



Mental well-being and self-efficacy on students' happiness

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A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of mental well-being and self-efficacy in happiness among students of Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch. The method of this study was descriptive and correlation. The statistical population consisted of all students of Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch, who were studying in the academic year 2017-2018. Among them, a sample of 300 students (195 girls and 105 boys) was selected in a multi-stage cluster sampling. To collect data, the questionnaires were used as: 1- mental well-being Questionnaire, 2-Self-efficacy and 3-Happiness. Data were analyzed by SPSS software using multiple regression analysis. The results showed that mental well-being and self-efficacy play an important role in the happiness of students.

Keywords: Mental Well-Being, Self-Efficacy, Happiness.

INTRODUCTION

From the ancient times, human has been always sought a utopia where he lives in satisfaction and pleases his life. Today, happiness, self-efficacy, and sense of mental well-being are the words to express the same sense in psychology, these words refer to a same subject in spite of their apparent difference from one another (Demir & Davidson, 2013; Garcia, Al Nima, & Kjell, 2014; Hadianfard, 2005; Lyubomirsky & Fritz, 2018).

Mental well-being feeling is a concept that refers to the positive state of mind and shows the quality of our lives. In psychological literature, the well-being is a combination of life satisfaction or how we think of a desirable life and what we feel about our lives (Bartram & Boniwell, 2007; Ryff, 2014). For many years, the issue of well-being and happiness has been neglected and unhealthy aspects such as depression, anxiety and emotional disorders have been emphasized on, but many studies have already been considered as a mental well-being. In fact, a general field called Positive Psychology is considered for understanding the process of human happiness (Furnham & Christoforou, 2007; van der Linden et al., 2017).

On the other hand, self-efficacy is one of the variables that is closely related to well-being, including individual judgments about his abilities, and capabilities to perform the specific assignments. Judgments related to self-efficacy are also due to an important role in the growth of internal motivation (Brown & Tierney, 2009; Krause, 2003). The concept of self-efficacy is an assurance that each individual expresses his ability to perform a set of tasks or perform a

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particular assignment (Bandura, 2006; Caprara, Alessandri, & Eisenberg, 2012). In fact, individuals with high self-efficacy are inherently interested to work more and tend to increase their efforts, they show more efforts to face the barriers, and act very effectively. By completing a task successfully, humans can benefit from strong sense of self-efficacy automatically, while failures can undermine self-efficacy (Bandura, 2001). Self-efficacy represents the confidence to self-abilities and is a kind of self-assessment that affects efforts and decisions in faced with the obstacles and decisions related to the activities will be rewarded.

Bandura (1994) believes that human beings need significant capabilities for acquiring the information, decision making, problem-solving, environmental management, and all processes that determine individual self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is among the variables related to psychological well-being and a set distinguished from beliefs about different areas of performance, including the self-discipline of intellectual processes, motivations, emotional and physiological states. In the Bandura system, the concept of self-efficacy means a sense of competence and ability to cope with life which preserving the performance criteria increases it and failures to meet and maintain this criterion, will reduce it. Bandura considers the self-efficacy as a person's perception of the degree of control on his life. Vitality, joy and mental happiness influence on all aspects of human personality and how to express different behaviors and this matter is considered by the researchers. From the ancient times, the positive feelings of human such as happiness have been considered.

Psychologists provided different definitions of happiness. Researchers such as Argyle (2013) defined the happiness as positive mental state, high level of general satisfaction, positive feeling and low level of negative feeling.

Happiness is one of the human requirements and essential to his life. The term of "happiness" includes a few mental concepts such as happiness, pleasure and joy, but it does not mean idiosyncratic optimism, denial of reality, or the perceived problems of yourself or others. Hence, a number of psychologists use the more general concept of "mental happiness", which includes the evaluations such as life satisfaction, excitement, positive mood, lack of depression and anxiety (Diener, Lucas, & Oishi, 2002). Seligman (2004) believes that happy people, usually evaluate their skills better and remind the positive events more than negative events, and make better decisions in their life plans. He also believes that joy can affect our safety system and increase the life expectancy of happy people.

The importance of human mental well-being has attracted the attention of psychologists and mental health professionals in the last few decades. The progress of psychology science in the one hand, and the dynamic nature and complexity of modern societies in the other hand, has caused to be considered the mental health, as well as physical health, so that the World Health Organization defines the existential, physical, mental, Social and mental aspects of human. Many factors affect the well-being and self-efficacy of which the happiness is among the one of these factors that have been addressed in this study.

METHODOLOGY

The method of this research is descriptive, correlation and predictive. Data were analyzed by SPSS software using multiple regression analysis

The statistical population of this study consisted of all students of Islamic Azad University, in the academic year of 1997-1998, which included 11,000 students. After determining the number of population based on Cochran formula, the final sample size included 376 students who were selected using cluster classification method. This study was performed with 95% confidence level and 5% error.

