

Influence of Happiness and Ego-Resilience on Department Satisfaction in College Students

Byung-Man Kim¹ and Seung-Soo Shin^{2*}

¹Department of Early childhood Education, Kyungnam University, Changwon, 51767, Republic of Korea;
bmkim@kyungnam.ac.kr

²Department of Information Security, Tongmyong University, Pusan, 48520, Republic of Korea;
shinss@tu.ac.kr

Abstract

Objectives: The purpose of this study was to examine the awareness of college students on their own happiness, creativity/personality and ego-resilience, the correlations of the three factors and the influence of creativity/personality and empowerment on happiness. It's basically meant to shed light on the variables positively affecting the happiness of college students and to give some suggestions on how to boost these variables. **Methods/Statistical Analysis:** The subjects in this study were 382 randomly selected students at a college located in the city of Busan. A statistical package Statistical Package for the Software Sciences (SPSS) WIN 23.0 was employed, and statistical data on mean, standard deviation and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were obtained to determine the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of the college students. Besides, stepwise multiple regression analysis was made to measure relative influence. **Findings:** First, the college students took an above-average positive view of their own happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction. Second, there were significant positive correlations among their happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction. Third, their happiness and ego-resilience could be regarded as the variables to affect their department satisfaction, and happiness was more influential, followed by ego-resilience. **Improvements/Applications:** The purpose of this study was to examine the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of college students and the relationships of happiness and ego-resilience, which are usually viewed as positive variables, to department satisfaction in an effort to increase their department satisfaction. It's basically meant to give some suggestions on how to ensure the successful adjustment of college students to their departments and how to bring positive changes to their lives.

Keywords: College Students, Department Satisfaction, Ego-Resilience, Happiness, Influence

1. Introduction

In modern society, the happiness, quality of life and satisfaction of college students are the concepts that are increasingly considered important, and another concept related to the happiness of humans including college students has long been one of concerns among a lot of philosophers and psychologists. In fact, however, studies of psychology have mostly examined negative human

psychology such as negative emotions or psychopathological symptoms over the last twelve decades since psychology was established as an independent discipline¹. In² whom was the president of the American Psychological Association suggested a new paradigm of psychology called "positive psychology" that aims at developing human strengths and potentials, improving the quality of life and focusing on human positives. From then on, there has been a growing concern for the

*Author for correspondence

positive and adaptive aspects of individual personality or behaviors.

The definition of happiness may vary from person to person, from culture to culture and from era to era, but that is the value that all mankind has pursued through all ages and regardless of culture, and that is one of their ultimate goals. In the law, the right to pursue one's happiness is defined as one of basic human rights, and everybody is considered to be equal and have the right to become happy according to the law³. Indeed, happiness is one of universal concerns for mankind, and the government and society should put their efforts into strengthening individual people's happiness. There is a growing perception that individual happiness is important to ensure the happiness of every organizational member, and the necessity of research on self-perceived happiness is stressed. Under the circumstances, happiness is diversely defined by scholars as subjective wellbeing, psychological wellbeing, morale or satisfaction, and these terms are considered to be of the same concept.

Studies of happiness argued that ego-resilience has the closest relationship with happiness⁴. Ego-resilience can be said as a dynamic process that individuals adapt themselves healthily and flexibly to changes that they may undergo in their developmental process like severe trauma or hardship or to routine stressful situations⁵. That is, it is a process to adjust oneself successfully to the given environments, and earlier studies that examined various people including college students found that there is a close positive correlation between ego-resilience and happiness⁶.

One of the variables that are closely linked to the happiness and ego-resilience of college students is how much they are satisfied with the departments they belong to. Department satisfaction is the outcome of a judgment process that students evaluate their departments in consideration of their future career plans or by their occupational standard. They will immensely be satisfied if the departments coincide with their ideals, future career or occupational standard⁷. This concept is mainly used in colleges to analyze the weaknesses of the department in terms of educational administration, and that also is widely used to compare it with other departments in terms of quality. An analysis of department satisfaction makes it possible to have a broader understanding of students in association with their life satisfaction. Department satisfaction can be assessed in two aspects. One is an affective aspect, and the other is a

cognitive one. The former indicates how much they are happy about their departments, and the latter represents how much they perceive their own or other people's expectations are satisfied.

