



Psychological well-being and academic performance of students in the career of nursing undergraduate

Bienestar psicológico y rendimiento académico de estudiantes de pregrado de la carrera de enfermería

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Recibido: 13 de marzo de 2020.

Aprobado: 29 de julio de 2020.

Cite this:

Ramírez-Coronel, A. et al. (2020). Psychological well-being and academic performance of students in the career of nursing undergraduate. *Espirales. Revista Multidisciplinaria de investigación científica*, 4(34), 1-13.

Abstract

This research study aims to analyze the relationship between psychological well-being and academic performance. A non-experimental design of a descriptive and correlational type was used. The sample of participants was 300 university students (61 men and 239 women) in the undergraduate program of nursing at the Universidad Católica de Cuenca, Azogues, with an average age of 22 years. The Psychological Welfare Scale, a Likert type test, was applied, consisting of 65 items. It was administered individually and the following stages were assessed: Subjective Psychological Welfare, Material Welfare, and Work Welfare. The results indicated that the greater their psychological well-being the better their academic performance.

Key words: Academic performance, psychological well-being, university students.

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Resumen

En este estudio investigativo se pretende analizar la relación entre bienestar psicológico y rendimiento académico. Se utilizó un diseño no experimental de tipo descriptivo y correlacional. La muestra de participantes fue de 300 estudiantes (61 hombres y 239 mujeres) universitarios del pregrado de la carrera de enfermería de la Universidad Católica de Cuenca sede Azogues, con una media de edad de 22 años. Se aplicó la escala de bienestar psicológico, prueba tipo Likert, constituida por 65 ítems. Su administración fue de manera individual y se valoró los siguientes estadios: bienestar psicológico subjetivo, bienestar material, bienestar laboral. Los resultados indicaron que a mayor bienestar psicológico mejor será su rendimiento académico.

Palabras clave: rendimiento académico, bienestar psicológico, estudiantes universitarios.

Introduction

Academic performance (AP), according to Novaez (1986), is the set of grades obtained by the person in activities of an academic nature. For Ryff and Keyes (1995) the AP is the result achieved from the educational process, which has previously been set out with its learning objectives and purposes. For this reason, "The AP is a set of skills linked to affective factors" (Velásquez et al., 2008, p. 143). The competencies proposed are those that reflect positive responses to the educational objectives set (Ryff, 1989). Therefore, the competencies acquired are those that will reflect the level of goals achieved by students according to the objectives set out in the curriculum.

On the other hand, Navarro (2003) mentions that the AP is the ability to measure the learning acquired in the educational process or program, in short, the AP is the result of academic or educational stimuli (Cooke et al., 2006). AP is the capacity of the student to acquire the objectives established in the teaching and learning process, which makes it possible to verify the level obtained by the individual (Rodríguez, Fita & Torrado, 2004).

High levels of motivation for learning are necessary to achieve excellent academic performance (Bray & Born, 2004). The relationship that students in educational establishments have with the perception of psychological well-being is related to the study of the purposes that they

project towards significant learning and, in turn, they consider the fulfillment of academic goals (Correa, Cuevas & Villaseñor, 2017).

AP can be affected by numerous variables. In the study carried out by Aliaga (2001) at the Universidad Nacional de San Marcos in the city of Lima-Peru, he affirms the relationship between motivation and learning strategies. Later, Robles and Páez (2003) affirmed in his investigation that the AP and the personality traits do not exist a significant relation. According to the study by Velásquez et al. (2008), they stated that in both women and men, there is a positive correlation between psychological well-being and assertiveness.

On the other hand, psychological well-being in most cases is characterized by life satisfaction or state of happiness, it is also identified as quality of life, which contains behavioural competencies, external environment contexts, beliefs and options about the satisfactions received (Castro & Casullo, 2001).

In the traditional studies of the psychological well-being two links have been called: one linked to happiness as a predictor of life satisfaction and one linked to potential development (Velásquez et al., 2008).

The Psychological well-being is illustrated as the level at which an individual judges his life as a whole in favorable terms (Morales & González, 2014). According to Diener (1994) he affirms the association of GS with positive mood, high self-esteem and low depressive symptoms. On the other hand, Castro (2010) establishes that psychological well-being contains three basic components: cognitive component, negative component and positive component. In order to produce the psychological well-being, it is necessary to link: cognitive judgment (directed to the goals set) and behavior (about objectives and purposes).

The individual with high levels of psychological well-being is capable of achieving the proposed goals, which will provoke happiness and satisfaction (Barrón et al., 2002; Bermúdez, Álvarez & Sánchez, 2003; Vivaldi & Barra, 2012; Correa, Cuevas & Villaseñor, 2017). The element that determines the RA is the BP (Morales & González, 2014).

Álvarez (2007) mentions that in university students there is a level of complexity in both the adaptation process and the procedure for staying in the academic program; and the factors that predominate in the academic environment are the following: psychological well-being, family dynamics, emotional intelligence, self-concept and self-esteem.