Date collecting tool:

Mental Welfare Questionnaire: The Wardwick-Edinburgh Mental Welfare Inventory was developed by Tennant et al. (2007). The questionnaire included 14 questions and its purpose was to examine the mental well-being of individuals from different dimensions (optimism, positive relationships with others, and energetic). The questionnaire composed three dimensions of optimism, positive relationships with others and energetic, which its scoring range was based on the five items Likert Scale. In Orgeta, Sterzo, and Orrell (2013), the results of exploratory factor analysis represent three factors (optimism, positive relationships with others and energetic) and confirmatory factor analysis also showed that three dimensions model is fitted to the data. Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the whole scale (12 items) and three factors were acceptable. Coefficients of simultaneous validity of this scale were significant with general self-efficacy and social support scales. The reliability of the questionnaire in this research was 0.888.

Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1992) General Self efficacy Scale: This is one-item questionnaire. In the research of the Aftab, Shah, and Mehmood (2012), the correlation of each question score with the total score of the questionnaire was calculated to assess the validity of the questionnaire, and also to determine the validity of the questionnaire. The range of coefficients is from 0.40 to 0.64 and all coefficients are at the significant level of 0.001. The reliability of the questionnaire is 0.994 in this research.

Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI): It includes 29 items and measures the level of individual happiness. The theoretical basis of this questionnaire is the definition of happiness in the view of Argyle & Crosland (They considered the happiness as an structure with three basic parts in order to provide an operational definition of happiness including the frequency and degree of positive affection, the average level of satisfaction during a period, and the absence of a negative feeling). This inventory was made based on Beck Depression Inventory (BDI, 1976) by Hills and Argyle (2002). Twenty-seven expressions of this questionnaire have been taken from BDI and reversed and then eleven questions have been added to cover other aspects of mental health. Like Beck's Depression Inventory, each item of happiness questionnaire has a four-choices which the subject must select one of them according to his current status. Today, this test is widely used in research on happiness. Argyle et al have reported the reliability of Oxford questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90 and its reliability of 0.75 during seven weeks. The simultaneous validity of this questionnaire was estimated as 0.43 by using friends' ratings of it. The reliability of this questionnaire was 0.976.

RESULTS

Mental well-being and self-efficacy contribute to the happiness of students at Islamic Azad University.

Table 1. Summary of regression model, mental well-being and self-efficacy on happiness

Model	Variables	Multiple regression factor	R ²	Adjusted R ²
1	Mental well-being & efficacy	0.807	0.652	0.65

In above table, the correlation coefficient between the variables of mental well-being and self-efficacy shown on happiness (0.807), coefficient of determination (0.652) and adjusted coefficient of determination (0.650) . In other words, 65% of the happiness variable of students of Islamic Azad University was explained using mental well-being and self-efficacy variables.

Table 2. Analysis of variance, mental well-being variables and self-efficacy on happiness

Method	Model	Model index	Sum of squares	df	Mean of squares	F	p
Concurrent	1	Regression	128.176	2	64.088	321.215	0.001
		Remaining	68.434	343	0.2		
		Total	196.610	345			

The above table shows the results of variance analysis that regression of mental well-being and self-efficacy variables on happiness has been applied simultaneously. The value of F = 321.215 was obtained at alpha level (0.001) which is smaller than (P <0.01) at a significant level, this means that the multivariate regression model is significant. Due to the results obtained in this hypothesis, it can be concluded that mental well-being and self-efficacy contribute to the happiness of the students of Islamic Azad University.

Table 3. Regression coefficient, variables of mental well-being and self-efficacy on happiness

Model	Mental well-being & efficacy variables	Nonstandard value		Standard coefficient	t	p
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Intercept	9.508	0.255		37.350	0.001
	Mental well being	-1.309	0.118	-.626	-11.132	0.001
	Self-efficacy	-.389	0.104	-.210	-3.738	0.001

The above table indicates the results of regression coefficients. The mental well-being variable was obtained with standard beta (0.626) at alpha level (0.001) which is smaller than (0.01 > P) at a significant level .This means that mental well-being contributes the students' happiness of Islamic Azad University.

CONCLUSION

The results of statistical analysis of multivariable regression coefficients from the questionnaires data showed the mental well-being and self-efficacy variables (P = 0.001) influence on the students' happiness in Islamic Azad University.

In explaining these findings, self-efficacy includes beliefs about the competence of the individual who affects work, as well as beliefs about the activities that have been successfully implemented and will be followed by the specific results. If these beliefs are positive, people will organize activities in ways that will be successful. By contrast, when ideas are negative,

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even if people have the skills they need, they will feel anxious and failure because they have doubts about their ability. So, it is unlikely that they will show the right behavior or insist to preserve their behavior when they faced with obstacles.

In fact, people with high well-being and efficacy will seek the sufficient solutions for their challenges and problems more than those with less self-efficacy. The relationship between mental well-being and self-efficacy with happiness is important, because it forms the person's belief in empowerment, cognition, attitude, behavior, and performance to use all his capacities in order to solve the problems in difficult situations, and this brings the high degree of satisfaction to his life which is the same happiness.

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