For college students, department satisfaction can be regarded as a barometer of happiness and subjective experience. In addition, ego-resilience is a variable to affect their happiness and department satisfaction, and will serve to guide them in the right direction by helping them to learn what they have to learn and keep living a happy life. In recent years, lots of domestic and foreign studies have examined happiness in a scientific and systematic way in various fields including philosophy, psychology, sociology and education^{4,8}, but just a few studies have investigated the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of college students together.

As studies found that happiness and ego-resilience exert positive influences on the improvement of the happiness of college students, it seems required to pay attention to what implications these variables have for the department satisfaction of college students.

The purpose of this study was to examine the awareness of college students on their own department satisfaction, happiness and ego-resilience, the correlations of the three factors and the influence of happiness and ego-resilience on department satisfaction. It's basically meant to shed light on the variables positively affecting the department satisfaction of college students and to give some suggestions on how to boost these variables.

Three research questions were posed:

1. What are the levels of happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction among college students?
2. What are the correlations among their happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction?
3. What influence do their happiness and ego-resilience exercise on department satisfaction?

2. Methods

The subjects in this study were 400 randomly selected students at a college located in the city of Busan. After a survey was conducted, the answer sheets from 392 respondents were gathered. The response rate stood at 98.0 percent, and the data from 382 respondents were analyzed except for 10 incomplete answer sheets.

The instrument used to assess the happiness of the pre-service early childhood teachers was⁹s Happiness Scale that was an adapted version of¹⁰ Happiness Scale which consisted of three areas: external happiness, internal happiness and self-regulatory happiness. The sub-variables of this scale were external happiness, internal happiness and self-regulatory happiness, and it was composed of 21 items.

The instrument used to evaluate ego-resilience was¹¹s scale, which adapted and modified¹² scales. The sub-factors of this scale were diversity of interest and concern, emotional regulation and positive future orientation, and it consisted of 21 items.

The instruments used to assess the department satisfaction of the preservice early childhood teachers were University of Illinois' Department Evaluation¹³ Department Satisfaction Scale. As for the latter,¹⁴ adapted version of the Department Evaluation Form that was developed by the research team of University of Illinois and Urban Campaign to assess the quality of college departments and was used by 13 to measure the department satisfaction of college students was modified by¹³ to suit Korean culture based on the results of earlier studies. This scale is composed of 28 items about five areas: course satisfaction, relational satisfaction, general satisfaction, awareness satisfaction and school satisfaction.

A statistical package SPSS WIN 23.0 was employed, and statistical data on mean, standard deviation and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were obtained to determine the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of the college students. Besides, stepwise multiple regression analysis was made to measure relative influence.

3. Results

3.1 The Self-Awareness of the College Students on Happiness, Ego-Resilience and Department Satisfaction

Table 1 shows, Overall, the college students got a mean of 3.55(SD=.55) in happiness; 3.61(SD=.51) in ego-resilience; and 3.54(SD=.57) in department satisfaction.

3.2 The Correlations of Happiness, Ego-Resilience and Department Satisfaction

As Table 2 shows, the correlations of their happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction ranged from .52 to .76($p<.01$), and those of the sub-factors were between .22 and .94($p<.01$). These findings implied that there were significant positive correlations among the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of the college students.

Table 1. The self-awareness of the college students on Happiness, Ego-Resilience and Department Satisfaction (N = 382)

Variables	Sub-Variables	M	SD	Reliability
Happiness	External happiness	3.73	.58	.85
	Inner happiness	3.56	.68	.84
	Self-regulation happiness	3.18	.65	.73
	Happiness	3.55	.55	.92
Ego-resilience	Diversity of interests and concerns	3.70	.59	.87
	Emotions	3.56	.60	.86
	Positive future orientation	3.59	.70	.82
	Ego-resilience	3.61	.51	.90
Department satisfaction	Subject satisfaction	3.56	.61	.78
	Relationship satisfaction	3.69	.68	.74
	General satisfaction	3.54	.61	.86
	Recognition satisfaction	3.65	.69	.86
	School satisfaction	3.33	.75	.90
	Department satisfaction	3.54	.57	.95

