Verification of the Structural Relationship Model of Happiness among Nursing Students

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to investigate a structural model which can explain the relationship among factors related to happiness among nursing students. The subjects were 431 nursing school students. Socio-demographic factors were assessed, and Social support scale, Self-esteem scale, Ego-Resilience scales, and Happiness scales were employed. The collected data were analyzed using the SPSS 14.0 and AMOS 18.0 program. The finding of this research indicated the following: First, self-esteem, ego-resilience, and health status had a direct effect on happiness. Second, social support and self-esteem had an indirect effect on happiness.

Keywords: Happiness, Nursing students

1 Introduction

All people seek happiness in their life and we are always interested in seeking it. Since nursing students are expected to take care of people who suffer from illnesses and health problems, careful consideration of their happiness is essential. Factors related with happiness are diverse. The higher is the self-esteem and ego-resilience, the greater is the happiness [1]. It has been reported that the more positively we recognize social relationships, the happier we become [2]. This study was performed to explore the factors that have an effect on happiness among nursing students and to provide basic data to promote their happiness.

2 Methods

2.1 Design

The study was performed for Verification of the Structural Relationship Model for building the hypothesis model of happiness among nursing students and to examine the suitable model fit and paths.
2.2 Sample

The participants in this study were nursing students from two colleges and one university. A survey was conducted among 436 nursing students, and finally, data of 431 participants were analyzed after excluding 5 subjects with missing data.

2.3 Questionnaire

Self-esteem: The Rosenberg Scale (1965) was used as a measure of self-esteem. It included 10 questions that were rated on a 1 to 4 scale. The Cronbach’s $\alpha$ for the scale was .831[3].

Ego-resilience: Kim’s scale (2003) was used to measure ego-resilience. It included 45 questions that were rated on a 1 to 6 scale. The Cronbach’s $\alpha$ for the scale was .892[4].

Social support: Park’s 5-point scale (1985) was used to assess social support. This scale included 20 questions and consisted of four sections, emotion, information, material, and evaluation. The Cronbach’s $\alpha$ for the scale was .956[5].

Happiness: Happiness was assessed by using the Kwon and Kim’s scale. This scale consisted of three sections, life of pleasure, life of engagement, and life of meaning. It included 21 questions that were rated on a 1 to 5 scale. The Cronbach’s $\alpha$ for the scale was .901[6].

2.4 Data analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the SPSS 19.0 and AMOS 18.0 statistics program. The general characteristics of respondents were calculated as frequencies and percentages. The overall model fit indices were reported, including the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), and aka Tucker-Lewis index (TLI).

3 Results

3.1 Demographics. Average age of the participants was 20.36± 2.53 years. Also, 89.8% of the participants were females and 53.1% of the participants were studying in the 1st year of nursing. Furthermore, 66.4% of the participants did not have a religion, and 76.3% of the participants lived with their families. The socio-economic status of 83.3% of the participants was moderate. Grade point average of 74.2% of the participants was more than 3.0 but less than 4.0.

Table 1. Model Fitness Indexes of the Hypothetical Model and Modified Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$(p)</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 2. Direct and Indirect Effects of Study Variables in the Modified Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Endogenous Variables</th>
<th>Exogenous Variables</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>SMC</th>
<th>Standardized Direct effects (p)</th>
<th>Standardized Indirect Effects (p)</th>
<th>Standardized Total effects (p)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>.413</td>
<td>1.95 ( * )</td>
<td>-1.05 ( * )</td>
<td>.90 ( * )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>-1.09</td>
<td>-4.71</td>
<td>.826</td>
<td>0.13 ( * )</td>
<td>.32 ( * )</td>
<td>.86 ( * )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social-support</td>
<td>-1.13</td>
<td>-1.06</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-1.21 ( * )</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.32 ( * )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>10.24</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td>.09 ( * )</td>
<td>.41 ( * )</td>
<td>.50 ( * )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social-support</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.48 ( * )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td>Social-support</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>7.59</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>.48 ( * )</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.48 ( * )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( * \) p<.05, \( * \) p<.01

Fig. 1. Conceptual framework of the study.

4 Discussion

The results of this study indicate the following: First, the key factor that determines the happiness among nursing students is their self-esteem. This finding is consistent with that in a study performed in Thailand [7]. Second, although social support does not have a direct effect on the happiness among nursing students, it is a reinforcing factor because it encourages their self-esteem. Third, ego-resilience has a negative effect on the happiness among nursing students. This is contrary to the finding that the more the adolescents develop ego-resilience, the more they feel happier [1]. The study by Kim (2008) suggested that adolescents feel happier when their daily stress level is low and their ego-resilience is high [8]. In light of the results of the study by Kim, this study result may be related with high stress level among nursing students in the circumstances of excessive workload and clinical practice. In other words, ego-resilience which has an effect on a person’s capacity for solving problems indicates...
that he/she is confronting a difficult and painful situation. Although ego-resilience has a positive influence on a person’s functional status, it is recognized as painful experience against happiness.

5 Conclusion

It is necessary to improve the self-esteem of nursing students to make her/him happy. Furthermore, we should take interest in reducing their the distress and the difficulty in improving their practicing capacity among nursing.

References