

Stress and Happiness in Life of Students at Rajabhat University in Thailand

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Abstract

Background: Stress is related to happiness in student life, it is a condition in the body and stimulated to respond from inside and outside the body. The body or mind is out of balance, with each person showing different stress affects the happiness in life in each period of that person.

Objective: To examine the relationship between stress and the happiness of Rajabhat University students in Thailand.

Material & Methods: This research was contextual research by using a cross-sectional survey. The samples were students selected the sample group by stratified proportion random simple and not overridden using a random number table. The sample consisted of 190 students. The research instruments were self-reported questionnaires. The statistics used for data analysis were descriptive using inferential statistics to analyze relationships with static chi-square.

Results: The results of the research, most students have a high level of stress and rare happiness in life. The study of the relationship between demographic factors, stress, and happiness in students' lives found that level education and family income have a relationship to the stress and gender associated with happiness. Stress was associated with happiness at a statistically significant level of 0.05.

Conclusion: In this research, there are suggestions to study the cause of stress and ways to stress management and the factors that contribute to the happiness of students to enable students to continue living in quality teaching and learning

Keywords: Stress, Happiness, University students, Students' life

Introduction

Happiness is one of the essential outcomes of human life, and it is an important concept in social sciences.¹ Feelings of happiness enhance an individual's intellect, strength, and productivity.² Happiness is something that every human being desires. Since happiness is a good

feeling, having a life is something that a person wants to keep their feelings long-lasting.³ The contemplative education center, Mahidol university provided meaning to happiness, meaning comfort, joy, happiness perception of the positive emotions in mind due to the satisfaction with the expected living conditions.⁴ Causing a feeling of self-worth, positively causing the creation of things. There are many elements that cause happiness. It assesses a person's happiness based on their perception of emotional feelings. The assessment of thought happiness results in a person's satisfaction in various areas of life and creating positive or negative emotions.⁵ Identifying the factors deriving happiness has attracted many researchers across the globe. From

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exploring the national statistical office's happiness situation in the first half of 2020 using the mental health questionnaire among those aged for more than 15 years, it was found that the male had happiness.70.76% and female 69.47%.⁶ In addition, there are survey results in students was found that 68.70% of the students had a high level of happiness score.⁷

Nowadays, stress is found in people of all ages. The slightest stress can affect human life in the first place, and unable to use daily life not causing trouble in society.⁸ Good stress management affects happiness in life today because of happiness and enables that person to live happily in society.⁹ They can also provide advice and care for those with stress to manage their stress and have a higher level of happiness. Eysenck and Eysenck¹⁰ said that a group of people who have changed once in a lifetime have a stressful one. A group of secondary school students in the 6th year of study at the tertiary level.¹⁰ After students choose to study in different institutions, there will be many changes, such as transfer of schools, adaptation to university life, adaptation to friends, teaching adaptation, and doing activities.¹¹ A living life that requires a different life may result in students having stress.¹² In addition, teaching and learning make students take on greater responsibility. It could affect students' adjustment in tertiary education. In an educational environment, these stressors are likely to be of a long-term nature, inducing physical and spiritual tiredness that affects one's health and affecting one's perception of completing an assignment/project, finally deteriorating their learnability.¹³ Additionally, educational environments may change with the impact of new educational technologies that affect the students' stress level and learning abilities.¹⁴ These negative emotions are caused by the existence of sources of stress, or "stressors", in students' lives.¹⁵ In addition, many of students are facing challenges due to the pressure from their homes and parents to succeed.¹⁶ For example, the facilities for learning and teaching activities are inadequate.¹⁷

Stress refers to the condition in which the body and mind respond to stimuli from both inside and outside the body.¹⁸ As a result, there are changes within the body in both structural and chemical reactions to counteract that threat. Causing the physical and mental imbalance by dividing stress levels into four levels.¹⁹ Mild Stress

refers to a small amount of stress and disappears in a short time. Occur in everyday life, this level of stress is not threatening to lifestyle. Individuals have automatic sample adjustments. It's a kind of adaptation, and the adjustment requires little energy. It is a condition in which the body is relaxed. Moderate Stress refers to the stresses that occur in daily life due to threats or encountering important events in society; people will react in the form of anxiety, fear, etc., considered normal in general, not severe until causing harm to the body.²⁰ It is a stress level that makes a person more active. High Stress is the degree to which a person has been exposed to an event that causes high stress. Can not adapt to reduce stress in a short time considered in the danger zone. If not mitigated, it can lead to chronic stress and various diseases later. Severe Stress is a high level of stress that continues continuously that causes the person to fail to adapt to being bored, discouraged, exhausted, and unable to control themselves. The physical symptoms or diseases easily follow.

