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A study of the rate of depression and its relation with dependency to others among university students

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays depression is a common disease increasing all around the world. Whereas almost half of those suffering from it are not aware of their disease or their disease is diagnosed as something else. Purpose: The aim of this study is to examine the rate of depression and its relation with dependency to others among the students of Tafresh Payame Noor University. Method: This study is conducted by descriptive-survey method. The statistical population consisted of 1000 university students (both male and female) and the sample volume with respect to Morgan's table was 278 people who selected by stratified-random sampling. 167 of them were female students and 111 of them were male students. In order to collect data Beck's depression questionnaire and questionnaire of dependency to others were applied. To analyse data independent t-test and X² (Chi-squared test) were used. Findings: The results of independent t-test showed that from the viewpoint of depression rate no significant difference exists between boys and girls and for purposes of emotional dependency a significant difference is observed between these two groups and among girls the mentioned point is more than boys. From the point of view of distrust no significant difference is declared among these two groups. Paying attention to

autonomy clarified that there is a meaningful difference between these two groups and this point in boys are more than girls. Also the results of X2 test showed that there is a positive relation between emotional dependency and depression and a positive relation is found between distrust and depression but there is no positive relation between autonomy and depression.

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1. Introduction

Depression is one the main factors causes disease and inability all around the world. It is actually an epidemic disease and induces considerable damages that influences both men and women (Patel V. 2001). Depression is one of the most common mental disorders which emerges as a global health problem in all cultures. There are few who never experience it in their life. Depression does not belong to a specific social class although specific groups are more prone to it due to their specific conditions. Life is full of ups and downs and excitement, however, when a situation lasts more than usual it may influence the individuals' performance and induce depression (Leibenluft , 1997).

Depression except medical problems and grief which is so common has different problems with itself. Person who suffers from it imagines that he/she is treated unjustly or he/she is rejected socially or he/she is hated by his/her own family. Sometimes the isolation associated with depression makes those patients who can be treated become far from the others or move toward death. Of course most kind of this disease are remediable (Mehryar,1993).

Nowadays the depression which is not diagnosed or is not cured is one of the main health problems. Usually for those who suffer from depression it is difficult to admit it or to ask for help. They may feel that they are sad and gloomy temporarily whereas they can enjoy the present remedies (Zarabi, 2002).

Depression is an important problem among university students as it can prevent their educational progress and success and it can also stop them from reaching to their special position. So in order to prevent the educational fall of students and increase their educational efficiency it is necessary to recognize the causes and factors influences on depression because a student can be active and creative when he/she is happy, hopeful, and responsible.

So the present study tries to examine depression and its relationship with dependency to others among the students of Tafresh Payame Noor University.

Now some of the researches conducted on this subject are being studied:

Ildarabadi et al., (2004) concluded in their surveys of outbreak of depression of students of Zabol University of Medical Sciences that 64.3% of the students suffered from different levels of depression, while it is less common among men comparing with women. No significant relationship was found between depression and gender.

Amani et al., (2003) conducted a study titled " A survey of outbreak of depression among Medical Sciences students of Ardabil University" and found out that 57% of the students suffered from different levels of depression and among them 64% of the cases were clinical depression (17<). In addition, the disorder was more rampant among the girl students.

Soleiman (1996) concluded in a research titled " A comparative survey of depression among students of Shahed University of Medical Sciences and students of Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences" and came to the conclusion that depression is more common among girls in Kermanshah University comparing with boys in Shahd University. In addition, depression was more rampant among male students of Medical Sciences of Shahed University comparing with that of the students in Kermanshah University. Furthermore, depression among girls in Shahed University was not significantly different with that of girl students in Kermanshah University.

Koushan and Vahedian (1996) performed a study named "Depression among the university students and mental/social factors in it" and reported that 40% of the students suffered from mild to moderate levels of depression (22.4% girls and 17.4% boys). Clearly, depression was more common among the girls.

Ahmadi (1992) completed a study titled "Rate of depression among students of Ahvaz University of Medical Sciences" and discovered that 52% of the girls and 38% of the boys suffered from mild to acute depression. Mean depression level of unmarried students was 10.42 and that of the married students was 7.97%. The findings indicated that 11% of boys and 20% of girls did not find the future promising. Moreover, 8% of boys and 7% of girls had thought about suicide.

In their study "Depression among the university students", Kaplan and Saduk (1998) reported that 186 cases (57.4%) of the participants suffered from depression and argued that life stresses can induce depression.

Godbey and Courage (1994) carried out a study named "Depression among students of Aghajan University, Pakistan" and came to the conclusion that 39% of the students suffered from depression out of which 20% of the cases had clinical depression.

2. Materials and methods

This study is conducted by descriptive-survey method. The statistical population consisted of 1000 university students (both male and female) and the sample volume with respect to Morgan's table was 278 people who were selected by stratified-random sampling. 167 of them were female students and 111 of them were male students. Standards for participating in this study include tendency to take part in the research and being a university student and standards for coming out of the research include occurring a stressful event like illness or any other event that influences the normal process of life and the function and behavior of a person negatively, rejecting to participate in the study and suffering from a disease or a mental problem or taking psychosis drugs. In order to analyse the data the descriptive statistics (frequency table, percent and diagram) and deductive statistics of independent t-test and X²(Chi-squared) test was applied that all was performed by SPSS software.

