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The Impact of Demographic Variables on the Happiness of High School Students

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The current study investigated the impact of demographic variables on student happiness in high schools of Shiraz City. The demographic variables included in the study are age, gender and social class. **Method:** The data analyzed using SPSS software **Results:** there is no significant relationship between age and happiness but social class and gender had significant relationships with happiness.

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INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly having a healthy and developed society depends on healthy members whether from mental or physical points of view. One of the important and effective variables on physical and mental health is happiness and vitality. This is particularly is of significant importance during adolescence and youth because these are very important and crucial periods in everyone's life and each person makes his most important and vital decision during the mentioned periods. As a matter of fact, happiness is of bilateral importance from performance point of view: on one hand, this is a positive sense that results from feeling satisfaction and victory. When we feel positive internally, the happiness makes the life satisfactory. Therefore the satisfaction caused by happiness affects the inevitable experiences in life, disappointment, failure and all in all the negative emotions. On the other hand, happiness facilitates the human's courage to do social activities. Therefore the instrumental happiness is a social bridge which sticks the relations to each other. In an article by Argil *et al.* [1] about the definition of happiness, it was evident that when people are asked this question: what is happiness? They arise 2 different replies: first they may state emotional feelings like enjoyment and second they define it as being satisfied of life generally and/or being satisfied in most of its aspects. It seems that happiness has 2 essential components (emotional and cognitive) whose emotional dimension causes that the person who feels happiness be recognized as a happy and vital one in others mind, and be able to communicate better in social events. Also from the cognitive point of view, such a person has a positive attitude toward his surrounding world and looks at his surrounding happenings and events more optimistically. Traits such as happiness and grief, courage and fear, self-confidence and inferiority etc. are originated from individuals' emotions and feeling, because these feelings are stimulus for our interaction with the surrounding environment that if it is in proper balance would form individuals' personality, causes correct and logical decision making in difficult situations in life and brings the successfulness in everything done. Happiness has an important impact on individuals' successfulness. Happiness individuals look at the events in their surrounding environment optimistically. Also happy person possesses healthy personality and would be a responsible o and good citizen. Therefore, it is observed that happiness is in direct relationship with individuals' personality and sprit. A man with happy mood puts the positively thinking in priority of all routine activities and better than others tries to find a solution for the complications. In other word, happiness comes into reality when human feels more satisfaction from himself and the surrounding environment. But unfortunately based on the current statistics, the rank of Iran in happiness among 65 countries is 61 which is a very minimal ranking (Chalpi et al). Based on this the effective factors on

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this case are of high importance, because when a phenomenon is not recognized accurately and scientifically, one cannot do any programming related with the case. On the other hand one of the important issues which is arising today especially in our society is the discussion on minimization of birth rate and as a result increasing the one-child rate toward which different people have different attitudes. The development and advancement of each society depends highly on the healthy, vital and mature human force. Since vital human are more willing and energetic in doing positive and constructive activities. Happiness is one the important signs of mental health of people and this is more important in adolescence and youth due to the fact that individuals make most of their important and crucial decisions during these periods such as education situation and job situation etc. and many of these decisions are reflection of the future life's quality and type which affects the midlife and aging periods of the life. On the other hand, a society with old forces never can achieve its development goals that are programming for. Therefore, having young, happy and vital human forces plays an important role in society development. To this opinion, the present article tries to evaluate impact of some of the demographical factors on happiness and happiness.

Hypotheses:

There is relationship between demographical factors (age, family dimension, rank of child, gender and number of children) and students' happiness.

1. There is relationship between individual's age and his/her happiness.
2. There is relationship between individual's rank of child and his/her happiness.
3. There is relationship between individual's gender and his/her happiness.

Methodology:

3-1- statistical society (studied population):

The population being studied includes a series of elements from which the sample is selected.

The statistical society is a combination of all cases that are joint in an certain characteristic.

The statistical society in this research includes total students of Shiraz high schools who are 80000 persons based on the statistical calendar of 1385 (statistical calendar 1385)

3-2- Sample:

Sample includes the total elements of the sample. In contrast, statistical one includes a series of elements in statistical society which is the base of sampling. Among all students of Shiraz high schools using Lin table a total of 384 cases were selected as the sample and for more reliability the sample was increased to 500 cases.