Happiness is a part of undergraduate students' university life in the transition from late adolescence to early adulthood. Therefore, the age that has been adjusted, for example, with changes in areas such as being in the environment and study atmosphere, differs from secondary school education, which affects life, activity, and work socialize. Living with other foreign origin students, there is parenting diverse thoughts and behaviors different to affect the way of black life and quality of learning.²¹ During at least four years of university life, the students are important and necessary at the university or manufacturing institution graduates must give important to the design of the learning system and facilities that facilitate life for graduates.²² In line with the association of higher education institutions, Thailand said that "higher education will focus on developing quality students to be both a good person and a good person life on campus is the happiest time of life, Because all students are in a bright age with brain power mind and body power for development.²³ Therefore encouraging students to be happy is most important because it is one of the factors of quality a good life and will result in the power to study and promote to continue to do creative activities in life for both oneself and society.

From the above information, it can be concluded that the level of happiness affects students' living. Student stress and proper stress management inevitably result in students being happy in teaching, resulting in students being interested in studying and participating in various activities. That students are happily interested and continue to be quality people of the country. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying the relationship between stress and these Rajabhat University students' happiness. The researcher sincerely hopes that the results of this study will benefit senior management or those involved in using the study as a guideline for improving students' quality of life. To have happiness and good quality of life in teaching until the end of the next course.

Objective

This study aimed to examine the stress and happiness in life levels, and to examine the relationship between demographic factors and happiness in life of university students.

Methods

Study Design

This research was explanatory research using a cross-sectional survey. To examine the stress and happiness in life levels, and to examine the relationship between those factors and happiness in life of university students.

Setting and Sample

The population was students at a Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University in Thailand. Which consists of Applied Thai Traditional Medicine Health Sciences, Traditional Chinese medicine, Secretary of Medicine and Public Health and Public Health enrolled in semester 1, the academic year 2020. There were 827 students and a sample number of 190 students.²⁴ The samples were students select the sample group by stratified proportion random simple and not overridden using a random number table for each subject. The questionnaire was distributed to students with a randomly selected list of students who had readiness and convenience in answering the questionnaire. Inclusion criteria were students in all five classes, years 1-4 registered enrolled in semester 1, the academic year 2020. Exclusion criteria

included students who are not comfortable participating in the research; they can cancel participation in this research at any time.

Instruments

The research tool was a questionnaire, divided into three parts:

Part 1: Questionnaire about happiness. Researcher, translation from Hills and Argyle.²⁵ There were used to measure the level of happiness. The questionnaire was a 6-Likert scale measure; there were 29 items. These are 17 positive questions, 12 negative questions. The respondents were the respondents themselves. Content validity determination, the researcher brought the tools to the three advisor experts to check the content validity, correctness of language, scoring criteria, and various recommendations have been made to correct them and used to experiment with students with similar characteristics was not a sample of 30 subjects Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.87.

Part 2: Questionnaire about stree from Department of Mental Health Stress Questionnaire (SPST - 20) contains 20 questions was a 5-Likert scale. Which has been revealed to the public developed by Suan Prung hospital, department of mental health. It has been revealed to be able to be used without breaking ethics and experimenting with students with similar characteristics was not a sample of 30 subjects Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.91. Stress is divided into four levels: a score ranged of 0 - 23 refers to the low-stress level, 24 - 41 refers to the moderate stress level, 42 - 61 refers to the high-stress level and score 62 or more points refers to the extremely high stress level.

Part 3: Personal factors were gender, ages, level of education, GPA, living, marital status, family income, income sufficiency of the student, source of income, and source of income contains ten questions. The respondents were the respondents themselves by checklist.

