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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A comparative investigation of some of the personality characteristics, emotional intelligence, DASS(depression ,anxiety ,stress) among the single and married students of the Payame Noor universities of Iran

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Abstract

The aim of the present research is a comparative investigation of some of the personality characteristics, emotional intelligence, DASS (depression, anxiety, stress) among the single and married students of the PayameNoor universities of Iran. For this purpose, 900 single and married students studying in the country (cities of Tehran, Karaj; Levasanat, Shahreray, Kermanshah, Ahvaz, Pakdasht) were selected as the sample of the research. By employing the multiple stage cluster sampling, students of junior college diploma, B.A, M.A, and Ph.D. courses were chosen. They responded to such questionnaires as 1.NEO Personality, 2. Grieves and Brad berry emotional intelligence, 3. Questionnaires on depression, anxiety and stress (DASS) as well as self- made tests about the inclination towards marriage. The analytical method of the data were conducted at two inferential and descriptive levels. The obtained results from the regression and correlation analysis indicated, there is a meaningful discrepancy between the neuroticism of the married and single people ($p=0/001$). The neuroticism degree among the single is higher than the married. However, in other personal indexes, no meaningful difference between the single and married students is seen. The difference between the single and married students at the DASS scale (depression, anxiety, stress) was meaningful. Also, there was a meaningful difference between the single and married students with regards to the emotional intelligence ($p=0/001$). The average rate of the emotional intelligence among the married students was higher.

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Introduction

Marriage is an act, engendering a bond between two sexes on the basis of permanent relations that requires making a social contract. It also, involves some legitimate physical relations. Marriage causes the person to be protected from different stress pressures and be kept away from the physical and mental illnesses. It should be mentioned, that a marriage leading to misfortune is a stress in itself that

brings about a burdensome mental pressure on the person, and increases the possibility of the nervous and mental illnesses. In general, the evidence indicates people lacking the social support are more prone to be afflicted with illnesses. Coronary diseases, cancer, seizure, liver infections, and blood pressure are among the causes of the premature deaths. These illnesses without exception are meaningfully higher in single men and women than in the married people. Marriage is the best way to secure such relations and interactions, that will

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eventually lead to the bodily and mental health (Azad, 1995). Marriage is a formal contract for accepting a mutual commitment to create a familial life so that, the marriage parties could very well be positioned in a clear and distinct direction. This contract is made by the consent and agreement of the wife and husband and on the basis of complete freedom of the two parties'. Under such circumstances, relations begin to appear, which are much closer. This contract of the mutual relations and bond is performed by means of proposal and explicit words called "contract" or the "act of marriage" (Bahrami and Aslami, 2009). In Navabinejad's opinion, (2001) marriage in legal terms refers to the consent and agreement of a woman and a man with matrimonial relations together in order to participate in life and to create a family according to the laws. Marriage occurs, when the physical and mental abilities of the afflicted people are minimized, and they lack a dynamic social and economic life to be in harmony with the circumstances (Navabi nejad, 2001). According to the definitions: a person who is married and has created a family, having a wife is called 'married', while the one who's not married, having no family is referred to as a single (Navabi nejad, 2001). Once stress arises, when people encounter with events that threaten their physical and mental health, Stress is assessed on the basis of the unpleasant social conditions, unpleasant events in life, and daily life problems. (Ghomashchi, 2008). Depression, feeling sadness, frustration, and disappointment about life followed by losing interest in most activities as well as disorders in sleeping, appetite, concentration and energy are the most common mental problems during adolescence years (Ghomashchi, 2008). Anxiety is the most prevalent response to a pressure factor, and is an unpleasant emotion, which is described by words such as "apprehension, uneasiness, stress, fear, feelings people often face at different rates" (Ghomashchi, 2008). Today, the rate of marriage has considerably been decreased. Some delay marriage to the extent that the vigor and excitement of the juvenile years almost disappear and the best natural opportunity of marriage is lost. Of course, this situation is subject to some different factors that are as follow: economic problems, hefty marriage portions and milk money, expensive dowries, rivalry, expensive marriage ceremonies, fear from poverty, having no clear future, disappointment about handling life in the future, prolonged education courses, the possibility of illegitimate relations and the lack of confidence in boys and girls towards each other (Sefidgaran, 2002). Dr. Sullivan of the University of New York holds the relationship between the soul and body is so strong and natural

