

Examination of the Relationship between Life Satisfaction and Perceived Social Support

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Abstract

The aim of this study has been to examine the amount of relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support among students. This study method was a kind of descriptive-correlation. This study population is included all students studying in the academic year 2014-2015 in the university of Shahid Beheshti. 368 male and female students (214 girls and 154 boys) were selected using stratified sampling method. The Diener questionnaire of life satisfaction, perceived social support questionnaire of multi-dimensional Zimet are used. The results showed that there is significant relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support. Based on these results by increasing the perceived social support we can improve the students` life satisfaction.

Keywords: Life Satisfaction, Perceived Social Support, Student

Introduction

The World Health Organization (WHO) knows health the complete state of physical and social health .(Perpuchi et al. 2014). Cowen (1991 quoted by Perpuchi et al, 2013) in this regard believes that today how ever, is skeptical about health, but happiness and evaluation related to life satisfaction are some factors that have been comon among all models of mental health having been suggested by the scientists. One of the main reasons that causes to be considered the topic of life satisfaction in psychology and the humanities in general, is the pivotal role in the health and wellbeing of human people. (Keshavarz et al. 2009) .Maltby et al (2004) found that people who have more life satisfaction, use more effective and more

appropriate coping styles, experience more deeper positive emotions and have more public health. Lack of life satisfaction is associated with poorer health status, symptoms of depression, mood disorders, inappropriate healthy behavior and social status. Life satisfaction is defined in different ways. For example, Abgus Campbell et al (1974, quoted by Darbandi, 2011) have supposed life satisfaction as the difference between what one wants and what one is, in fact, they have proposed a difference between the reality and the ideal. Anklis Maykls (1986; quoted by Darbandi, 2011), has defined life satisfaction as the person perception difference of how things are and how they can be. One of the factors that can affect life satisfaction is the social support. Social support is a set of general and specific behaviors that modify the exerted psychological pressure to the person and researches have shown this issue has effect mental, social and physical health. People with higher social support have higher physical, mental and social health, and shows better compatibility over against the stresses of life (Robert and Gottlieb, 1997). Social support has been made as the strongest opposition force that a person deals with stressful situations successfully and easily in times of conflict known and facilitates difficulties toleration (Ghaedi and Ya`qubi, 2008). Torkan, (2014) in his study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between perceived social support from family and life satisfaction. Kung et al, (2015) in their study showed that women with higher social support reported more life satisfaction than men. Ahmar Khan, (2015), Bakhshi Roodsari et al (2005) in their study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between social support and life satisfaction. According to the above subjects, this study seeks to examine the relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support it.

Research Method

This study is a descriptive-correlation kind. The study population is included all male and female students in the University of Shahid Beheshti in the academic year 2014-2015. The sample size of 368 people (214 females and 154 males) were selected using stratified sampling. It has been used from life satisfaction questionnaires of Diener, multi-dimensional perceived social support questionnaire of Zimet In order to gather information.

A) Life Satisfaction questionnaires of Diener et al: Life Satisfaction questionnaire measures overall judgment of one's life that, in general, based on life conditions comparison with predetermined standards are predicted. This scale is designed by Diener et al in 1985 for all age groups. This scale consisted of 48 items initially then it decreased to 10 items after factor analysis. Due to the semantic similarity between the items, the final version decreased in to the 5 items Responding scale to items based on the 7 degree Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree the main manufacturers of this scale have reported the internal compability validity coefficients and re-test of this scale among students respectively 87% and 82% (sheikhy et al. 2011). Asgari and Shabaki (2010) have earned the validity of this scale and tasnif the equivalent of 86% and 82%. Sheikhy et al (2011), have earned Cronbach's alpha coefficients life satisfaction and retest the equivalent of 85% and 77%.

B) Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPP): This 12-item questionnaire to assess perceived social support from three sources: family, friends and important people in life by Zimet et al

(1988) has been prepared. Answers range has 7 options from strongly disagree to strongly agree .Rostamy et al (2010) have earned reliability and validity of this scale between 76% to 89%.

Findings:

Table 1: Scores mean and standard deviation of life satisfaction and perceived social support in the total sample

Variables	N	M	SD	Minimum-maximum	Lower limit	Average limit	Lipper limit
Life satisfaction	391	20.47	6.11	5-35	66 %16.9	246 %62.9	79 20.2
Social support	391	4.79	0.88	1.42-1.75	56 %14.3	284 %72.6	51 %13.0
Family support	391	5.01	0.93	1.25-7.00	106 %27.1	232 %59.3	53 %13.6
Friends support		4.76	1.34	1.00-7.00	61 %15.6	282 %27.1	48 125.3
Important people support		4.60	1.14	1.00-7.00	59 %15.1	262 %67.0	70 %17.9

Table 2: Scores mean and standard deviation of life satisfaction and perceived social support differentiated by gender

