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The comparison of happiness in Orphanage and non-orphanage children

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of this study was to compare happiness in orphanage and non-orphanage children. Research method was descriptive study. In so doing, through cluster sampling 74 orphanage and non-orphanage children selected. Measurement devise was The Memorial University of Newfoundland Scale of Happiness (MUNSH). Data analyzed by dependent t test and Pearson's correlation coefficient. Results showed that there is a significant difference between orphanage and non-orphanage children in positive and negative emotions. Orphanage children show more negative emotions (NA and NE) and less positive emotions (PA and PE) in comparison with non-orphanage children. There is no significant correlation between age, education and happiness.

Key words: happiness, orphanage, non-orphanage

INTRODUCTION

Positive psychology is a new branch of psychology that has emerged recently and a new horizon has opened on psychologists and researchers. In this type of psychology, rather than emphasizing the identification and study of mental deficiencies or restoration and treatment, recognize and promote the positive aspects and strengths of human being. Happiness in this area takes place. Happiness and joy are one of the most important human psychological needs that have a major influence in shaping personality and mental health. It is one of the variables that in recent years, has been considered in the field of health psychology [1].

Based on recent researches, Seligman [2] believes that happiness is beyond enjoyment. Happy people are healthier and more successful and have a more social commitment. Happy people, overestimated their skills and recall positive events more than negative events, and better decide for life planning. Educational studies show that children learn faster in a positive mood states. Optimism, self-esteem and personality are the personality traits that are correlated with happiness.

Seligman's concept of happiness [3] has three components: positive emotions (life with happy), commitment (the engaged life or good life), and significance (the meaningful life).

Also, Argyle, Martin and Lu [4] believes happiness has three basic and principal components as: positive emotion, satisfaction from life and lack of negative emotions including depression and anxiety, and recent studies of happiness [5 and 6] have tended to look at three sorts of variables: situational variables like marital status, educational achievement, financial status or health status; social variables like satisfaction with social relationships, size of social networks, or behavior in social situations or personality variables notably extraversion and neuroticism.

The joyful environment will affect learning and glorifying of talents among students and will double their energy [7].

Saffari-Nia [8] in his study showed that girls who were living in apartments without natural design, were significantly lower than the average score of the girls living in houses or apartments with natural design. . Soleimani and Talebian [9] found that students' happiness in school depends on the quality of their relationship with principals, teachers and consultants, instruments, physical environment, and leadership. A research by Oishi, et. al. [10] revealed that emphasizing important aspects of individuals will lead to their happiness. The happier the people, the more safety they feel [11].

Happy people have a high level mental and physical health and will succeed more in their lives [12]. Happy persons make decisions better in planning for life, because they are looking for important strategies [1].

There were positive correlations between happiness and self-control, problem solving, reappraisal coping and being responsible. There was a negative correlation between happiness and escape- avoidance. There weren't any significant correlations between happiness and other styles of coping [13].

Neuroticism was negatively related to happiness and Extraversion was positively related to happiness. Similar results were obtained by Eysenck [14], Argyle [15], Furnham [16], [17, 18 and 19].

Therefore, the aim of this study was to compare happiness in orphanage and non orphanage children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants

Method of sampling is cluster. First, total Uremia City orphanage listed and randomly three orphanages were chosen. Then, from any orphanage, all subjects as sample chosen and Oxford Happiness Inventory distributed among them. In general, 99 questionnaires were distributed and ultimately from distributed questionnaires, 74 questionnaires were collected. The same way, from non-orphanage children 45 subjects, who were in terms of demographic data, same as orphanage children, were selected.

Table 1: distributed questionnaires in different units

orphanage	Distributed questionnaires	Collected questionnaires
Hanyeh 2 Orphanage	15	12
Saleh 2 Orphanage	20	17
Mehrasa Orphanage	14	9
Non Orphanage children	45	36
Total	99	74

Measures

The Memorial University of Newfoundland Scale of Happiness (MUNSH). This draft is provided by Kozma and Stones. This scale has 24 items. This scale has four subscales; 1) Positive Affect, 2) Positive Experience, 3) Negative Affect, and 4) Negative Experience. There are 24 items in this Scale that gives a row score. Scores are added together according to the following formula.

$$\text{MUNSH} = (\text{PA} + \text{PE}) - (\text{NA} + \text{NE})$$

Items relate to subscales:

1. Positive Affect subscale (PA): 1,2,3,4,10
2. Positive Effect subscale (PE): 12,14,15,19,21,23,24
3. Negative Affect subscale (NA): 5,6,7,8,9
4. Negative Effect subscale (NE): 11,13,16,17,18,20,22

It consists of 5 item related to Positive Affect (PA) and 7 item relate to Positive Experience (PE). Scores of these two categories phrase added together and then the total scores of Negative Affect (NA) and Negative Experience (NE) reduce from them. The highest positive row score is 24.

