



Pathology of Health Behavior Among University Students, Screening First-Year Students (Freshman)

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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to recognize behavior pathology of college students in the area of general health, moral health, social health, and lifestyle; besides, it reflected on the relationship between social health, general health, and moral intelligence with lifestyle among students of Marvdasht Azad University. Research design was correlational descriptive. Statistical population includes all students of Human Sciences, Psychology, and Education faculties recorded for 2013-2014. 266 persons were selected through simple random sampling. Measuring instruments were Goldberg's General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28), Keyes's social health scale, and lifestyle questionnaire. Collected data was analyzed through SPSS-18 software. Results of study indicated that 39.5 percent of individuals did not have high social health; all individuals of statistical population had problems in regard to general health; 17.3 percent of individuals suffered from moral intelligence less than average; 2.6 percent of individuals had problems in regard to lifestyle. Results also showed that there is a direct relationship between social health, mental health, and moral intelligence with lifestyle. The three variables are able to predict lifestyle; in this regard, general health and social health have respectively the highest and the lowest ability to predict lifestyle.

Keywords: social health, mental health, moral intelligence, lifestyle, first-year students of University

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INTRODUCTION

Students in university may encounter with positive or negative, unexpected or predictable, personal or general circumstances. They challenge persons who attempt to comprehend the complicated and involving world around. Healthy persons are able to encounter with such circumstances in proper manner and confront with problems as they protect their mental health. Observing spiritual needs and mental health of students is very significant as they organize a large part of population since they are exposed into certain dangers by stressful and effective factors (Hatami M and et al, 2005). Etymologically speaking, healthy signifies generality and sacredness that includes both physical and spiritual features. The oldest definition of healthy is not ill (Moieni,2006). Health embraces several aspects that mental and social health are such. If one is able to control intrinsic desires of id and make balance among three elements of character id, ego, and superego, psychiatrists believe he has mental health (Schultz and et aql, 2013; Buse K and et al, 2009). Social health along with physical and mental health is one of the elements organizing general health of family and society (Fadaee and et al, 2007). Moral intelligence is related to these two aspects as well (Gidens and et al, 2009). Wissing and Fouri (Wissing and et al, 2000) consider physical, mental, emotional, intellectual,

moral, spiritual, and social aspects for health, and also they believe they have differences and influenced by several factors, though they share common features. Thus, individuals' health in different aspects is effective on improving life quality and advancing goals of society. One of the concepts analogous in the meaning to moral health is moral intelligence. Fortunately, moral intelligence can be acquired and educated. Moral intelligence has 7 elements that are: sympathy, awareness, self-control, attention and respect, kindness, patience, fairness (Lennick and et al, 2008). Health has broad meaning and its definition is influenced by awareness and approach by a society with cultural and geographical conditions, as health is dynamic process and its concept is changed in different periods (Moieni,2006 ; Nejat, 1993). Suggested perspectives on mental health can be categorized into three groups: a group influenced by medical model, a group influenced by humanism, and a group influenced by social views (Hamdiyeh and et al, 2202). Social health has been considered through functionalism and hedonism as well (Ryff and et al, 2003; Keyes and et al, 2002; Waterman,1993). Social health is an important area in psychology and mental health, as has been allocated to numerous studies and researches (Larson,1996; Keyes and et al, 2004). Moral intelligence has several aspects. Lennick and Kiel believe moral intelligence includes four aspects of honesty, responsibility, compassion, and forgiveness.

A study by Vimala Siri (Wimalasiri,2001). indicated that age, education, and religious issues have a significance impact on participants' moral judgment, and educational degree and sex are not effective on moral intelligence. Also, Jones et al (Dean El

and et al, 2002) studied the relationship between anxiety and lifestyle among students of Hong Kong University. It showed that female students are more anxious and anxious individuals have unhealthy lifestyle such as less physical activity, headache, insufficient sleep, high use of salt, etc. The results of the study (Harrison and et al, 2006) on individuals older than 18 indicated that there is a relationship between diet, smoking, and physical activity, in a way smokers, individuals who eat less fruit and vegetables, and individuals with less physical activity, in comparison to others, have low health condition and are more susceptible to chronic diseases.

Considering former researches, this study aims to analyze mental health, social health, moral intelligence, and students' lifestyle so as to increase aforementioned aspects in students by providing and practicing certain teachings and educational workshops. Former studies considered issues related to students in regard to one particular element. This study, however, takes into consideration four elements of mental health, social health, moral intelligence, and lifestyle. Significance of this study is in evaluation of these issues all together. Thus, the question is: how is the condition of social health, mental health, moral intelligence, and lifestyle among students of university? Is there a significant relationship between social health, mental health, and moral intelligence with lifestyle? And are social health, mental health, and moral intelligence able to predict lifestyle?

METHOD

Research Design: the present study is designed as correlational descriptive research.

