

The Influence of Self-Consciousness, Social Intelligence and Psychological Capital on Happiness among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

Happiness and positive mental states have internal and external effects on psychosocial factors that directly influence the well-being of individuals. The present study aims to study the influence of Self-consciousness, Social intelligence, Psychological Capital on Happiness, thereby predicting their impact on happiness among young adults. Convenient sampling was used to collect the data of 172 young adults from Pune. The overall sample was split between 83 males and 88 females. Pearson Correlation and Stepwise Linear Regression was used to study the predictive role of Self-consciousness, Social intelligence, and Psychological Capital on happiness. The results depict an intercorrelation between all the variables and the combination of social intelligence and psychological capital predicts an individual's happiness around 45%.

Keywords: *Self-Consciousness, Social Intelligence, Psychological Capital, Happiness*

Emotional comfort and happiness are integral constructs to ensure an overall well-being of an individual. Happiness is known to hold the potential of healing the mind, body, and soul of a person that helps them to deal with the negative effects and emotional injuries of life. The bio-rhythm and the psychological factors are usually disturbed or excited by unavoidable circumstances due to which a person's internal peace and harmony are disrupted, thus, impacting their life. Especially young age people are under the development of a psychological and social phase where they are learning to articulate such experiences, therefore there is a necessity to broaden the knowledge of life satisfaction, subjective and overall well-being. There is a need to acknowledge and recognize the internal and external consciousness of an individual so that they can achieve an emotional balance and live a healthy life.

Happiness and positive emotions

A human being strives to experience and be encouraged to have emotions for existence and well-being. Past research has shown that positive affective states tend to diminish the negative impact of outside stressors that affects the overall functioning of an individual including mental health and fitness. The happiness quotient is unmeasurable in numerical

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terms, however, it can be obtained by assessing the positive subtraits of feeling good and satisfied in life. Well-being can be enhanced by achieving a good level of self-consciousness and awareness since it is crucial in helping us feel more empowered which leads to satisfaction and happiness in individuals. (Srivastava, 2016). Higher degrees of aesthetic conduct, a functional and greener environment are related to happiness and more secure surroundings (Hart et.al, 2018). This reflects that a healthy external environment is also a reason for joy or satisfaction which makes the surroundings seem reliable, safe, and secure.

Self-consciousness and awareness

An individual who is self-conscious and aware of themselves is well prepared for the changes in their internal and external world. They are also able to conceptualize their experiences and move towards healthy developments in life. Self-consciousness is a part of inner personality and is related to traits like guilt-proneness, social anxiety, shame, embarrassment, or neuroticism (Darvill et.al, 1992). Other than psychological constructs, some biological factors play a role in understanding the levels of self-consciousness in a person (Wagner et.al, 2008). People high on dispositional and situational self-consciousness are able to deal better with the challenges thereby developing and enhancing the self-regulatory mechanism within themselves (Kreibich et.al, 2020).

Social intelligence

Social skills are very important to develop social constructs within an individual. It can enhance interpersonal interaction, emotional and behavioural responses, attitudes, social responsibilities, ability to seek help, self-awareness, resilience, communication overall. Socially intelligent individuals are often seen as being socially evolved to function in multiple domains of life. But there can be other constructs as well that can be understood to define social intellect. These constructs include some personality traits like extroversion, talkativeness, openness, and agreeableness which are often found in socially intellectual people, depicting an interlink between social, personal, and cultural factors (Vyrost and Kyselova, 2006). Life satisfaction and emotional responses impact interpersonal skills and happiness, whereas empathy and warm-heartedness are related positively to the social information processing domain (Fedáková and Jelenova, 2004).

Psychological capital

Psychological capital consists of four major components: hope, self-efficacy, resilience, and optimism (HERO). These components are known to be linked with positive emotional responses in an individual which helps them to develop a sense of well-being and belongingness with self and the others. Quality of life is the indicator of comfort, well-being, life satisfaction, safety and security of an individual and is often associated with happiness, and the quality of life is also interlinked with psychological capital (Santisi et.al, 2020). It is also known to define the success rate and performance level of a person in their workplace, thereby depicting better financial stability, educational level, and emotional stability (Lehoczky, 2013).

