Relationship between assertiveness and social anxiety with happiness [1]

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between assertiveness and social anxiety with happiness in the second class of high school girls of Bojnourd. The main research method is descriptive and correlational type. The population consists of girls students of high school of Bojnourd (4540 persons) that 400 persons of them selected by multi- stage random sampling and based on Morgan`s table. The Assertiveness Inventory (Gambrills & Richey, 1975), Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Hills & Argyle, 2002) and Social Phobia Inventory (Connor et al, 2000) were used in order to gathering of data. Pearson correlation, multiple regressions with stepwise method and variance analysis of univariate was used to test the hypothesis. Results showed that assertiveness and social anxiety is relate with happiness and predicts it. Found that there is a significant positive relationship between assertiveness and happiness at the level of less than 0.01. In addition, there is a negative and meaningful relationship between social anxiety and its dimensions with happiness at the level of less than 0.01. There is a significant negative and meaningful relationship between assertiveness and dimensions and total score of social anxiety at the level of less than 0.01. In addition, there is a significant difference between Assertiveness and happiness of students of different academic disciplines. The absence of negative emotions such as anxiety, embarrassment and low zinc, depression, anger, positive emotions and mood, activity, and more extensive social relations were related to the happiness.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, an empirical investigation based on psychologists and sociologists' studies interpret the increasing human happiness. Psychologists who interested in "Positive Psychology" have focused attention on the potential benefits of positive feelings such as happiness. Happy individuals usually improve one's skills and recall the positive more than negative events and have a better decision making in his/her life programs because of the effective information strategies related to the risk- security management (Seligman, Rashid, & Parks, 2006).

Generally, humans will evolve in such a way that some of the situations make him/her happy and some deem life hopeless. It seems that individual differences of feeling happiness are related to the personality differences which can arise from both genetic factors and environmental factors (Buss, 2000).

Happiness consists of emotional, social and cognitive components. Emotional components cause a person to be always happy. Social Components results in the development of social relationships improve perceived social supports. Finally, cognitive component helps a person to have his/her own specific thoughts and processing of information to interpret daily events in a way that brings him/her optimism. Another prominent feature of entrepreneur is the risk-taking. The risk may be privilege in the positive relation with others, purposeful life, personal development, loving others, are also components of happiness (Myers, & Diener, 1995).

Happiness has positive effects on life style which is as a positive affect can facilitate interpersonal relationships and also has more positive outcomes on knowledge, social health and activities. Happy people are more creative problem solving. The happiest people welcome and even seek out problems, meeting them as challenges and opportunities to improve thoughts (Carr, 2011). definition of happiness is represented by Vinhon (1998 cited in Mir Shah Jafari, & Abdi, 2002) Refers to the desirability of an individual difference in the total quality of life. In other words, happiness means a person how much loves his/her life.

A person who has a high level of satisfaction with his/her life with experiences of greater positive affect or less negative affect would be deemed to so happy (Argyle, 2005).

Costa and McCrae (1980) found that extraversion and self-satisfaction can predict happiness of person in 13 years later. In many ways they often have excellent communication skills. They don't react negatively to an environment, they take control of it, and steer it. That can be a positive blessing for the workplace, and can also overcome social problems for introverts (Cheng & Furnham, 2003).

Social anxiety disorder (SAD), is one of the most common psychiatric disorders social which characterized by an intense fear in one or more social situations causing considerable distress and impaired ability to function in at least some parts of daily life (Sadock, & Sadock, 2011).

In recent decades, many studies have been performed on anxiety and related fields showing that anxiety disorders are quite prevalent in the society. One of these disorders is the test anxiety. Test anxiety is an important educational problem which affecting millions of students worldwide, and is an undesirable emotional reaction to the situation to be evaluated. Test anxiety is a threat to people's mental health and negative effects of their efficiency, talent, personality, and social identity. (Dyrbye, Thomas, Huntington, Lawson, Novotny, Sloan, & Shanafelt, 2006).

Several studies about the effective reduction on self-expression with depression, anxiety, aggression have shown that the students who have higher self-esteem are successful in their study and educations.(Neici & Sheheni, 2001). The results have shown that the training of social skills speeds up assertiveness and self-esteem of students. Assertiveness skill is the best way to cope with the anxiety as a risk factor and give a satisfying experience of communicating with others that need sufficient knowledge, prudence, negotiation and flexibility (Ryff, 1989).

Assertiveness training has two major aims: reduction of social anxiety and promotion of social skills training of assertiveness means standing up for personal rights - expressing thoughts, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways.

Assertiveness (certainty) means that people express their positive and negative emotions without violating the rights of others and are struggling against speech anxiety while respecting the rights and beliefs of others.

Psychologists believes that responding in a passive or non-assertive way that tends to be more inclined to portray themselves in a negative light or put themselves down and, as a result, may actually come to feel inferior to others. (Van Gandhi, 2002) Passive responding can encourage treatment that reinforces a passive role. While the underlying causes of passive responding are often poor self-confidence and self-esteem, passive responding itself can serve to yet further reduce feelings of self-worth (Dilute, 1981).

