IS SELF-CONCEPT ON RESILIENCE AND HAPPINESS ASSOCIATED? A STUDY OF THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to investigate the concept of self-concept, resilience, and happiness among male and female undergraduate students in a Nigerian college. The study was conducted using the cross-sectional methodology. The sample size was 70 students conveniently recruited for sampling purpose. The results show that happiness and resilience are statistically significant between male and female students; whereas, self-concept is statistically insignificant between male and female students. Furthermore, the results show that self-concept and happiness have positive and significant correlation; whereas, the relationship between self-concept and resilience is positive but insignificant. Similarly, the relationship between resilience and happiness is positive but insignificant.

Keywords: Resilience, Happiness, Self-concept, Undergraduate, Students, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), self-concept is about self-evaluation or self-perception which represent an individual's sum of attributes and beliefs in a particular context. It is believed to be reflecting a person's overall comprehensive sense of self and is a stable or generalized sense of self (Leonard, Beauvais, & Scholl, 1999). Aspects of the self-add to self-esteem in accordance with the importance of that aspect (Kling, Ryff, & Essex, 1997). In general, students possess three perceived attributes including happiness, resilience, and self-concept. Those individuals who are in process of developing their self-concept and healthy personality

experience greater happiness and resilience compare to those individuals who have weaker function of development of healthy personality (Joshy & Raj, 2013).

Resilience

The term resilience is about psychic resistance in the situation of challenges, adversity, and stressors. It is about process of overcoming the negative effects of risk exposure and successful coping of traumatic experiences and avoiding the negative complications associated with it.

Even though, resilience is related with developmental psychopathology, there are related concepts such as self-organization, self-regulation, emotional intelligence, and self-concept. An important contribution of resilience is the presence of both promotive and risk factors that either reduce negative outcomes or bring positive outcomes. Resiliency is a process of recovering from negative events. It encompasses the psychological damage and the enduring strength that can result from struggling with hardship. A key result of this study shows that resilient adolescents have higher happiness than their peers, and have high self-concept. Resilience involves comprehensive characteristics of the whole child. (Anthony & Cohler, 1987, p. 95).

Happiness

The concept of happiness is about life satisfaction and a sense of well-being among individuals. It is also broadly referring to as positive subjective experience of an individual. Recent literature suggest that happiness is about reporting a mild to moderate positive mood and emotions and developing a sense of resilience the majority of the time. If someone is happy, it can be advantageous to such individuals in wide range of situations.

In present study, we focus on self-concepts and its influence on individuals in the case of undergraduate students. The justification of the present study is that in current competitive environment, undergraduate students are under high pressure in terms of economic, social, and psychological domain. The result of this situation is that students develop some strategies to overcome such pressure such as exhibiting a different personality compare to the real one, they possess. The effects of such psychological dissonance in personality and identity is that students experience a lot of stress and forget about happiness and create false self-concept. Based on positive psychology, based concept of PsyCaps (hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience) is gaining increased attention. The modern positive psychology stresses on psychological resilience as an important concept. In this study, we focus on psychological resilience among undergraduate students. Based on the nature of the study, we develop the following research objectives;

Objectives

- To compare the dimensions of self-concept, happiness and resilience among the male and female undergraduate students.

Hypotheses

- There is significant relationship between the dimensions of self-concept, happiness and resilience among the male and female undergraduate students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Samples

In present study, the sampling is based on convenience non-random sampling approach. The sample is based on undergraduate students of a university in Nigeria.

Instruments

the self-concept questionnaire is adapted from Saraswat (1981) consisted of 48 items which measure the self-concept of undergraduate students. The resilience is measured by 25 items adapted from Wagnild and Young (1990). The happiness is measured by 4 items and adapted from Lyubomirsky.

Statistical Analysis

We used quantitative approach for data analysis and used SPSS version 19 for analysis purpose. All the data was first entered in MS Excel and later transferred to SPSS for further analysis. All the data was first checked properly for any errors or omissions. The main analyses included independent sample t-test and correlation analysis.

RESULTS

Table 1
Demographic Details

Gender	Male	Female
	45	25
Age	Less than 18 years	18 to 22 Years
	27	43

Table 1 shows that in our sample, there were total of 70 participants out of which 45 were male and 25 were female.

Table 2
Mean, Standard Deviation in Self-concept on Happiness and Resilience between Gender.

CATEGORY		N	MEAN	SD	t-statistics
HAPPINESS	MALE	32	28.07	2.29	2.043
	FEMALE	38	27.08	2.20	
SELF-CONCEPT	MALE	32	272.29	22.36	0.987
	FEMALE	38	272.24	22.72	
RESILIENCE	MALE	32	227.50	27.77	1.995
	FEMALE	38	229.22	25.66	

The results show that in our sample, happiness for male was 28.07 and for female it was 27.08. The difference for happiness between male and female was statistically significant based on t-statistics (tstat=2.043, P<.05). The self-concept mean value is 272.29 while for female the mean value is 272.72. The resilience mean value is 227.5 and for female, the mean value is 229.22. The self-concept for male and female was statistically insignificant based on t-statistics

(tstat=0.987, $P>.05$). The resilience for male and female was statistically significant based on t-statistics (tstat=1.995, $P<.05$). Based on the results, we can conclude that happiness and resilience are statistically significant between male and female students; whereas, self-concept is statistically insignificant between male and female students.

Table 3

Correlation

VARIABLES		SELF-CONCEPT	RESILIENCE	HAPPINESS
SELF-CONCEPT	Pearson Correlation	1	0.232	0.487*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.195	0.016
RESILIENCE	Pearson Correlation	0.232	1	0.159
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.195		0.189
HAPPINESS	Pearson Correlation	0.487*	0.159	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.016	0.189	

* Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels.

The correlation table shows that self-concept is positively but insignificantly associated with resilience ($r=.232$, $P>.05$); and self-concept and happiness are positively and significantly associated ($r=.487$, $P<.05$). Similarly, resilience and happiness are positively but insignificantly associated ($r=.159$, $P>.05$).

Discussion

The focus of the study was to compare the dimensions of self-concepts among male and female undergraduate students. The results show that happiness and resilience are statistically significant between male and female students. Furthermore, in happiness, male students score more than female; while, in resilience, female students score more than male students. The results show that self-concept is an important factor which has important connection with the situations an individual face as part of his/her development era (Zimmerman & Kumar, 1994).

This is the fundamental to have successful life where in, success indicates that a person is able to adapt to the society in expected ways (Masten & Coatsworth, 2009). The results also show that among male and female undergraduate students, moderate level of self-concept is present and is an important contributor in their personality development.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of the study is that self-concept is important for individuals at late adolescent age as it determines their personality characteristics. It can also be concluded that self-concept varies among male and female students. The study also concludes that self-concept is critical for shaping important characteristics of personality of adolescents and hence it should not be ignored.

Recommendations

It is recommended that parents, teachers, counsellors, and other important stakeholders should focus on developing the self-concept among adolescents. If some problems are found related to the adolescent self-concept, so proper consultation should be availed.

Conflict of Interests

Author declare no conflict of interests.

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