Table 2. The correlations of Happiness, Ego-Resilience and Department Satisfaction (N = 382)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Happiness (1)	1													
External happiness (2)	.92**	1												
Inner happiness (3)	.89**	.71**	1											
Self-regulation happiness (4)	.82**	.63**	.66**	1										
Ego-resilience (5)	.76**	.72**	.67**	.59**	1									
Diversity of interests and concerns (6)	.64**	.67**	.52**	.47**	.82**	1								
Emotions (7)	.53**	.50**	.48**	.42**	.81**	.44**	1							
Positive future (8)	.70**	.63**	.66**	.57**	.85**	.62**	.51**	1						
Department satisfaction (9)	.60**	.56**	.56**	.47**	.52**	.43**	.36**	.51**	1					
Subject satisfaction (10)	.48**	.44**	.46**	.38**	.38**	.33**	.26**	.36**	.80**	1				
Relationship satisfaction (11)	.49**	.49**	.42**	.38**	.45**	.37**	.34**	.41**	.66**	.59**	1			
General satisfaction (12)	.55**	.49**	.52**	.43**	.48**	.40**	.34**	.46**	.94**	.73**	.55**	1		
Recognition satisfaction (13)	.55**	.51**	.49**	.43**	.50**	.40**	.37**	.48**	.86**	.55**	.49**	.76**	1	
School satisfaction (14)	.47**	.43**	.45**	.35**	.37**	.31**	.22**	.40**	.87**	.58**	.43**	.76**	.69**	.47**

**p<.01

Table 3. The relative influence of Happiness and Ego-Resilience on Department Satisfaction (N = 382)

Dependent variables	Independent variables	B	β	t	R^2	Change of R^2	F
Department satisfaction	(Invariable)	1.17			.68		258.69***
	Happiness	.51	.06	8.02***		.66	
	Ego-resilience	.15	.14	2.25*		.02	

*p<.05, ***p<.001

3.3 The Relative Influence of Happiness and Ego-Resilience on Department Satisfaction

Table 3 shows, the happiness and ego-resilience of the college students had a 38% explainability of department satisfaction. To be specific, happiness had 36% explainability, and there was a 2% increase when ego-resilience was added. So the two had 38% explainability. Also, the F value was 112.61, which was statistically significant, and the above-mentioned regression model formula was found to be appropriate ($p<.001$). The findings could be interpreted that the happiness and ego-resilience of college students are the variables to affect their department satisfaction, and

that happiness is more influential, followed by ego-resilience.

Table 4 shows, to what extent the sub-variables of the happiness and ego-resilience of the college students impacted on department satisfaction was analyzed in detail and the sub-variables had 38% explainability. Specifically, internal happiness had 31% explainability. There was a 5% increase when external happiness was added, and there was a 2% increase when positive future orientation was added. Thus, the sub-variables had 38% explainability. In addition, the F value was 76.67, which was statistically significant. Therefore the above-mentioned regression model formula turned out to be appropriate ($p<.001$).

Table 4. The relative influence of Sub-variables Happiness and Ego-Resilience on Department Satisfaction (N = 382)

Dependent variables	Independent variables	B	β	<i>t</i>	R^2	Change of R^2	<i>F</i>
Department satisfaction	(Invariable)	1.30			.38		76.67***
	Inner happiness	.22	.26	4.43***		.31	
	External happiness	.27	.27	4.47***		.05	
	Positive future	.13	.16	2.82**		.02	

$p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of college students and the relationships of happiness and ego-resilience, which are usually viewed as positive variables, to department satisfaction in an effort to increase their department satisfaction. It's basically meant to give some suggestions on how to ensure the successful adjustment of college students to their departments and how to bring positive changes to their lives. The findings of the study on the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of college students have the following implications:

First, the college students took an above-average positive view of their own happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction. It's argued that not only in happy or ordinary situations but in stressful situations such as hardship, fear, anger or anxiety, happy people have a tendency to have positive emotions that enable them to interact with the given environments with pleasure in general¹⁵⁻¹⁶. According to this argument, the emotions and quality of life of college students will become better if they experience more happiness. Given the findings of studies on positive psychology, happy environments, happiness promotion programs and training ought to be provided to boost the happiness of college students.

Second, there were significant positive correlations among their happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction. Happy and ego-resilient college students are expected to be more satisfied with the departments they belong to than unhappy and pessimistic students. This finding lends credibility to the findings of¹⁷ study that one's studies and occupation are the determinants for his or her quality of life, and that a happiness index is linked to job satisfaction. According to earlier studies on the happiness

of college students, students mentioned self-satisfaction, positive thinking, and target setting/acting out, relational efforts, self-love, self-care and being absorbed in what they liked to do as the elements necessary for their happiness. In a word, the kind of environments that can bolster happiness and ego-resilience should be created to help college students to lead a happier life by tiding over difficulties.