that mental problems are represented in bodily illnesses. American scientists have claimed the possibility of the metabolic syndrome causing coronary diseases is twice as much in the single and divorced women than the women having a good joint life. An interesting research showed that the married women go on diet more than the single women do. They do this, because they attend to their health state more (Noroozi, 2003). From the perspective of the mental health, people who have been successful in their marriage suffer from mental illnesses to a much lesser extent. Hence, marriage could be a major factor to avoid mistakes and is a reason for bodily and mental health. In such away, the single are more common to visit psychiatry clinics. The single people, widows as well as the celibate are more likely to have premature deaths and this is the case for all the social structures of all nations. Researches have revealed, that the degree of depression amongst the single people are higher than the married people (Noroozi, 2003). Some of the factors including social participation, social support and social control reduce life threatening behaviors, while the marriage benefits lead to more economic welfare as well as the protection of the mental health state (Keyes, 2005). According to the conducted researches, each year in the United States, around 400,000 abortions occur by women under the age of 20, who are mostly unmarried adolescents? According to the researchers, the prohibition of marriage at different ages of sexual emotions in America causes sexual relationship at other ages outside the family to become normal. American scientists claim, it is estimated, that in the United States, 70% of the 19 year-old single women and 80% to 90% of the single men experience illegitimate relations. (Health department and Human care of the United States of America, 2004). The focus of the present research is to consider more comprehensively the fundamental issue of marriage among the Payame Noor students, who despite enjoying freer educational courses and having qualifications for marriage are still unmarried. This research is concerned with analyzing psychological problems of the single and married students. It aims to investigate the hypothesis which says there is a difference between the personality characteristics; stress, anxiety, depression and the emotional intelligence of the single and married students of Payame Noor.

Methodology

The aim of the present research is to investigate the difference between the personality variables; stress, depression, anxiety among the single and married people. The research is comparative (non-intervention). This comparative research deals with

how some of the characteristics and major psychological problems become prevalent among the single and married students of Payame Noor universities in 4 provinces of Iran.

Research Instruments

(NEO) personality five –factor Test: The NEO five-factor questionnaire (NEO-FFI) is a brief scale for measuring five major personality factors (McCrae and Costa, 1987). This questionnaire includes 60 items that measures the fivefold dimensions of a normal personality. These five dimensions are neuroticism, extroversion, empiricism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Each dimension includes 12 items. The subject is asked to determine their agreement or disagreement on a five-point Likert scale according to an understanding of themselves. Higher scores indicate higher neuroticism, extroversion, empiricism, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. The factors' validity coefficient was neuroticism 0/69, extroversion 0/64, empiricism 0/52, agreeableness 0/57, and conscientiousness 0/42 respectively. The two-week retest reliability of NEO-FFI was higher and it was reported for five scales from 0/86 to 0/90 (McCrae and Costa, 1987). Nilforooshan et al (2010) have reported the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0/76, 0/63, 0/31, 0/48, and 0/81 for these factors respectively.

DASS Questionnaire: Antony et al, (1998), discussed the said scale under the factorial analysis which the results again showed the three factors of depression, stress and anxiety. The results of this study revealed that 68% of the total variance of the scale is measured by these three factors. The specific values of the factors of stress, depression, and anxiety in the said research, were 9.08, 2.89, and 1.23 and the alpha coefficient for these factors were 0.92, 0.95 and 0.92 respectively. Also the results of the correlation estimation among the factors in the study by Antony et al, (1998), show a correlation coefficient of 0.48 between depression and stress, correlation coefficient of 0.53 between anxiety and stress and correlation coefficient of 0.28 between anxiety and depression. The reliability and validity of this questionnaire has been investigated in Iran by Samani and Jokar (2007) in which it was reported, that the retest reliability for the depression, anxiety and stress scale were 0.76, 0.80 and 0.77 while the Cronbach's alpha for the depression, anxiety and stress were 0.74, 0.81 and 0.78 respectively.

The Greives and Brad berry's emotional intelligence: With the studies conducted on the Canadian students, it was revealed that the Greives and Brad berry's emotional intelligence correlation

based on the Alexey Timia scale was 84% and the rate was 81% in a study by Khosrojavid (2002).

The self-made test on the inclination to marriage:

The internal similarity degree using the Cronbach's alpha method in a pretest in which 0.5 of the obtained population was employed is 0.84.

