Personality, Self-esteem predictors of happiness and depression among High School Student in Iran

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Abstract
The aim of this paper was to study correlations between personality, self-esteem and happiness, depression among 110 boys student in high school. In all 110 participants completed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, Beck Depression Inventory, and Oxford Happiness Inventory. Results indicated that among the four dimensions of personality extraversion (r = 0.32, r = -0.45; p < 0.001) and Intuition (r = 0.21, r = -0.11; p < 0.001) were significantly correlated with happiness and depression. Self-esteem was significantly correlated with happiness and depression (r = 0.57, r = -0.42; p < 0.01).

Keywords: Personality, Self-esteem, Happiness, Depression, High School

Introduction
It was not comparatively recently that psychologists have looked at the correlates, definitions and predictors of happiness (Argyle, 2001). Depression and anxiety, the main manifestations of unhappiness on the other hand have been studied extensively by psychologists from various research areas and numerous textbooks and papers have been written on the past the topic over the past century (Seligman, 2005).
Very few studies on happiness have included other measures that may intervene the relationship between personality and happiness such as self-esteem. Further, the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI; Argyle, Martin, & Crossland, 1989) which has been used in many studies to measure happiness is in both style and content almost the "psychological opposite" of the Beck depression Inventory (BDI; Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock, & Erbaugh, 1961). Over the past 30 years or so there have been various attempts by psychologists to define happiness or psychological well-being and explain its causes and consequences. Bradburn and Caplovitz (1965) conducted a pioneer study on American people's quality of life and their psychological well-being. They found that positive and negative feeling states were not correlated with each other, though both were correlated individually with general measures of happiness (Seligman, 2005). Emmons, et al (2003) has noted many recent studies which replicate this effect namely that positive and negative factors. Thus it seems the correlates and predictors of happiness and unhappiness maybe quite different (McCullough, 2004).

There is a fairly impressive and long established literature on trait correlates of happiness. Indeed, Neve and Cooper (1998) reported on a meta-analysis of 137 personality traits and subjective well-being. Those most closely associated were: repressive-defensiveness, trait emotional stability, locus of control, hardiness, positive affectivity, self-esteem and leisure. Recent studies in the Big Five tradition on trait correlates of happiness have tended to yield consistent findings (Bartlett, et al 2006). Costa & McCrae (1991) confirmed the hypothesis that temperamental traits of emotionally, fearfulness, hostility and impulsivity were associated with lower levels of happiness and especially with negative affect while the temperamental trait of sociability and activity will be associated with higher levels of happiness and positive affect. Consequently, they proposed a model of the relation between personality and happiness: extraversion, together with its components of sociability, vigor, predisposes individuals towards positive affect (McCullough, et al, 2004). Headey, Glowacki, Holmstrom, and Wearing (1985) found that extraversion predisposed young people to favorable life events which in turn led to a high level of positive well-being and to increases in extraversion. There is an assumption that personality influenced happiness could be
attributed to short-term mood that affect responses to personality measures (Mroczek, et al., 2005). But in this research have been used from Myers-Briggs type theory for study the role of personality in happiness and depression. Myers-Briggs type theory is a psychological theory based on the work of Carl Gustav Jung that was adapted by Katharine Briggs in the 1920s. They explain the four bipolar basic to Myers-Briggs theory: extraversion-introversion, sensing-intuition, thinking-feeling, and judgment-perception (Willing et al., 2001).

**Extraversion (E) and Introversion (I).** Extraverted individuals obtain information through an orientation toward the outer world of people, events or things. They enjoy meeting new people, thinking aloud, and being active. Introversion types seek the introspection of ideas, thoughts, and concepts. They prefer to process their thoughts internally before speaking, have few close friends, and often seek conversations that tend to be deeper in nature (Harland, 2005).

**Sensing (S) and Intuition (N)** relates to individuals preference in how they receive and make sense of information or data from the external world. Sensing types are more aware of their sense in relation to their environment, are often factually based, focus on practical concrete problems and generally believe that if something works, it is best left alone. Individuals who have a tendency to understand the world through an intuitive process prefer to live in a world of possibilities and options, often looking toward the future. They also tend to focus on complicated abstract problems, seeing the big picture, sometimes at the expense of the details (Sharf, 2006).

