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Standardization of Fear of Success Scale in College and High school students

Jafar Afshinfar¹, Hassan Aminpoor² and Ali Mostafaei²

¹ Department of English, Payame Noor University, Tehran, IR.IRAN

² Department of Psychology, Payame Noor University, Tehran, IR.IRAN

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to standardize the fear of success scale on high school and college students in West Azerbaijan Province, to see whether the fear of success scale possesses enough reliability and validity and also how many factors the scale include. This research is applied by nature and also exploratory from another perspective. Goad and Goad's fear of success scale was administered to 647 subjects. In order to calculate the reliability of the scale and its validity, Cranach's alpha and factor analysis including main component analysis and Warimax rotation was used respectively. Those items which had correlation coefficient lower than 0.30 were removed from final version of the scale. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 18. The reliability of the fear of success scale (29 items) was calculated using Cronbach's alpha (0.69). This scale can be used to identify high school and college students' fear of success. The result of the index for KMO (0.754) and Kory Bartlet (529.1811) was statistically significant at the level $\alpha=0.001$. The factor was derived by main component analysis (PC) which includes 32.71% of the total variance of the scale. It can be concluded that people's fear of success is due to their unawareness and a sense of inability. By training and educating people, it is possible to reduce the fear of success among the students.

Keywords: standardization, fear of success, college students, High school students

1. Introduction

The most exciting feeling that a person can enjoy in his/her lifetime is a "sense of achievement." This wonderful feeling is a valuable endowment that only a successful person can experience. Fear of success (FOSS) is a stressful factor that is derived from "achievement." Brooks [1] maintains that fear of success (FOSS) is the same as fear of achievement which is intensified by fear of failure arising from inability to fulfill one's duties. Hyland [2] regards FOSS as avoidance of success which is accompanied with lack of self-esteem and fear of social isolation.

Messina [cited in 6] regards fear of success as a fear through which the individual tries to gain the maximum results from his efforts. But the individual feels that he/she will never be pleased with achieving his/her goals; the individual does not believe in his /her merits to carry out activities properly. Contrary to fear of failure, here, the individual is afraid of doing thing with pride. In fact the individual underestimate his/her own abilities to continue his /her progress and success. At this stage, fighting success and imagining the idea that success is fearful emerges unconsciously. Sometimes peoples' past such as past failures that takes roots in individuals and becomes part him/her prevents them from achieving success. There are times when the individual believes that he/she has enough capability and luck but those changes that stem from success create anxiety and worry for him. At any rate, the problem arises because the individual develop conflicting and contradictory in his/her mind. Conscious mind tells him/her that you should do that and definitely you can do it but half-conscious mind tells him/her: if you succeed in doing that, you will feel sorry. Therefore, instead of assessing and examining the situations and making a rational decision, he/she postpones doing it.

Messina [cited in 6] maintains that the individual destroys the opportunities along with progress with the idea that if he/she succeeds, this success will cause him/her to lose others' attention and care. It is quite obvious that everybody, by nature, needs others' support and approval. Therefore, fear of success is fear of ostracism; a person who is afraid of being ostracized will feel unhappy even with the thought of ostracism. This kind of fear will prevent him/her from revealing his/her tendencies, emotions and demands so he /she considers others' inattention and indifference a crushing blow to himself/herself. As a result, the individual becomes suspicious of his/her own values and loses his/her self-confidence.

According to Richardson (2004), the individual fears because he/she thinks if he/she becomes successful, others will him/her differently. Ambition and success which means stirring up others' anger and jealousy will leads to losing others' support and love. Even the thought of this , in turn, intensify anxiety and expand it, for this reason, the person feels that he /she should avoid any action that shows a sign of success and ambition and this vicious circle continues. Given this, those people who fear success possess special patterns of behaviors by means of which they come close to the total success though they never pave the way to achieve success. Whenever these individuals come close to development, progress and promotion, something will distract them, resulting in abandoning and confronting their success. Therefore, they are prevented from achieving success and this leads to their inefficiency [5].

Lazaris [3] and Pang et al. [4] consider FOSS as a deterrent factor of the individual in realizing his/her wishes. These types of individuals have a chain of doubt and suspicion around themselves and cannot carry out their duties well. In fact, they are afraid of the consequences of their actions arising from the occasion. These people's feelings concerning inability in performing their jobs cause them to submit themselves to fear rather than fighting it [5].

