

Original article:

A Study of Happiness-inducing Factors in Nursing and Midwifery Students at the Islamic Azad University of Jahrom

Rahmanian Koshkaki A¹, Kargar Jahromi M², Rahmanian Koshkaki A³, Aliyar Pirouzi⁴, Moosavifard Z⁵.

Abstract

Introduction: In psychology, happiness is defined as a positive emotion which lasts longer than a temporary good feeling; it is a steady condition among one's positive emotions and understanding of life. Happiness is beneficial to the whole society, but the effects of happiness on university students, as the new blood and future makers of nations, have been of greater interest to researchers. The present study aims to explore the factors that induce happiness in nursing and midwifery students.

Methods: The present study is a descriptive-comparative work of research conducted in 2017 on 200 nursing and midwifery students at the Islamic Azad University of Jahrom in the south of Iran. The subjects were selected based on the census sampling method. To determine the degree of happiness in the subjects, the researchers used the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire developed by Argyle et al. in 1979. The questionnaire consists of 29 multiple-choice items scored on the Likert scale between 0 and 3. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire have been tested and confirmed in several studies. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS v. 15. **Findings:** Of the 200 students studied, 81% (171) were female and 65.4% (138) were single. The mean happiness score of the subjects was found to be 40.1±9.1. On the happiness scale, the students' happiness level was medium. 21.9% of the students had low happiness levels (a score of 0 to 28), 71.5% had acceptable happiness levels (a score of 29 to 57), and 6.6% had high happiness levels (a score of 58 to 87). An analysis of the data showed that there was not a significant relationship between the subjects' levels of happiness and any of their demographic characteristics except their term of study (p=0.05). **Conclusion:** The findings of the present study show that the degree of happiness among nursing and midwifery university students is medium. Since nursing and midwifery university students are potential labor force in the healthcare systems of societies, it is essential that they maintain acceptable levels of happiness which is a criterion of psychological health. Accordingly, it is recommended that organized measures be taken to improve the psychological health of students and keep it at satisfactory levels throughout the duration of their education.

Keywords: happiness; nurse; midwife; influential factors.

Bangladesh Journal of Medical Science Vol. 20 No. 01 January'21. Page : 33-38
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3329/bjms.v20i1.50342>

Introduction:

Happiness is a positive emotion in the psychology, considered as a deeper state than a good temporary condition. Happiness is a Sustained feeling in positive emotion and life reality perception^{1,2}. It

is one of mental health criteria and one of the six basic human emotions including anger, fear, hatred, wonder, sadness and joy³. Psychologists began to focus on positive emotions in the late twentieth century, and since then, happiness has been raised as one of the topics discussed by psychologists and

1. Afifeh Rahmanian Koshkaki, Department of nursing, Jahrom Branch, Islamic Azad University, Jahrom, Iran.
2. Marzieh Kargar Jahromi, Faculty Member, MSc of Nursing, Gerash University of Medical Science, Gerash, Iran.
3. Ali Rahmanian koshkaki, Jahrom University of Medical Science, Jahrom, Iran.
4. Aliyar Pirouzi, Gerash University of Medical Science, Gerash, Iran.
5. Zinab Sadat moosavifard, Department of nursing, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad university, Bandar Abbas, Iran

Correspondence to: Afifeh Rahmanian Koshkaki, Department of Nursing, Jahrom Branch, Islamic Azad university, Jahrom, Iran.. E-mail: afifeh61@yahoo.com

