



Achievement motivation and learned optimism as determinants of happiness in students

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Abstract: *The present research was executed to elucidate the role of achievement motivation and learned optimism on happiness of students. The sample consisted of 60 students studying post graduate courses in a university. They were assessed by achievement motivation scale, learned optimism scale and happiness scale. The results of correlation coefficient indicated that all of the studied variables were positively significantly correlated with happiness. Also, the regression analysis showed that achievement motivation and learned optimism could predict happiness significantly. The implications and limitations of the research are discussed.*

Key Words: *achievement motivation, learned optimism, happiness and students*

1. INTRODUCTION

Students are the greatest resource of a nation. They are to be given appropriate guidance and counseling so that they can lead their lives successfully. The need to be happy is an urgent requirement for students. They need happiness to lead life successfully. The present study is an attempt in making an understanding of how achievement motivation and learned optimism contribute to the happiness in students.

Achievement motivation

Achievement motivation, also referred to as the need for achievement (and abbreviated *n* Achievement), is an important determinant of aspiration, effort, and persistence when an individual expects that his performance will be evaluated in relation to some standard of excellence. Such behavior is called achievement-oriented.

Motivation to achieve is instigated when an individual knows that he is responsible for the outcome of some venture, when he anticipates explicit knowledge of results that will define his success or failure, and when there is some degree of risk, i.e., some uncertainty about the outcome of his effort. The goal of achievement-oriented activity is to succeed, to perform well in relation to a standard of excellence or in comparison with others who are competitors (McClelland 1961, chapter 6; Atkinson 1964).

Individuals differ in their strength of motive to achieve, and various activities differ in the challenge they pose and the opportunity they offer for expression of this motive. Thus, both personality and environmental factors must be considered in accounting

for the strength of motivation to achieve in a particular person facing a particular challenge in a particular situation. The very same person may be more strongly motivated at one time than at another time, even though in most situations he may generally tend to be more interested in achieving than other people.

Learned optimism

Scheier and Carver (1985) have defined optimism “as a generalized expectancy that good as opposed to bad outcomes will generally occur when confronted with problems across important life domains.” Learned optimism is a sense of enthusiasm, confidence and control, which develops once one achieves small successes. According to Martin Seligman (1991), how an individual thinks about events in his /her life greatly affects the kinds of actions he / she take. Learned optimism is having a strong expectation that despite the inevitable setbacks and frustrations, events and experiences will eventually turn out alright.

Happiness

Happiness is a positive emotional state. It involves the detailed evaluation of one’s current position in the world. It is the sum total of positive effect and general life satisfaction. It is flourishing of human beings and associated with living a life of virtue. The happiness level of a person is governed by three factors which are a set point for happiness, happiness relevant circumstantial factors, and happiness-producing activities and practices. There are two traditions on happiness. They are eudemonic and hedonic.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Review of related literature is an important pre-requisite for actual planning and carrying out of any research work. The present section represents a brief review of the researches done in the area related to the present investigation.

Mallari, Shedy Dee C etal (2003) determined salient themes of female individuals who are inside the academic setting on their concept of happiness and moral development. The idea of studying the Filipina Female Concept of Happiness came from two areas of study--Female Psychology and Positive Psychology. The researchers were intrigued by the idea that since the female brain is influenced by various amounts of hormones during different stages in their life, affecting their perceptions, emotions and behaviors and perhaps it will show differences in the concept of happiness and moral development. Content analysis of interviews and essays from 12 participants suggested that compared to emerging adults, early teens and late teens attributed their happiness more on extrinsic factors. The results showed that as Filipinas grow older, their concept of happiness became more intrinsic. The study explored the Filipina's concept of happiness and moral development.

Chorro, Estefanía Gomis etal (2017) intended to assess the level at which students prioritize happiness; and discern how the experience of happiness affects the formation of their identity and their relationship with their environment, taking into account the values deduced from their perceptions, and understanding from where these values come, as well as how they are applied in their daily life. The findings indicate that students in fifth or sixth grade value happiness as a necessary aspect of life, derived from criteria such as health, and friends and family. The concept of happiness, however, is learned at home with parents and families.

Flynn, Deborah M etal (2015) explored the relationship between happiness, and six other life domains: Academic Success, Financial Security, Familial Support, Living Environment, Self-Image and Social Relations. Participants were one hundred and ninety-two students from a small undergraduate university. The purpose of the study was to determine which life domain had the greatest influence on student happiness. Assessment tools included the Oxford Happiness Inventory, the Multidimensional Student Life Satisfaction Scale, and a Financial Success Survey created by the inside the academic setting on their concept of happiness and moral development. The idea of studying the Filipina Female Concept of Happiness came from two areas of study—Female Psychology and Positive Psychology. The researchers were intrigued by the idea that since the female brain is influenced by various amounts of hormones during different stages in their life, affecting their perceptions, emotions and behaviors and perhaps it will show differences in the concept of happiness and moral development. Content analysis of interviews and essays from 12 participants suggested that compared to emerging adults, early teens and late teens attributed their happiness more on extrinsic factors. The results showed that as Filipinas grow older, their concept of happiness became more intrinsic. The study explored the Filipina's concept of happiness and moral development.