Objectives

The objectives or goals of the present study are as follows:

- To examine the association between self-consciousness, social intelligence, and psychological capital, along with happiness among young adults.
- To examine the self-consciousness, social intelligence, and psychological capital, as predictors of happiness among young adults.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

For the present study, the sample comprised 172 participants (N= 83 males, N= 88 females) of the young adult age group. The sample was drawn via the convenience sampling method from the city of Pune, Maharashtra (India).

Inclusion criteria

The participants were selected only within the age group of 18 to 25 years old, i.e. young adults.

The gender group included both the males and females.

Exclusion criteria

Demographic details like religion, occupation, socioeconomic status were not included in the present study.

Instruments

For the purpose of the present study, the following measurement tools/scales were used to measure the respective variables:

- **Oxford Happiness Questionnaire:** A 29-item scale used to measure the psychological well-being of an individual on a 6-point Likert scale. It was developed by Peter Hills and Michael Argyle (2002). The measures of both scales are highly correlated and depict high levels of reliability ($\alpha(168) = 0.91$), the intercorrelation for OHQ were 0.04 to 0.65, mean 0.28, and showed a high internal validity.
- **Self-consciousness Scale-Revised version:** A 23-item scale that measures an individual's private and public self-consciousness or awareness on a Likert-type scale. It was developed by Scheier and Carver (1985); a revised version was developed to use with the general population that has good psychometric properties. The scale is high on reliability, private and public domain was found to be 0.75 and 0.84 respectively, and for social anxiety was 0.79. The scale is closely related to the original one on internal consistency and reliability including the sub-domains.
- **TSIS-Tromso Social Intelligence Scale:** A 21-item scale that is used to measure the social ability and skill intellect of an individual on a 7-point Likert scale. It was developed by D. H. Silvera, M Martinussen, T. I. Dahl (2001). It was found that the psychometric properties of the TSIS were good as "Cronbach alpha, test-retest and split-half reliability coefficients were .83, .80, and .75 respectively".
- **Psychological Capital (PsyCap) Questionnaire (PCQ) Self-Rated version:** A 24-item scale used to measure the positive psychological development state of individuals on a 6-point Likert scale. It was developed by Fred Luthans, Bruce J. Avolio, & James B. Avey (2007). The PCQ scale has good reliability and validity, "Cronbach's alpha was .92 and the composite reliability coefficient was .95".

Procedure

Following the COVID-19 protocols, the present study was conducted through a virtual mode, and the data was collected through Google Forms. The form consisted of all the relevant information including the Consent Letter and captured all the required information like Demographics, the measurement scale, etc. that was needed for the study. The survey form was shared via social media for the collection of the data. The participants were

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informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of the information collected. The ethical protocols for the research were well-followed post the data collection and analysis.

Data analysis

For performing the statistical analysis in the present study, the Statistical Package for The Social Sciences (SPSS software version 26) was employed to study the data. Descriptive statistical analysis was done for all the variables and the normality of the data set was checked. Pearson correlation was used to study the relationship between Self-consciousness, Social Intelligence, Psychological capital, and Happiness. Stepwise Linear Regression was applied to understand the predictive variables for happiness.

RESULTS

Table 1: Displays the correlation analysis among the variables Self-consciousness, Social Intelligence, Psychological Capital, and Happiness

	Self-consciousness	Social Intelligence	Psychological Capital	Happiness
Self-consciousness	-	-	-	-
Social Intelligence	.332**	-	-	-
Psychological Capital	-.031	.215**	-	-
Happiness	-.169*	-.081	.640**	-

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

A correlation measure was carried out to study the relationship between variables Self-consciousness, Social Intelligence, Psychological Capital, and Happiness. As we can see in Table 2, Happiness is negatively associated with Self-consciousness and Social Intelligence ($r = -.169, -.081$ at $p \leq 0.05$ respectively), and positively associated with Psychological Capital ($r = .640$ at $p \leq 0.01$) which is significant. Social Intelligence correlated positively with Self-consciousness and Psychological Capital ($r = .215$ at $p \leq 0.01$) which is significant. Psychological Capital correlated positively with Social Intelligence and Happiness ($r = .215$ at $p \leq 0.01$ and $r = .640$ at $p \leq 0.01$) which is significant. Self-consciousness is correlated negatively with Psychological Capital ($r = -.031$ at $p < 0.05$) which is significant.