sociologists and has been included in the medical science⁴. Studies on happiness proposed that happy individuals are highly oriented in the information and events processing and interpreting in such a way to bring about happiness and satisfaction⁵. In fact, these people respond more positively and consistently, with lower stress level, a reinforced immune system, and more creativity than those who are quiet⁶. For this reason, possessing a sense of happiness may increase mental health improvement^{7,8}. It is contagious, meaning that one person's happiness impacts others to make life pleasant and satisfactory⁹. Since happiness is one of the fundamental mankind thrills, so people experience it as how they are however the happiness definition is not as simple as its experience. According to Wainon's theory, happiness refers to the individual's judgment of the entire life quality desirability. In other words, happiness means how much individuals loves their own lives¹⁰. Based on Maslow's opinion, the main indicator of the people struggling for their own prosperity, perfection, qualities and abilities is the feelings of joy and humor. The most comprehensive and operational joy definition belongs to Wainon. According his idea, joy is referred to person's judgment of their whole life quality desirability level. In another phrase, joys means that how much a person loves his own life¹⁰. In general, positive emotions has an important role in occupational function improvement. In fact, it is mixed with organizational life excitement¹¹. Happy living makes people having more motivation in jobs and educations¹². Joy facilitates our passion to social activity and interaction. In an era in which medical knowledge is rapidly developing and expanding, and day by day, we are witnessing simpler and safe diagnosis methods, our communication with patient must be optimized correspondingly¹³. Happiness and joy are the benefits of the whole social communities but the students corpses has been paid more attention by researchers and psychologists as young and future of society forces in order to present suitable solutions and methods for investigation and followed joy increasing of this impressive community. The happiness of the community is one of the most influential factors in economic, cultural, and social development and leads to reduction of family disruption and divorces and increment in academic interest and finding interest in the job and increasing in production. Thus happiness and vitality in students cause their more willing presents in university and not only encouraging them in science and knowledge but also honoring the Noteworthy University's

values¹⁴. In 1382, Jaafari et al researched in the field of students' joy and happiness in Isfahan and resulted the 45/83 as the students' joy level⁴. In Lorestan, Study results of Farhadi et al in 1384 showed that only 18/7% of the students had very good joy. Francis et al projec in Duisburg University (2003) expressed 41/6 for the boy's joy mean and 43/1 for the girls and there wasn't any meaningful difference between boys and girls¹⁶. Since having a happy life can solve many psychological problems and because more motivation in work and education¹⁷ and also With regard to the research activities conducted in the world that referred to some of them briefly, indicates the importance of this issue, especially among young people and students. Medical students need to have a good physical and mental health due to their important role in the health maintaining of the community and It can be said that their happiness can have a profound effect on all dimensions and levels of society. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the joy and satisfactory status of nursing and obstetric students of Islamic Azad University, Jahrom Branch.

Study method

This descriptive transient study was conducted in 1396 on nursing and obstetric students of Islamic Azad University, Jahrom Branch. By using a census sampling, a questionnaire was distributed among 250 students after written consent, and finally due to not returning of some of the questionnaires, 200 individuals were surveyed in this study. To determine the level of happiness, Oxford's joy standard questionnaire was used which has been developed by Argyll et al (1979)⁴. The questionnaire contains 29 multiple choice questions which their options are scored on a Likert scale of 0 to 3, respectively. As a result, the range of scores varies between (0-87). In this questionnaire, score (0-28) is considered low joy level, (29-57) acceptable and score (58-87) as very good happiness level. The test reliability and validity have been measured in previous studies. Oxford happy questionnaire validity and reliability was studied on 727 Iranian students and its use was approved (18). The results of another study showed that all 29 Oxford happiness inventory had a high correlation with the total score and Cronbach's alpha of 0.98 (19). The gained data were analyzed by SPSS version 15 using descriptive statistics, independent t-test and ANOVA for comparing happiness score and its relation with demographic and educational variables at a significant level ($p \leq / 05$).

Results:

Of the 200 students studied, 81% (171) girls and 65.4% (138) were single. Students demographic characteristics are listed in Table 1. The average score of student's joy in the current study was 40.1 ± 9.1 . According to the scores division, the student's happiness level was in the medium range. 21% of the students at low joy level (0-28), 71/5% of the students at the acceptable level, (29-57) and 6/6% were at a very good level (58-87). Data analysis showed no demographic characteristics of the students studied with their joy except for the term ($p=0/05$), there was no significant relationship (table 2).