Some researchers believe that individuals refrain from success due to various factors including psychological, social and cultural pressures [6]. They, also, argue that although these individuals gain excellent occupational and educational status, they still do not enjoy their achievements and do not internalize it. The results of some studies [5, 7, and 8] indicate that there is a significant relationship between FOSS and employees' inefficiency; males are more sensitive to the lack of social recognition as negative consequences of success than females. Furthermore, fear of success is not associated with anxiety in females. Fear of success seems to be less disruptive for performance achievement than fear of failure. Mastery-avoidance goals are predictor of fear of success and the anorexic group scored higher in FOSS than both the bulimic group and the control group [9].

Maureen [9] suggests that under some circumstances FOSS causes them to lose their motives. As a result, the more the fear among the employees, the more inefficient they would be.

Other studies show that both femininity and masculinity have a negative correlation with FOSS [10]. The results of an investigation done by Mateen Rad et al [11] indicate that there is a significant difference between females (mean=11.34) and males (Mean =9.66)' FOSS with $\alpha=0.039$. However, Griffiore [12] based on some research, concluded that there is no significant difference between FOSS in females and males.

Many studies [13, 14, and 15] showed that the need for achievement was significantly related to meta-cognitive self-regulation and mastery-approach goals partially mediated this relationship. Fear of failure was negatively associated with meta-cognitive and self-regulation. The women who were higher in fear of success and more traditional tended to be lower in career salience.

With regard to the studies discussed, the aim of this research is to standardize the fear of success scale (FOSS).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

2-1 Participants

Fear of success scale (FOSS) was administered to a sample of 668 people who were selected using randomization sampling technique. Out of this sample 21 were discarded from final analysis because of some defects. The remaining sample comprising 647 were utilized to analyze the data.

2.2 Materials

In this study fear of success scale developed by Good and Good (1993) was used. This scale consists of 29 yes-no questions which generally assesses fear of success.

2-3 Procedures

This study is applied by nature. It is also from another perspective could be called exploratory since the present factors are identified using exploratory method.

2-4 Data Analysis

In order to obtain the validity of the scale, factor analysis that is Warimax rotation technique is employed.

RESULTS

3-1 specifications of the sample

68.3and 31.7 per cent of the subjects were respectively females and males with an average age range of 19 (the youngest 14 and the oldest 40). Other characteristics of the sample are shown in table 1.

Table 1: characteristics of the sample based on gender and education level and place of residence

| Descriptive Index | Gender | | Education | | Residence | |
|-------------------|--------|------|-----------------|----------------|-----------|-------|
| | Female | Male | College student | School student | Urban | Rural |
| Frequency | 242 | 205 | 332/315 | 315 | 554 | 91 |
| Percentage | 68.3 | 31.7 | 51.3/48.7 | 48.7 | 85.6 | 14.1 |

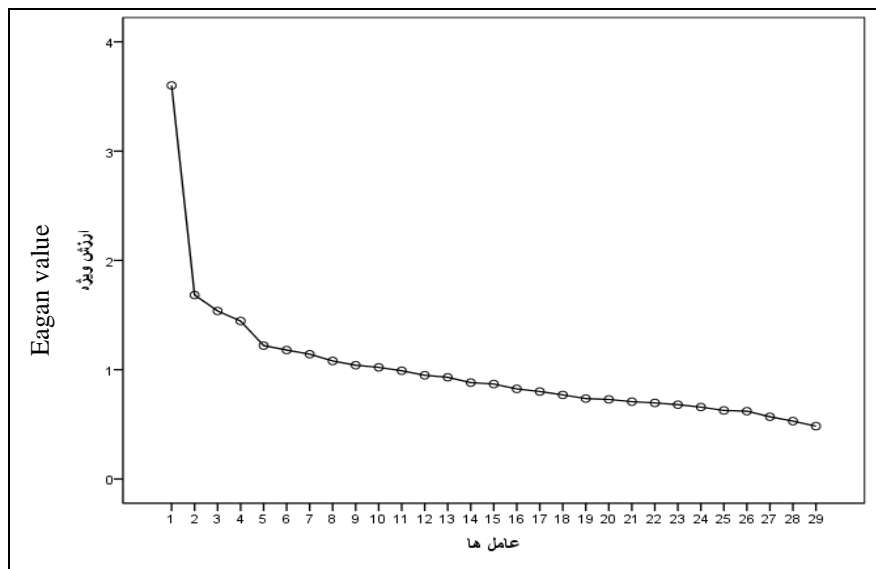
3-2 Reliability of the scale

The reliability of the scale of fear of success for 647 subjects was calculated using Cronbach α ($\alpha =0.690$). The reliability of the scale, its composing factors and the final form of the scale are displayed in table 2 after discarding those items that had a correlation coefficient lower than 0.30.