Data Collection

Data were collected by using questionnaires. Data were collected during 1 May – 1 August 2020. We used a convenience sample of 190 students who were willing to participate in the study. The participants then signed a consent form, and each student spent around

10-15 minutes completing the self-report questionnaires. Checked all questionnaires, and if an incomplete questionnaire was found, the participant was asked to complete the questionnaire. However, respondents who were not willing to participate could withdraw anytime.

Data Analysis

Analyze general data happy stress levels by descriptive statistics using frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, and inferential statistics. Analyze the relationships between personal factors with happiness in life, stress, and happiness with Chi-square. Statistical significance was set at <.05.

Ethical Consideration

The present study was approved by the Ethical Committee from Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University Ethics Committee certificate number: COA. 2-169/2020 and the directors of five faculties. Each participant received explanations about the study and had their rights protected throughout, including confidentiality

and the right to refuse or withdraw from the study. The participants also received information 160 sheets and signed a consent form.

Result

In total, 190 students, most of the students were female, aged 22 years, most studied in the third year with a GPA of 3.01-3.50, living at the most dormitory, thier parents marriage is together, and family income enough but not left to collect. The income sufficiency of student has enough but not left to collect. Most of the income source comes from parents, and most students do not take extra work.

The students had a mean score of 52.23 stress. Overall, most students have a high level of stress. The students had the highest stress level in the moderate of 85 students accounting for 44.70 percent. Then 53 students had a high level of stress, 27.90 percent of which was a low level of stress, 46 students accounting for 24.20 percent, and six students with the lowest stress level accounting for 3.20 percent (see Table 2).

Table 1: Number, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation of Student Stress (N = 190)

Stress level	Number	Percentage	Mean	SD
			3.10	0.80
Stress is low	46	24.20		
Moderate stress	85	44.70		
High levels of stress	53	27.90		
Severe stress	6	3.20		

From Table 2, students had the mean of happiness in life of 3.09 refer to rare happy, with the sometime unhappy in life 123 students representing 64.70%, followed by had happy 38 students of them representing 20.00%; some were not happy 25 students accounted for 13.20% and were unhappy at all, the least was one student accounting for 0.50%.

Table 2: Number, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation of Student Life Happiness (N = 190)

Happiness in life	Number	Percentage	Mean	SD
			3.09	0.64
Not happy at all	1	0.50		
Unhappy	25	13.20		
Sometimes unhappy	123	64.70		
Happy	38	20.00		
Sometime happy	3	1.60		
Always happy	0	0.00		
Very happy	0	0.00		

From Table 3, analyze the relationship between personal factors as follows: sex, age, year, GPA, shelter, their parent’s marital status, family income, the sufficiency of the money received each month itself, the main source of income, and extra work with happiness in life found that the age and marital status of their

parents has a relationship to the happiness in the life of the students. Their parents’ age and marital status affect the happiness in student life. However, sex, year, GPA, shelter, family income, the sufficiency of the money received each month itself, the main source of income, and extra work is no relationship with the happiness in student life.

Table 3: Relationship between personal factors and happiness in student life (N = 190)

Personal factor	p-value
Sex	0.69
Age	0.00*
Year level	0.98
GPA	1.00
Shelter	0.16
Father-mother’s marital status	0.04*
Family income	0.28
The sufficiency of the money received each month itself.	0.21
Main source of income	0.08
Extra work	0.08

* Statistical significance at level 0.05.

From Table 4 analyzed the relationship between stress and happiness in students' lives. It was found that stress was related to the happiness in the student's life, meaning that the students were having different levels of stress resulting in their happiness in life. There were also statistically significant differences at the 0.05 level.

Table 4: The relationship between stress and happiness in student life (N = 190)

Variable	p-value
Stress	0.03*

* Statistical significance at level 0.05.

Discussion

This research found that stress was associated with happiness and gender was related to happiness statistically significant at a level of 0.05. Overall, students have a high level of stress and sometimes unhappy.

