health Promotion, Urmia Health Center, Urmia University of Medical Sciences, Urmia, Iran.

²MSc in midwifery, Urmia Health Center, Urmia University of Medical Sciences, Urmia, Iran, ³MSC Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Urmia, Iran, ⁴School of management and medical informatics, Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Tabriz, Iran. Email: JalilehAmirzehni@gmail.com

Received - 10.07.2018; Reviewed and accepted - 31.07.2018

ABSTRACT

Aims: Student success is one of the important indicators in the evaluation of educational systems. Different personal factors can be effective in a student's academic achievement, one of them is happiness. The aim of this study is to determine the level of happiness and its relationship with academic achievement in midwifery students. **Method:** This is a descriptive-analytic study done on 140 midwifery students. The research sample was taken using a stratified random sampling method. Data were collected by a demographic questionnaire and Oxford happiness questionnaire for patients. Data analysis was done through independent t-test, one-way Variance, and multivariate linear regression test. **Findings:** The average of student's happiness score was 58.98 ± 7.51 . And most students (70%) were happy. Happiness was also associated with age, marital status, and economic status. Regression results showed that happiness was significantly ($p < 0.001$) able to explain the student's success rate to 34%. **Conclusion:** Considering the meaningful relationship of happiness with academic success, it seems that in order to keep students happy and to promote education and academic achievements, special attention should be paid for happiness planning and interventions, and hope that this happiness would be more durable.

Keyword: Students, Academic achievement, Midwifery, Happiness.

INTRODUCTION

Mental well-being is a field of study in psychology which researchers attempt to understand people assessments from their lives [1]. The basis of behaviors that affect health and lifestyle will be built in schools [2]. One of the psychological needs of man is joy and happiness and because of its great impact on people's lives, it has always been in the mind of men [3]. Happiness and joy are the essential and natural human needs and it can be considered as one of the most important factors in the health of the family and society [4]. The spirit of hope and effort is in the light of a happy life [5].

There are two meanings for the word happiness in English: One is enjoying [6] In this case, we have talked about the positive excitement in present time; and the second meaning is happiness and prosperity [7] in this sense, happiness is synonym with a satisfaction of life. This seems [8] what is said in positivist psychology has near has the same purpose of second meaning [9]. The most extensive research on psychological happiness has been done by Argyle. He has reported his research results in a book entitled "Psychology of Happiness." Argyle writes about the meaning of happiness: Sometimes it is said that the concept of happiness is vague and mysterious. But it's clear that most people know well what happiness is. When we ask people about the meaning of happiness, they often respond to happiness as being in a happy state of mind or other positive emotions or is: Satisfying from their life [10]. Of course, he believes that in addition to these two components, positive emotions and satisfaction, there is also a third component that is: absence of depression and anxiety or other negative emotions [11].

One of the main concepts in positive psychology, which is one of the new branches of psychology, is happiness [12]. Positive psychology has opened new horizons to psychologists and researchers. In this branch of psychology, attention is paid to the recognition and promotion of positive aspects and strengths of human beings rather than the emphasis on identifying and studying mental deficits and their treatment [13]. Happiness is a result of human judgment about how to live a life [14]. This judgment is not imposed from the outside, but the internal state that affects the positive emotions [15]. According to this, happiness is based on personal attitude and perception and it

indicates a pleasant situation that results from the experience of positive excitement [16]. Along the students, the motivation for the progress of academic achievement is very important. This motivation helps people to find the pursuit that is necessary to successfully complete a homework, achievement of a goal or achieve a certain degree of competence in their work, in order to finally achieve the necessary success in academic achievement [17]. Academic achievement can be considered the most important educational milestone. This interval is measured by standardized intervals. Regardless of possible orientations in these tests, academic achievement is the result of several factors [18]. One of the important variables that are related to academic achievement is happiness. Students who have a high level of happiness and well-being are more active in academic performance and have better academic achievement [19]. When it comes to happiness and satisfaction among students, job satisfaction should also be considered, and the education satisfaction level as a symbol of job satisfaction has a close relationship with happiness and satisfaction among students [20]. Students are the active and future forces of society [21]. Considering that the rate of progress and failure of education is a criterion for the efficiency of the education system, identifying and influencing variables on academic performance leads to better recognition and prediction of effective variables in the educational system. Therefore, the study of variables that are related to academic achievements, is

