

A Study on the Influence of Parents' Educational Levels on College Students' SWB

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Abstract: Along with social economic development and social science progress, education has gradually been a tool of people to obtain means of substance and livelihood. Among so many influencing factors of SWB, parents' educational level is one of the key objective indicators to measure their children's well-being. Therefore, this research tries to carry out a case study of college students in NEUST and have an empirical test on the relation between parents' educational level and their children's SWB, so as to provide the basis and reference for student management.

Keywords: College Students; Parents' Educational Levels; Subjective Well-being

1. Introduction

Subjective well-being ("SWB" for short) specially refers to the evaluator's overall assessment on life quality according to his/her own standards. The individuals who have higher degrees of satisfaction with overall life quality will have more positive and less negative emotions, and thus have stronger sense of well-being. SWB has been paid more attentions in mental health education since very long time and is regarded as a significant indicator of mental health. Therefore, it's a key subject to study the influencing factors and formation mechanism of SWB, for the purpose of giving better play to its positive effects in social and individual development.

Along with social economic development and social science progress, education has gradually been a tool of people to obtain means of substance and livelihood. Considering the increasingly prominent significance of education and people's pursuit of eternal well-being, many scholars at home and abroad have studied on the relation between the two. Among so many influencing factors of SWB, parents' educational level is one of the key objective indicators to measure their children's well-being. However, so far there's not any consensus in the theoretical cycle. Therefore, this research tries to carry out a case study of students in our school and have an empirical test on the relation between parents' educational level and their children's SWB, so as to provide the basis and reference for student management of the school.

2. Statement of the problems

Scholars have had massive researches and studies on SWB, and the vast research literatures show there have been abundant achievements with great effects on human development and social progress. However, by reflection, there're still some problems left:

(1) In relevant previous researches, household income, parents' occupations and educational levels are integrated into a comprehensive indicator (objective socioeconomic status) to discuss the relation with SWB. In this way, the family's education, property and social status and reputation are converted into one value which is general, so the influence of each of the factors on SWB cannot be recognized.

(2) Some researches show that parents' educational level may directly predict SWB (Catherine and Marieke, 1997; Luca Stanca, 2009; etc.), while some other scholars have completely opposite conclusions, and they thought maybe it was because people with

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higher educational level have higher expectations for their children, but the large gap between reality and expectation would lead to low level of SWB.

3. Significance of the study

This research is carried out to further verify the influence of parents' educational level on students of the school, so as to provide the administrative department with effective references for the convenience of making policies and offer beneficial suggestions for students to enhance their SWB.

4. Scope and delimitation

This research takes college students for study, investigates on the basic conditions of their SWB through general well-being schedule ("GWB" for short), determines the parents' educational background and relevant information based on their family information, and discusses about the influence of parents' educational level on college students.

5. Definition of terms

SWB is the evaluator's overall assessment on life quality based on his/her own standards, including three parts of life satisfaction, positive and negative emotions. Life satisfaction refers to the individuals' cognitive appraisal on overall quality of their lives, i.e. their judgment on life quality in general; positive emotion refers to positive emotional experience, such as being optimistic, happy, self-respecting and gregarious; negative emotion refers to negative emotional experience, such as being depressed, anxious and nervous.

In this research, parents' educational level shall refer to the highest level of education among the two parents, and is further classified into four grades of "College Degree and Below", "Bachelor's Degree", "Master's Degree" and "Doctor's Degree".

6. Methodology

6.1 Research design

6.1.1 Purpose and contents

This research takes college students of Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (NEUST) as object, investigates on the basic conditions of their SWB through GWB, and discusses about the influence of parents' educational level on college students based on family information and parents' education background. So the main contents are as follows:

- (1) Learn about the basic conditions of college students' SWB and discuss about the differences of SWB in terms of demographic variables;
- (2) Discuss about the relation between parents' educational level and college students' SWB.

6.1.2 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Father's educational level has obvious influence on college students' SWB;

Hypothesis 2: Mother's educational level has obvious influence on college students' SWB;

Hypothesis 3: Both father's and mother's educational level have obvious influence on college students' SWB.

6.2 Population and sample

Stratified sampling was adopted to pick out 100 college students of NEUST, and 100 questionnaires were recovered with 91 valid ones and effective recovery rate of 91% .

6.3 Instrument used

(1) Variables setting

Independent variables in this research are parents' educational level, which are divided into groups and assigned with values according to the results of investigation and statistics. There're four grades of "College Degree and Below", "Bachelor's Degree", "Master's Degree" and "Doctor's Degree" from low to high educational level of parents marked with numbers from 1 to 4, and the higher value of number indicates higher level of education.

General Well-Being Schedule is a customized measurement tool for National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), which is used to evaluate testee's SWB based on his/her statements on happiness. It contains 33 items, and Duan Jianhua made some revise in 1996. He used the first 18 items to have tests and the results showed the correlation of scores of individual item and total scores is between 0.49 and 0.78, and that of sub-schedule and complete schedule is between 0.56 and 0.88; coefficient of internal consistency of male is 0.91 and female is 0.95.

(2) Analysis tools

Correlation analysis: It is the statistical analysis technique to study the correlativity of two and more random variables on an equal footing. In this research, it is used to reflect the influence of parents' educational level on well-being of the testers.

Double factor variance analysis: There're two types of it - double factor variance analysis without and with mutual effect. In

the first case, it makes the hypothesis that factor A and factor B have mutually independent effect and have no interrelation, and in the second case, it makes the hypothesis that factor A and factor B will have a new effect upon combination. In this research, double factor variance analysis with mutual effect is adopted, i.e. the combination of both parents' educational levels will have influence on their children's well-being.