**Thinking (T) and Feeling (F)** are considered the "rational processes" by which we come to certain conclusions and judgments regarding the information collected. Thinking types (T) prefer to focus on making decisions based on an impersonal objective position. Feeling types (F) have a tendency to respond well easily to people's values and are adept at assessing the human impact of decisions (Van Regenmorter, 2004).

**Judging (J) and Perceiving (P)** related to how we "Live our outward life." Judging type prefer to live a structured, organized life. They also tend to be self-disciplined, enjoy making decisions, and thrive on other. Perceiving types prefer to live a lifestyle that is more flexible and adaptable. They tend to thrive on spontaneity.
to leave hinges open, require more information in order to make decisions, and often get thing done at the last minute (Varvel, 2004). Sixteen possible combinations of letters are possible from the four dichotomous Paris. Each "type" (e.g., ENTJ or ISFP) represents a dynamic interaction with individual preference for those related traits. But another variable that in this research has been consider as a predictor of happiness and depression was self-esteem. Owens (1993) argues that an overemphasis on global self-esteem gas muted the theoretical, empirical and substantive nuances, especially a more precise understanding of the development and maintenance of negative self-evaluation and its consequences for well-being (Keyes, 2005).

Rosenberg (1965) found that those low in self-esteem isolate themselves from others more often, tend to be more self-conscious and are also more likely to be depressed than those with high self-esteem. On the other hand, self-esteem decreases during periods of unhappiness such as depression (Keyes, 2005).

This suggests the possible bidirectional causation between self-esteem and depression. However no such evidence has been found between self-esteem and happiness (Lyubomisky, 2005). Some researchers argue that there are two distinct dimensions of global self-esteem: the positive and negative dimensions. For example, high self-esteem has also been reported to be one of the strongest predictors of well-being (Sheldon, et al., 2001). In deed self-esteem is so closely related to happiness that it could be considered as a component of happiness (Argyle, 2001).

In summary this study focuses on the relationship between personality traits, self-esteem, happiness and depression. Various demographic variable (such as parental statues, Mothers employment, Economic statues parent) were also examined to explain the determinants of happiness and depression.

**Method** (participants, instruments, procedures and Analysis)

This investigation was a predictor type. Statistical population was Isfahan high school boy's student that was in 11 classroom in 2010 year. Statistical sample selected by cluster samplings. First, in one step among all of 5 educational governmental areas 2 areas was randomly selected. Second, 5 schools selected randomly and gotten the questionnaires to all students. The rang of age sample was from 16 to 17 years old (M =
13.12; SD= 1.26). One hundred and ten participants completed the questionnaires. Data analyzed by SPSS v.16 and Mean, Standard deviation, correlation and regression methods to analyze.

Data gathering was done with five questionnaires including:

- **Demographic variable Inventory**, that consists of variables such as: age, Parental status, Mothers employment, Economic status parent.

- **MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator; form G)**
  This indicator was designed by Myers-Briggs (1960). It has 92 items. This indicator has four scales (Extraversion, Intuition, Thinking, Perceiving). Each scale has 23 items. Iranian internal reliability has Cronbach's α for Extraversion–Introversion (0.76), Thinking–Feeling (0.77), Intuition–Sensing (0.70) Judging–Perceiving (0.79) & test-re-test reliability for Extraversion–Introversion (0.95), Intuition–Sensing (0.92), Thinking–Feeling (0.93), Judging–Perceiving (0.93) (Mahmodian, 2007).

- **The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale**; This scale was designed by Rosenberg (1965) to measure adolescents' global feeling of self-worth or self acceptance. It is rated on a four-point scale from (1) strongly agree through to (4) strongly disagree, for 10 statements designed equally to be positive and negative. It has a reproducibility index of 0.93 and a test–re-test reliability of 0.85 (Rajabi et al, 2008).

- **Beck Depression Inventory**; this inventory was devised by Beck et al. (1961). It has 21 items and each item has 4 options and based on (0) to (3). It showed a split-half reliability of 0.86. The test-re-test reliability coefficients are usually in the 0.70 s over a period of weeks. The validity has been shown between scores on the test and clinical judgment to have a high level of consistency. The magnitude of the correlations ranges from 0.60 to 0.90 with a variety of sample sizes ( ).

- **The Oxford Happiness Inventory**; This inventory was designed by Argyle, Martin, and Crossland (1989) and is a 29-item questionnaire, based on a four-point rating scale from (0) agree through to (3) disagree. Iranian internal reliability Cronbach α of (0.98) and test-re-test reliability of it was (0.92) (Alipour & Noorbala, 2000).

