

The Effect of Happiness on Various Aspects of Parenting and Positive Parenting



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Submission: April 23, 2017; **Published:** May 23, 2017

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of happiness as a crucial factor in positive psychology criteria on dimension of positive parenting. A total of 327 mothers of students provided usable surveys with age between 34 till 59 which selected randomly from seven zoon in Qom city. Results show that happiness explain 12 percent of positive parenting variance and 3 percent of uncertainty in dealing with child and happiness had a positive influence on positive parenting and negative on two the other variables. Effect of subject well-being, self-esteem and life satisfaction are statistically significant. Results and literature reviews in this paper indicates that happiness as a variable which can have an important role in parenting actions will cause positive parenting style in parents. With respect to positive parenting effects with entering happiness in family interactions, it can be possible to move toward positive parenting.

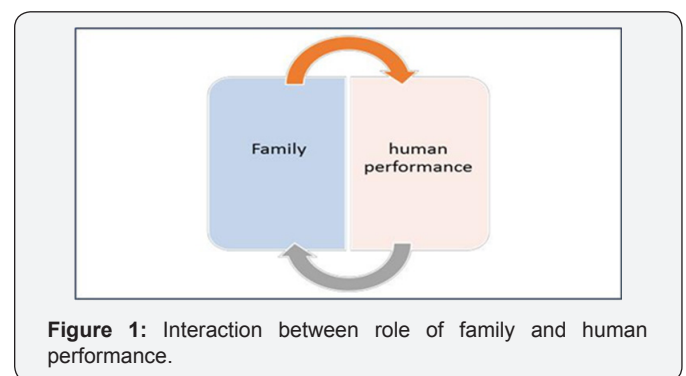
Keywords: Positive psychology; Parenting style; Positive parenting; Life satisfaction; Self- esteem; Well-being

Introduction

In the last two decades, positive psychology, with an emphasis on capabilities, positive personal and social life and gratitude, is of great interest [1]. Good and positive life in positive psychology is coping with unpleasant and negative emotional experiences (such as anxiety, depression and anger) by happiness in conscious experiences [2]. Researchers have introduced three different areas in context of positive psychology [3] first, optimal life is consist of positive emotion in past, present and future, second, life is include of using positive characteristics of individuals and three, meaningfulness aspect of life. Look at the more recently definitions provided in the case of positive psychology represents a move towards prosperity and flourishing. Later definitions of positive psychology emphasize “the scientific study of optimal human functioning” [4] and “the scientific study of the qualities and conditions that allow people to live a life worthwhile” [5].

Seligman with focusing on happiness reached to the wider concept of flourishing [3]. As indicated by Seligman’s late plan of positive psychology, prosperity (i.e., flourishing) emerges from fruitful quest for five endeavors or pillars: Positive feelings, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement [6]. Improving these five dimensions independently lead to

flourishing. Happiness (pleasant mental and emotional well-being) as one of positive emotions in mentioned model, is one of the fundamental concepts in positive psychology [7]. In the narrow sense, happiness can be viewed as positive emotional with satisfaction and from a broader perspective, individual assessment of the desirability and positive life is defined happiness [8].



Positive psychology as an oriented scientific and applied approach is the robustness of undiscovered and promote the human positive performance of various aspects human being [9] and naturally, family as the source of many human performances

affect and influenced by them. Enhance human performance in any field affected family status and vice versa enhance the role of the family in improving individual performance. This negative relationship can be considered quite the opposite and negative aspects. From the perspective of system thinking to most important mentioned cycle to improve the system improvement variables can be utilized. Happiness is an improvement factor which can use to enhance this cycle (Figure 1).

Previous researches have appeared that happiness is a critical marker of good physical and mental health, a positive mood, a good quality of life. Happiness is likewise connected with enhancements in physical strength, social connections, family association and mental functioning [10]. Happiness is a state that has three characteristics: the frequency and degree of positive affect or joy; the average level of satisfaction over a period; and the absence of negative feelings, such as depression and anxiety [11]. It is a multidimensional construct that involves of both cognitive and emotional elements [12] and depends on the psychological process, which is influenced by the interaction between individuals' psychological traits and the living environment [13].