To collect information Beck's depression questionnaire and questionnaire of dependency to others were used.

Two questionnaires were used to measure the variables (dependency and depression). Beck's depression questionnaire including 13 statements was used to measure depression. Each statement can be scored 0-3 points and thus maximum score of the questionnaire is 39. Estimating the rate of depression is as follows: 0-3 = trivial; 4-7 = mild; 8-10 = moderate more than mild; 11-14 = moderate less than acute; 15-39 = acute. Regarding dependency, a questionnaire with 48 questions was used and with respect to this point that how exact they can reflect the abilities, feelings, and behavior of a person they can get one of these scores.

1= completely disagree; 2= disagree; 3= agree; 4= completely agree.

The test was comprised of three scales: emotional dependency to others, distrust in society, and autonomy.

Questions regarding emotional dependency are included:

3 -6 -7 -9 -12 -15 -16 -19 -22 -26 -33 -35 -38 -40 -43 -45 -47

Questions regarding distrust in society are included:

2 -5 -9 -13 -17 -20 -23 -24 -27 -30 -32 -36 -39 -41 -44 -46

Questions regarding autonomy are included:

1 -4 -8 -11 -14 -18 -21 -25 -28 -31 -34 -37 -42 -48

3. Results

In tables (1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8) the characteristics of variables in relation with the rate of depression, emotional dependency, distrust, and autonomy are discussed. Table 9 shows the conclusions of independent T-test, the difference between two variable groups in relation with the rate of depression that is mean depression level among girls is 8.28 and that of boys is 7.18. So there is no significant difference between girls and boys. In Table 10 X² test declares the relation between emotional dependency and

depression that as the calculated χ^2 (6.139), which is higher than critical χ^2 of the table ($\chi^2 = 5.22$) at tolerance level of 5%, and on the other hand the significant level of the test with the amount of 10% is less than 5% so there is a relationship between emotional dependency and depression at probability level of 95%. In Table 11 χ^2 test shows the relation between distrust and depression that because calculated χ^2 (22.985) which is higher than critical χ^2 (2.732) at $df = 5$ and on the other hand at the meaningful level of the test with the amount of 3% is less than 5% so there is a relationship between distrust and depression at probability level of 95%. In Table 12 χ^2 test indicates the relation between autonomy and depression that as calculated χ^2 (19.465) that is higher than critical χ^2 ($\chi^2 = 5.22$) at $df = 5$ and at the meaningful level of the test with the amount of 78% is more than 5% therefore there is no relationship between autonomy and depression at probability level of 95%. Table 13 shows the independent T-test in relation with the difference between girls and boys from the viewpoint of emotional dependency and depression that the emotional dependency among girls (48.74) is higher than boys (46.32). Therefore there is a significant difference between boys and girls regarding emotional dependency. Table 14 displays the independent T-test on the difference between boys and girls from the viewpoint of distrust in the society that perception of distrust in the society among girls is 38.71 and that of boys is 38.88. Therefore, there is no significant difference between boys and girls regarding perception of distrust in the society. Table 15 the independent T-test on the difference between boys and girls from the viewpoint of autonomy that autonomy among girls (31.95) is less than boys (34.24). Therefore there is a significant difference between boys and girls regarding autonomy.

Table 1
Frequency distribution and percent of the female students' answer on the rate of depression.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Trivial | 37 | 22.2% |
| Mild | 57 | 34.1% |
| Moderate(more than mild) | 30 | 18% |
| Moderate(less than acute) | 19 | 11.4% |
| Acute | 24 | 14.4% |
| Total | 167 | 100 |

Table 2
Frequency distribution and percent of the male students' answer on the rate of depression.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Trivial | 32 | 28.8% |
| Mild | 35 | 31.5% |
| Moderate(more than mild) | 20 | 18% |
| Moderate(less than acute) | 6 | 5.4% |
| Acute | 18 | 16.2% |
| Total | 111 | 100 |

Table 3

Frequency distribution and percent of the female students' answer on the rate of emotional dependency.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Much | 62 | 37.1% |
| Moderate | 99 | 59.3% |
| Little | 5 | 3% |
| None | 1 | 0.6% |
| Total | 167 | 100 |

Table 4

Frequency distribution and percent of the male students' answer on the rate of emotional dependency.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Much | 22 | 19.8% |
| Moderate | 85 | 76.6% |
| Little | 4 | 3.6% |
| None | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 111 | 100 |

Table 5

Frequency distribution and percent of the female students' answer on the rate of distrust.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Much | 7 | 4.2% |
| Moderate | 142 | 85% |
| Little | 18 | 10.8% |
| None | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 167 | 100 |

Table 6

Frequency distribution and percent of the male students' answer on the rate of distrust.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Much | 6 | 5.4% |
| Moderate | 91 | 82% |
| Little | 14 | 12.6% |
| None | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 111 | 100 |

