Happiness, A Function Of Emotional Intelligence: An Analysis Among Dental Students Of Faridabad

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Abstract

INTRODUCTION
Positive Psychology recognises happiness as an emotion and asserts its importance. It is related to emotional intelligence on a certain level. Emotional Intelligence is the ability to connect, perceive and manage others and our own emotions. In this study we aim to determine the relationship between happiness and emotional intelligence in Undergraduate Dental students in Faridabad.

MATERIAL AND METHOD
A cross-sectional study was conducted among 384 students of all the four years of BDS curriculum of a dental school in Faridabad. The age of the participants varied from 18 - 24 years. The data gathering tools were Oxford Happiness Inventory and Shering's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire. The significance level was set at p≤ 0.05.

RESULT
The females comprised 82.1% and males comprised only 17.9% of the study population. The students were almost uniformly distributed among the various years of education, the majority being in final year (28%) followed by third year. The mean happiness score of dental students was 125.92+19.46 and mean emotional intelligence score was 126.13+13.43 and were positively correlated with p<0.05. Although, when the linear regression analysis of dependent variable, happiness was assessed it was noted that, independent variables such as sex and age had no significant effect on it.

CONCLUSION
In this study, emotional intelligence was a predictive factor for happiness in medical students. Students with higher emotional intelligence felt healthier.

KEYWORDS: Emotional intelligence, Happiness, mental health, Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Among the newer branches of Psychology, Positive psychology has emerged as a field with the objective to determine the psychological capacities of individuals, rather than focusing on measurement of the psychopathology of the concerned. The belief central to the concept of positive psychology is that measurable positive features have the ability to protect one against adverse events that may be risky to one's mental health. Psychologists today are focusing attention to emotions like happiness as they are potential sources of positive emotions. [1,2]

Positive Psychology recognises happiness as an emotion and asserts its importance [3,4]. Happiness may be described as a mental evaluation of events with positive emotion which consists of these three components: repeated occurrences of positive effect, rare frequencies of negative effect, and a higher level of satisfaction in life.[5]

Although happiness depends on certain situational factors, reflected in within-individual variations of affect, the fact that some individuals are consistently happier than others suggest dispositional causes underlying the

pursuit and experience of happiness. This reinstates that personality traits, although not a major determinant, but are probably the most robust predictors of happiness. [6]

Consequences such as success in marriage, relationship, and career; and more income, health and longevity are closely related to happiness. Some research available on this aspect does indicate that successful people were happier in their lives. However, in 2005 researchers presented a mental model showed that happiness was actually the cause of success, not its effect. [7]

An individual's ability to recognize emotions in order to motivate himself/herself and to make communicating with people simpler by managing one's emotions is considered as emotional intelligence. Additionally, it can also been described as the ability to monitor the emotions of oneself and others and to use this information to differentiate between other individuals with the intention of guiding one's thoughts and actions [8]. It may also be said that the ability to connect, perceive and manage others and our own emotions is indeed emotional intelligence [9,10].

The relationship of emotional intelligence and happiness is certainly documented; however role of certain covariates require some investigation. More recently the purview of emotional intelligence has been expanding by highlighting its application in personal life, education, work and success in business; substantial research has been done in this regard. [11]

It goes to say that, person with high emotional intelligence will experience less negativity in life, as a result provides more stability to the person [12]. Furthermore, studies by Mayer and Saluvy shows that emotional intelligence is related to various mental health components especially happiness. [13]

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To further explore these tenet's among dental students in India, the present research was a questionnaire survey to establish the relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Happiness.

III. METHOD OF RESEARCH

This present research was a descriptive cross-sectional survey. The target population of this study were the undergraduate students of Manav Rachna Dental College, Faridabad. Census Sampling method was used and all students who

of all the four years of BDS curriculum were included in the study. In this manner the sample size achieved was of 384 students. The age of the participants varied from 18 - 24 years. Moreover, for ethical consideration, the test subjects contributed in this study freely and voluntarily and filling out this questionnaire means that they have free and informed consent.

Both descriptive statistics and analytic statistics were applied.

IV. RESEARCH TOOLS

The data gathering tools were Oxford Happiness Inventory [14] and Shering's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaires [15]. As to the grading of Happiness in Section 1, it included 29 questions, each having 6 options ranging from strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, moderately agree and strongly agree. Section 2 of the questionnaire included 33 questions on emotional intelligence with options ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. Reliability and validity of this test was evaluated. Cronbach's alpha was derived and it was found to be acceptable at 8.05. The sum of the grades that every individual scored made up for his or her total grade of happiness and emotional intelligence respectively. The Questionnaire assessed five scales of emotional intelligence consisting of self-awareness, self-control. self-arousal, sympathy, and social skills.\

V. DATA ANALYSIS

Tests for correlation were also done to evaluate significance of the relationship of variables by using Pearson correlation coefficient and to compare the scores of male and female T-test was used. Linear Regression Analysis was done to see the effect of independent variable on the outcome variable of Happiness Index. All the statistical calculations were performed using computer software SPSS.

VI. RESEARCH RESULTS

The present cross sectional study was carried out among the 364 dental students of a university in Faridabad, India to assess the various predictor variables for happiness and to determine correlation between emotional intelligence and happiness. The females comprised 82.1% and males comprised only 17.9% of the study population. The students were almost uniformly distributed among the various years of

education, the majority being in final year (28%) followed by third year (Table 1).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of study population

Variable		N	%
Sex	Females	299	82.1
	Males	65	17.9
Year of study	1st year	81	22.3
	2nd year	86	23.6
	3rd year	95	26.1
	4th year	102	28.0
	Total	364	100.0

The mean age of the study population was 20.83 ± 1.57 years. The mean age increased with the years of study. The mean age of first years was 19.35 years, second years was 20.13 years, third years was 21.31 years, fourth years was 22.19 years. The mean age of males was 21.67 ± 1.95 and the mean age of females was 20.65 ± 1.42 years (Table 2).