Subjects: Statistical population includes all students of Human Sciences, Psychology, and Education faculties recorded for 2013-2014, that are 1214 persons. According to Morgan table, sampling was determined as 266 persons through simple random sampling. For selecting considered sample, questionnaires were distributed among students in first-year welcome student ceremony. Incomplete questionnaires were removed from 320 filled questionnaires, then 266 questionnaire were selected for the study. Firstly, questionnaires were distributed randomly among statistical sample of first-year students. Then, collected questioners were analyzed according to features of demography (sex, age, occupation, marital status, degree, major, and birth order) and also based on descriptive and inferential statistics. Questionnaires with low score were separated, and 60 students with unfavorable general, social health and moral intelligence were selected randomly, and finally they were distributed randomly in two 30-person-groups of test and control.

Goldberg's General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28): it was compiled and designed by Goldberg and Hildog(Ghanbarzadeh,2015) for realizing non-psychotic mental disorders in health care centers and society. It includes 28 articles and 4 secondary scales that each scale has 7 questions including physical signs, anxiety signs, social function, and depression signs. Scoring in this questionnaire is based on this principle that high scoring indicates low mental health. Goldberg and Mary meta-analyzed several studies through GHQ and concluded reliability of the questionnaire is 0.80 (Ghanbarzadeh,2015).

Keyes's Social Health Scale: it was designed by Keyes (keyes ,1998). in 33 questions for evaluation of social health in 1998, and it was evaluated by 5 Likert type scale. Social capital was considered as the main independent variable which was evaluated in two aspects of cognition and structure. The first one includes all kinds of trusts: friends' trust, others' trust, personal trust, extended trust, institutional trust, social trust by family, and the second one covers social participations.

Poursharifi et al (Poursharifi and et al, 2014) used internal consistency for evaluating reliability in this scale. They reported that achieved alpha for whole scale is 0.78 and individually for each scale is: 0.71 for social integration, 0.74 for social reception, 0.74 for social participation, 0.70 for social self-actualization, and 0.77 for social attachment that indicates this scale has favorable reliability.

Moral Intelligence Scale: compiled and designed by Lennick and Keil (Lennick and et al, 2008), it evaluates through 40 questions and 10 sub-tests. Scoring is according to 5 Likert type scale in which never is 1, rarely is 2, ..., and in all occasions is 5. It is divided in 2 after total scoring. Moral intelligence sub-scales are calculated and divided in 2 as well. It was standardized by Arasteh, Azizi, Shamami, Jafari Rad, and Muhammadi Jozanikar. 100 is the highest score in moral intelligence scale. Reliability and validity of this scale were acknowledged by Martin & Astin. Lifestyle Questionnaire: it has 70 questions in Likert scale which is scored as always (3), usually (2), Sometimes (1), and never (0). This questionnaire includes 10 factors of 1. Physical health, 2. Physical exercise and health, 3. Weight-control and diet, 4. Prevention of diseases, 5. Psychological health, 6. Spiritual health, 7. Social health, 8. Avoiding drugs and alcohols, 9. Prevention of accidents, and 10. Environmental health. High scoring in each factor and for questionnaire in whole indicates favorable lifestyle. Cronbach's alpha in internal consistency was calculated between 0.76 to 0.89 for lifestyle factors and for questionnaire in whole.

FINDINGS

Table (1): Distribution of Statistical Sample based on General and social Health

Condition	Social Health		General Health	
	Distributio n	Percen t	Distributio n	Percen t
Unfavorabl e	105	39.5	266	100
Favorable	119	44.7	0	0
Unclear	42	15.8	-----	-----
Total	266	100	266	100

As it is observed from above table, 39.5 percent of persons do not have favorable social health; in other words, they are sick. All persons in statistical sample are suffering from inappropriate mental health as well.

Table (2): Distribution of Statistical Sample based on Moral Intelligence and Lifestyle

Intensit y	Moral Intelligence		Lifestyle	
	Distributio n	Percen t	Distributio n	Percen t
Less than Average	46	17.3	7	2.6
Average	14	5.3	2	0.8
More than Average	203	76.3	255	95.9
Unclear	3	1.1	2	0.8
Total	266	100	266	100

As it is seen from above table, moral intelligence for 17.3 percent of persons is less than average. 2.6 percent of persons are suffering from unfavorable lifestyle.

Pearson correlation coefficient was used in order to determine whether social health, mental health, and moral intelligence have significant relationship with lifestyle or not; results in this regard are presented in correlation matrix in table (3).

Table (3): Correlation Matrix between Social Health, Mental Health, and Moral Intelligence with Lifestyle

Variables	1	2	3	4
Social Health	1			
Mental Health	0.213**	1		
Moral Intelligence	0.04	0.281**	1	
Lifestyle	0.166*	0.274**	0.281**	1

As the last row in matrix indicates there is a direct significant relationship between social health, mental health, and moral intelligence with lifestyle.