Many years of exploration refer to the significance of parental association in advancing ideal child development [14] and Parenting styles as one of the important factors in the formation of emotional and behavioral disorders of children have always been a great interest [15-19]. As indicated by past studies, parental passionate backing is specifically identified with juvenile happiness [20,21]. Decades of research confirm familial links in mental illness, but little is known about the relationships between parents' and children's levels of positive emotions [22]. Amato revealed that emotional closeness to parents significantly predicted the happiness of the children and each of parents have their unique role to such happiness.

Parent's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors generate parenting styles. Child rearing and parenting styles are in interest in psychology. Almost two decade ago, outcomes of various researchers show that child rearing styles has significant effect on children performance [23-25]. Studies concerning parenting style is focused on three main fields: The first axis of researches have worked on parents-children emotional relationships, the second axis has pointed to the issue of parental behavior and finally the third axis is based on the parents' attitude. Emotional relationships between child and parents and parents' attitudes are more concern with theorists in the field of psychoanalysis and the second field which focus on parents' behavior is on learning and behavioral perspective [26]. The results of numerous research studies in this area suggest that most researchers based their study on behavior has studied the parents behavior in a bipolar framework. This kind of studying led to the notice to positive and negative sides of parenting styles.

Frick is one of the scholars who define the parenting style in both positive and negative aspects. In his definition, parenting has some subscales as positive parenting, physical punishment, poor monitoring, authority and parents awareness. According to the Frick, parents use of punishment or monitoring children's behavior in a different proportion. Positive parenting style in families and outcomes of the application of each of these behaviors are quite different. Positive parenting is the reasoning that parental endeavors to impact their children ought to limited to warm and supportive guidance [27]. Laura Markham [28] define it like this" Positive parenting-sometimes called positive discipline, gentle guidance, or loving guidance-is simply guidance that keeps our kids on the right path, offered in a positive way that resists any temptation to be punitive" [28].

Studies showed that the effectiveness of positive parenting in many types of developmental disorders and behavioral improvement in children has been approved [29,30]. Zubrick in a positive parenting program on 718 parents showed that after participating in this program in compare with control group, Significant changes made in authoritarian parenting style, emotional and behavioral disorders of children and parents and marital adjustment increased [31].

In this study, based on the impact of happiness on every dimension of life spin, we examined its effect on parenting style. In other words, we want to answer to this question which happiness translates in regards to parents and child-rearing? In this way, the following hypotheses were tested: (1) Happiness has effect on parenting sub-scales, (2) Happiness sub-scales have effect on positive parenting, (3) Happiness sub-scales have effect on uncertainty in dealing with child, (4) Happiness sub-scales have effect on poor monitoring.

Method

a.Participants

The participants were high school students in grades 10 through 12 recruited from one school located in Qom, Iran. A total of 327 mothers of students provided usable surveys with age between 34 till 59 (mean=39.15 and standard deviation=5.796) which selected randomly from seven zoon in Qom city.

b.Measures

i. Happiness: The Oxford Happiness Inventory [11]. This is a 29 item questionnaire, based on a seven point rating scale from (7) agree through to (1) disagree. It has a test-retest reliability (over four months) of 0.78 and a Cronbach coefficient of between 0.64 and 0.87. Some of the items are almost identical to the Beck Depression Inventory but reversed on content and it has sub-categories of personal achievement, enjoyment and fun in life, and vigor and good health, according to Furnham and Brewin. It has a reported validity of 0.43 with friends' ratings of happiness on a 10- point scale. It also correlates with positive

affect, life satisfaction, and depression at $r = 0.40$ to 0.60 . High scores indicate high state happiness.

ii. Parenting style: Alabama Parenting Questionnaire has been prepared by Frick. This scale has three different forms parents, children, and telephone interviews with children. The APQ has good psychometric properties including criterion validity in differentiating clinical and nonclinical groups. Frick et al. reported a mean r^2 across its five scales of 0.24 for predicting child symptoms of ODD and CD. Independent investigations have also shown the APQ to be an informative assessment tool.