3-3 sampling method:

Researchers often are interested in a group of peoples' characteristics but studying them directly is not possible. Therefore, in such cases the research would be focusing on a part of the characteristics. Usually one can assure relatively that the obtained results from a sample of population can be extended to the total population. In this research the intended and random sampling methods are used. To select the students who have sister and brother the random method of sampling is used but because one of the emphasized variables of the present article is family dimension, the intended sampling method is used to select the students who are one-child, i.e. in each classroom where the questionnaires are distributed, one-child students are considered as intended analysis.

4-3- Information collection technique and tools:

To collect the survey data different techniques can be used. The main point is that data collection results to variable matrix based on the cases. Data can be collected by observation, deep interview, content analysis or other different techniques. But the questionnaire is the most frequently used technique. In this research necessary data are collected using Oxford happiness and demography questionnaires by experienced questioners.

5-3- Data collection method:

In this study to collect data the books, magazines, theses, internet searches etc. were used.

3-6- Data analysis and extraction:

After collecting data this is the time of analysis. After encoding data the SPSS was used to analyze them in 2 levels of deductive and descriptive. In deductive statistics the simple linear regression analysis, transmittal analysis (ANOVA) and t-test and multivariable regression considering the variables measurement level were used.

Results:

In this section data analysis is used in order to evaluate the relationship between independent and dependent variables. To investigate the relationship between data relative to their measurement the Pearson's correlative analysis (when both dependent and independent variables are in spatial level), t-test (when the independent variable is nominal and bi-chotomous) and transmittal analysis (when independent variable is nominal and polychotomous) are used and then the multivariable regression is used.

Hypothesis1. There is relationship between individual's age and his/her happiness.

Table 1: Evaluation of relationship between age and amount of students' happiness.

Meaningfulness level	Amount of correlation	Variable name
0/042	-0/085	Age and happiness

The relationship between age and happiness using Pearson's correlative analysis are presented in tale 3 Considering the meaningfulness level there is no meaningful relationship between age and amount of students' happiness. Therefore the first hypothesis is ignored.

Hypothesis 2. There is relationship between individual's rank of child and his/her happiness.

Table 2: Evaluation of relationship between rank of child and students' happiness.

Meaningfulness level	Amount of correlation	Variable name
0/013	-0.118	The ranking of children and happiness

Table 2 evaluates whether the amount of individuals' happiness is affected by the rank of child or not? Considering the meaningfulness level shows that the relationship between these 2 variables is negative and meaningful. In other word first child in family is happier than other ones. Therefore the mentioned hypothesis is confirmed.

Hypothesis3. There is relationship between individual's gender and his/her happiness.

Table 3: Evaluation of relationship between gender and happiness.

Meaningfulness level	Value of t	Standard deviation	Average	Gender	
				male	female
0.000	0.208	2.65	2.51	happiness	
			2.42		

Table 3 Evaluates the relationship between gender and amount of happiness. As the table shows there is a meaningful difference between gender and happiness. In other word happiness in boys is different from girls. Therefore the third hypothesis is confirmed.

Discussion and conclusion:

The results of the research show that second and third children are less happy than first one, in other word the ranking of children affects the happiness and happiness and this is due to the fact that materialistic equipment and spiritual attentions to the children is reduced when they are increasing. Gender is a demographical variable which is considered in most of the researches because even if the economic, social and cultural situations are equal for both genders, there are again differences between boys and girls. Based on the results, the average score of happiness for boys is more than girls which can be due to different pedagogical, cultural or social situations which is confirmed in a research by Keshavarz and Ostalo. Ostalo in his research states that although there is no significant difference in happiness between girls and boys, but girls are more depressed than boys and they are also more sensitive in family relations. Females are a half of population in each society and their role is not negligible for any open-mind person. But considering the fact research concludes that girls amount of happiness and happiness is less than boys, so this issue should be investigated and studied more deeply so that the factors effective on this issue are clarified. Regarding the fact that family dimension variable affects the happiness in students negatively, the extensive family dimension programming should be considered more accurately and more studies should be done relative to this issue. In other word the proper equipment should be prepared for extension of family dimension that family, children and society wouldn't be affected negatively.

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