Componants support	social	gender	N	M	SD	Min-Max	Lover limit	Avarage limit	Upper limit
Life satisfaction		girls	216	21.60	6.03	5-35	25 %11.6	140 %64.8	51 %23.6
		Boys	175	19.69	6.07	5-35	41 %23.4	106 %60.6	28 %7.2
Social support		Girls	216	4.98	0.77	1.50-6.75	17 %7.9	164 %75.9	35 %16.2
		Boys	175	4.56	0.96	1.42-6.33	39 %22.3	120 %68.6	16 %9.1
Family support		Girls	216	5.17	0.85	1.50-7.00	46 215.3	135 %62.5	35 %16.2
		Boys	175	4.81	0.98	1.25-6.50	60 %34.3	97 %55.4	18 %10.3
Friends support		Girls	216	4.96	1.26	1.00-7.00	25 %11.6	164 %75.9	27 %12.5

	Boys	175	4.51	1.39	1.00-7.00	36 %20.6	118 %67.4	21 %12.0
Important people support	Girls	216	4.80	1.07	1.00-7.00	22 %10.2	147 %68.1	47 %21.8
	Boys	175	4.35	1.18	1.00-6.75	37 %21.1	115 %65.7	23 %13.1

This study hypothesis: there is relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support .

Table 3. Results of Pearson correlation test on the analysis on the relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support.

Variables	Perceived social support
Life satisfaction	r =0.41**
	Sig =0.000 n = 391

** Significance at 0.99 confidence (P <0.01)

As Table 3 shows between life satisfaction and social support among the university of Shahid Beheshti students correlation coefficient is to the amount of $r=0.41$ ($r=0.41$, $p<0.01$). Because the obtained correlation coefficient is less than the standard significance level ($\alpha = 0.01$) so it can be concluded there is a positive and significant relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support. So this study hypothesis is accepted at a confidence level of 99%.

Discussion and conclusion:

This study has been done in order to investigate the relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between life satisfaction and perceived social support that the above findings are consonant with researches of Khosravi and Nahid Poor (2012); Perpuchi et al. (2013); Nazari Chegini et al (2013); Onyishi and Okongwu (2013); Yalsin (2011). In this regard Onyishi and Okongwu (2013) in their study stated that there is a positive relationship between social support and life satisfaction. Support of friends and social support and family support are an important predictor of life satisfaction. Mahanta and Aggarwal (2013) stated that the more social support from family and friends is, the greater life satisfaction will be. The results of the Yelsin's researches (2011) confirmed that social support is associated with life satisfaction and social support is the predictor of life satisfaction in students. In other words, when the levels of perceived support from friends and colleagues increases, levels of life satisfaction of students increases. To explain these results it can be noted to the theory of original work or direct impact. According to this model, there is a linear relationship between quality of life and social support and positive effects of social support or lack of social isolation leads to improve quality of life. The theorists of this view believe that who have more social support, will have better quality of life and greater health. It is believed that the effect of social support on personal health is direct and it is beneficial for health and fitness spontaneously and the relationship between quality of life and social support is linear, this pattern is also common as the general pattern of social support. According to this pattern, lack of social support or loss of it, is overwhelming in itself, so social support increases a person's resistance in various ways (Allen, 2010, quoted by Shah Mohammadi, 2012). Having social support is one of the most important components of mental health and satisfaction of their lives. When people know they are supported by family and close friends, they feel more satisfaction and act with logic and better performance in dealing with problems. It is evident that all men at the time of problems need to be supported by their family and friends to feel safe. In fact, the more people social supports are, their willingness are more too. So in two ways social support affects life satisfaction. One is direct impact or public impact of social support on life satisfaction that regardless of the level of experienced distress by the person affects life satisfaction. Another is indirect impact or is a mediator which supports individuals against the negative effects of stressful situations. In fact support is a mutual assistance that creates a positive impression of your self, self-acceptance, hope, love feeling and satisfaction and reduces anxiety and all of these give a chance to self-actualization and growth (Perpuchi and Ahmadi, 2014). Through social support people can handle their stress and through this, they count on others help. So social support helps people as an important factor in life satisfaction. Social support is known as the most contrasted powerful force, to deal with stressful situations successfully and easily at the time of conflict and facilitates difficulties bearing for people. Also social support through an intermediary role performance between stressors of life and physical and mental problems appearance as well as strengthen the understanding of people, causes to reduce experienced stress, increase survival and improve quality of life and life satisfaction (Ghaedi and Ya'qubi, 2008). Social supports can lead to positive experiences and positive understanding of self, others and the world. A person who has more social support, because of being the positive stereotypes, interprets events and occurrences to a more positive and expects good events happen, therefore such a man knows the world a safe place and thinks tasks are foreseeable Khosravi and Nahid Poor (2012) and therefore has a greater life satisfaction.

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