



Determining the Relationship Between Time Perspective and Student Happiness

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between time perspective and happiness of master degree students of Islamic Azad University, Hamedan Branch. The statistical population of the study consisted of all female undergraduate students of Islamic Azad University, Shahid Hamedan during the academic year of 2011-2012. Their number was 4000. Sample size based on at least 50 people plus 10 predictors for each variable was estimated to be 120 people who were selected by stratified random sampling. To measure the time perspective, we used the Zimbardo (66) questionnaire (1999) and happiness from the Oxford Questionnaire 29, which was designed by Arjil (1996). Data analysis was performed by Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis using Barney and Kenny method using SPSS software. The results showed that the time horizons of students were not high, while happiness was reported at a high level. There was a significant relationship between time perspective and happiness among students. Therefore, in order to increase student happiness, it is suggested that positive perspectives and transnational future be strengthened.

Key words: Time Perspective, Happiness, Students

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INTRODUCTION

Living in the contemporary world “the age of technology and information” has been accompanied by the increased loneliness of human beings and the development of psychosocial problems and problems, such as depression, suicide, divorce and various types of delinquency, despite the many benefits and widespread connections. It affects human happiness and attracts the attention of scholars and pundits. Happiness and time perspective are fundamental concepts in psychology and affect behavior. Positive psychologists have focused their attention on potential sources of positive emotions, such as a sense of happiness.

Happiness is the amount of positive value a person considers for himself [1].

This structure has two aspects: one, emotional factors that represent the emotional experience of happiness, euphoria, pleasure and other positive emotions, and the other, a cognitive assessment of satisfaction from different realms of life that expresses happiness and psychological well-being. However, happiness doesn't indicate lack of depression, but indicates a number of positive cognitive and emotional states [2, 3] categorizes positive emotions into three categories that relate to past, present, and future. Positive emotions associated with the future including optimism, hope, trust, faith, and belief. Satisfaction, pleasure, realization, pride, and peace are the major positive emotions associated with the past. There are two distinct classes: immediate pleasures and more stable satisfaction in relation to the positive emotions.

According to [4], happiness is defined as a person who evaluates his/her entire life well and how much he/she loves his/her life.

[5] find that happiness and euphoria are a combination of positive affect, lack of negative affect and life satisfaction. So happiness has three basic components: positive excitement, satisfaction with life, and lack of negative emotions. Therefore, happiness is vital to a positive concept for staying healthy and increasing power to confront life problems. Happiness is sustained when a person has a higher sense of satisfaction than himself and his surroundings [6].

Yasemi, Almasi, and Abbasi (1394) concluded in their studies that happiness is strongly influenced by the quality of life. Quality of life is not a new concept. This concept has a background in Greek philosophy, and Aristotle has referred to it in the discussion of happiness. Quality of life is considered as an essential indicator of health, and since the quality of life includes many aspects such as physical health, mental health, social communication, family life, emotions, physical functions, spirituality, and professional life of individuals, the importance of this is twofold [7].

A time perspective is a cognitive-behavioral concept that indicates the person's orientation and attitude toward the past, present and future. [8,9] introduced five dimensions of time: past negative (PN), past positive (PP), present hedonistic (PH), present fatalistic (PF), future (F). [10] has shown that the person's confidence in his future is positively evaluated, he will be more likely to feel happy and joyful. In addition, he introduces optimism about the future such an explanatory style rather than having one personality character. In this view, these people associate negative events with attributing their cause to factors with three externalities, transience and specificity. Future people believe that long-term goals are achievable.

The research results by [11-15] showed that there was a significant relationship between time perspective and happiness, and a time perspective could predict happiness. With a review of what has been said, it can be said that time perspective is one of the influential variables that affect happiness. They are also influenced by each other. As the most important place for future generations to be present while having a healthy

and dynamic environment, University should provide students a sense of happiness and joyful which is less important. Of course, attention to this need requires studying these concepts, and in the next steps, requires practical planning. According to the above mentioned, this research will examine the underlying factors (time perspective) of happiness in students and answer the question of whether the time perspective has the ability to predict happiness among graduate students of the Islamic Azad University of Hamedan?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method was a descriptive research method of a correlation type and data collection method of a quantitative type. The statistical population of this study consisted of all female undergraduate students of Islamic Azad University of Hamedan, in the academic year of 2011-2012. Their total number is 4000.