one of the main issues in research in educational systems. Given the above, happiness can be considered as influential factors in the success and academic achievement of students. Considering the importance of the concept of happiness and lack of sufficient studies in this field, this study aimed to investigate the effect of happiness on students' academic achievements.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This research is descriptive-analytic. The research units included 140 midwifery students selected through random sampling. There were 4 classes (entrance students of year 92, 93, 94, 95) and each class included 35 midwifery students who were randomly selected. The data collection tool was the individual-social

questionnaire. It was Oxford Happiness Test Questionnaire. The Oxford Happiness Test Questionnaire, which contained 29 items, was among the factors influencing happiness in students. And it evaluates psychological constructs as social interest, extraversion, kindness, consent, humor, sense of purpose, self-esteem, self-respect, self-acceptance, physical health, autonomy, control location, and aesthetic sensation. Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) has 29 questions, each of which contains 4 answers, the first term gets zero, the second, 9, third one's score is 1 and the fourth gets 3. At the end all the scores accumulated, the scores of zero to 25 are weak happiness, the scores of 26-50 are average happiness, the scores of 51-75, the good happiness, and the scores of 76 and higher are great happiness. Scores ranges are 0 to 98. Reliability and validity of the Happiness Questionnaire in Iran were studied by Alipour and Nourbala on 101 students of AllamehTabatabai University and Shahed

University (62 women and 39 men) with an average age of 22.5 years. Alfakrunbakh was 98% and composite reliability was 92%, and the reliability was 79% with a re-test method after three weeks [22].

Findings

The mean age of the students was 21.26±1.87 years. The most age group was 20 to 22 (54.22%) and the moderate economic status was 80 person (57.4%). Also, 119 of them (85%) were single and 21 one (15%) were married. The relationship between demographic variables and happiness was assessed using independent t-test. The results showed that happiness had a significant relationship with age, marital status, and economic status (p <0.05), but happiness was not significant with the place of residence and year of entering the university (Table 1)

Table 1: Average distribution and standard deviation of student happiness in terms of demographic variables.

Variables	students		happiness Mean±SD	p-value
	Abundance	percentage		
Age	less than 20	43	30.71	0.04
	20-22	76	54.28	
	more than 22	21	15.01	
Marriage status	single	119	85	0.007
	married	21	15	
Place of residence	native	56	40	0.09
	non-native	84	60	
Entrance year	95	35	25	0.14
	94	35	25	
	93	35	25	
	92	35	25	
Economic situation	weak	36	25.71	0.008
	moderate	80	57.14	
	good	24	17.15	

According to the research findings, students' happiness average score was 58.88 ± 11.75 out of a total score of 87. 24.3% of students had moderate happiness, 70% had good happiness, 5.7% had a great happiness (Table 2).

Table 2: Distribution and Mean and Standard Deviation of Student Happiness Status

Division of happiness	Abundance	percentage	Mean and standard deviation
Happiness	moderate	34	24.3
	good	98	70
	great	8	5.7

The results of the regression test showed that happiness significantly predicted students' academic achievement (p <0.001). Higher happiness predicts 34% increase in students' academic achievement. The beta value indicates the relative importance of independent variables in the prediction of the dependent variable so that the score of happiness has had an effect on increasing academic achievement. The correlation coefficient in this study showed that there is a direct and significant relationship between happiness and academic success (Table 3).

Table 3: Regression analysis indicators to predict academic achievement in students

Independent variables	r ² coefficient of determination	r correlation coefficient	F	beta	t	P
Happiness	0.35	0.34	19.07	0.34	4.36	p0.001

DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis showed that there was a significant relationship between age, marriage, residence and economic status that confirms sectional study of Safaei and coworkers [23] aimed to investigate the relationship between academic achievement and some demographic factors with happiness on 180 students. The descriptive-correlation study of Bayrami and coworkers [24] aimed to share the factors of gender, type of residence, religiosity and family functioning in predicting the happiness on 372 students of Tabriz medical students through a multistage cluster random sampling method. There was a significant relationship between native students and happiness. Veenhoven and coworkers [25] also showed that age is one of the components associated with happiness, Which is consistent with the present study. The human being is the perfection of life, and through marriage, it naturally reaches a higher level of perfection, which can also enhance the maintenance of a person's satisfaction from life. The relationship between marital status and happiness has been evaluated in similar studies by Bowling and coworkers [26] as well as Strobel [27] and their results are

consistent with the results obtained in this study. In the study of Siamian and coworkers [28], with the aim of identifying the happiness of paramedical students, the relation between age and indigenous and non-native students was not significant in terms of happiness, But there was a significant relationship between marital status and happiness. Many researchers believe that marriage has the strongest effect on happiness and mental and physical well-being, and deprivation is very disturbing [29]. Also, it showed the lowest level of happiness at a great level, which was consistent with the results of the present study. The results of this study showed that native students were happier than non-native students. And the study of Bairami and coworkers [24], with the aim of determining gender, type of residence, religiosity, and family functioning in predicting medical students was also similar.