Table 2: displays the regression model of happiness with Social Intelligence and Psychological Capital

MODEL	R	R-Square	Ad. R Square
Psychological Capital, Social Intelligence	.678**	.460	.454

**Predictors: (Constant), Psychological Capital, Social Intelligence

To study and analyze the predictive role of self-consciousness, social intelligence, and psychological capital on happiness, a stepwise-regression analysis was employed. Keeping Happiness as a criterion variable and others as predictors of happiness, the regression model was run, excluding the variable self-consciousness. Social intelligence and psychological capital turned out to be relevant and significant predictors of happiness ($\beta = -.230$ and $\beta = .690$). As shown in Table 3, the predictors viz. Social intelligence and psychological capital explained a total of 46% variance in happiness (R square= 0.460).

DISCUSSION

The present study aimed at investigating the influence of Self-consciousness, Social intelligence, Psychological Capital, on Happiness among young adults. The analysis was found to be significant in depicting an intercorrelation between all the variables, however, the nature of the relationship or association differed in all domains. It shows that a happy individual would be more socially intelligent and have a good level of psychological capital; however, the level of self-consciousness might differ accordingly. The study also depicts that gender groups might differ in all these domains. For example, females were found to be higher on domains like self-consciousness, psychological capital, and happiness except for the social intelligence factor which was higher for the male group. Similarly, the factors pertaining to self-centredness and positive attitude along with other psychological factors were found to contribute to happiness in an individual (Dambrun, 2017).

Happiness is a positive behavioral emotion that is influenced by social and psychological factors and is therefore predicted by the levels of domains like social intelligence and psychological capital (Lu et.al, 1997, Hart et.al 2016). There are other significant factors that play a role in influencing the positive emotional responses: like an individual's satisfaction with mental health, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and social well-being impact their happiness (Khosroherdi et.al, 2018). The other aspects that are known to correlate with happiness are social support, economic conditions, and physical health (Amorim et.al, 2017). The measures of such attributes can be said to have gender differences; therefore, it can be concluded that happiness as a whole is a common measure of the psychosocial well-being of an individual (Singh and Singh, 2018).

Happiness is found to be correlated with many variables like age, gender, bodily attributes, and spiritual and cultural factors. Happiness levels may seem to reduce with time due to social or situational conditions, and people with higher levels of self-acceptance, self-esteem, and social skills tend to have a more satisfying and happy life (Garaigardobil, 2015). There are varied dimensions of social constructs and interpersonal skills that are found to be correlated positively with levels of happiness among college students (Doğan and Eryılmaz, 2014). Socially intellectual individuals often tend to have strong personality traits which gives them good performance skills, social competence, overall positive affect, and life satisfaction (Birknerova et.al, 2013). Therefore, socially intelligent individuals are more socially involved in multiple activities, etc.

Limitations and Suggestions

The present study gives us an insight into understanding the relationship between the psychological and social constructs among individuals, but it is not free from limitations. The sample size could have been larger for considering a better picture of a diverse population. Other demographic factors like economic status, education, and financial well-being could have been used as contributing factors. Since the study was conducted during the pandemic, the study is not completely bias-free. In this regard, an extensive study should be done focusing on the current limitations of the study and also examining the role of contributing factors. Adopting a mixed-method approach and studying gender differences might be more helpful for future research. Other correlating factors of psychological well-being should be studied to examine its association with social and cultural factors.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights the predictive function and association of domains of social intelligence, self-consciousness, and psychological capital with happiness. These insights have helped us to understand that psychological well-being is dependent upon factors that deal with the psychosocial support system and the social world of the individual. It has also helped us to understand the social construction of psychological attributes that impact the potential performance and participation of individuals.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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