Table 2: Mean age of the study population

Years of education	N	Mean	S.D.
1st year	81	19.35	1.15
2nd year	86	20.13	0.84
3rd year	95	21.31	1.19
4th year	102	22.19	1.31
Total	364	20.83	1.57

The mean happiness score of dental students was 125.92 ± 19.46 and mean emotional intelligence score was 126.13 ± 13.43. When the male and female happiness scores were evaluated, the difference was not found to be statistically significant (p=0.234). However, the mean emotional intelligence scores showed significant difference between males and females (p=0.022). Females (EI= 126.13 ± 13.43) were found to have more emotional intelligence than males (121.72 ± 16.32). The comparison of happiness scores ad EI scores according to the year of study showed no significant difference (p=0.431 and 0.362 respectively) (Table 3).

Table 3: Mean Happiness and EI score according to Gender

Variables		Happiness	Emotional Intelligence
Total study population		125.92 ± 19.46	126.13 ± 13.43
Gender	Females	125.92 ± 19.47	126.13 ± 13.43
	Males	122.78 ± 18.14	121.72 ± 16.32
	p-value (Males v/s Females)	0.234	0.022
Year of study	1st year	124.16 ± 18.06	124.70 ± 10.75
	2nd year	127.52 ± 19.41	127.40 ± 15.36
	3rd year	126.48 ± 20.61	125.61 ± 13.31
	4th year	123.42 ± 18.73	123.85 ± 15.78
	p-value (years of study)	0.431	0.362

Student t-test applied, non- significant difference at p>0.05,*significant difference at p<0.05

Tests of correlation (Pearson correlation coefficient test) was conducted and it was found that happiness and emotional intelligence were positively correlated and this correlation was found to be statistically significant (p<0.001, r=0.605). Thus, it may be said that an increase in emotional intelligence will cause an increase in happiness (Table 4).

Table 4: Correlation between happiness and Emotional intelligence

Happiness score	EI score
Pearson correlation (r)	0.605**
p-value	0.0001

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

When the linear regression analysis of dependent variable, happiness was assessed, the effect of the independent variables such as sex and age was not significant.

The effect of emotional intelligence on happiness score was 0.837 which means that as other independent variables are constant; by 1 score increase in emotional intelligence score, there was 0.837 score increase in happiness. It was also shown that when all the other variables are constant or zero, the mean score of happiness is about 48 (Table 5).

Table 5: Linear regression analysis (Modelling) of Happiness versus independent variables EI score, age, gender and year of training

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	B	Std. Error
(Constant)	47.850	17.137		2.792	.006
EI score	.837	.058	.610	14.426	.000
Age	-1.341	.752	-.110	-1.783	.075
Gender	-1.669	2.264	-.033	-.737	.462
Year of Training	1.374	1.033	.079	1.331	.184

Dependent Variable: Happiness score

VII.   DISCUSSION

The present study evaluated the relationship between happiness and emotional intelligence among dental students. Both these variables were found to be positively correlated and this correlation was statistically significant. This is indicative of the fact that emotional intelligence is a good predicter of happiness. Similar inference was drawn in the studies conducted by,

Hasan Nia et al. in 2014 [16], and Ghahramani et al. in 2019 [17].

There was no effect of increasing age and happiness. However, as reported in existing literature, views regarding this have been different. Morgan et al. [18] explained that happiness has a downward trend to age in developing countries, where as in developed countries the reverse of this phenomenon is seen with happiness being proportional to age. Our study, however did not concur with either of these findings and the variable of happiness was found to be independent of age.

Positive relationship has been shown between emotional intelligence and both general and mental health [19-22]. Also, when speaking of students, various studies have shown that information and skills training for students can lead to an increase emotional intelligence and, thus, translate to better educational outcomes [23]. The present study did not evaluate these aspects and this was the limitation of our study, more studies may be planned by incorporating all these factors.

Literature is rife with reports of Emotional Intelligence having great significance in everyone's lives and especially with those of students. Factors like Physical Activity, Entrepreneurial Self Efficacy, Self Esteem and Academic Success were all positively correlated with Emotional Intelligence. All these factors also eventually have an effect on Happiness [24-27]. It can also be safely said that the importance of these factors such have increased or gained more significance by the virtue of the Pandemic of COVID-19. As we enter into the new normal created by the pandemic it is very evident that higher emotional intelligence has helped people cope better with the Pandemic too. Koçak, O. in 2021 postulated that Emotional Intelligence was positively correlated with satisfaction in life and negatively with depression and expressed the importance of this with respect to coping with COVID 19[28].

VIII.   SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS

Off late, much importance has been given to positive work and learning environment, work satisfaction and its effects on productivity. All these factors are a function of the state of mind of an individual, where in happiness and

emotional intelligence play important roles. They have the power to influence the output of an individual whether in terms of academic performance, self-efficacy or in developing new skills. The present study highlighted these factors. In conclusion, in the studied population, emotional intelligence has a significant positive relationship with happiness. Furthermore, students with higher emotional intelligence felt healthier. Therefore, it is recommended that students must be trained in techniques of increasing emotional intelligence in schools and universities.

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