In terms of happiness, according to the results of the study, about three-quarters of midwifery students achieved good grades of happiness. In the study by Zohoor and coworkers [30], the average score of happiness among students of Tehran University of Medical Sciences in Tehran was also well-established, which was consistent with the present study. In the study conducted by

Sharifi and coworkers [31], the average happiness rate of Kashan medical students was high. In the study of power and colleagues [32], in order to determine the relationship between self-esteem and happiness among Arak medical students, the average student's happiness score was high. The present study showed a direct and meaningful relationship between happiness and academic success. Chow and coworkers, after examining a large sample from various American universities, concluded that the students' grades had a significant relationship with their satisfaction and happiness [20]. In another study, Luszczynska and coworkers found that satisfaction with education was a promising factor among students in Southeast American universities [33]. In a study by Chen and coworkers in 2005, it is also noted that there is a significant relationship between happiness and academic grade among Canadian students [34]. In the study of Asgharinejad et al. [35], with the aim of attachment styles with happiness in marital matters in married students, results showed a significant relationship between marriage and happiness among couples, which is consistent with the results of this study. In the study of Easterlin and coworkers [36], with the aim of examining the cycle of happiness at the intersection of the economy, psychology and population also showed a significant difference between income and age with happiness.

CONCLUSIONS

Academic progress and some of the demographic factors are significantly associated with happiness in students. A better understanding of such factors in the form of empirical and longitudinal studies can be effective in determining the more transparent relationship between cause and effect among such variables and can help to promote mental health among students. In addition, with the knowledge of such factors that can play a decisive role in improving the education and educational status of students, qualitative planning will be possible in order to strengthen these factors.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the end, all the students of the Islamic Azad University of Urmia Branch, who supported us in this research, are sincerely thanked and appreciated.

Ethical Permission

The ethics committee of students of the Islamic Azad University of Urmia approved the study.

Conflicts of Interests

No Conflicts of Interests has been declared by the authors.

Funding\Support

This article is the result of a research plan approved by the Islamic Azad University of Urmia.

