The Relationship between Mental Health and Self-Esteem of the Female Students in Islamic Azad University of Ramhormoz

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between mental health and self-esteem of the students. The research statistical population consisted of all students in Islamic Azad University of Rāmhormoz in the academic year 2015-2016, of whom 210 people were regarded as the research sample using the random sampling method. Mental health questionnaire (SCL25) and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory were used for collecting data. The correlation coefficient was obtained as 0.818 and the significance level was obtained as 0.000 that is less than 0.05, indicating a relationship between mental health and self-esteem of students of Islamic Azad University of Rāmhormoz.

Keywords: Mental Health, Self-Esteem, Students

Introduction: Generally the health is a good physical, mental and social condition in the Articles of Association of the World Health Organization to which nowadays a lot of research is devoted (Abbasnia et al., 2012). World Health Organization (2005) define mental health as a state of prosperity that an individual can recognize their abilities and capabilities, handle everyday typical pressures, work fruitfully and advantageously, and be capable of cooperation with its own society. Sadeghi et al. (2011) believe that maintaining mental and physical health is one of the most important human tasks. Mohtashami et al. (2004) have identified five primary mental health maxims such as consideration and respect for self and others, recognition of the limits of self and others, knowing the fact that human behaviors are caused by other factors, knowing that behaviors of a person are related to his whole existence, and identifying the needs and triggers that cause human actions. One of the main objectives of the universities is to train specialized and skill full work force towards the actualization of social and economic goals and satisfaction of the needs of the community. Students, as important agents in educational system, are intellectual, smart, and pioneer of each society, which their entrance to universities is accompanied with emotion

and simultaneously with some problems (Asghari et al., 2013). In today's stressful world, mental health of people, especially students is in serious jeopardy. According to Hunt and Eisenberg (2010), Psychological disorders among students enrolled in universities as well as other members of society are rampant and their quantity and severity are increasing day by day. Some are very common mental disorders such as depression, and anxiety as well as a number of less common schizophrenia and bipolar disorders. Results of a survey by Mokhtari et al. (2012) showed that male students have a better mental health status in comparison with female students and seniors have a better mental health status in comparison with freshmen and finally 43 percent of females and 32.1 percent of male students and generally37.8 percent of students were suspected of mental disorders.

The concept of mental health and cognitive health is one of the aspects of the overall concept of physical, psychological and social health that despite the efforts of the mental health pioneers in the world in order to ensure good health for humans, there is no a firm benchmark in the full definition of mental health, yet. Mental health was welcomed in some schools of Europe and America after World War Input suspended particle size, however, after World War II and revealing the events of the horror, mental health with emphasis on quality of the relationships was seriously and profoundly considered by scientists, philosophers, physicians, experts, educators, clergymen and social sciences thinkers. Mental health needs healthy living environment in addition to a healthy body. The effect of the environmental factors on people and the strategies that people use to overcome the environmental conflicts are discussed in different psychological approaches based on the certain views on human nature and driving force of mental health; for example, some of approaches consider mental health as an ongoing process and others regard it in the form of norms and following social customs and others to two deal with both aspects. For instance, clinical psychology and psychiatry at the psychopathology have focused on normal people and believe that normality is equal to mental health (lack of disease symptom). But the current state of psychology in the world reveals psychologists' considerable attention to mental health concept as the lack of disease symptom (Nasrollahi et al, 2011).

All people, regardless of age, gender, cultural background, and their purpose in life need self-esteem. Self-esteem really affects all dimensions of life. In fact, various psychological studies suggest that, if self-esteem is not satisfied, the broader needs such as the need to develop or understand potential remains are limited. Remember that when someone praises you or when you successfully complete a project, what kind of joy you feel. People who feel good about themselves more likely feel good about life. They can confidently encounter with the challenges and responsibilities of life and cope with them (Islaminasab, 1997; Mohammadifar, 2015).

Most of classic and contemporary psychological theories agree that all people increasingly need self-esteem. In fact, since William James published his *The Principles of Psychology* to the most recent empirical studies on self-esteem, all assume that self-esteem determines the various behavior problems. New researches on the importance of self-esteem have developed theories of panic inhibitors. These theories were extended based on the

studies carried out by Baker (1973-1975). This theory states that self-esteem is one of the aspects of human personality that is of great value in mental world of the people and people keep their self-esteem through stabilizing the reality and live by internalizing the values which show their attitudes and views. This theory states that every person, increasingly requires self-esteem, because self-esteem is central to psychological aspects and protect him from anxiety and helps him to be aware of the vulnerability and mortality. Self-esteem plays a pivotal role in protecting the people from anxiety in primary individual interactions with parents, friends and society. In prima

In the early years of life, fulfillment of needs, affection and parents' protection form the basis of the self-esteem in children and gradually, when the good standards of parents are internalized, feelings of safety and security is formed, and self-esteem is established and gives peace to the person (Greenberg and Solman, 1999, quoted by Sokan, 2014). Noruzi (2008) examined the relationship between mental health and self-management and results showed that there is a significant relationship between mental health and self-esteem.

Judge et al (2011) investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health of students of the University of California using a Bar-on emotional intelligence questionnaire. The results showed that a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and mental health.