Previous research indicates that university students between the ages of 18 and 29 show a high level of self-acceptance (García, 2013). While university students between the ages of 30 and 55 show a high degree of self-acceptance, personal growth and mastery of their surroundings.

There are also several studies that investigate the correlation between psychological well-being and other factors that determine the life of a university student such as anxiety (Moreno & Moreno, 2016), stress (Matalinares et al., 2016), religious orientation (García & Bernabé, 2013), social support (Rodríguez, 2014) and the couple's relationship (Arias, Navarrete & Flor, 2013).

In the approach of the problem around the correlation of the academic performance and the psychological well-being, knowing that the AP is the result of the qualifications obtained in the process of teaching and learning and the psychological well-being is the state satisfaction or happiness, in this investigation it will be determined if a significant relation exists between the variables mentioned in the in undergraduate students of the career of infirmary of the Universidad Católica de Cuenca.

The general objective of this research is to analyze the relationship between psychological well-being and academic performance in undergraduate nursing students at the Universidad Católica de Cuenca, Azogues. And, the hypothesis that is raised in this study is to establish if the undergraduate students of infirmary to greater psychological well-being greater academic yield.

Materials and Methods

A non-experimental, descriptive, correlational, quantitatively oriented study was conducted to analyze the relationship between academic performance and psychological well-being. The population is 490 undergraduate students of the nursing career and we worked with a sample of 300 students (61 men and 239 women), to determine the sample we applied the formula of finite populations, then we carried out a non-probabilistic sampling. The criteria for inclusion are the following: students from the Universidad Católica de Cuenca, Azogues campus, undergraduate students in the career of Nursing, and students who have agreed to complete the survey. And as Exclusion Criteria are the following: students from other Universities, students who do not belong to the Nursing career, people who do not wish to participate in the research.

The instrument used was the following: The Psychological Welfare Scale (Sánchez-Cánovas, 2013), Likert type, constituted by 65 items, its administration or application is individual and its answers from 1 = "totally disagree" to 6 Totally agree, the following stages: Subjective Psychological Welfare, Material Welfare, Work Welfare and Relationship with the Couple. These subscales can be applied separately (except for the first two, which will always be applied together) or together. In this way, the PBS allows to obtain in a quick and brief way a specific evaluation of the level of general happiness of the person and the level of satisfaction with their economic income and material goods, with their work and with their relationship with their partner, all of which are intimately related to the general psychological well-being of a person. And, for academic performance, the final grade of each student was requested.

The following procedure was carried out: in the first instance, a meeting was held with the director of the nursing degree at the Universidad Católica de Cuenca, Azogues campus, in order to request permission to carry out this investigation. Then, the final grade (overall grade) of the educational process of all the students who are studying the undergraduate degree in nursing was requested, and with this, the AP of the student body was obtained. The Psychological Well-Being Scale was then administered individually in a quiet environment. It was run in an individualized session with a duration of 30 minutes per participant. Finally, the informed consent was signed and presented with the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality.

A descriptive analysis of frequencies and percentages was established and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was applied to demonstrate the distribution. Subsequently, the correlation analysis between the variables with the Spearman's Rho correlation was performed, since this test is adequately vigorous in the face of apparent non-parametric compliance. For the analysis of the data we used the SPSS version 26 statistic with original license (N/S:59326190518).

Results

Of the 300 students who conducted the survey, 61 students were men, worth 20 per cent, while the number of women who conducted the survey was 239, belonging to 80 per cent of the total students. The female sex predominated with a percentage of 79.7 per cent, while the male sex had a percentage of 20.3 per cent. In terms of age, the average was 22 years old, with a median and fashion of 21 years old. In terms of marital status, it showed that 67 % of the students surveyed were single; 17.7 % of students were married; 6.7 % were divorced and 8.7 % lived in a union. The highest percentage of psychological well-being is 49 per cent (149) of students have average psychological well-being; while 39.7 per cent (119) have high psychological well-being and 10.7 per cent (32) of students have low psychological well-being. Most of the academic performance is 61 % (183) have an outstanding average; 32 % (96) have a very good average; 1.3 % (4) have a good average and 5.7 % (17) have a regular average (Table 1).

Of most students, 90 % have outstanding academic performance and average psychological well-being; 74 % have outstanding academic performance and high psychological well-being; 53 % have very good academic performance and average psychological well-being; 35 % of students have very good academic performance and high psychological well-being; 19 % have outstanding academic performance and low psychological well-being; 9 % have fair academic performance and high psychological well-being; 8 % have very good academic performance and low psychological well-being; 5 % have fair academic performance and average psychological well-being; 3 % have fair academic performance and low psychological well-being; 2 % have good academic performance and low psychological well-being; 1 % have good academic performance and average psychological well-being and 1 % have very good academic performance and high psychological well-being.

Table 1. Psychological well-being and AP

		f	%
Psychological well-being	Under	32	10.7
	Average	149	49.7
	High	119	39.7
Academic performance	Regular	17	5.7
	Well	4	1.3
	Very Good	96	32
	Outstanding	183	61
Total		300	100

Source: author's own elaboration.