2. Method

This study was based on correlation research.

2.1. Participants

The population studied consisted of female public secondary schools of second time in Bojnourd from 2014-2015 of education years. The sample size was estimated to 4540 students were educated in 13 schools but the sample size in this study was about 351 that would be selected on the basis of Morgan's formula table. However, to cover loss to follow up, we recruited 400 students. Method was through multistage random sampling it means that from all 13 public secondary schools of second time in Bojnourd, 5 schools were randomly selected and from each 5 school 4 classes of 20 students. After obtaining residence permit form the Department of Education and gave feedback of questionnaire form took them enough time to fill out the questionnaires and after collecting the questionnaires, the data were analyzed.

2.2. Measurement

2.2.1. The Assertiveness Inventory

This questionnaire consisted of 40 test items. Each item showed a special occasion that requires assertive behavior. This assertiveness questionnaire had two parts. One Section was devoted to measuring the degree or extent of the discomfort. Another part examined the probability of the assertive behavior. In this questionnaire, the respondents were asked to express the extent and severity of their discomfort when they were faced with situations that required assertiveness, Each item was rated on a 5-point scale ranging Scores on this inventory were classified as follows: 40-79.9 (high), 80-119.9 (average), 120-159.9 (low), and 160-200 (very low). The questionnaire consisted of a number of questions about the interaction, dealing with others, giving negative feedback, responding to criticism, reject, demand and accept its limitations admiration of others, etc. (Florin, zernitsky,1987)

Gambrills and Richey (1975) Assertiveness showed that the questionnaire had high and significant inter-rater reliability and clear differences in the internal structure of questionnaire between clinical and nonclinical populations. With a pattern of parent-reported questionnaire children's correlations was 0.71. Different factors of authenticate in the original test of this questionnaire were 0.39 to 70/0 and as Gambrills and Richie reported Test-retest reliability showed coefficient 0.81.

2.2.2. Social Phobia Inventory (SPIN)

Availability of brief, self-report measures to be used as screening instruments was crucial to detect correctly with social anxiety disorder. This self-reported assessment scale consisted of 17 items, which covered the main spectrum of social phobia such as fear (6 items), avoidance (7 items), and physiological symptoms (4 items). The questions on the questionnaire were based on five-point Likert scales with the endpoints correspond to agree strongly and disagree strongly. Test-retest reliability of social phobia diagnosis was in the range of 0.78 to 0.89. Internal consistency by Cranach alpha for whole of scale was equal to 0.94 and for subscales: social phobia 0.89avoidance 0.91 physiological symptoms 0.80.

2.2.3. Oxford Happiness Questionnaire

OHQ was developed by psychologists Hills and Argyle (2002) the OHQ comprised 29 items this questionnaire had 5 scales including life satisfaction, positive mood, health, competency and self-

esteem. Responses were involving the selection of four options that were different for each item from 1 (never) to 4 (A great deal). Also Cranach's alpha coefficient was calculated 0.87 to .92 and test-retest reliability 0.53 to 0.91 at different time intervals have been reported. Cranach's alpha correlation with reliability coefficient split - half and test – retest respectively 0.93, 0.92, 0.79 reported.

3. Results

The sample of this study comprised 400 high school students of Bojnourd. The sample distribution by students' age and grade level of different fields indicated that the average age of the total sample standard deviation 70.0 and 90.16 with the minimum and maximum 16 and 18 years. And overall 40% of the experimental field, 20% human and 40% had math. The mean and standard deviation of assertiveness was 7.22 and 80.140, respectively. And the criteria for social anxiety scale were 18.19 and 76.10 and at last for happiness were 45.44 and 82.14. Among the aspects of social anxiety social Avoidance had the highest average and psychological distress was the lowest average (98.7 to 16.5).

Table1. Summary of Regression Analyses for variance on happiness in terms of assertiveness and social anxiety.

	Model	Predictors	R	R^2	R^2 Adjusted	F	P
Happiness	1	assertiveness	0.40	0.16	0.16	75.98	0.0005
	2	assertiveness fear	0.45	0.21	0.20	50.16	0.0005

In the best prediction model multiple correlation coefficient of happiness predictor variables were equal to 0.45 that illustrated the degree of association between the variables "moderate" degree of inter correlation among the predictor variables and criterion variables (happiness). The coefficient of determination was equal to 0.21 and indicated that 21% of happiness was related to predictor variables. In general, measures analysis of variance (ANOVA), significant regression and linear relationship between variables meant that the significant level was less than 1%. Test showed that regression model with the related predictor variables results had a well-fitting regression model and measuring explained variation models meant probably true not due to chance which had also shown that predictor variables, providing a review of the variables that predicted happiness. With more than a 99% chance of the variables in predicting and changes were associated with the changing criterion design. Concerning to assess the relative importance of predictor variables in predicting happiness, first the Values of regression coefficients should be evaluated. The results of regression coefficient values were shown in Table 4-5.