**Results**
The result of research has been brought in below tables. Table 1 shows that extraversion was significantly correlated with happiness & depression (r=0.45, r=-0.32; p<0.001). Intuition were significantly correlated with happiness and depression (r=0.39, r=-0.32; p<0.001). Also Self-esteem was significantly correlated with happiness and depression (r= 0.46, r=-0.57; p<0.01). Also results of table 1 indicate that there is not significant relation between demographic variable and happiness and depression.

Table 1: Correlations between personality (MBTI), self-esteem, depression (BDI), happiness (OHI) and demographic variables controlling for age and sex and classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Mean</th>
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<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>8.41</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
<td>-0.45</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuition</td>
<td>6.06</td>
<td>.61</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>0.21***</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceiving</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>0.15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>30.68</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>6.85</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental statues</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers employment</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic statues parent</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01
***p<.001

Table 2: Productiveness of Happiness and depression based on personality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>predictor</th>
<th>Happiness</th>
<th>Depression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extraversion</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuition</td>
<td>-0.09**</td>
<td>.06**-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thinking</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
<td>.13***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total R^2</td>
<td>.10***</td>
<td>.21***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R^2 unique to traits</td>
<td>.17***</td>
<td>.18***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01

***p<.001

In this research have been predicted significant relationships between personality traits (extraversion, intuition) and self-esteem with happiness and depression. The results showed that this model predicting happiness was significant, F(10.031)=50.43, p<.001 and explained .17 of the variance (the personality traits added .10 of above the control variables, p<.001). The model predicting depression was significant, F(10.3215)=24.31, p<.001 and explained .18 of the variance (the personality traits added .21 above the control variables, p<.001).

Table 3: Productiveness of Happiness and depression based on self-esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>predictor</th>
<th>Happiness</th>
<th>Depression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
<td>0.18***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total R^2</td>
<td>0.12*</td>
<td>0.23*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R^2 unique to traits</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p<.01
The results of table 3 showed that this model predicting happiness was significant, $F(10.2210)=23.43, p<.001$ and explained $0.15$ of the variance (the self-esteem added $0.15$ of above the control variables, $p<.001$). The model predicting depression was significant, $F(10.1108)=14.01, p<.001$) and explained $0.14$ of the variance (the self-esteem added $0.23$ above the control variables, $p<.001$).

**Discussion**

This study examined the correlations between demographic variables, personality (Extraversion, Intuition, Perceiving, Thinking), self-esteem, depression, and happiness in a group of boys high school students. The multiple regressions allowed for exploration of the relationship between demographic, personality trait, and self-esteem variables whereas many previous studies. The result showed that there is no significantly correlated between demographic variable and happiness and depression. On the other hand, parental statues, mother employment and economic statues had no impact on happiness and depression students. Possibly this finding related to culture. The second finding of this research shows that there is significant relation between personality traits (Extraversion and intuition) and happiness and depression. This finding is congruence past research (Argyle & Lu, 1990; Brebner et al, 1995; Furnham & Brewins, 1990; Francis, 1999). Eysenck (1967) has proposed that extraversion have lower cortical arousal than introverts and therefore might seek out external stimuli by means of varied social activities. However, the mechanism of extraverts higher scores (relative to introverts) on happiness remain unclear. The third finding of research indicates that there is significantly relation between self-esteem and happiness and depression. This finding was confirmed by pervious research (self-esteem has most powerful direct predictor of both happiness and depression). On the other hand self-esteem seemed equally important in predicting factors of depression. Many previous studies showed that self-esteem is major factor of happiness (Diener, 2000; Sprague, 1997), but there is no theory to indicate that happiness leads to self-esteem (Argyle & Lu, 1990).

As to depression individuals with low self-esteem tend to be more prone to depression and being in a depressed stated may sustain individuals low sense of self-
worth as Beck’s (1967) theory indicated. Self-esteem was found to be particularly important in individual’s self-reported happiness which is in line with the previous finding (Argyle & Crossland, 1987; Campbell et al., 1976; Myers, 1992; Visser, 2000). However, the mechanism by which self-esteem influences human mental health as well as self-reported happiness remains unclear.

Limitation

This study, such all of research have several limitation. But most of important of them is that this study was done among boys student in one city, thus in generalizability of these finding about all of students should be careful. A second limitation was the use of self-report data which increases the possibility of common answer.
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