According to Ahadi (2009), there is a positive relationship between secure attachment style and self-respect, while there is a negative relationship between anxious-ambivalent attachment style and self-respect. There is a negative relationship between secure and avoidant attachment styles and feeling lonely and there is a positive relationship between anxious-ambivalent attachment style and feeling lonely. Findings of a research by RahimianBougar et al. (2008) suggested that there is significant positive relationship between secure attachment style and public health and there is a significant negative relationship between anxious-ambivalent attachment style and public health. People with avoidant attachment style mostly use emotion-oriented coping strategy in stressful situations (Mandal et al., 2010). The results of Ghazanfari et al. (2008) showed that there is a significant relationship between mental health and coping strategies.

Research question:

Is there any relationship between self-esteem and mental health of the students of Islamic Azad University of Rāmhormoz?

Research hypothesis: There is a relationship between mental health and self-esteem of the students of Islamic Azad University of Rāmhormoz.

Research objective: This study aimed to show the relationship between mental health and self-esteem of the students.

Method: The statistical population of the study consisted of all students of Islamic Azad University of Rāmhormoz in the academic year 2015-2016, and 210 students were selected as the research sample using the random sampling method.

Research tool:

Mental health questionnaire or Symptom Checklist -25 (SCL25): In this study, SCL-25 mental health questionnaire extracted by Najarian and Davoodi (1992) using factor analysis of the SCL-90-R scale was used. Preliminary studies have shown high correlation of SCL-25 and SCL-90-R scale and confirmed that it is a reliable and valid scale to measure general psychological harm. The scale is the multiple-choice and is scored from none = 0; little = 1; somehow = 2; much = 3; and severely = 4. The maximum score that can be achieved is 100 and minimum score is zero. This scale with 24 items has eight dimensions of physical complaints, obsession or compulsion, irritability in personal interactions, depression, anxiety, phobic anxiety, paranoid thoughts, psychosis and an extra question that cannot be classified in any of factors but is calculated in the total score. Reliability coefficients were retested in a sample of 312 university students of Shahid Chamran University after five weeks; it was 0.78 for total sample, 0.77 for women and 0.79 for men (Taghavi, 2001). In the present study, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.95.

Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory: This inventory was developed by Coopersmith (1967) based on the revision proposed by Daymond (1954). This scale discusses self-esteem of the children and adolescents in four areas: social dimension, academic dimension, family, and self-esteem. It consists of 58 items and four main subscales as well as a lie detector that as follows: General Self-Esteem Scale (26 items). One of the studies confirmed its reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient as 0.81 that was statistically significant. Its reliability was also obtained as 0.79 by Bayangard (1992). Its reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained as 0.75 in this study.

Result:

Research hypothesis: There is a relationship between mental health and self-esteem of the students.

Table 1: the simple correlation coefficients between mental health and self-esteem of the students

Independent variable	Dependent variable	Statistical index		
		correlation coefficient (r)	Significance level (p)	number
Mental health	Self-esteem	0.818**	0.000	279

As shown in Table 1, correlation coefficient was obtained as 0.818 and the significance level was obtained as 0.000 that is less than 0.05, therefore, there a relationship between mental health and self-esteem of students of this university; so that as the mental health increases, self-esteem increases, too.

Discussion and conclusion: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between the mental health and self-esteem of the students. Correlation coefficient was obtained as 0.818 and the significance level was obtained as 0.000 that is less than 0.05, therefore, there a relationship between mental health and self-esteem of students of this university; so that as the mental health increases, self-esteem increases, too. The results of this study are

consistent with those of Noruzi (2008) and Judge et al (2011). Mental health is an overall concept of health and the World Health Organization defines health as 'state of full physical, psychological, social health and lack of disease or disability.' Some assumed that mental illness is opposite the mental health, however, it is not true and concept of mental health is much broader than this. Mental health and self-esteem influence different issues and social factors. To this end, mental disorders is more prevalent in some social groups; for example, issues such as social class, lifestyle, location, poverty, unemployment and migration affect mental health. People based on their amount of income are classified into three upper, middle and lower classes and this social classification affects the quality of life. People who live in low classes of society have lower income and suffer from more problems such as poor housing, poor nutrition, child labor, unemployment, lack of suitable entertainments, lack of timely access to health services and dozens of problems that affect their mental health and self-esteem (quoted by Rahimian, 2014). A high number of studies have shown that there is a high correlation between power and increasing the mental illness and reducing self-esteem (Golstman 1991). In other words, people who live in lower socio-economic class may more suffer from mental illness (Richari, 2005, quoted by Asl-e Shahraki, 2008).

Research limitations:

1- This study was carried out on students of Islamic Azad University of Rāmhormoz, thus, generalizations to other universities in different spatial and temporal conditions should be cautiously carried out because of the various climatic conditions and cultural aspects.
2- In this study, the self-report questionnaire was employed for data collection. It should be noted that these tools cause limitations, too.

Suggestions:

1- Further studies can be similarly performed in other cities however with larger sample sizes.
2- It is recommended to use other methods and tools for data collection such as interviews in order to investigate or evaluate the research variables, especially personality type.
3- Further workshops should be hold to promote social self-esteem.

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