Third, their happiness and ego-resilience could be regarded as the variables to affect their department satisfaction, and happiness was more influential, followed by ego-resilience. The findings coincide with the finding of¹⁸ study that there were stronger achievement motivation and satisfaction in happy people than in unhappy ones. So far, it turns out to exercise positive influences on the department satisfaction of college students when they become happier and more ego-resilient. The improvement of the happiness and ego-resilience of college students is expected to make a great contribution to the enhancement of their quality of life. The findings of the study suggest that in order to boost the department satisfaction of college students, it's necessary to improve their happiness and ego-resilience.

This study has some limitations, and there are some suggestions on future research efforts:

First, a quantitative research method was utilized to measure the happiness, ego-resilience and department satisfaction of the college students. As these variables belong to the affective domain, a quantitative analysis may not be sufficient enough to have a profound understanding of these variables.

Second, the geographic scope of this study was confined to some regions by examining the early childhood teachers who worked in the city of Busan. To produce more generalizable results, more sampling is required

from broader regions, but it's not possible in this study to do that. In the future, sampling from more extended areas is required¹⁹⁻²⁰.

5. Acknowledgment

The Research was supported by the Tongmyong University Research Grants 2016.

6. References

1. Kim BM, Kim JI, Youn JJ. The application based on creativity/ personality education program using a digital curation System. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*. 2016; 9(26):1-7.
2. Hwang H-I, Choi H-J, Kim M-J. A Study on kindergarten teachers' optimism, teachers' efficacy and job satisfaction. *Journal of Children's Literature and Education*. 2012; 13(2): 167-92.
3. Seligman MEP. *Authentic happiness*. New York:Free Press Publication Company;2004.
4. Oh Y-J. Analysis of Happiness Mentioned in Picture Books Recommended by Educare Guideline of Standard Educare Curriculum. *Journal of Children's Literature and Education*. 2009; 10(1):23-44.
5. Kim M-J, Kim B-M. Path analysis of the influential factors for the happiness of early childhood teachers. *The Journal of Eco Early Childhood Education and Care*. 2015; 15(4):99-120.
6. Luther SS, Cicchetti D, Becker B. The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Development*. 2000; 71(3):543-62.
7. Lee H-N, Jeong H-J, Lee K-H, Lee H-J. The Relationship among Stress Perception, Stress Coping, Ego-resilience and Happiness of University Students. *Korea Journal of Counseling*. 2006; 7(3):701-13.
8. Ha H-S. A study of department satisfaction and school satisfaction of undergraduate students [Master's thesis]. Seoul National University; 2000.
9. Seligman MEP, Steen TA, Park N, Peterson C. Positive psychology progress. *American Psychologist*. 2005; 60(5):410-21.
10. Kwon S-M. *Positive psychology*. Seoul: Hakjisa Publication Company; 2011.
11. Argyle M. *The psychology of happiness*, 2nd (ed)., East Sussex, England: Routledge, 2001.
12. Min D-I. The effects of family strengths, school life health and ego-resilience on mental health of adolescents[Doctoral's Thesis]. Inha University; 2007.
13. Atsushi O, Hitoshi N, Shinji N, Motoyuki K. Development and validation of an adolescent resilience scale. *Japanese Journal of Counseling Science*. 2002; 35:57-65.
14. Ha H-S. A study of department satisfaction and school satisfaction of undergraduate students[Master's thesis]. Seoul National University; 1999.
15. Na D-J, Song J-H, A preliminary study of a major-adjustment program for college students with major-aptitude discrepancy. *Journal of Student Life*. 1985; 16(2):424-31.
16. Diener E. Subjective well-being. *Psychological Bulletin*. 1984; 95(3):542-75.
17. Seligman MEP, Csikszentmihalyi M. *Positive psychology*. Journal of American Psychological Association. 2000; 55(1):5-14.
18. Veorff J, Douvan E, Kulka RA. *The inner American*. New York: Basic Books Publication Company;1981.
19. Myers D. *The pursuit of happiness*. New York: Avon Books Publication Company; 1992.
20. Kim J-J, Kim B-M. Analysis on the types of infant leaders' images among early childhood teachers. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*. 2015; 8(S7): pp.462-6.