The validity of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Scale of Happiness (MUNSH) in Garrusi et al. research [20] was 0.76, Cronbach's Alpha 0.71 was obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 frequencies distribution of subjects

Group	statistics	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Orphanage	Age	13	20	15.64	1.94
	Grade	1	7	3.36	1.64
	Positive Score	0	24	12.78	6.16
	Negative Score	0	24	13.28	5.5
Non Orphanage	Age	13	20	15.6	1.9
	Grade	2	8	3.3	1.6
	Positive Score	0	22	17.08	6.08
	Negative Score	0	24	7.41	7.01

As can be seen in table 1, the mean age of subjects 15.64 year, minimum of age 13 and maximum is 20. Mean score of PA and PE of orphanage children is 12.78; mean score of non-orphanage children is 17.08. Mean score of NA and NE of orphanage children is 13.28; mean score of non-orphanage children is 7.41. Positive score of non-orphanage children is significantly higher than orphanage children. In other words, non-orphanage children are happier than orphanage children.

Table 2, dependent t test for orphanage and non orphanage in PA/PE

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower Upper				
Pair 1	Group – PA/PE	-13.43056	6.30409	.74294	-14.91194 -11.94917	-18.077	73	.000	

Results of t test shows that there is a significant difference between two groups in level of 0.01; as seen in table 1, mean score of positive affect and experience (PA and PE) of non-orphanage children is higher than orphanage children, i.e. non-orphanage children are happier than orphanage children. Therefore, it can be concluded that environment has a significant role in people's happiness.

Table 3, dependent t test for orphanage and non orphanage in NA/NE

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower Upper				
Pair 1	group – NA/NE	-8.84722	7.14569	.84213	-10.52638 -7.16807	-10.506	73	.000	

Results of t test shows that there is a significant difference between two groups in level of 0.01; as seen in table 1, mean score of negative affect and experience (NA and NE) of orphanage children is higher than non-orphanage children, i.e. orphanage children are more sad than non-orphanage children. Therefore, it can be concluded that environment has a significant role in people's happiness and sadness. The orphanage children are unhappy and more prone to depression.

Table 4 dependent t test for orphanage and non orphanage in total scores

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower Upper				
Pair 1	group – Total score	-3.08333	11.97503	1.41127	-5.89733 -2.26934	-2.185	73	.032	

Results of t test relate to happiness (total score) shows that there is a significant difference between orphanage and non-orphanage children in level 0.05; i.e. orphanage children experienced less positive affect and experience (PA and PE) and more negative affect and experience (NA and NE).

Table 5 Correlation matrix of age and Happiness Scale and its subscales

Correlations					
		age	PA/NA	NA/NE	Total score
age	Pearson Correlation	-			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	74			
PA/PE	Pearson Correlation	-.055	-		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.645			
	N	74	74		
NA/NE	Pearson Correlation	.122	-.658**	-	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.306	.000		
	N	74	74	74	
Total score	Pearson Correlation	-.099	.904**	-.917**	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.409	.000	.000	
	N	74	74	74	74

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen in table 5, there is no significant correlation between age and Happiness. In other words, through age could not be determined whether one person happiness or not?

There is negative correlation between NA and NE with PA and PE; also there is negative correlation between NA and NE with Happiness. Also, there is positive correlation between PA and PE with Happiness.

Table 6 Correlation matrix of education and Happiness Scale and its subscales

Correlations					
		PA/PE	NA/NE	Total score	education
PA/PE	Pearson Correlation	-			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	74			
NA/NE	Pearson Correlation	-.658**	-		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	74	74		
Total score	Pearson Correlation	.904**	-.917**	-	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	74	74	74	
education	Pearson Correlation	-.039	.170	-.117	-
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.744	.154	.327	
	N	74	74	74	74

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As can be seen in table 6, there is no significant correlation between education and Happiness and its subscales. In other words, through education could not be determined whether one person is happy or not?

But, there is negative correlation between NA and NE with PA and PE; also there is negative correlation between NA and NE with Happiness. Also, there is positive correlation between PA and PE with Happiness.

DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted by the aim of comparing happiness in both orphanage and non-orphanage children. On the basis of this research, findings relate to happiness showed that there is a significant difference between two groups in positive and negative emotions. Orphanage children show more negative emotions (NA and NE) and less positive emotions (PA and PE) in comparison with non-orphanage children.

The results of this research conform to Seligman [2] Saffari-Nia [8] and [9 and 11]. Saffari-Nia [8] in his study showed that girls who were living in apartments without natural design, were significantly lower than the average score of the girls living in houses or apartments with natural design. . Soleimani and Talebian [9] found that students' happiness in school depends on the quality of their relationship with principals, teachers and consultants, instruments, physical environment, and leadership.

Habibzadeh and Allahviridiyani [21] found that there was no meaningful relationship between the factors (age, marital status, education, income groups) with happiness. Whereas there was a meaningful relationship among

sexuality, economical safety and job satisfaction and also number of national and international travels with happiness.

Tan and Majid [22] showed that Creativity self-efficacy subscales correlated positively with happiness scales, i.e., satisfaction with life, subjective happiness, well-being, percentage of happiness and average emotions.

Closed environments have unpleasant effects on mental health. This issue makes people doesn't feel happy and comfortable in that environment. Because at the orphanage, people live as group, rules and regulation governs. This rules and regulations makes when someone has violated the law will be punished. Thus, in long term people do not enjoy living in such environments and if they are forced to continue living in it, will wither. To enhance happiness in orphanage children, this environment should be pleasant for them and strict regulations must be reduced. Overall, studies on the psychological impacts of different environments are very low.

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