Table 2: Reliability and descriptive indices of the fear of success scale and its factors

| Factor | Reliability | Subjects | Number of Items | Mean | Variance |
|--------------|-------------|----------|-----------------|-------|----------|
| Initial Form | 0.690 | 647 | 29 | 11.86 | 4.27 |
| 1st | 0.588 | 647 | 7 | 3.10 | 1.78 |
| 2nd | 0.605 | 647 | 7 | 1.68 | 1.61 |
| 3rd | 0.472 | 647 | 5 | 2.41 | 1.36 |
| 4th | 0.368 | 647 | 4 | 1.85 | 1.17 |
| 5th | 0.265 | 647 | 5 | 2.50 | 1.02 |
| Final Form | 0.680 | 647 | 28 | 11.56 | 4.06 |

Diagram 1 shows the composing factors of fear of success scale



Factors

Table 3 presents composing factors of fear of success scale along with correlation coefficient of each items with involving factors of the scale received based on 6 times repetition of the analysis of the main components and Warimax rotation technique.

The results of the index of KMO equals 0.754 and Keruot Bartlet test (1811.529) is significant at the level $\alpha=0.001$ which indicates that the sample under the study is enough to analyze the data. At the initial stage 10 factors which had a variance above 1 were derived by main components analysis method after 25 rotations. These 10 factors

indicate 51.55 per cent of the whole variance of the scale. Also, 5 derived factors show 32.71 percent of the whole variance of the scale.

Table 3 Correlation coefficient of each item with the total score of the fear of success scale

| Factors | Items | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 28 | 21 | 11 | 24 | 25 | 19 | 29 |
| 1 | | | | | | | |
| Correlation coefficient of each item with the total score | 0.582 | 0.562 | 0.493 | 0.466 | 0.424 | 0.400 | 0.400 |
| 2 | | | | | | | |
| Correlation coefficient of each item with the total score | 0.604 | 0.529 | 0.526 | 0.519 | 0.494 | 0.465 | 0.455 |
| 3 | | | | | | | |
| Correlation coefficient of each item with the total score | 0.642 | 0.628 | 0.485 | 0.374 | 0.355 | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | |
| Correlation coefficient of each item with the total score | 0.667 | 0.591 | 0.579 | 0.358 | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | |
| Correlation coefficient of each item with the total score | 0.572 | 0.431 | 0.384 | -0.361 | 0.301 | | |

Table 4 shows composing factors of the scale which were obtained based on main components analysis method after six times repetition. It also displays the degree of commonality of them with the total score of the test. Item number 4 was removed from the total score of the test due to a correlation coefficient lower than 0.30.

Table 4 Fear of success factors and their commonality

| Factor | Name of the Factor | Degree of commonality | Percent Explanatory Variance | Percent Cumulative Variance |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | Fear of specialization | 2.483 | 8.562 | 8.562 |
| 2 | Fear of acquiring information | 2.254 | 7.774 | 16.336 |
| 3 | Feeling of inability to do things | 1.847 | 6.369 | 22.705 |
| 4 | Anxious of success | 1.494 | 5.152 | 27.857 |
| 5 | Doing things to attract attention | 1.409 | 4.857 | 32.714 |

Standardization of Fear of Success Scale (FOSSS)

In order to examine the performance of the college and school students in fear of success scale and its composing factors, categorical and percentile norms were prepared in tables 5 and 6 respectively.

Table 5: Categorical norm of fear of success scale and its composing factors

| Scale | Female and Male Gender | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|-------------------|----------|----------------|--|
| | College and high school students | | Position in Scale | | | |
| | Mean | SD | N | Disorder | Sever disorder | |
| Fear of specialization | 3.10 | 1.78 | 647 | 4 | 6 | |
| Fear of acquiring information | 1.68 | 1.61 | 647 | 3 | 4 | |
| Feeling of Inability to do things | 2.41 | 1.36 | 647 | 4 | 6 | |
| Anxious of success | 1.85 | 1.17 | 647 | 3 | 4 | |
| Doing things to attract attention | 2.50 | 1.02 | 646 | 4 | 6 | |
| Fear of Success | 11.56 | 4.06 | 646 | 16 | 27 | |

Based on categorical norm, one degree of SD above the mean indicate the disorder of the subjects in the scale and 2 degree of SD above the mean shows severe disorder of the subjects in the scale. Given the results, it is required that the subject go to counseling centers.

