

HAPPINESS AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF POST GRADUATE STUDENTS: A PREDICTIVE STUDY

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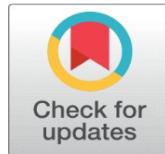
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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at exploring the correlation of happiness level of postgraduate university students and their academic performance. Data was gathered from students in the second semester of their courses, using the fish bowl method for random sample selection. After collecting the data, SPSSv26 was utilized for descriptive analysis and regression analysis. The research findings indicated no significant difference in happiness levels based on gender of postgraduate students. Furthermore, an insignificant positive correlation was observed between happiness and academic achievement. The regression analysis confirmed that happiness does not serve as a significant predictor for the academic success of postgraduate students at Jammu University.



1. INTRODUCTION

Happiness is a concept that pertains to the effective realm of human beings. Happiness acts as an emotion that plays a crucial role in the growth and accomplishment of individuals. Happiness holds immense value for each person. It encompasses the range of emotions we experience from both our internal and external surroundings (Zulkifli, 2013). Defining happiness is a challenging task, as it involves various interpretations found in literature that also evolve over time (McMahon, 2008). In the age of modernization, people have become emotionless machines, detached from the true essence of happiness. It seems that the pursuit of wealth has overshadowed their ability to experience joy, resulting in a significant disconnection from genuine fulfillment. Happiness, once intertwined with different aspects of life, now feels elusive in this money-driven world. From an economic perspective, the concept of happiness is intriguing because individuals who are happy tend to exert more effort and enjoy better health (Veenhoven, 1988). The notion of happiness is complex and subjective, varying from one person to another. Numerous psychologists have conducted extensive research on this topic.

Based on the 2020 United Nations World Happiness report, Finland has once again secured the top position, making it their third consecutive win. In contrast, Sri Lanka holds the 130th rank on the list. Happiness is a crucial aspect of every person's life, although it can vary greatly from individual to individual. Furthermore, the means of attaining happiness can also differ significantly. There are various factors that can impact happiness, and in turn, happiness can also have

positive or negative effects on other areas of life. When we consider university students, their main goal is to succeed academically. Their immediate and future educational objectives revolve around achieving high Grade Point Averages (GPA) and obtaining a prestigious degree. Any setbacks in their academic journey can cause significant distress. Some individuals may turn to drugs or engage in negative behaviors, which can lead to addiction or even thoughts of suicide. When evaluating the academic performance of university students, there are multiple factors that come into play. Researches were conducted to identify the elements that determine a student's success. Happiness can be defined as how satisfied an individual perceives their quality of life to be, according to Veenhoven (1992). It is a subjective and internal emotion that involves cognitive processes. The impact of happiness on life expectancy is significant, as happier individuals tend to live longer and healthier lives. As such, happiness is not only a desired outcome but also acts as a driving force and constant motivation for people's actions. Numerous studies show the connection between happiness and various aspects of life, including physical health, mental well-being etc. The 2019 World Happiness Report highlights that almost one-third of the population is unhappy with their lives, a percentage that has been rapidly increasing over the past decade. University students around the world are experiencing low levels of happiness, a concerning issue that has garnered significant attention. According to a survey conducted in 2017, depression rates were observed to be higher among the people of the age groups between 18 years and 25 years. at a rate of 13.1%, whereas 7.7% observed for those in the age group 26 to 49 and simultaneously 4.7% depression rate observed for individuals aged 50 and above. Disturbingly, young people between the ages of 18 and 25 were twice as likely to have suicidal thoughts compared to other people who were in different age groups except 18 to 25. A feeling of independence is experienced by the students studying in the University life, but at the same time they should be prepared to deal with the transmutations that come with personal growth and academic demands, it can lead to heightened stress levels. Researches have indicated that almost half of the college going students experience a very moderate level of stress-related issues, effecting their mental health. The 2018 National College Health Assessment Survey, it was found that 13% of students attending college experience thoughts of suicide, and approximately 2% have made one suicide attempt within the last one year. Lack of happiness can lead to various negative outcomes, such as compromised physical as well as mental well-being, mental illness of severe degree or even suicide, and compromised academic performance. These consequences can significantly impact a student's future development and career. Given the growing number of college students globally, it becomes crucial to investigate the causes of low levels of happiness among students in order to implement proactive and effective measures for improving their overall well-being.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jiang and colleagues (2022) conducted a research study titled "Happiness in University Students: Personal, Familial, and Social Factors: A Cross-Sectional Questionnaire Survey." The results of their study indicated that several social factors were positively associated with happiness in university students. These factors included good academic performance, maintaining a regular sleep schedule, and having healthy relationships. Additionally, personal factors such as good health and positive familial relationships, including frequent meetings with parents, were also found to be related to happiness. In a study by Mauri and colleagues (2021), it was concluded that there is a positive relationship between academic performance and happiness, with the two factors showing a good correlation. Similarly, Otagi and colleagues (2019) found that happiness has a positive impact on students' academic performance. Furthermore, Langevin (2013) discovered that happiness plays a significant role in explaining variations in academic performance, even after controlling for variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity. Tabbodi and colleagues (2015) found a positive association between happiness and academic achievement in students, noting that females tend to have higher happiness scores compared to males. Another study by Kiamarsi and Momeni (2013) also supported the connection between happiness and academic performance.

In a study conducted by Shoaakazemi et al. (2013), it was discovered that 68 percent of the variability in university students' academic achievement could be attributed to their level of happiness. Additionally, happiness was found to be a significant predictor of self-regulation, which is a cognitive skill. The study also revealed that 38 percent of the variation in problem-solving abilities could be explained by happiness.