Considering that the research method is correlation and prediction type, and considering that the regression analysis has been used, therefore, the sample size was estimated 10 persons based on at least 50 people for each predictor variable. So, since there were 7 predictor variables, the sample size determined 120 people. The statistical sample was randomly assigned to 120 people. In this study, questionnaires were used to collect information, which included the happiness, and time perspective questionnaires.

Oxford Happiness Test

Oxford Happiness Test has 29 items and measures the level of happiness. The theoretical basis of this questionnaire is the definition of [16] form happiness. The test was made in 1989 by Argyle and based on Beck Depression Inventory (BDI). The 21 items of the questionnaire were taken from BDI, reversed and eleven questions added to it to cover other aspects of mental and psychological well-being. The method of scoring this questionnaire is based on the four-level Likert scale. The score range for this questionnaire is between 29 and 116. Also, the score 72.5 is the cut-point in the questionnaire that scores below 72.5 indicate happiness and scores above 72.5 show happiness. [18] reported the reliability of the Oxford questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90 and its retest reliability of 0.77 per week. The simultaneous validity of this questionnaire was estimated 0.43 by using

friends' evaluation about people. In a study conducted by Alipour and Nourbala (2007) to assess the reliability and validity of the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI), Cronbach's Alpha for the entire inventory was 0.91. The validity of the questionnaire was also obtained 0.83 in the research of Alipour and Noorbala (2007) with a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) method.

Time Perspective Test

The time perspective of the present study was measured by [8] questionnaire. The questionnaire has 66 questions and has been scored by five-point Likert (very false = 1, false = 2, indifferent = 3, true = 4 and very true = 5), while the method of scoring questions (9, 24, 25, 41, 56, 61) are reversed. This questionnaire consists of six dimensions of PN (questions 4-5-16-22-27-33-34-36-50, and 54), PP (questions 2-7-11-15-20- 25-49-41, and 49), PF (questions 3-14-35-37-38-47-52-53), PH (Questions 1-8-12-17-19-23-26 -28-31-32-42-44-46-48, and 55), F (questions 6-9-10-13-18-21-24-30-40-43-45-51-56) and transcendental future (TF) (Questions 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, and 66). The score range of the questionnaire is from 66 to 330, which a score of 198 is the cut-point of the questionnaire. Scores below 198 indicate a low level of time perspective and scores higher than 198 indicate a high level of time perspective for subjects. Nozari (2012) has calculated the Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.44 in the total subscales. On the other hand, the validity of the test was calculated 0.78.

RESULTS

120 graduate students of the Islamic Azad University of Hamedan have been studied in this research. The results of this study showed that the most of the students participating in this study with a percentage frequency of 83.3% were in the field of humanities branch, and the least with a percentage frequency of 1.7% were in the field of basic sciences. As well as 7.5% were in technical and engineering fields, 4.2% were in medical sciences and 3.3% were in art and architecture. According to the studies, most of the students with a percentage frequency of 47.5% are Fars and then with a percentage frequency of 28.3% Kurds. Also, 19.2% are Turkish, 1.7% are Lor and 3.3% are other ethnicities. Students' total average is 17.15 and their median is 17.23. Also, most students earned an average of 17, and also, the

standard deviation of the students' average is about 1.72. On the other hand, the lowest reported average is 10.98 and the most reported average is 19.99.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of the students according to the type of time perspective

Time perspective type	Frequency	Percentage
PN	0	0
PP	58	48.3
PF	1	0.8
PH	4	3.3
F	30	25
TF	27	22.5
Total	120	100