Results

Prior to testing the hypotheses, reliability of measurement tools was determined by Cronbach alpha. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients are above 0.7 for all two constructs (0.73 for happiness and 0.79 for parenting styles). AMOS 20 was used to conduct all of the following structural equation model analyses, with Maximum Likelihood as the method of estimation.

a. **H1:** Happiness has effect on parenting sub-scales.

Structural equation modeling was applied to assess this assumption; model of happiness was considered as a

Table 2: Estimate effect of happiness on parenting sub-scales.

Variable	Path	Variable	R ²	Standard estimation	C.R	P-value
Happiness	→	Positive parenting	0.12	0.35	6.36	0.001
		Uncertainty in dealing with child	0.03	-0.18	-3.35	0.001
		Poor monitoring	0.00	-0.07	-1.22	0.221

According to table 2, effect of happiness on positive parenting and Uncertainty in dealing with child is significant ($P\text{-value} < 0.05$) but effect of happiness on poor monitoring isn't significant. In addition, happiness explain 12 percent of positive parenting variance and 3 percent of uncertainty in dealing with child. Further, happiness had a positive influence on positive parenting and negative on two the other variables.

b. **H2:** Happiness sub-scales have effect on positive parenting.

Table 3: Model Result.

Indices	df	Chi-square	CFI	PCFI	RMSE	Hoelter Index
Amount	10	2.39	0.99	0.55	0.06	249

This hypothesis testing was also completed through structural equation modeling. A first order equation was examined and model was supported by data. Assessment indices for overall structural model indicates that developed model supported data, in other words, fitted model is good.

first-order factor model and sub-scales of parenting and entered to the model as observed variables. The model provided acceptable fit to the data. Table 1 shows the model parameters (Figure 2) (Tables 1 & 2).

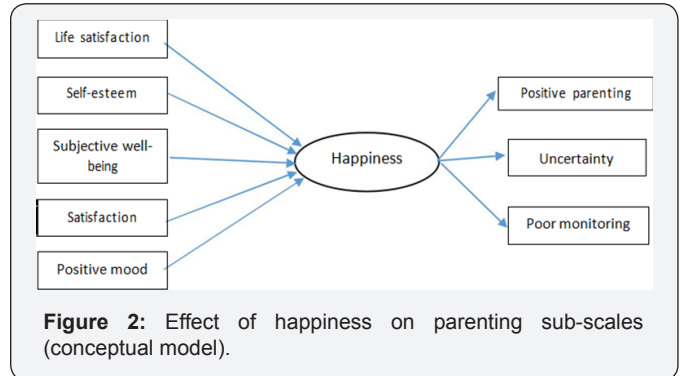
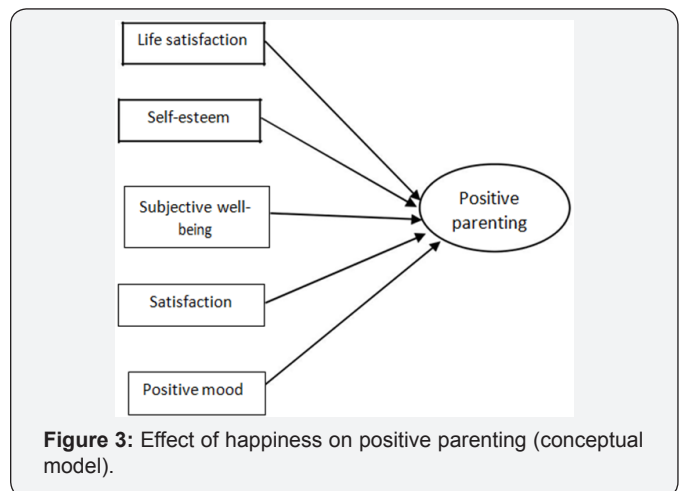


Table 1: Model Result.