Contrarily, Permiakova et al. (2017) reported no correlation between adolescents' academic achievement and their happiness, as stated by Raisi et al. (2014). However, it was observed that happy adolescents were more resilient and better equipped to handle difficulties compared to their less happy peers. These findings were consistent with another

study conducted by Mushtaq et al. (2014), which showed no correlation between happiness and academic achievement. Interestingly, the use of sleep medication emerged as the sole significant predictor of students' academic performance.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To study the happiness among the university students in respect of gender.
- 2) To study the relationship between the happiness of the students and their academic performance.
- 3) To predict the academic performance of the students on the basis of their happiness level.

4. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- 1) There will be no significant difference in the level of happiness among the university students on the basis of gender i.e., male, female.
- 2) There will be a positive relationship between the happiness and academic performance of the university students.
- 3) Academic performance of the students will improve with the increase in the happiness of the students.

5. SAMPLE

The sample in the present study was taken from the students studying in the different departments of the university of Jammu. Lottery method of random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The total sample consisted of 120 students in which 60 students were male and 60 were female.

6. TOOLS

In the present study, "Happiness scale" (H-scale) was used which is developed by "Dr. K. L Bharadwaj" and "Dr. Poonam R. Das". The Happiness Scale consists of 28 items. There are 5 alternatives against each statement. The split-half reliability of the scale on a sample of 150 cases was determined with the use of Gutman and spearman Brown formula and found to be .74 and .79 respectively. Percentile norms provided for different sample groups are used for interpretation of the scores. For the academic performance previous semester marks of the students were taken.

7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The data analysis was performed using SPSSv26 software. The current study included conducting independent samples t-test and regression analysis. The findings are summarized below in terms of analysis and interpretation of the results.

Table 1: showing mean standard deviation for happiness of male and female students

Group Statistics					
	Male Female	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Happiness Level	Male	60	104.9667	10.04729	1.29710
	Female	60	111.1000	8.94181	1.15438

The mean value of happiness for male as per the above table 1 is 104.9667 which means that there is average happiness level among the male students. Further the mean happiness score of female students is 111.1000 which also means that female students also possess average level of happiness. However apparently the mean score of female students is more than the male students.

Table 2: Showing the independent samples t-test for happiness between male and female university students

Independent Sample t-test										
Leven's test for equality of variances							t-test for equality of means		95% confidence interval of the difference	
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error difference	Lower	Upper
Happiness	Equal variances assumed	1.730	.191	-3.532	118	.001	-6.13333	1.73639	-9.57187	2.69480
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.532	116.432	.001	-6.13333	1.73639	-9.57235	2.69432

From the above table no.2, the p value for Levene's test of equality of variances is .191 which is greater than .05 this means equal variances are assumed between the two groups i.e., male and female. Further the t value is -3.532 and degree of freedom 118 and the significance (p value) is .001. This implies that the alternative hypothesis is accepted and null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant difference in the happiness level of male and female students.

8. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Regression analysis was carried out in SPSSv26 for knowing the effect of the happiness on the academic achievement of the students.

Correlation between happiness and Academic Achievement of University students

Table 3: Correlation matrix

Correlation		Academic Achievement	Happiness
Pearson Correlation	Academic Achievement	1.000	.241
	Happiness Male	.241	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Academic Achievement	.	.004
	Happiness	.004	.
N	Academic Achievement	120	120
	Happiness	120	120

From the above table no., 3 it can be seen that the coefficient of correlation between happiness and academic achievement is .241 which means there is a positive correlation between the academic achievement of university students and their happiness. The more the students will be happy the higher will be their academic achievement. Further the significance value is .004 that means the correlation between these two variables is not significant.

Table 4: Model summary between the happiness and academic achievement of university students

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.241 ^a	.058	.050	7.96704
a. Predictors: (Constant), Happiness				
b. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement				

The r square value in the above table 4 is .058, which means that 5 percent of the variation in the dependent variable i.e., academic achievement of the students is explained by the independent variable i.e., happiness among the students. The rest of the variation may be due to some other factors/variables which further need to be researched.

Table 5: ANOVA between happiness and Academic Achievement of university students

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	462.019	1	462.019	7.279	.008 ^b
	Residual	7489.906	118	63.474		
	Total	7951.925	119			
a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Happiness						

The F value in the above table no., 5 is 7.279 which is significant as the p value/ significance value is .008. This implies that the present model is not significant for explaining the variation in the dependent variable due to the independent variable. Happiness among university students is not a significant predictor of the academic achievement.

Table 6: Estimated Coefficients between happiness and academic achievement of university students

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	53.350	7.956		6.705	.000
	Happiness	.198	.073	.241	2.698	.008
a. Dependent Variable: Academic Achievement						

From the above table no., 6 the unstandardised beta value for happiness (Independent Variable) is 0.198, this means that with one unit change in happiness of the students there will be 0.198 units change in the academic achievement of the students. The t value in the table is 2.698 as the p value is .008 it means that there is no significant difference in the happiness and academic achievement of the students. Hence, it can be interpreted that academic achievement is not influenced by the level of happiness of the students.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are drawn on the basis of the study. On average, female postgraduate students studying at the University of Jammu experience greater levels of happiness compared to their male counterparts.

The happiness levels of Jammu University postgraduate students have a positive correlation with their academic achievements. However, the correlation is not statistically significant.

The happiness of the students does not influence the academic achievement, with a one-unit increase in happiness resulting in a 0.198 unit change in academic performance.

Moreover, happiness does not serve as a significant predictor of academic achievement.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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