Multiple regression was used also in order to determine whether social health, mental health, and moral intelligence are able to predict lifestyle or not; results in this regard are presented in table (4).

Table (4): Prediction of lifestyle through Social Health, Mental Health, and Moral Intelligence

Variables	R	R ²	F	P<	β	T	P<
Social Health	0.45	0.209	19.15	0.001	0.24	3.87	0.001
Mental Health					0.317	5.12	0.001
Moral Intelligence					0.278	4.59	0.001

According to above table it is observed from F and its significance level that variables are significantly effective in regression equation. Achieved regression effect (F=19.15) is significant in 0.001, and calculated R-squared is 0.209 according to variables, which indicate variables are able to predict lifestyle 20 percent. On the other hand, β and T significance level indicate all three variables are able to predict lifestyle; mental health has the highest ability and social health has the lowest ability in prediction of lifestyle.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to study general health, social health, moral intelligence, and lifestyle among the first-year student of university. Research sample was chosen from all students of Human Sciences, Psychology, and Education faculties, that 266 persons were selected by simple random sampling through Morgan table. Goldberg’s General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28), Keyes’s social health scale, and lifestyle questionnaire were used in this study. Collected data was analyzed through SPSS-18 software. Results of study indicated that 39.5 percent of individuals did not have high social health; all individuals of statistical population had problems in regard to general health; 17.3 percent of individuals suffered from moral intelligence less than average; 2.6 percent of individuals had problems in regard to lifestyle. Results also showed that there is a direct relationship between social health, mental health, and moral intelligence with lifestyle. The three variables are able to predict lifestyle; in this regard, general

health and social health have respectively the highest and the lowest ability to predict lifestyle.

It is noted about similarity of this study with former studies that this research has not been studied both in Iran and abroad as its aim was to evaluate lifestyle, mental health, social health, and moral intelligence among first-year students of University.

literature review can be very helpful in discussion over the results of the study. One has to consider university students as the center of advances and development in any society (as they are a large part of population in Iran or other countries). They may be vulnerable since they confront with specific issues such as academic underachievement, educational troubles, inappropriate thought inclinations, drug addiction, anxiety, depression, and so forth. Studies indicated that problems of university students increases more after entering into university, since it is stressful circumstance for many. Associate degree or bachelor’s degree students are in 18 to 24 in their first year of university, and many enter into university right after high school which is for most of them the first experience of independent life. Therefore, they face with several new experiences that they do not how to deal; even those students who do not face with severe troubles or they did not have specific problem before university are exposed to stressful situations such as more-than-usual expectations, lack of interest to major, relationships specially with opposite sex, away from home, group life with people with different culture, difficulty of courses and so forth. Consequently, they are not able to take advantage of their own talents or university potentialities, and they are not motivated enough to improve personal and academic level in full scale. Since the results indicated that persons in this study does not have favorable mental health, that can be evaluated in 28 questions of GHQ in regard to mental health, this study considers four substantial elements: anxiety, depression, social disorder, and physical disorder. Probably it is the case with the sample of this study to be susceptible in one of the aforementioned elements (anxiety, depression, physical function, and social function). However, it is not possible to claim certainly persons in this study have mental health disorder. Other reasons related and effective on mental health are religion, spirituality, relationships, and goals in life. As stressful circumstances are experienced during different periods of life, to create and keep spiritual welfare (religion and spirituality) improves mental health and reduces mental disorders. In contrast, lack of belief in religion or spirituality causes disorders in mental health and individuals’ happiness. Lack of goal and motivation is also substantial in depression, so logical and achievable goal in life is one of eth main elements in favorable mental health.

As it is observed in findings, there is a direct significant relationship between social health, general health, and moral intelligence with lifestyle. Findings in this regard is in line with former studies (Harrison and et al, 2006; Ghanbarzadeh,2015; keyes,1968). The more one has social health, general health, and moral intelligence, the more favorable lifestyle is. Generally, if one practices higher social and mental health, S/he has higher positive lifestyle and moral intelligence. Researchers insist appropriate lifestyle originates from daily life patterns that can be health or unhealthy; a healthy lifestyle is then a balanced life with logical selections. Certainly, selections are influenced by factors such as chance, resources, social and cultural environment, and one can claim if an individual has higher financial, educational and social possibilities, her/his lifestyle is healthier.

Every research has limitations that provide preliminary conditions for subsequent studies; research design in this study

was correlational descriptive that might be its limitation. It is possible to extend and generalize results of the present study cautiously. Other variables such as social family status can be effective on results of the study. Lack of control over environmental factors at the time of test is another issue as well. Considering challenges and limitations to this study it is suggested educational centers, media, and other institutions recognize and support university students in problems and disorders. A study solely on general health of university students is also recommended since 100 percent of individuals in this study has unfavorable general health.

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