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Happiness among under graduate and post graduate students

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Abstract

Happiness is an important aspect of life. Every individual wants to be happy and tries to seek happiness through their own means and ways. Factors like life satisfaction, contentment, work, hobby, education, art, and the like have a great influence on the happiness of human beings. This empirical research paper focuses on the difference in the level of happiness between the under graduate and post graduate students. A between groups research design was chosen and purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample (N=60). 30 under graduate and 30 post graduate students between the age group of 19-23 years participated in the study. The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire was used to assess the Happiness. Independent sample t test was used for statistical analysis. The mean values show that under graduate students have higher level of happiness compared to post graduate students. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference in happiness between the under graduate and post graduate students.

Keywords: Happiness, under graduates, post graduates

1. Introduction

Happiness is often defined as “a state of well-being and contentment” (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It is perhaps one of the most salient of human pursuits (Diener, Sapyta, & Suh, 1998) [5]. Conceptually, the word happiness is often used interchangeably with the terms quality of life (Veenhoven, 2005) [15], subjective well-being (Levett, 2010) [16], life satisfaction, peak experiences, and important in maintaining health (Bekhet *et al.*, 2008) [17].

Happiness is primarily a subjective phenomenon “for which the final judge is whoever lives inside a person's skin” (Diener, 1984) [2]. The ancients believed happiness was not achieved, but either god-given or due to chance. If happiness was experienced, it was not a function of the individual but rather was generously bestowed upon them by the cosmos (Bruhin *et al.*, 2009) [6].

Happiness is, thus, one of the great and pervasive themes of Indian thought and an important psychological experience. The Indian tradition considers happiness as a spiritual pursuit, that it is only by turning inwards, establishing in one's self, and realizing one's true nature one can find happiness.

Many more perspectives on happiness exists, especially when one considers the western philosophical and theoretical literature. The earliest thought on happiness in the western context can be traced to the ancient Greek philosophers dating back to early 3rd century BC. Among the various perspectives, two – hedonism and eudaimonia – have gained tremendous attention by psychologists.

Happiness from a hedonistic point of view concerns the unrestrained pursuit of immediate pleasure and enjoyment, comfort, the maximization of pleasure and the minimization of pain, and occurs when pleasurable experiences and sensory gratifications outweigh painful experiences. Rooted in hedonism, Bentham (1786/1996) popularized the utilitarian theory in which happiness was equated with both the presence of pleasure and absence of pain.

This perspective describes happiness as a feeling of pleasure or an expression of satisfaction or contentment (e.g. being _happy with 'or _satisfied with 'something), and as an appraisal of one's overall quality of experience - a happy life (Diener, 1984; Shin & Johnson, 1978) [2, 1]. A person may be happy about his life conditions or overall economic situation as compared to feelings of pleasure, but as soon as such conditions fade, happiness is lost.

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This makes the state of happiness very unstable, circumstantial and conditional.

Abdel-khalek (2005) ^[8] stated that happiness is an ultimate aim of human being, and every people seek out for happiness and wanted to be happy. The meaning of happiness is different to different people with different means and ways to achieve it. Therefore, human happiness cannot be guaranteed, since people make choices of their own and it differs from person to person. Argyle (1987, cited in Bekhet *et al.*, 2008) ^[17] has conceptualized happiness as positive inner experience, the highest good, and the ultimate motivator for all human behaviors and as the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his or her life as a whole.

Happiness consist of five important aspects viz

1. Happiness encompasses of positive feelings, good emotions, experiences and enjoyments of life without negative feelings such as anxiety and depression.
2. To attain happiness is the fundamental human aspiration, most important goal and ultimate aim of human being.
3. Attainment of happiness is an exclusive goal for some and not always achievable.
4. Happiness has different meanings and purposes of life to different people and there is different ways to achieve and not transferable from one person to other.
5. Happiness is satisfaction, successful, and achievement of wants and desire.

Happiness is not only important to our personal lives but also important to our global community. The value of happiness is enormous. Happiness leads to success, achievement, satisfaction, good health and longevity of life. The importance of happiness is to achieve many personal ambitions and goals that what we all seek for. Happiness helps to transform people to become more compassionate, more creative, more energetic, and more successful in life (Dhammananda, 2011) ^[18]. True happiness comes from within and deep inside, which does not depend on any circumstances. True security begins as a mental state, as inner strength, as faith in oneself, and feelings of happiness and security is important to attain happiness and security in the material world (Sasson, 2011 b) ^[19]. Happier people are more attractive and happiness brings undying quest of life (Dhammananda, 2011 ^[18]; Yang, 2007) ^[20]. The other reason why happiness is important is for healthy body is because positive feelings change the chemical makeup of our bodies, producing chemicals that enhance immunity and cell repair (Bekhet *et al.*, 2008) ^[17].

Review of Literature

A study conducted by Hetal D. Kavadi and Dr. Ashwin Jansari (2019) ^[21] on college students aimed to know the level of happiness among graduate and post graduate students and the gender differences among them in happiness. The findings revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female students in happiness and there was no significant difference in happiness between the under graduate and post graduate students.

A study conducted by Aditya Chamuah and Dr. R. Shankar (2019) ^[22] on the happiness, locus of control and learned optimism among post graduate students. The findings

inferred that locus of control and learned optimism were significantly correlated with happiness.

Another study conducted by Muhammad Akhtaruzzaman, W. Ahmad and SK Kurup (2021) ^[23] on the subjective well-being (happiness), work and academic success of post graduate international students concluded that a significant relationship exists between happiness and academic performance.