6.4 Procedure of the study

The data collected were process with SPSS24.0 after manual entry and check. T-test and ANOVA were used to test the differences of demographic variables in terms of SWB, and double factor variance analysis was used to study the relation between parents' educational level and SWB.

To avoid the deviation due to man-made co-variation of predictive variable and criterion variable caused by data sources or graders, the same test environment, project context and characteristics of the project, in this research tests were mainly conducted in the way of anonymity, and so the names of testers were unknown to protect their privacy; subjective reports were used for SWB, and the generally used Likert method for scoring.

6.5 Statistical analysis

6.5.1 Descriptive statistical results of variables

Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were conducted for variables in this research, and the results are shown in Table 1. It can be seen that both father's and mother's educational levels have positive correlation with the students' subjective well-being.

Table 1. Correlation Matrix

		Scores of well-being	Your father's educational level	Your mother's educational level
Correlation	Scores of well-being	1.000	0.289* *	0.164*
	Your father's educational level	0.289* *	1.000	0.561
	Your mother's educational level	0.164*	0.561	1.000
Significance (one-tail)	Scores of well-being		0.001	0.014
	Your father's educational level	0.001		0.000
	Your mother's educational level	0.014	0.000	

Note: * indicates the significance on the level of 0.05 and * * the significance on the level of 0.01.

6.5.2 ANOVA

(1) Double factor variance analysis of gender and major Double factor variance analysis was adopted to test the differences of SWB due to gender and major, and the results are shown in Table 2. It indicates no obvious main effect of gender and major, which means gender and major show no obvious difference for SWB, and the data are respectively $F= 1.320, p= 0.274 > 0.05$, $F= 1.036$, and $p= 0.432 > 0.05$.

Table 2. Inter-subject Effect Test of Gender and Major

Dependent variable: Scores of well-being

Source	Category-III sum of squares	Variance	Mean square	F	Significance
Modified model	1438.982 ^a	20	71.949	1.220	0.265
Intercept	77933.677	1	77933.677	1321.534	0.000
Your gender	155.719	2	77.860	1.320	0.274
Your major	977.098	16	61.069	1.036	0.432
Deviation	4128.051	70	58.972		
Total	46896.000	91			
Total after modification	5567.033	90			

a. R-square = 0.258 (after modification, R-square = 0.047)

(2) Double factor variance analysis of both parents' educational levels Double factor variance analysis was adopted to test the differences of SWB due to both parents' educational levels, and the results are shown in Table 3. It indicates no obvious individual main effect of both father's and mother's educational levels, which means father's and mother's educational levels show no obvious difference for SWB individually, and the data are respectively $F= 0.552, p= 0.648 > 0.05$, $F= 0.124$, and $p= 0.946 > 0.05$.

However, the combined effect of father and mother would have influence on SWB, as shown by $F= 4.163$, and $P= 0.045 < 0.05$.

Table 3. Inter-subject Effect Test of Parents' Educational Levels

Dependent variable: Scores of well-being

Source	Category-III sum of squares	Variance	Mean square	F	Significance
Modified model	578.716 ^a	7	82.674	1.376	0.227
Intercept	49756.609	1	49756.609	827.894	0.000
Your father's educational level	99.483	3	33.161	0.552	0.648
Your mother's educational level	22.372	3	7.457	0.124	0.946
Your father's educational level * your mother's educational level	250.184	1	250.184	4.163	0.045
Deviation	4988.317	83	60.100		
Total	468996.000	91			
Total after modification	5567.033	90			

R-square = 0.104 (after modification, R-square = 0.028)

7. Test of hypothesis

Normality test: The research results show that college students' SWB scores present normal distribution, with 15 having scores above 80, 18 below 65, and 57 between 65 and 80, which accounts for 62.6% of the total. This indicates the college students generally have good conditions of well-being and only a few of them are distributed at high or low levels.

Homogeneity test of variance: Equal variance is one of the premises of double factor variance analysis, and according to Levin equality test results with the use of SPSS (as indicated in Table 4, the significance is $0.675 > 0.05$, which indicates the sample data conform to the requirements of homogeneity of variance, and thus double factor variance analysis could be adopted.

Table 4. Levin Equality Test of Error Variance^a

Dependent variable: Scores of well-being

F	Variance 1	Variance 2	Significance
0.697	7	83	0.675
Test the hypothesis that "error variances of dependent variables of each group are equal".			
a. Design: Intercept +Your father's educational level +Your mother's educational level +Your father's educational level * Your mother's educational level			

8. Conclusion

About the differences due to gender, there's no obvious difference of SWB due to gender, which means both male and female students have received good cares materially and spiritually. For all the time, most of them think they are happy, and there's no obvious difference of SMB for male and female students.

About the differences due to parents' educational levels, the joint educational levels of both parents have obvious influence on students' SWB and there shows the positive correlation. Parents with higher educational levels may probably create more favorable family environments, and at the same time, they probably have better parenting style. Therefore, they can not only provide a favorable environment good for nurturing and moulding their children's characters, but also exert direct influence on children as to their self-efficacy and emotions by virtue of their inherent value orientation, attitudes and behavioral habits, which is to the benefit of their children to have healthy mental, and thus their children have higher degree of satisfaction towards life. Meanwhile, such kind of parents can keep an eye on other aspects of their children besides of academic records, including physical conditions, mental state, moral quality, and so on. When parents pay close attention to the mental health of children, the children's positive mental quality could develop much better and so they can have more sense of well-being.

The suggestion for administrative department and relevant personnel of the school is to do a good job in the investigation and analysis on students' family background, pay attention to their parents' educational levels, give priorities to the students whose parents are of low educational levels, and take effective measures of enhancing psychological counseling or increasing special loves, so as to promote their SWB.

References

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