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Kapikiran, Sahin etal. (2016) examined the role of self-esteem as a mediator in the relationships between optimism and psychological resilience on depressive symptoms in university students. A total of 494 undergraduate students, comprising of 253 female and 241 male participated in this study. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 30 ($M = 20.85$, $SD = 1.57$). Instruments measuring optimism, psychological resilience, self-esteem and depression were administered to university students from different faculties and departments. Application of a structural equation model to the obtained data resulted in a direct relationship between optimism and psychological resilience with symptoms of depression. In addition, it was determined that self-esteem is a full mediator between psychological resilience and depressive symptoms. The mediator role of self-esteem between optimism and depressive symptoms; however, did not reach statistically significant levels. The findings are discussed within the self-esteem, optimism, and resilience in an individual's mental health context.

Phan, Huy P etal (2016) explored a conceptual model that depicted four major orientations: optimism, self-efficacy, and academic well-being. An important question for consideration, in this case, involved the testing of different untested trajectories that could explain and predict individuals' mastery-approach goal orientations. This research investigation, in particular, is of significance for its unexploratory nature, and its findings, we contend, would contribute to our understanding of individuals' academic and learning patterns. Data were collected across six separate time points, and path analytical

procedures were used to test the hypothesized relationships. MPlus 7.3 produced a number of notable findings, emphasizing mediating mechanisms and interesting trajectories, for example: (1) the impact of enactive learning experience on Time 1 optimism and Time 3 self-efficacy, (2) the positive impact of Time 1 optimism on Time 2 motivation towards learning, and on Time 3 self-efficacy, (3) the direct impact of Time 1 optimism on Time 6 mastery-approach goals, mediated by Time 4 optimism and then Time 5 motivation towards learning. This evidence, overall, is substantive in terms of making theoretical contributions, as well as informing sound pedagogical practices for consideration and implementation.

Aksoy, Nil et al (2014) analysed the relationship between university students' attitude to listening to music and their level of optimism. The study group for the research consists of 508 students who studied at Aksaray University in the 2012-13 academic year. Simple random sampling is used. In this study, the "Attitude Scale for Listening to Music" and the "Optimism Scale", which were developed by the researcher, are used for measurement. According to the findings of the research study, there is a significant correlation at the level of 0.430 between students' attitudes to listening to music and their level of optimism. The level of optimism has a positive impact on the attitude to listening to music at the level of 0.184.

Adegboyega, Lateef Omotosho (2018) investigated the influence of achievement motivation on Nigerian undergraduates' attitude towards examination. Descriptive survey of the correlational type was employed for the study. One thousand, five hundred and thirty-six (1,536) undergraduates in Nigeria were drawn using purposive and stratified sampling techniques. Four research questions were generated to guide the application of the study, while two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level. "Achievement Motivation Scale" (AMS) and "Attitude Towards Examination Scale" (ATES) were the instruments used to collect relevant data. The findings revealed that majority of Nigerian undergraduates have a high level of achievement motivation. The findings also revealed that majority of Nigerian undergraduates have a positive attitude towards examination. There was a significant correlation between achievement motivation and attitude of Nigerian undergraduates towards examination. The findings also revealed that gender, age, level of study, university and family type had a significant positive influence on undergraduates' achievement motivation and attitude towards examination in Nigeria. It was therefore recommended, among others that counsellors and lecturers should be properly equipped with strategies needed to assist students in developing appropriate achievement motivation level so as to promote positive attitude towards examination.

Han, Jing; Lu, Qingsheng (2018) said that achievement motivation as one of the most important parts in learning motivation indicates a concern with success in competition with some standard of excellence. Learners who are highly motivated to learn a language are likely to use a variety of strategies. Besides achievement motivation, goal setting, a very important cognitive mediator between motivational antecedents and motivational behaviour, becomes another variable influencing learners' strategy use. Therefore, the current study will focus the influence of achievement motivation and goal setting on learners' strategy use, aiming to deal with (1) the typical types of learning strategies held by the college students under investigation; (2) effect of different levels of achievement motivation on the use of learning strategies; (3) the relationship among goal-setting, learning strategies and achievement motivation. The results show that compensation and metacognitive strategies are reported as

being used the most frequently, followed by cognitive and affective strategies, while the three least frequently used individual strategies involve "use words differently," "start L2 conversation," and "ask for native's help." Concerning the relationship between achievement motivation and strategy use, motive to achieve success (Ms) is positively and significantly correlated with four of the six types of learning strategies, i.e. cognitive, metacognitive, affective and social strategies. On the contrary, motive to avoid failure (Mf) is negatively but not significantly correlated with all the strategies. With regard to goal-setting and strategy use, the study shows that all six learning strategies are significantly correlated with goal-setting except affective strategies. As to relationship between goal-setting and achievement motivation, motive to achieve success (Ms) has significant positive relations with three levels of goal-setting, while motive to avoid failure (Mf) is positively related to "short-term goal" and "mastery goal."