Students had the most moderate stress levels. The students were stressed at a high level, and then stress is low and had the least severe stress levels, respectively. The teaching and learning system with a teacher advisor help give advice and counseling to students. Through various technology, channels are making it easier to reach students. These allow students to manage stress quickly and appropriately. Abiola et al²⁶ who found psychological distress due to academic stress among clinical students in a Nigerian tertiary institution. The authors identified academic stress as the highest in medical students, followed by allied-health students, and the least in those who are not in any of these two disciplines.

Most students were sometimes unhappy. Followed by happy, unhappy, and not happy at all, respectively. Happiness in life at the happiest and happiest level. Students were not happy in life at this level. Education level and family income had a relationship to the stress of the students not consistent with the research of there was no statistically significant difference in the perceptions of male and female students on the causes of academic stress among the students in higher education.²⁷

Gender has a relationship to the happiness in the life of the students not consistent with the research of

Ouiprasert²⁸ found that the age difference the happiness in life was not significantly different at 0.05 level. Aungkana²⁹ found that marital status does not correlate with happiness. Sawangphol³⁰ found that age difference had a no different effect on happiness at work. Consistent with the research of Ouiprasert²⁸ found that sex, marital status of parents, education level different there was a statistically significant difference in working happiness at a level of 0.05. Consisted study of Aungkana²⁹ found that age, work experience there is no relationship with happiness. The earlier empirical research on causes of happiness can be traced back to the work of Easterlin³¹ Scitovsky³² and Hirsch³³ These studies considered economic factors to explain happiness. The studies such as Wadsworth³⁴ emphasized socio-demographic factors to explain happiness. These studies explored the U-shaped relationship between age and happiness. Some other studies considered marital status,³⁵ success in education,³⁶ and physical health as causes of happiness.³⁷ Frey and Stutzer³⁸ argued that institutional factor such as individual's participation in political matters plays a vital role in the life satisfaction.

Analyze the relationship between stress and happiness. The research results were found that stress is related to happiness in life. Because stress is a condition in which the body and the mind are stimulated in response to stimuli coming from the inside and outside the body. As a result of anxiety unbalanced body or mind, with different expressions of stress, affect the happiness in life of each moment of that person. In line with research by Silva and Figueiredo-Braga³⁹ found that first and second-year students had lower stress levels than third and fourth years. Research by Norman and Goldberg⁴⁰ found that male and female students had different study stress. The female students had higher stress than the male students.

Conclusion

Most of the students are female, aged 22 years, mostly studying in the third year, with a GPA of 3.01-3.50, living at the most dormitory, father-mother's marriage Is together, family income is fair but not accumulated, the adequacy of the money the students received each month was sufficient but not the rest most of the source of income comes from parents. Most students do not take part-time work. Students had the most moderate

stress levels. Students are happiest in life at the level of unhappiness in life. The age and marital status of their parents had a relationship to the happiness in the life of the students, and stress is related to happiness in student life. Executive and educational administrators, the research results could be used as a guideline for stress management activities and increasing students' level of happiness to have a better quality of life. This study's results could be combined with the assignment of duties and responsibilities to senior students to organize a mentor system to help new students create a good image for the university in the future. In addition, the causes of stress should be studied thoroughly to prevent the occurrence of severe stress if it is caused by teaching and learning to suit the students further.

Research limitations

This research only studied students at one university should have studied at other universities to compare research results and apply the information to promote stress management happy creation to suit the students. In addition, the data was collected by using questionnaires alone. There should be more qualitative data collection, such as in-depth interviews, grouping, to confirm more quality quantitative research data.

Implications for Future Research

This research study examines the relationship between stress and happiness of life students. The results can be used as information to make students happy to reduce the stress that arises during university studies. The current teaching and learning system that focuses on student center and the application of technology to be used in teaching and learning reducing stress for students is therefore important for the university administrators to focus on. To make students happy in university studies and graduate with high quality. However, other factors that should be studied are the cause that promotes the students' stress, such as the environment, teaching, quality of teachers, and so on to know the cause of stress. These study findings will also help the academic staff and university management/administrators design and implement policies toward refining the teaching procedures in higher education. Moreover, this study would be of great value to academic staff and university administrators' academic stress and coping strategies.

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