Table 6 percentile rank of fear of success and its composing factors

| Rank Percent | Factors | | | | | |
|--------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Fear of specialization | Fear of acquiring information | Feeling of inability to do things | Anxious of success | Doing things to attract attention | Fear of Success |
| 25 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 9 |
| 50 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 11 |
| 75 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 14 |

Implications of the Study

Table 7 correlation coefficient of factors of fear of success

| Correlation Coefficient | Fear of acquiring information | Feeling of inability to do things | Anxious of success | Doing things to attract attention | Final factor of Fear of Success |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Fear of specialization | **0/398 | **0/334 | 0/005 | **0/175 | **0/752 |
| Fear of acquiring information | | **0/219 | 0/005 | **0/121 | **0/674 |
| Feeling of inability to do things | | | -0/018 | **0/186 | **0/608 |
| Anxious of success | | | | 0/058 | **0/301 |
| Doing things to attract attention | | | | | 0/454** |

**Correlation coefficient is significant at level .01

*Correlation coefficient is significant at level .05

Table 7 displays the correlation coefficient of the composing factors of FOSS. The highest correlation coefficient is between fear of specialization and fear of acquiring information, and FOSS. The correlation between other factors and FOSS was significant at $\alpha=0.01$. In order to study the difference between the scores of college and high school students in FOSS, the researchers used the independent sample t-test.

Table 8 Check the fear of success factors based on academic status

| variable | Subjects | Mean | SD | T | sig | Eject of zero hypothesis |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|--------------------------|
| Fear of specialization | student | 3.29 | 1.77 | 2.661 | .008 | ** |
| | College students | 2.92 | 1.77 | | | |
| Fear of acquiring information | student | 1.78 | 1.64 | 1.483 | .139 | - |
| | College students | 1.59 | 1.58 | | | |
| Feeling of inability to do things | student | 2.51 | 1.35 | 1.714 | .087 | - |
| | College students | 2.33 | 1.36 | | | |
| Anxious of success | student | 1.87 | 1/15 | .420 | .675 | - |
| | College students | 1.83 | 1/19 | | | |
| Doing things to attract attention | student | 2.51 | .986 | .308 | .758 | - |
| | College students | 2.49 | 1.044 | | | |
| Fear of Success | student | 12.27 | 4.17 | 2.344 | .019 | * |
| | College students | 11.48 | 4.34 | | | |

Number of students 315 and number of college students is 332

The results are presented in table 8. With regard to table 8, there is a significant difference between fear of specialization in college and school students.

In order to study the difference between the scores of female and male (college /high school) students in FOSS and its composing factors, the researchers employed the independent sample t-test. Results showed in table 9.

Table 9 Check fear of success factors based on gender

| variable | Subjects | Mean | SD | T | sig | Eject of zero hypothesis |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-------|------|--------|------|--------------------------|
| Fear of specialization | Male | 3.12 | 1.80 | .376 | .707 | - |
| | Female | 3.06 | 1.74 | | | |
| Fear of acquiring information | Male | 1.67 | 1.58 | -.348 | .728 | - |
| | Female | 1.72 | 1.67 | | | |
| Feeling of inability to do things | Male | 2.56 | 1.29 | 3.715 | .001 | ** |
| | Female | 2.12 | 1.45 | | | |
| Anxious of success | Male | 1.82 | 1.17 | -1.018 | .309 | - |
| | Female | 1.92 | 1.17 | | | |
| Doing things to attract attention | Male | 2.51 | 1.01 | .405 | .686 | - |
| | Female | 2.47 | 1.03 | | | |
| Fear of Success | Male | 11.97 | 4.21 | .912 | .362 | - |
| | Female | 11.64 | 4.40 | | | |

**Significant at level .01

Number of females is 442 and numbers of males is 205

According to the results in Table 9 between the feelings of inability to do things, there are significant differences between males and females. There was no significant difference between urban and rural students, in any of the variables studied.

DISCUSSION

Whatever its etiology, there is considerable evidence that fear of success exists. It could be concluded that fear of success of individuals is due to their unawareness and inability in performing tasks. Therefore, by teaching and providing individuals with proper information in various aspects of fear, we can reduce fear of success among students.

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