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Psychological well-being and academic performance of students

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Abstract

Aim To investigate the influence of psychological well-being on academic Performance of students The pursuit of happiness or psychological well-being is central to human existence. Therefore, psychological well-being is a popular topic of psychological research. Questions concerning the personal characteristics and contextual factors that predict psychological well-being in the student age are central in that line of research Karnataka students that acquire higher education are considered to be the future leaders. Academic success is regarded as their major life achievement and key goal of life.

Keywords: Psychological, academic performance, human existence

Introduction

The pursuit of happiness or psychological well-being is central to human existence. Therefore, psychological well-being is a popular topic of psychological research. Questions concerning the personal characteristics and contextual factors that predict psychological well-being in the student age are central in that line of research. Karnataka students that acquire higher education are considered to be the future leaders. Academic success is regarded as their major life achievement and key goal of life. During their academic career, students face various responsibilities and challenges and this could be the main reason and primary source of their stress and anxiety. In the majority of cases adolescents are able to handle the difficulties which they face; however, in the number of cases these challenges may have a serious impact on the young person's psychological well-being. In order for adolescents to achieve their life goals and obtain academic success, it is important to be in a psychologically healthy condition. Stressful atmosphere may create and/or elevate psychological distress and reduce their academic performance (Dwyer & Cummings, 2001) [9].

Emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being (happiness, life satisfaction and depression) are important resources for enhancing students' learning, success and quality in education. In the context of bottom-up and top-down models of subjective well-being, three main sources are discussed: socio-structural characteristics, personality traits and self regulatory indicators (e.g., Brief, Butcher, George, & Link, 1993; Costa *et al.*, 1987; Diener, 1994; Smith, Fleeson, Gleisemann, Settersten & Kunzmann, 1999; Staudinger & Fleeson 1996; Veenhoven, 1991) [1, 5, 6]. Further lifespan theory argues that socio-structural characteristics as well as psychological characteristics might take on different functions and, therefore, show different effects depending on the larger cultural context in which they are embedded. The research of student well-being can be useful for colleges and universities in understanding the degree to which their students are self-accepting, are pursuing meaningful goals with a sense of purpose in life, have established quality ties with others, are autonomous in thought and action, have the ability to manage complex environments to suit personal needs and values, and continue to grow and develop.

Problem of Research

Well-being as a multifaceted concept is often thought of as one of the hallmarks of the liberal arts experience, resulting from educational encounters that both guide students in the search for meaning and direction in life and help them realize their true potential.

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In Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999)^[8] review of the area of Subjective well-being the relationship between Education and Psychological well-being (PWB) is discussed. Small, but significant correlation between education and PWB has often been found (e.g., Campbell *et al.*, 1976; Diener *et al.*, 1993)^[4, 7]. In a meta – analysis of the literature, reported a median effect size of .13. Education is more highly related to well-being for individuals with lower incomes (Campbell, 1981; Diener *et al.*, 1993)^[3, 7] and in poor countries. As Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999)^[8] described, it is plausible that education may have other indirect effects on PWB as well. Education may contribute to PWB by allowing individuals to make progress toward their goals or to adapt to changes in the environment around them. Diener, Sandwick, Seidlitz, and Diener (1993)^[7] found a correlation between income and PWB in a sample in the United States. In Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999)^[8] review wealthier people are consistently happier, than poorer people. Most researchers emphasized the importance of having goals. Commitment to a set of goals provides a sense of personal agency and a sense of structure and meaning to daily life. found that certain coping strategies, for example rational action, were perceived as effective coping responses by respondents, and those, who used these forms of coping reported higher well-being.

Research Focus

The main purpose of the present study was to identify the degree of psychological well-being of students in Karnataka context. The study explored which factors are influencing on the students well-being and whether well-being and academic performance were correlated. Students' purpose of life, tendency of personal growth, financial background and coping strategies moderate the influence of life circumstance and events on students psychological well-being.

Methodology

Teleological theories of well-being have claimed and empirical evidence has demonstrated that involvement in the pursuit of goals, as well as goal commitment, contributes to subjective well-being. In Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999)^[8] review subjective well-being is a broad category of phenomena that includes people's emotional responses, domain satisfactions and global judgment of life satisfaction. Few existing theories attempt to explain why variables differently relate to the separate components of psychological well-being (PWB). Early research on PWB was limited to cataloging the various resources and demographic factors that are correlated with psychological well-being. The most recent 30 years of research have increased our knowledge in this area, the most important contribution is in the understanding that these external, bottom-up factors often are responsible for only a small part of variance in PWB. Temperament and cognitions, goals, culture and adaptation coping efforts moderate influence of life circumstances and events on PWB. In Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith (1999)^[8] review theoretical models have been developed in each of these areas to explain how internal factors within the person moderate and mediate the impact of the environment on people's PWB. An increasing number of researchers now focus on people's goals and strivings on how people coping with difficulties. There is no simple answer to what causes PWB. Studies of religion, coping and attribution suggest that cognitive factors play an important role. Studies of people with disabilities show that objective factors can matter, but people often adapt their goals to what is possible for them. Studies of heritability

demonstrate that personality plays an important role. Cross-cultural studies reveal that different factors correlate with PWB in different societies. Researcher should be open to the possibility that different strategies work better in different environments and different people. They need to understand the complex interplay of culture, personality, cognitions, goals and resources and the objective environment (Diener *et al.*, 1999)^[8] Psychological well-being have been shown to predict students' attitudes and academic performance in higher educational institutions. Thus, the overall question of interest of many studies was to discover, how changes in emotional intelligence, self-efficacy and psychological well-being (happiness, life satisfaction and depression) are related to students' behaviors and attitudes. Therefore, positive emotions have a potentially adaptive and interactive nature and might moderate the relationship between stress or depression and college students' behaviors and attitudes that lead to success.

Conclusions

A questionnaire that measures Psychological Well-Being - Riff Inventory Psychological Well-Being was adapted population. It was established that students acquire medium level psychological well-being and low level of depression. Subjective and objective factors that effect students' psychological well-being were revealed. From subjective factors having a purpose of life, orientation on personal growth and having certain coping strategies turned out to be the most important. From objective factors, academic Performance and financial background (job and salary) were important. The authors recommend for the teachers and parents to keep in mind the meaning and importance of the factors that influence students' psychological well-being to better understand and evaluate students' personal needs and values, in order to assist and help them through their personal growth and development. The major goal of future research will be to clarify the inter correlation between external and internal factors moderate and mediate the impact of the environment on students' psychological well-being.

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