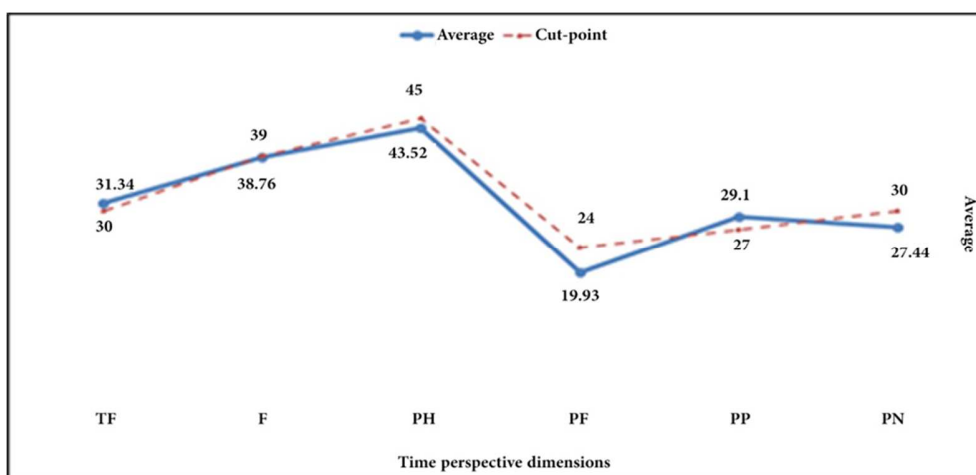
Table 1 shows that the time perspective of most students with a percentage frequency of 48.3% is PP and then with a percentage frequency of 25% is F. Also, 22.5% had TF, and 3.3% had PH. 0.8% has chosen the PF, and none of the subjects had PN.

Table 2: Statistical indices of students' time perspectives

Time perspective	Avg	Cut-point	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	Variance	Least	Most
PN	27.44	30	27	20	6.40	40.98	17	41
PP	29.1	27	30	30	5.86	34.37	16	38
PF	19.93	24	19	15	5.45	29.76	13	32
PH	43.52	45	44	22	11.63	135.31	22	66
F	38.76	39	38	36	9.10	82.88	26	60
TF	31.34	30	31	31	6.24	38.95	18	42

The results of Table 2 show that the averages of all time perspective dimensions, other than the dimensions of PP, and TF are less than their cut-points, while the averages of the PP, and TF dimensions are more than their cut-points. On the other hand, the least amount of distance between the average and the cut-point is related to the F dimension and the most is related to the PH dimension.

The results of the statistical indices showed the students' quality of life that the average for students' quality of life was 81.88 more than the cut-off point (78). The results of the happiness statistical indices also showed that the average for students' happiness is 90.51 more than the cut-off point (72.5).



Plot 1: Linear diagram of the dimension average of time perspective based on cut-points

Student’s time perspectives are at a high level.

To investigate the first hypothesis of this research, one sample t-test was used. Table 3 examines the time perspective values among students.

Table 3: Students’ time perspectives

Time perspective	Cut-point	Avg.	Std.Dev.	t Stat.	df	P-value	Mean Difference
PN	30	27.44	6.40	-4.377	119	0.0001**	-2.56
PP	27	29.10	5.86	3.924	119	0.0001**	2.10
PF	24	19.93	5.45	-8.166	119	0.0001**	4.06
PH	45	43.52	11.63	-1.389	119	0.167	-1.47
F	39	38.77	9.10	-0.281	119	0.779	-0.23
TF	30	31.34	6.24	2.355	119	0.020*	1.34

** P < 0.01, * P < 0.05, n = 120

Table 3 shows that the P-values of PH and F time perspectives are greater than 0.05, which shows that there is no significant difference between the mean of these dimensions with their cut-point, so these two dimensions are at a moderate level among Students. While the averages of PN and PF are less than their cut-point. Considering the fact that the P-value is less than 0.01, there is the meaningful difference between the mean scores of the PN and PH dimensions, and thus, the time perspectives of PN and PH are at a low level for students. However, the averages of PP and TF time perspectives are greater than their cut-point, and

given that their P-values are less than 0.05, then PP and TF time perspectives are at a high level for students.

To examine the question that the happiness of graduate students at the Islamic Azad University of Hamedan is at a high level, one sample t-test was used. Table 5 examines the level of happiness among graduate students of Islamic Azad University of Hamedan.