Table 1: Frequency distribution of demographic characteristics of Jahrom Azad University Students 1396 per year

Demographic characteristics	number	percent
age		
≤20	48	23/5
20-25	150	73/5
25-30	5	2/5
≤30	1	/5
sex		
male	29	14/2
female	171	83/8
Marital status		
Single	138	68
married	62	30/5
Majors		
nursing	134	65/4
obstetric	71	34/6
Academic semesters		
Term 2	45	22
Term 3	8	3/9
Term 4	74	36/1
Term 6	78	38

Table 2: The mean and standard deviation of student joy score and its relationship with demographic and educational characteristics

variables	Vitality mean & standard deviation	P value
sex		0/23
male	78/90 ± 14/86	
female	83/00 ± 20/12	
age	83± 13/20	0/3
address		0/98
dormitory	82/66 ± 21/63	
house	82/50 ± 16/86	
Marital status		0/47
single	81/83 ± 18/36	
married	83/58 ± 21/80	
majors		0/50
nursing	80/66 ± 18/72	
obstetric	86/02 ± 20/16	
Academic semesters		0/05
Term 2	86/43 ± 15/00	
Term 3	81/66 ± 7/57	
Term 4	82/66 ± 20/24	
Term 6	79/92 ± 20/60	

Tests: Independent t test, ** ANOVA test

Discussion and conclusion:

In this study, 200 undergraduate nursing and obstetric students were examined for their vitality and its relationship with demographic characteristics. The student's vitality score mean ($40/10 \pm 9/1$) indicates moderate vitality. In a survey conducted by Shojaei et al. (2012), 69.8% of nursing students had a moderate level of happiness and 17.5% had a low level of happiness (20). In another study in Iran Medical Sciences University, the average score for happiness was 42 ± 42 ²¹. Another study conducted at the University of Turkey showed that the students' vitality was 63.1 ± 11.31 (Oxford)²². Undergraduates' Isfahan University vitality Mean score was 44.4 ± 13.38 ²³ and mean score of Kashan's students was

45.8 ± 4.13²⁴. The comparison of the students' joy means in this research and the mentioned studies shows that the findings are close. Also, the findings of this study are consistent with the study of Francis et al., Which measures the undergraduate students vitality at the University of Woodberg based on the Oxford test (41.6)¹⁶. Considering the fact that a significant percentage of students enjoyed the level of happiness and satisfaction, it is important to note that there is long distance between the obtained average amount (40.10 ± 9.1) and the maximum possible level of happiness (87). On the other hand, Kaplan et al consider low vitality equal to depression mood which its outbreak is 3-6%^{25,26}. According to conducted investigation, students' happiness scores mean in Iran is in medium range in most studies whereas Turkey students study express vitality as in good level. Obviously, we need to consider different issues and problems in comparing the results of various studies. In this project, there was no significant difference between the state of vitality and gender. Which is consistent with the results of many other similar studies^{16,27,28}. In the other two studies, the mean score of vitality in boys was significantly higher than girls' score^{29,30}. In this study, there was no significant relationship between happiness and vitality and marital status, but other studies showed that happiness among married students was higher than single students^{4,15}. Of course, since married people include a small percentage of the sample, this result is not interpretable and generalized. In the present study, there is no significant difference between the age and happiness levels which is consistent with Jafari et al.⁴. As shown in Table 2, there is no significant relationship between happiness and the demographic variables except academic term (p=0.05). Perhaps the reason for happiness in the different semester is attributed to the students' lack of field knowledge and their failure to meet their expectations of the practice field, the lack of opportunities for employment, the concern about the conditions of marriage and the necessity of working in different shifts and other existing problems³¹.

Conclusion:

These study findings showed that students have a moderate vitality level. Nursing and obstetric students are potential community health forces that enter the workplace after graduation to serve. Therefore, maintaining the happiness level, which is one of the mental health components, is essential. Therefore, it is desirable that measures should be taken to improve student mental health and maintaining it at the appropriate level in the educational period and take the necessary steps.

Consequently, considering the importance of happiness in mental health and student's vulnerability, it is recommended that educational instructors should be considered in order to develop a happy academic environment in the university environment.

Ethical Approval: The study was approved by the institutional Ethics Committee of the Gerash University of Medical Science (IR.GERUMS. REC.1397.1322).

Prior to this study, Students were informed of the purpose of the research. Participants were informed of their right to refuse to participate in or to withdraw from the study at any stage. Anonymity and confidentiality of participants were maintained.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

Acknowledgments

Hereby, the respected personnel and nursing and midwifery students at the Islamic Azad University of Jahrom who have cooperated in study and gathering data are acknowledged.

Author contribution

Study conception and design (AR, AR), statistical expertise, analysis and interpretation of data and supervision (AR), manuscript preparation (MK, AR), supervision, administrative support and critical revision of the paper (AP, ZM).

Financial disclosure : None

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