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Section V. Prosperity and Socio-Economic Development Moderator: I. Fedyukin (HSE University), I. Froumin (HSE University), M. Yudkevich (HSE University)

Tuesday, April 9

Session V-12. Wellbeing of Schoolchildren and Students: Factors (continued)

Moderator: M. Novikova (HSE University)

A. Getman (HSE University), A. Kapuza (HSE University), T. Chirkina (HSE University)

Academic and non-academic students' characteristics with varying levels of functional literacy ([abstract](#))

K. Vilkova (HSE University), N. Lebedeva (HSE University)

Interests' contribution to the measurement of association between self-concept and math ([abstract](#))

N. Nyunt (YUoE), H. Aung (YUoE)

Happiness and self-esteem of undergraduate student teachers at Yangon University of Education ([abstract](#))

Happiness and Self-Esteem of Undergraduate Student Teachers in Yangon University of Education

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Happiness is often used interchangeably with subjective well-being (Diener 2000; Diener, Lucas 2009; Veenhoven 2010). Happiness is defined as distinct feelings different from other everyday emotions that make a person feel that life is good and worth living to the fullest (Magen, 1998). Happiness is the mental or emotional state of well-being occurring as the result of positive emotions including contentment and joy (Veenhoven, 2008). According to Veenhoven (2005), the word happiness is often used interchangeably with the terms quality of life whereas Bekhet (2008) stated that subjective well-being, life satisfaction, peak experiences, and important in maintaining health. The concept of happiness has different meanings to different people.

According to Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, (2003), there is a strong link between self-esteem and happiness because a high level of self-esteem leads to a happy and positive life event and self-esteem seem to be a predictor of happiness.

Self-esteem is defined as an overall attitude and assessment of ones' self- worth and self-acceptance (Rosenberg, 1965). Coopersmith added that self-esteem was important to a person's identity and awareness and that high and low self-esteem would influence behaviour in positive and negative ways (as cited in James, K., 2002). The importance of developing undergraduate student teachers' self-esteem is crucial to the learning environment in their classrooms, their specific teaching-learning strategies.

The primary purpose of the current study was to examine the undergraduate student teachers' happiness and then, to explore their self-esteem is of next interest. A total of 280 (first year to the fourth year) undergraduate student teachers participated. A quantitative approach was used in this study. The Self-esteem Inventory (SEI) and the Oxford Happiness Inventory were used as the research instruments. Self-esteem Inventory consists of fifty items which could be divided into four subscales such as general self, social self-peers, home-parents, and school academic and the total score of the items can be given as self-esteem of individuals.

The Oxford Happiness Inventory is a 29 items multiple-choice measure and each question displays 4 choices for the respondent's current happiness experience. The required sample was selected using a random sampling technique. The undergraduate student teachers' happiness and self-esteem were examined by using the above-mentioned instruments.

Numerous studies have revealed significant differences in happiness scores between males and females. Some study has shown that female often reports being unhappier compared to their counterpart male (Levin, Currie & Muldoon 2009; Moljord et al. 2011), whereas other study reported that female show being happier than male (Crossley & Langdridge 2005; Piqueras 2011). Csikszentmihalyi & Hunter 2003; Mahon, Yarcheski & Yarcheski 2005; Natvig, Albrektsen & Qvarnstrøm 2003; van deWetering et al. (2010) found that no gender differences in adolescents' level of happiness. Similar results have not been reported concerning the association of gender and level of happiness. In our study, there was no significant difference in undergraduate student teachers' happiness by gender.

Happiness is primarily influenced by circumstances which refer to the incidental but relatively stable factors within an individual's life, including national, demographic, geographic, and contextual variables, as well as life events (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon & Schkade 2005; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky 2005). According to our results, undergraduate student teachers' happiness does not depend on the life event. In addition to a life event and gender, there was no significant difference in the overall happiness score of undergraduate student teachers by educational level and age. It may be said that the undergraduate student teachers' happiness does not depend on the life event, gender, age groups, and educational level.

Regarding the undergraduate student teachers' self-esteem, there were significant differences by age, educational level, and life event. The first-year undergraduate student teachers have higher self-esteem derived from school academic than the third-year undergraduate student teachers. Besides, the undergraduate student teachers who encountered a positive life event have higher self-esteem than the undergraduate student teachers who encountered a negative life event. However, there was no gender difference.

A significant positive correlation was found between undergraduate student teachers' self-esteem and happiness. It means that happiness causes prospective teachers' high self-esteem. Undergraduate students need to develop high self-esteem to be happy and satisfy life in their adulthood. It may be possible that students' success in the workplace, classroom, school, personal and interpersonal successes causes both happiness and high self-esteem, whereas corresponding failures may lead to unhappiness and low self-esteem of individuals. It is even possible that happiness causes high self-esteem. According to Peiró,(2006); Haring and et al, (1984); Easterlin, (2006); Lelkes, (2006); Easterlin, (1995), there is a correlation between happiness and some factors such as age, gender, marital status,

religion, educational level, and income. Cross-cultural research highlighted that the relationship between self-esteem and happiness, life satisfaction, may be varied to some extent. In particular, it was stronger in individualistic countries than in collectivistic ones. Diener and Diener (1995) stated that people who live in individualistic countries are more socialized to attend to their interests and preferences, and so these become important in determining overall happiness, whereas collectivistic cultures encourage people to emphasize group preferences and interrelationships among people.

The result of this study provides a base for certain preventive or corrective measures for happiness and self-esteem to be carried out. So, school consultants should guide undergraduate student teachers on how to develop happiness and self-esteem. Investigating undergraduate student teachers' happiness and self-esteem helps in approaching their various needs and problems and helps in finding ways to cater to their needs and find solutions for their problems. This study may contribute to a better understanding and awareness of undergraduate student teachers' happiness and self-esteem. This may help to fill gaps in the literature regarding the associations between the undergraduate student teachers' happiness and self-esteem. This information should be used to stimulate further efforts to develop and deliver effective mental health promotion programs for schools and families. This study should include increased attention to the provision of professional counseling support for students who are troubled by the serious effects of happiness and self-esteem.

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