Sarangi, C.(2015) said that achievement motivation is a consistent striving force of an individual to achieve success to a certain standard of excellence in competing situation. In this study an attempt was made to study the effect of achievement motivation on the academic achievement of the high school students of tribal and non- tribal communities in relation to their sex and locale. For this purpose a sample of 200 students, studying in class IX of ten government high schools of Goalpara District of Assam was selected. They were administered the measures of Achievement Motivation Scale by Gopal Rao. "t" test and co-efficient of correlation (r) was applied to study the significance of difference between means and significant relation between achievement motivation academic achievement respectively. It was found that there was no significant difference between tribal-non tribal and boy-girl students but urban students have shown high achievement motivation than the rural students. In case of relationship between achievement motivation and academic achievement it was observed that there was no significant relation between achievement motivation and academic achievement of tribal, boy and rural students but there was a significant relationship between the achievement motivation and academic achievement of non- tribal, girl and urban students.

3. OBJECTIVES:

- To study the relationship between achievement motivation, learned optimism and happiness among students.
- To assess the role of achievement motivation and learned optimism on happiness among students.

Hypotheses

- There is positive and significant relationship between achievement motivation, learned optimism and happiness among students.
- There is positive and significant contribution of achievement motivation on happiness among students.
- There is positive and significant contribution of learned optimism on happiness among students.

4. METHODS:

Sample

Participants: Sample of the study consisted of 60 students; their age range was 20 to 25. There are 30 males and 30 females. They were selected by snowball sampling technique from a University.

Tools

4.1. Achievement motivation Scale

Achievement motivation scale developed by Deo and Mohan was used. This scale has set of 50 statements. For every statement, the possible responses are divided into five categories which are : always ,frequently, sometimes, rarely and never.

4.2 Learned Optimism Scale

Learned optimism scale developed by Pethe, Chaudhari, Dhar and Upinder Dhar was used. This scale has set of 22 statements related to one’s behavior Five possible modes of responses are provided, such as : Strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Higher the scores, higher is the learned optimism.

4.3 Happiness Scale

Happiness scale developed by Rastogi and Moorjani was used. This scale has set of 62 statements related to one’s behavior Five possible modes of responses are provided, such as : Strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Higher the scores, higher is the happiness.

Procedure The students were approached and asked to complete the questionnaires of achievement motivation, learned optimism and happiness. All the respondents were also told that their anonymity will be preserved and their responses will be confidential. After that questionnaires were collected from the respondents and scored manually.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Descriptive statistics and correlation coefficients among independents variables with dependent variable (n=60)

Variables	M(SD)	Happiness
Achievement motivation	186.75 (3.83)	-0.068
Learned optimism	104.42 (3.05)	-0.100
Happiness	299.08 (6.52)	

As shown in table 5, the mean and standard deviation of Achievement motivation, learned optimism, happiness were 186.75(SD=3.83), 104.42(SD=3.05) and 299.08 (SD=6.52) respectively. The table shows the low correlation coefficients of Achievement motivation, learned optimism with happiness. All correlation were positive statistical not significant.

Table 2 Effects of Achievement motivation and Learned optimism on happiness

Variable	MR	RS	F R	B	t	P
Intercept				353.686	6.287	0.000
Achievement motivation	0.133	0.018	0.515 P>0.01	-0.153	0.674	0.503
Learned optimism				-0.249	0.871	0.387

A multiple regression was run to predict happiness from Achievement motivation and learned optimism. The results showed that the prediction model was fitted and the variables statistically, not significantly predicted, F=0.515, p>0.001, R²=0.018. Furthermore, the unstandardized coefficients (Bs) showed that Achievement motivation and learned optimism significantly predicted happiness.

Also, the general form of the equation to predict happiness from Achievement motivation and learned optimism is predicted happiness = $353.686 + (0.153 \times \text{hope}) + (0.249 \times \text{learned optimism})$.

6. CONCLUSION:

Consequently, it is concluded that achievement motivation and learned optimism are positively and significantly correlated with happiness. It is also concluded that achievement motivation and learned optimism are having significant variance on happiness of students. It means that the people having greater level of achievement motivation most probably experience better happiness and vice versa. Because, people who have high level of achievement motivation are expected to tackle bad circumstances more conveniently as compare to low level of achievement motivation. So that it may be inferred that people are having high level of achievement motivation and high level of learned optimism may also have excellent level of happiness.

Suggestion

The findings of study show a glimpse of the impact of student's achievement motivation and learned optimism on happiness. However, more researches are needed to study the moderating factors of happiness among different professions, culture as well as age groups. The findings of students could be compared with those found in other areas of the world to decode similarities and differences.

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