Table 2 of Spearman's Rho correlation shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between psychological well-being and academic performance, given that the p-value is .018; therefore, the alternative hypothesis is confirmed, that is, the greater the psychological well-being the better the academic performance (Figure 1).

Table 2. Correlations between psychological well-being, material well-being, work and academic performance

		Academic Performance
Psychologist	Spearman's Rho	.837*
	p-value	.018
Material	Spearman's Rho	.183
	p-value	.107
Labour	Spearman's Rho	.233
	p-value	.293
p-value <0.05		

Source: author's own elaboration.

Discussion and Conclusion

There are studies that show similar results as the one carried out by Carranza, Hernández and Alhuay (2017) in the city of Tarapoto in Peru, with psychology students, aged between 16 and 30 years, where the results showed a statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.01$). Another study is related to the previous ones by Velázquez et al. (2008) in Lima-Peru, with university students from the faculties of medicine, law and administration; the results showed that there is a statistically significant relationship in gender (male $p = 0.031$ and female $p = 0.01$); as for the faculties, in medicine the correlation between psychological well-being and academic performance shows a statistically significant relationship ($p = 0.03$); the correlation between psychological well-being and AP of the law faculty shows significant relationship ($p = 0.034$); the correlation between psychological well-being and AP of management faculty students similarly shows statistically significant relationship ($p = 0.13$); the correlation of youth and adults showed significant relationship ($p = 0.01$ and $p = 0.05$). This means that the good self-acceptance of the student affects the development within the university, this type of students demonstrates to have better relations with society, they persist and struggle to achieve their goals, they are able to solve problems without difficulties.

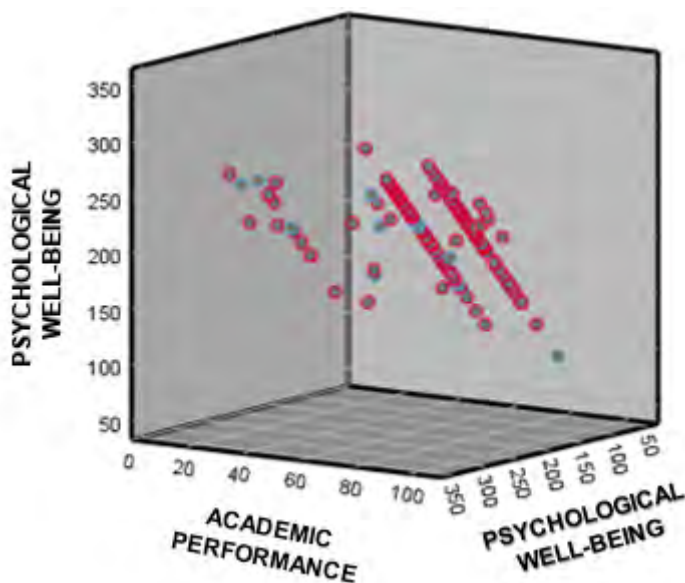


Figure 1. Dispersion between Academic Performance and Psychological Well-being. Source: author's own elaboration.

Similarly, a study conducted in Medellín, Colombia, by García (2014) proposes that psychological well-being and AP were evaluated and a statistically significant relationship was established given that the p-value was 0.03 with incidence in adults in the field of Engineering.

Another study is related to the previous ones, this one was conducted by Ferragut and Fierro (2012), a statistically significant relationship was established between emotional intelligence and AP with a p value of 0.04 in school students. On the other hand, Chávez (2006) in Mexico City, at the Universidad Iberoamericana de Psicología conducted a study of men and women where the results showed that there is no statistically significant relationship with a p value of 0.08 in men, but in women the correlation showed a significant relationship ($p < 0.05$). If a student is emotionally well, he or she will set goals and know what he or she wants for his or her future, so he or she will strive to have goals met.

With the results of this study, the hypothesis was confirmed. Based on this, the university authorities will believe it is pertinent to make decisions to be able to intervene in different ways in the resolution of psychological problems in order to rescue, maintain or potentialize capacities that influence the correct academic development of the students.

Future research could be directed towards the study of personal well-being and its relationship with emotional intelligence and social skills (Ramírez-Coronel et al., 2020); AP in relation to neuropsychological functions (Ramírez-Coronel, 2018, 2019), with anthropometric measurements (Ramírez-Coronel et al., 2020; Romero-Sacoto & Ramírez-Coronel, 2019; Romero-Sacoto et al., 2020). It would be interesting to ask, as other authors have done, whether an indirect relationship can be established between IQ and performance, mediated by the effects on psychological balance (Extremera & Fernández-Berrocal, 2003).

The study presents the limitation of having applied Perceived Emotional Intelligence tests, in this sense it would be interesting to be able to compare these results with measures of evaluation of the execution of this construct in addition to self-perception. This study carried out with university students of the nursing career showed results of a significant moderate relationship between psychological well-being and AP.

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