The statistical universe of this comparative investigation includes the single and married students studying at Payame Noor universities in Iran who have participated in the first cluster sampling method based on the same academic majors. For this purpose, 900 single and married students studying in the country (cities of Tehran, Karaj; Levasanat, Shahreray, Kermanshah, Ahvaz, Pakdasht) were selected as the sample of the research. By employing the multiple stage cluster sampling, students of junior college diploma, B.A, M.A, and Ph.D. courses were chosen. They responded to such questionnaires as 1. NEO Personality, 2. Greives and Brad berry emotional intelligence, 3. Questionnaires on depression, anxiety and stress (DASS) as well as self-made tests about the inclination towards marriage. In this research, the cluster method involves several stages, in such a way after all Payame Noor universities where the same majors were being taught (Humanities majors) were identified, several universities were chosen randomly through stage cluster sampling method. The reason, why 900 people were selected was due to the fact that, there were a variety of variables in the research including age, sex, major, academic years and semesters. Of course, some of them didn't respond to the questionnaire but 362 men and 395 women did. As a result the statistical analysis was performed on the respondents.

Findings

Table 1: The differences between the personality characteristics in the single and married students

Variable	Marriage status	Number of subjects	Average	Standard deviation	T degree	Df	Sig
Neuroticism	single	325	39.24	5.41	-6.144	755	0.000
	Married	432	41.75	5.65			
Extroversion	Single	325	37.62	5.80	0.602	755	0.547
	Married	432	37.87	5.59			
Openness	Single	325	37.75	6.37	-1.742	755	0.082
	Married	432	37.87	5.90			
Agreeableness	Single	325	35.74	6.06	-0.762	755	0.446
	Married	432	36.09	6.26			
Conscientiousness	Single	325	36.63	6.99	0.371	755	0.711
	Married	432	36.43	7.50			

As it is seen in Table. 1, there is a meaningful difference between the neuroticism of the single and married students ($p=0/000$). However, in other indexes (extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) there is no meaningful difference between the two groups of the students.

Table 2 : The difference between the single and married students on the DASS scale

Variable	Marriage status	Number of subjects	Average	Standard deviation	T degree	Df	Sig
DASS	Single	325	43.44	13.17	0.573	755	0.000
	Married	432	42.89	13.03			

As it is seen in Table.2, there is a meaningful difference on the DASS scale (depression, anxiety, stress) between the single and married students. According to the average, there is a high level of depression, anxiety and stress among the single students.

Table3: The difference of the emotional intelligence among the single and married students

Variable	Marriage status	Number of subjects	Average	Standard deviation	T degree	Df	Sig
Emotional intelligence	Single	324	89.37	13.31	5.405	754	0.000
	Married	432	94.15	10.98			

As it is seen in table .3, there is a meaningful difference between the marriage status and the emotional intelligence. Hence, there is a difference between the emotional intelligence of the groups of the students.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of the present research is a comparative investigation of some of the personality

characteristics, emotional intelligence, DASS (depression, anxiety, stress) among the single and married students of the Payame Noor universities of Iran. The results showed that there is a meaningful

difference with regards to neuroticism between the single and married students. However, in other components (extroversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness), there is no meaningful difference between the two groups of students. Also, there is a difference between the two groups concerning anxiety, depression and stress. The other results indicate that there is a difference between the two groups over the emotional intelligence. These results are in line with the Noroozi (2003), Keyes' (2005) researches as well as the findings provided by the Health department and Human care of the United States (1997). In general, it could be said the marriage problems are the most important problems, the young people are facing, whose effects are very well ingrained in different aspects of the society. Such problems delay the act of marriage and this delay is detrimental to the people and the society as a whole, resulting in the lack of flexibility, impatience and aggression of the people. Thus, the married people enjoy better mental health and this is one of the psychological characteristics associated with the marriage status which the researcher has dealt with. Since the married people possess different duties and responsibilities, they feel they are needed by others, and such a feeling prevents from nervous and mental disorders or reduces the possibility of such disorders. Because there is a meaningful difference between the single and married people with regards to the personality components, it can be said that there is either noneuroticism variable or a low degree of it among the married people. Since the married group have scored higher in other variables such as extroversion, openness and agreeableness, it can be said the results are in line with our hypothesis that such components and variables facilitate the interpersonal relations and marriage as a whole (Laura Berc, 2008). Because marriage helps to expand interpersonal relations and leads to increasing social support, and self-esteem, it should be said higher and positive social relations are one of the tolerance components regarded as protection against pathological problems including depression, anxiety and obsession and Based on the process that was explained, marriage could be a protection against depression, anxiety and stress. The results of the present research are in line with the available literature in psychology. The other explanation is that the emotional intelligence increases the intimate relations and the sympathy level among people, and acts as a facilitator to get people inclined towards each other, which in this research, it is represented in the married people. (Besharat, 2005).

The expansiveness of the statistical population and samples and the fact that only Payame Noor students

were employed were delimiting factors. It is recommended, that in the future researches, other groups of the society including single and married people (professionals, employees, housekeepers) be involved with greater samples at the national level.

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