Table 5: Students’ Happiness of the Islamic Azad University of Hamadan

Variable	Cut-point	Avg.	Std.Dev.	t Stat.	df	P-value	Mean Difference
Happiness	72.5	90.52	19.38	10.184	119	0.0001**	18.02

** P < 0.01, n = 120

Table 5 shows that the happiness P-value is less than 0.01, and with a confidence level of 99%, there is a meaningful difference between the mean scores of students’ happiness and their cut-point, which is 72.5. Since the average of students’ happiness is more than the cut-point of 72.5, so the happiness of graduate students at the Islamic Azad University of Hamadan is at a high level. Therefore, the third hypothesis of this research is confirmed.

There is a relationship between time perspective and students’ happiness. For the fourth study, Pearson correlation coefficient test

was used. Table 6 shows the correlation coefficient between time perspectives and happiness.

Table 6: The relationship between time perspectives and happiness

Variables	Happiness
PN	0.348**
PP	0.706**
PF	0.279**
PH	0.576**
F	0.390**
TF	0.688**

** P < 0.01, n = 120

From Table 6, it can be concluded that there is a direct meaningful relationship with 99% confidence level between time perspectives and happiness. The highest correlation coefficient among the dimensions of time perspectives is related to the PP and the least correlation coefficient of it is related to the PN. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis of this research is confirmed.

There is a relationship between the time perspectives and happiness of graduate students at the Islamic Azad University of Hamedan. For the fourth study, Pearson correlation coefficient test was used. Table 7 shows the correlation coefficient between time perspectives and happiness.

Table 7: The relationship between time perspectives and happiness

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DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research was conducted with the aim of predicting the happiness based on time perspective among graduate students of Islamic Azad University, Hamedan Branch. The present study was a correlation type of descriptive research method and in terms of data collection method was a quantitative research. A statistical population of this study consisted of all graduate students of the Islamic Azad University of Hamedan in the academic year of 2011-2012 that were 4,000 students totally. A statistical sample was randomly assigned to 120 people. Regarding the fact that this research method was correlation and prediction type, and considering that the regression analysis was used, hence the sample size was estimated 10 based on at least 50 people for each predictor variable. So, since there were 7 predictor variables, the sample size was 120. In this research, [8] questionnaire and Oxford happiness Questionnaire, designed by [16] were used to measure the time perspective. The results showed that 37 students were male and 83 were females. 100 students studied in the fields of human sciences, and then 9 students were related to technical and engineering branches. Five people from medical sciences, four people from art and architecture, and two people from basic sciences attended this research. Most of the students participating in this research were Fars with an abundance (frequency) of 57 people, and the least of them was Lor with an abundance of 2 people. Also, 23 people were Turkish, 34 were Kurdish and 4 were from other Iranian ethnic groups. The student's average score in this study was 17.17 and the average score of the most students was 17. Time perspective of the most students with an abundance of 58 was PP and only one person had PF perspective. None of the participants didn't have PN. The average quality of life and happiness of the students were 81.88 and 90.51 greater than their cut-points of 78 and 94, respectively. While the average of the students' time perspective was 191.81 less than its cut-off point of 191. The average of all aspects of the time perspective, other than the dimensions of PP, and TF was less than their cut-points, while the average of PP, and

TF dimensions was more than their cut-points. The students' time perspective was not at a high level, while their happiness was reported at a high level. It was also found that there was a meaningful and positive relationship between time perspective and happiness among students.

According to the fourth hypothesis of this research, which studies the relationship between time perspective and happiness among graduate students of the Islamic Azad University of Hamedan, it can be said that there is a meaningful relationship between the time perspective and the happiness of the graduate students at the Islamic Azad University of Hamedan. In this regard, the results of researches [18, 14], and Taherian et al. (1393) are in line with the result of this study. Because they showed that there is a meaningful relationship between the time perspective and happiness of the people and time perspective can promote happiness.