Table 7

Frequency distribution and percent of the female students' answer on the rate of autonomy.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Much | 7 | 4.2% |
| Moderate | 118 | 70.7% |
| Little | 40 | 24% |
| None | 2 | 1.2% |
| Total | 167 | 100 |

Table 8
Frequency distribution and percent of the male students' answer on the rate of autonomy.

| Options | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Much | 9 | 8.1% |
| Moderate | 86 | 77.5% |
| Little | 16 | 14.4% |
| None | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 111 | 100 |

Table 9
Independent t-test on the difference between girls and boys regarding depression.

| Index / Statistic group | N | Ave. | St. deviation | St. error | T | DF | Critical T at tolerance level | | Sig. |
|----------------------------|-----|------|------------------|--------------|-------|-----|-------------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | | | | | | %95 | %99 | |
| Girl | 167 | 8/28 | 6/00 | 0/464 | 1/477 | 276 | 1/96 | 2/57 | 0/608 |
| Boy | 111 | 7/18 | 6/14 | 0/583 | | | | | |

Table 10
X2(Chi- squared) test on the relationship between emotional dependency and depression.

| χ^2 | Df | Critical χ^2 at tolerance level | | Sig. |
|----------|----|--------------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | %95 | %99 | |
| 26/139 | 12 | 5/22 | 3/57 | 0/010 |

Table 11
X2Chi-squared) test on the relationship between distrust in the society and depression.

| χ^2 | Df | Critical χ^2 at tolerance level | | Sig |
|----------|----|--------------------------------------|--------|-------|
| | | %95 | %99 | |
| 22/985 | 8 | 2/73264 | 1/6446 | 0/003 |

Table 12
X2(Chi-squared) test on the relationship between autonomy and depression.

| χ^2 | Df | Critical χ^2 at tolerance level | | Sig |
|----------|----|--------------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | %95 | %99 | |
| 19/465 | 12 | 5/22 | 3/57 | 0/078 |

Table 13
X2(Chi- squared) test on the difference between boys and girls regarding emotional dependency.

| Index / Statistic group | N | Ave. | St. deviation | St. error | T | DF | Critical T at tolerance level | | Sig. |
|----------------------------|-----|-------|------------------|--------------|-------|-----|----------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | | | | | | %95 | %99 | |
| Girl | 167 | 48/74 | 7/382 | 0/571 | 2/790 | 276 | 1/96 | 2/57 | 0/006 |
| Boy | 111 | 46/32 | 6/595 | 0/626 | | | | | |

Table 14

X2(Chi- squared) test on the difference between boys and girls regarding perceived distrust in the society.

| Index Statistic group | N | Ave. | St. deviation | St. error | T | DF | Critical T at tolerance level | | Sig. |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|---------------|-----------|--------|-----|-------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | | | | | | %95 | %99 | |
| Girl | 167 | 38/71 | 5/424 | 0/420 | | | | | |
| Boy | 111 | 38/88 | 6/006 | 0/570 | -0/246 | 276 | 1/96 | 2/57 | 0/806 |

Table 15

X2(Chi- squared) test on the difference between boys and girls regarding autonomy.

| Index Statistic group | N | Ave. | St. deviation | St. error | T | DF | Critical T at tolerance level | | Sig. |
|--------------------------|-----|-------|---------------|-----------|-------|-----|-------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | | | | | | %95 | %99 | |
| Girl | 167 | 31/95 | 6/244 | 0/483 | | | | | |
| Boy | 111 | 34/24 | 5/758 | 0/546 | 3/098 | 276 | 1/96 | 2/57 | 0/002 |

4. Discussion

As mentioned before the aim of this study was to examine the rate of depression and its relationship with dependency to others among the students of Tafresh Payamme Noor University. The students' rate of depression can be included as the basic index of their mental health thus a student who suffers from depression disorder may lose his/ her interest in educational subjects and feels idle. So when such conditions occur the students cannot be expected to do mental struggles purposefully and creatively. They become indifferent to the standards of their age which are ability, intelligent, health, attractiveness, and etc... and feel unable (Hemati, 2006). The results of the study indicated that:

- Majority of students (male and female) suffered from mild depression. This result is consistent with Iildarabadi (2004), Amani (2003), Soleiman (1996), Kooshan and Vahedian (1996), and Ahmadi (1992).
- Emotional dependency among the majority of the students (male and female) was at moderate level, although it was higher among the girls so that there was a significant difference between boys and girls in this regard. In addition, a positive relationship was found between emotional dependency and depression. That is, the higher the emotional dependency, the higher the depression. This result is consistent with Ganji (2002), Soltani (2004), Farabi (2006).
- Distrust among the boys and girls was at moderate level and no significant difference was found between boys and girls in this regard. Furthermore, a positive relationship was found between perceived distrust at the society and depression so that the higher the distrust, the deeper the depression. This result is consistent with Ganji (2002).
- Autonomy level of majority of the students (male and female) was at moderate level. However, boys enjoyed higher level of autonomy comparing with the girls and there was a significant difference between boys and girls. Moreover, no relationship was found between autonomy and depression.

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