A study conducted in West Bengal by Lalit Lalita V Mohakud (2017) ^[10] on happiness among the higher education level rural and urban students found that there was a significant difference in happiness between the students who live in rural area and who live in urban area.

A study conducted by Greeshma K on meaning in life and happiness among post graduate students found that a significant positive relation exists between presence of meaning in life and happiness and meaning in life was found to be a strong predictor of happiness. They also found that females were happier compared to males.

A study done by Alireza Soukdar and others on studying the relationship and impact of personality on happiness among successful students and other students found that there is a significant relationship between all personality dimension and happiness.

Methodology

Problem

To study the difference in the level of happiness among under graduate and post graduate students.

Objective

To verify the difference in the level of happiness between under graduate and post graduate students.

Hypothesis

There will be no difference in the level of happiness among under graduate and post graduate students.

Variables

- Independent Variable: Level of Education – Under Graduation and Post-Graduation.
- Dependent Variable: Level of Happiness.

Research Design

Between groups design was used for the study.

Sample

Purposive sampling technique was used and a total of 60 students were selected as the sample. Among them, 30 were under graduate students and 30 were post graduate students between the age group of 19-23 years.

Inclusion Criteria

- Under Graduate and Post Graduate students of Government colleges only, aged between 19-23 years were included.
- Both male and female students were included.
- Only day scholars were included.

Exclusion Criteria

- Students from private colleges were excluded.
- Students staying in hostels and paying guest accommodation were excluded.

Research Tools

- Demographic data sheet.
- Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (Michael Argyle and Peter Hills, 2002) ^[24].

Procedure

The adolescents aged between 19 – 23 years were approached for consent to be participants for the present study. The Semi-structured Interview Schedule was administered to obtain the required demographic details of the sample. Based on the demographic details obtained by the sample, they were categorized into two groups: Under graduate and Post graduate students. The subjects were also screened keeping in view the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Rapport was established with the subjects before the administration of the questionnaire. Subsequently, the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire which consists of 29 items

was administered to them with appropriate instructions. After the completion of the task, the questionnaire was collected from the sample and obtained data was statistically analysed considering the objective of the study. To arrive at the key findings of the study, Independent Sample ‘t’ test was used.

Results and Discussion

Happiness is a key factor in life which all of us irrespective of the age, profession, culture, etc. Long for. The present study highlights the importance of measuring happiness between under graduate and Post graduate students whose happiness is dependent on many factors. But, here it was examined whether the level of education has a significant role to play in determining one’s happiness. Statistical analysis of the study has been presented below.

Table: showing the difference between the under graduate and Post graduate students in happiness.

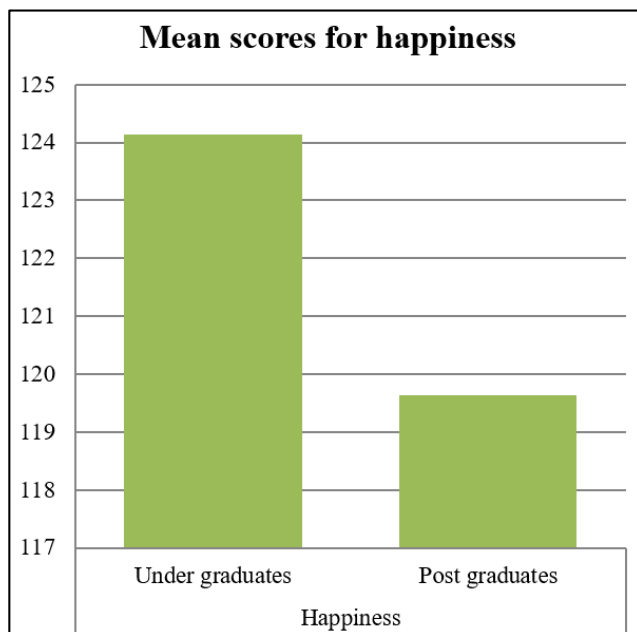
Group Statistics					
Variable	Sample	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	‘T’ Value
Happiness	Under graduate students	30	124.13	14.01	
	Post graduate students	30	119.63	17.47	1.10

Not significant

The above table shows the difference between the under graduate and Post graduate students in happiness. As per the table, the mean is 124.13 and 119.63, with the standard deviation being 14.01 and 17.47 in Happiness for under graduate and Post graduate students respectively. The obtained ‘t’ value was 1.10 indicating no significant difference in happiness between under graduate and Post graduate students. Hence, the study accepts the null hypothesis stating “There will be no difference in the level of happiness among under graduate and post graduate students”.

and female students in happiness and there was no significant difference in happiness between the under graduate and post graduate students.

In a study related to meaning in life and happiness among post graduate students (Greeshma. K) Found that a significant positive relation exists between presence of meaning in life and happiness and meaning in life was found to be a strong predictor of happiness. She also found that females were happier compared to males. Studies have also found that a significant relationship exists between happiness and academic performance among post graduate international students who work part-time. These studies support the findings of the present study.



Graphical representation of mean values shows that, under graduate students have higher level of happiness when compared to post graduate students. Hetal D. Kavadi and Dr. Ashwin Jansari (2019) ^[21], in their study on college students found that there was a significant difference between male

Conclusions

The results of the present study shows that there is no significant difference in the level of happiness between under graduate and post graduate students. The study shows that under graduate students have higher level of happiness when compared to post graduate students but not major difference has been noticed. The study proposes to work on the various factors that influences the happiness of under graduate and post graduate students.

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