Therefore, by comparing the results of the fourth hypothesis of this research with the results of previous researches, it can be concluded that the time perspective, including having a sense of pleasure from thinking to the past, having a pleasant feeling of past events, using his past experiences to repeat better in the future, having more good experiences than bad experiences in the past, trying to change your current situation and non-resisting the current changes, enjoying your own circumstances, having an excitement about your current life, and a high incentive to do things in the current situation, being up-to-date in the appointment, committing to future goals, fulfilling your commitments, taking into account your own interests before planning, preparing for your future work and doing hard things at the beginning, believing in development and growth of life, and Making an attempt to improve your conditions for achieving happiness and bliss has a meaningful relationship with happiness.

Time perspective causes that a person thinks always about mistakes caused by various factors, such as lack of sufficient experience in the past, and these mistakes should not result in a failure in

the future especially in academic issues. This perspective helps the person to avoid future incidents in the future, using his prior knowledge of these events. Therefore, the careful attention to the past mistakes makes it impossible for the individual to repeat the past mistakes and thus focus more on life goals. Therefore, he has less difficult to achieve, and this can be a source of happiness for him. Attention to positive events in the past makes the person feel more motivated to advance his/her goals in the future, including educational goals, which ultimately can increase the satisfaction with education and the happiness of being in school. When one looks at his past successes and is happy to repeat them in mind, he/she will try to repeat such events in now or in the future. Thus, he/she steps with great potential and motivation for success in life-affairs. Consequently, due to his/her positive past, he will feel satisfied that this satisfaction will be a source of happiness.

When one recognizes and accepts his current limitations, he achieves realism that this realism can lead to a lack of deviation from his/her life plans to a large extent, and does not make a person believe in luck. Therefore, he/she steps on the path to life or study with more earnestness, and this effort can lead to the success, satisfaction of studying in a person, and happiness. Therefore, identifying own weaknesses causes them and therefore, he/she moves better towards his/her goals better than ever before, and achieves his/her own requirements better than before, which can ultimately increase happiness. On the other hand, high flexibility and non-resistance to current changes make him/her consistent with the present and current conditions. Therefore, he/she aligned him/herself with PH to step toward success with the best form. The result of this success can be a happiness, vivacity, and relaxation feelings. Because the inflexibility causes the person to stop quickly his/her efforts and, therefore, cannot satisfy his/her success and achieve happiness. While measuring a person's current situation is as an algebraic mode, it causes that he performs always the best flexible solution. This flexibility can lead to better prosperity and

happiness on the path to success. The reason why there is a meaningful connection between PN and happiness, is that people with PN try to learn lessons from their past negative experiences and make fewer mistakes in the future. In fact, PN is seen as a valuable experience for individuals, and one can reduce his/her mistakes in the future due to his/her negative experiences and ultimately increase his/her happiness. The reason for the positive relationship between the PF and happiness is that the PF makes one more diligent to overcome the shortcomings and problems in life and eliminate them. As a result, it makes the person more purposeful and effective and this feeling can create happiness and vivacity in him/her.

"While Freud considered humans as prisoners and victims of past events, Jung believed that we would be shaped by our future in addition to our own past. In his view, we are not only affected by what has happened to us in our childhood but also we are affected by what we wish to do in the future. [19].

In Jung's view, although the future of people is affected by the past, this is not a definite effect, and people with PN are not condemned to failure, and under conditions, they can have a different future with happiness. People with PN try to learn lessons from their past negative experiences and make fewer mistakes in the future. In fact, PN is seen as a valuable experience for individuals, and one can reduce his/her own mistakes in the future due to his/her negative experiences and ultimately increase his/her happiness. There are also similar explanations for the positive relationship between PF and happiness. That is, PF makes one more diligent to overcome the shortcomings and problems in life and eliminate them. As a result, it makes the person more purposeful and effective and this feeling can create happiness and vivacity in him/her. Another explanation is that part of the research findings that speak about the relationship between PN and PF with happiness is related to the respondents' comments and the research constraints. They

introduce themselves happy in their responses and this is out of researcher's discretion.

This study also has some limitations as follows,

1. Failure to control the same locational conditions for the completion of questionnaires by subjects,
2. Another limitation of the research was the high number of questions in the questionnaire,
3. The history of limited research in Persian sources on the time perspective,
4. The desire of some students to exaggerate in answering some of the questions in the questionnaire to make a better figure of themselves.

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