Indices	df	Chi-square	CFI	PCFI	RMSE	Hoelter Index
Amount	20	1.07	0.99	0.71	0.01	478

All indices are in optimum range and model parameters are presented in Table 3. Conceptual model is presented in Figure 3.



Components of happiness variable explains 16% of the in positive parenting variance. Effect of subject well-being, self-esteem and life satisfaction are statistically significant ($P\text{-value} > 0.05$). Effect of positive mood and satisfaction

on positive parenting is not significantly different from zero. Taking into account the values of the path of the two components of positive parenting component can say positive mood on positive parenting is inverse (increase

Table 4: Estimate effect of happiness on positive parenting.

Variable	Path	Variable	R ²	Standard estimation	C.R	P-value
Positive mood	→	Positive parenting	0.16	-0.18	-2.08	0.038
Satisfaction				0.23	2.39	0.017
Subjective well-being				0.13	1.32	0.186
Self-esteem				0.16	1.52	0.128
Life satisfaction				0.06	0.59	0.551

Discussion

Interactions in a family play a crucial role in the development of an individual. The healthy functioning of these interaction patterns improve mental health of family members. Stable and happy family circumstances is a necessary condition for children’s overall growth and development [32]. Recent studies investigating parenting in different cultures have pointed to several important patterns regarding linkages between parenting strategies and psychosocial outcomes [33]. Positive family functioning can alleviate the impact of different variables in child development, such as family income and family structure [34].

In this study, the issue under consideration is to determine role of happiness on parenting style dimensions. The results clearly demonstrate that happiness has positive influence on positive parenting and negative effect on uncertainty in dealing with child. This suggest that happiness in parents has a decision making power and better behavioral interaction with children. Further, based on results and literatures which as a whole indicates that the associations between positive affect and positive close relationships are bidirectional [35], it can be suggest that happy parents have a closer relationship with their children. Close relationships such as parent-child relationships are some of the most significant aspects of life [36]. Parents who experience higher happiness and positive moods may provide their infants with more positive parenting experiences [37] and these positive experiences may improve relationship between parent and child [38].

Forming attachments to close others is a requirement for individuals from infancy to adulthood. Based on attachment theory, adaptive framework of attachment system [36] works differently in different ages. Infants are seeking care and protection, so, they acts in ways to ensure parents will give them those. Over time, children’s experiences with others and advancement of affection bonds (e.g., with friends) managed by their initial attachment histories and attachment styles remain genuinely stable crosswise over time keeping on impacting

positive mood will reduce positive parenting) and the effect of satisfaction on positive parenting is direct (increased satisfaction - increase positive parenting) (Table 4).

interpersonal relationships in adulthood. Eventually, those with secure attachment styles are probably to have positive close relationships and are more inclined to encountering positive affecting both in their relationships and in general [36].

Even more importantly, this study indicates that subject well-being, self-esteem and life satisfaction affect positive parenting. Dimensions of adversity in parents’ (mostly mothers’) lives and different aspects of their psychological health have been implicated as significant factors in parenting [39]. Degree of life satisfaction may have important implications in parenting style and individuals with high life satisfaction degree will show more motivation, engagement and success in their life [40].

Self-esteem, characterized as the extent to which an individual trusts him or herself to be fit, noteworthy, fruitful, and commendable, reliably has been found to relate with mental prosperity [41]. People with higher self-esteem are generally happier [42] have better psychological and physical health, have better incomes, and show lower degree of criminal behavior during adulthood [43]. In the case of parenting with regard to fundamental aspects of parenting (warmth, nurturance, and acceptance or responsivity and amount of control, structure, and involvement or demandingness that caregivers display toward their children) results shows that there is a positive association between self-esteem and positive parenting which is line with before researches [44,45].

Conclusion

Results and literature reviews in this paper indicates that happiness as an variable which can have an important role in parenting actions will cause positive parenting style in parents. With respect to positive parenting effects with entering happiness in family interactions, it can be possible to move toward positive parenting.

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DOI: [10.19080/PBSIJ.2017.04.5555627](https://doi.org/10.19080/PBSIJ.2017.04.5555627)

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