Table2. Regression analyses (stepwise) of happiness in terms of assertiveness and social anxiety

	Model	Predictors	Non-standard		Standard	t	P
			B	Standard	Beta		
Happiness	1	assertiveness	0.27	0.03	0.40	8.72	0.0005
		assertiveness	0.19	0.03	0.29	5.62	0.0005
	2	fear	-0.86	-0.18	-0.24	-4.72	0.0005

The identical variables listed in table 4-5, with obtaining net regression coefficient values showed that the best prediction model for happiness assertiveness ($\beta= 0.29$) and fear ($\beta= -0.24$) were able to predict a score on criterion variable. Assertiveness could be considered very highly correlated with predicting happiness and fear was a negative predictor for happiness.

4. Discussion

Assertiveness is a kind of confidence. It is a way of behaving that helps people clearly communicates their needs, wants and feelings without hurting anyone else (Wolpe, 1968). If you are socially anxious, you might have some difficulty expressing your thoughts and feelings openly. Because of avoidance of social situations this psychological phenomenon marked by concerns pertaining to social rejection and embarrassment including features of being shy, fearful, and withdrawn in new situations. Avoiding or distracting from your chronic anxiety symptoms would usually lead you to more, not less, trouble. So, poor health leads to greater happiness. The balance of your mental and emotional health could definitely provide underlies sensory pleasure and causes positive affective.

High level of mental health increased both happiness and life satisfaction. People with a mental health felt happy most of the time because feeling happy in your mind are as important as feeling happy in your body.

King and Napa (1998) believes that people spend a lifetime searching for happiness and happiness was considered very important in life. People who were stressed or anxious could often resort to passive or aggressive behavior and this was likely to increase the feelings of stress or anxious as a result and it would be expected to reduce happiness. Assertive behavior and skills was not only a keystone of good mental health and happiness It was also linked to a fertile ground for sustained prosperity and growth and aware of differences in different fields conceptualize such as effective interpersonal relationships. Students with assertive behavior learned to exercise more control over their life and relationships, and thus might help to increase their self-confidence. It helped them to reduce the stress in their life as they were less bothered about the opinions of others. Assertiveness with interpersonal confidence enhanced relationship satisfaction and stood up for their rights. So, assertive behaviors led to increase respect from others. Directly or indirectly assertiveness skill could promote happiness and

enhance the mental health. People with assertiveness tended to trust others and responded to request in a timely manner with high quality and potentially enjoyable interaction.

Assertive communication included verbal and nonverbal behavior .Teaching of assertiveness skills included nonverbal and verbal behavior causes that communication became more pleasant because they after received assertiveness skills training could express their requests as appropriate expressions and verbal more easily and generally became clear by verbal communication (like saying 'yes' or 'no'), appropriate words in non-verbal and practical form tackled in contrast better and constructive criticism (Alberti & Emmons, 1982).

Hills and Argyle (1998) believed that the main feature characters such as the absence of negative emotions such as anxiety, embarrassment and low zinc, depression, anger, positive emotions and mood, activity, and more extensive social relations were related to the happiness. Feel efficiency, socialization, positive recognition, a sense of joy and happiness, skill of saying "no" and say self-esteem were addressing the components of happiness, as identified by… They could pay better to their relationship management. With expressing emotions found probably better friends due to having assertiveness skills, such as negative expressing emotions, constructive criticism and said no timely and appropriately. They gained more knowledge which was able to put in conflict and according to these result factors be friendlier in the relationship that consequently led to happiness.

People with lack of assertiveness did not express their feelings, values and opinions and were powerless to protect their privacy. Responding passively could allow rights and needs to be neglected or ignored. Whereas paid more attention to the other's rights and wishes could intensify social anxiety. Social anxiety was defined as a strategy to avoid keeping certain sources of reinforcement social and as the lack of assertive, these problems were completely too passive. People with social anxiety peered the forms of repeat victimization experiences in interpersonal

relationship (Duckworth & Mercer, 2006).

On the other hands, social features and personality traits had significant role than field study courses related to the assertiveness and happiness investigations. In other words, science experiments students had superiority in assertiveness, human sciences students showed the superiority in happiness under three influences of the social environment and personality traits and environmental variables. So there were stable individual differences of variety study fields in happiness and assertiveness. Personality traits helped people to deal problems better in the different social situations. Refereed to statistics possible explanation for the low happiness achievement might be occurred because of choosing post-compulsory mathematics and most affected by lack of student interest. And this kind of apathy and fear related to the study fields indicated that they forced to bear the range of negative emotions of restlessness, lack of peace to distress and fear than the other students of the different fields that caused feeling less successful so finally these results reduced their happiness. The second reason to explain this hypothesis was that as the most difficult math course, their social relationships limited with others and it was one of the most effective long term ways to become an

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