REFERENCES

- Wei M, Liao KYH, Ku TY, Shaffer PA. Attachment, self-compassion, empathy, and subjective well-being among college students and community adults. *Journal of personality*. 2011;79(1):191-221.
- Zareipour M, Sadaghianifar A, Valizadeh R, Alinejad M, Noorani S, Ghelichi Ghogh M. The Effect of Health Promoting Schools Program in Improving the Health Status of Schools in Urmia, North West of Iran. *Int J Pediatr* 2017;5(2): 4319-27.
- Cieslik M. *Positive Psychology and Happiness. The Happiness Riddle and the Quest for a Good Life*: Springer; 2017. p. 43-53.
- Cieslik M. *Introduction: The Happiness Riddle. The Happiness Riddle and the Quest for a Good Life*: Springer; 2017. p. 1-11.
- Argyle M. *The psychology of happiness*: Routledge; 2013.
- Graham C, Pozuelo JR. Happiness, stress, and age: how the U curve varies across people and places. *Journal of Population Economics*. 2017;30(1):225-64.
- Rahman S, Ansari SA, Parveen F. *Happiness as Correlates of Mental Well-Being*. 2016.
- Seligman ME, Csikszentmihalyi M. *Positive psychology: An introduction*: Springer; 2014.
- Buss DM. The evolution of happiness. *American psychologist*. 2000;55(1):15.
- Veenhoven R. *Conditions of happiness*: Springer Science & Business Media; 2013.
- Argyle M. *Psychology of happiness translated by Anaraki G and et al*. Isfahan: Isfahan Academic Center for Education. 2003.
- Proyer RT, Gander F, Wellenzohn S, Ruch W. Addressing the role of personality, ability, and positive and negative affect in positive psychology interventions: Findings from a randomized intervention based on the Authentic Happiness Theory and extensions. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*. 2016;11(6):609-21.
- Safarnejad F, Ho-Abdullah I, Awal NM. A cognitive study of happiness metaphors in Persian and English. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 2014;118:110-7.
- Mongrain M, Komeyliyan Z, Barnhart R. Happiness vs. mindfulness exercises for individuals vulnerable to depression. *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 2015;11(4):366-77.
- Beyer AC. *Happiness, Equality, and Communication*. *International Political Psychology*: Springer; 2017. p. 79-103.
- Pelechano V, González-Leandro P, García L, Morán C. Is it possible to be too happy? Happiness, personality, and psychopathology. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*. 2013;13(1):18-24.
- Reeve J. *Understanding motivation and emotion*: John Wiley & Sons; 2014.
- Abolghasemi M, Miraly Rostami O. The investigation of the effective factors on the academic achievements of Tehran engineering departments students for submitting a model to predicting their academic achievements. *Iranian Journal of Engineering Education*. 2013;15(58):67-84.
- Paeizi M, Shahrarai M, Farzad VE, Safaei P. A study of the impact of assertive training on happiness and academic achievement of high-school girls. 2008.
- Chow HP. Life satisfaction among university students in a Canadian prairie city: A multivariate analysis. *Social Indicators Research*. 2005;70(2):139-50.
- Zareipour M, Rezaee Moradali M, Alinejad M, Haghi F. Correlation between Spiritual Health and Health Locus of Control in Nursing and Midwifery Students of the Islamic Azad University Of Urmia, Iran. *Health Spiritual Med Ethics*. 2017;4(2):27-32
- Alipour A, Noorbala A. A preliminary study of reliability and validity of the Oxford happiness inventory among students in Tehran University. *J of Thought and behavior*. 1999;1.
- Saffari m, Sanaeinasab H, Rashidi Jahan h, Purtaghi G, Pakpour A. Happiness, Self-efficacy and Academic Achievement among Students of Baqiyatallah University of Medical Sciences. *Journal of Medical Education Development*. 2014;7(13):45-56.
- Bayrami m, Hashemi t, Alaie p, Abdollahi aav. Demographic factors, relying on the Islamic religion and family functioning in the prediction of students'happiness in Tabriz University of medical sciences, IRAN. 2011.
- Veenhoven R. Greater happiness for a greater number: Is that possible in Austria? 2011.
- Bowling A, Windsor J. Towards the good life: A population survey of dimensions of quality of life. *Journal of Happiness Studies*. 2001;2(1):55-82.
- Strobel M, Tumasjan A, Spörrle M. Be yourself, believe in yourself, and be happy: Self-efficacy as a mediator between personality factors and subjective well-being. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*. 2011;52(1):43-8.
- Siamian H, Naeimi OB, Shahrabi A, Hassan Zadeh R, Abazari MR, Khademloo M, et al. The status of happiness and its association with demographic variables among the paramedical students. *Journal of Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences*. 2012;21(86):159-66.

29. Myers DG, Diener E. The pursuit of happiness. *Scientific American*. 1996; 274(5):70-2.
30. Zohour A, Fekri A. University students'happiness at the faculty of management and medical information sciences, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, IRAN. 2004.
31. Sharifi K, Sooky Z, Tagharrobi Z, Akbari H. Happiness and its related factors among the students of Kashan University of medical sciences in 2006-7. *KAUMS Journal (FEYZ)*. 2010;14(1):62-9.
32. Tavan B, Jahani F, Rafeei M. The Relationship between Self-esteem and Happiness among Students of Arak University of Medical Sciences. *Iranian Journal of Medical Education*. 2014;14(6):474-82.
33. Luszczynska A, Scholz U, Schwarzer R. The general self-efficacy scale: multicultural validation studies. *The Journal of psychology*. 2005; 139(5):439-57.
34. Chen M, Lin H-J. Self-efficacy, foreign language anxiety as predictors of academic performance among professional program students in general English proficiency writing test. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*. 2009; 109(2):420-30.
35. M AN, E D. Relationship between attachment styles with marital happiness and agreement on issues of married women university students. *Research Consulting (new consulting and research)*. 2006;14(4):69-70.
36. Easterlin RA. Life cycle happiness and its sources: Intersections of psychology, economics, and demography. *Journal of Economic Psychology*. 2006;27(4):463-82..

© 2018 by the authors; licensee MJPMS, India. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC-BY) license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)