GENDER AND COMPLEXION AS DETERMINANTS OF HAPPINESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE

BY

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Abstract

The study is on Gender and Complexion as Determinants of Happiness among Secondary School Students in Awka, Anambra State. The participants in this study were made up of one hundred and sixty-seven (167) secondary students in Awka Metropolis, Awka, Anambra State. Out of the participants, 68 (41%) were boys and 99 (59%) were girls. Their ages range from 11 (eleven) to 20 (twenty) years old with mean age of 14. Their complexions are, Dark, Chocolate, and Fair. Among the participants, 26 (16%) were Dark, 91 (54%) were Chocolate and 50 (30%) were Fair respectively. One instrument was used for the study; Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999). Data was collected through purposive sampling technique; the design for study was Cross-Sectional and 2-way ANOVA statistics was used for analysis. The first hypothesis which stated that Gender will not significantly determine happiness among secondary school students in Awka was confirmed at f (1, .051) = .822, $p<0.05$ level of significance. Also, the second hypothesis which stated that Complexion will not significantly determine happiness among secondary school students in Awka was confirmed at f (2, .096) = .909, $p<0.05$ level of significance. Finally, third hypothesis which stated that Complexion will not differ significantly with gender in determining happiness among secondary school students in Awka was also confirmed at f (2, .381) =.684, $p<0.05$ level of significance. It is recommended that researchers should advance this study with another population to ascertain the determinants of happiness among youths.

Key words: Gender, Complexion, Happiness, Students

Introduction

Happiness is a mental state of well-being described by positive emotions ranging from contentment to profound delight (Kesebir & Diener, 2008; Goff, Helliwell & Mayraz, 2018). It plays a great role in the human emotionality and well-being. It is one of the major dimensions of human experience and emotional life (Diener, Sapyta & Suh, 1998). It can be better understood with respect to frequency and recurrence of positive affect, increased satisfaction of life and uncommon negative effect which are the components of subjective welling (Diener, 1984; Rojas, 2018), and happiness is a serious psychological factor among human genders.

Gender entails sexuality. It is the quality that distinguishes organisms on the basis of their reproductive roles. It can further be explained in terms of male or female, feminity or masculinity; man or woman (Helliwell, Norton, Huang & Wang, 2018b). Owing to social roles, men tend to be happier than females mainly in relationship setting, men tend to be assertive and aggressive while females usually internalize their problems which lead to depression and anxiety in turn makes them to be less happy than their male counterpart (Leadbetter, Kuperminc, Blatt & Hertzog, 1999; Su, Tay & Diener, 2014). According to Senik (2015), females are happier than males after 18 years of age till their fifties, but on the contrary before the age of 18 and after then fifties. Though, most of these studies were done in Europe and Asia, there is need to replicate them in this part of the world (especially Nigeria) where black is

dorminant. Aside gender, complexion has also been implicated on the level of happiness according to several findings.

Complexion simply means the colour or colouration of a person's skin. It is usually used as the basis of appreciating beauty. An individual's complexion often times determines the relationships, acceptance, and rejection by others which enhances or negates psychological well-being (happiness). Black is beautiful, is a popular saying but many with dark complexion end up buying bleaching cream in order to become fair or light skinned.

Studies have shown that the complexion of a person can lead to psychological distress or unhappiness; one study reported that light skin is associated with beauty whereas; dark skin is associated with ugliness, and evil. Wade, Melanie, and Leslie (2004) reported an experimental study. In the experimental setting on hiring, white subjects acting as managers of a firm recommended hiring fair-skinned more than dark-skinned black job applicants, despite identical credentials and this determines the happiness levels of individuals based on colour with the findings showing that the white are happier than the black.

Gender and complexion as determinants of happiness among students has not really been properly directed attention to. Since happiness is a biopsychosocial factor, there is need to investigate their influence, hence, their investigation in this study.

The tripartite model of subjective well-being developed by Diener (1984) describes how people experience their quality of lives and it includes both cognitive judgments and emotional reactions. In cognitive judgment, people appraise the situation and condition they found themselves and the outcome of the appraisal or assessment determines whether their reaction will be negative or positive. And in the area of emotion, peoples' responses to their condition or state (in this case, male or female, black or white) are predominantly determined by their present or current emotional state which may be positive or negative.

Happiness has been defined by psychologists as the integration of relative positive and negative affect, and life satisfaction (Diener, Suh, Lucas & smith, 1999). Subjective well-being comprises moods and emotions alongside a person's satisfaction with specific and general areas of life (Diener et al, 1999; Helliwell, Huang & Wang, 2018a). Several studies have been done in order to authenticate this theory. A study by Khodarahimi (2013) on the roles of gender and age on positive psychological construction employed 200 young Iranian adults who responded to varieties of texts found out that males are higher than females on happiness.

Stevenson and Wolfers (2009), reviewed several studies in US and reported that males are happier than females, attesting that for more than three decades, the women's happiness has declined both absolutely and in comparison with their men counterparts. Reporting a study on happiness, Tkach and Lyubomisrsky (2006) found that males and females are equally happy, but confirmed gender differences for their use of happiness-enhancing strategies which are also related in their domains of life

satisfaction; example, girls are more satisfied than boys in learning and friendships whereas the opposite is true in the physical activities.

According to Boarini, Comola, Smith, Mandrin and Keulenaer (2012) women are both happier and satisfied with life than their men counterparts. But Proto and Rustichini (2015) reported the link and the relationship of the personality traits across genders with the view that happiness is linked to personality trait, using the big five classification; the implication is that a female with openness to dimension of the personality is happier than a man with neuroticism dimension and vice versa. The conflicting finding in the works done in the West and Asia should be verified especially in this part of the world.

Statement of the Problem

There are conflicting findings on the roles of gender and complexion on happiness with Western and Asian studies proving that the variables of interest determine how happy people can become. On gender, Khodarahimi (2013) reported that males are higher than females in happiness, but Tkach and Lyubomisrsky (2006) found that both genders are equal in happiness. On complexion, Wade etal (2004) reported that whites are happier than blacks. Gender and complexion are indispensable aspects of human existence and happiness has been researched on by scholars in both Western and Asian part of the world, but little or nothing has been done in this area of research in this part of the world mainly with respect to the three variables of importance. As stated above, the works done at the aforementioned areas have conflicting findings which necessitate further research with key interest among secondary school students.

Finally, the study will be a source of literature in this area of research and it will fill the gap in knowledge in this area.

Purpose of the Study

This research is aimed at investigating whether gender and complexion can determine happiness among secondary school students. In specific terms, the study will determine the influence of each variable on happiness among secondary school students.

Hypothesis

1. Gender will not significantly determine happiness among secondary school students in Awka.
2. Complexion will not significantly determine happiness among secondary school students in Awka
3. Complexion and gender will not differ significantly in determining happiness among secondary school students in Awka

Method

Participants

The participants in this study were made up of one hundred and sixty-seven (167) students from secondary schools in in Awka Metropolis, Awka, Anambra State and they were chosen through Purposive Sampling Technique. Out of the participants, 68 (41%) were boys and 99 (59%) were girls. Their ages range from 11 (eleven) to 20 (twenty) years old with mean age of 14. Their complexions are, Dark, Chocolate, and

Fair. Among the participants, 26 (16%) were Dark, 91 (54%) were Chocolate and 50 (30%) were Fair respectively.

Instrument

The instrument used in this work is a 4-item Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) which measures Subjective Happiness. The first 3 items as direct scored items, while the fourth item is reverse scored on a 7 point likert response options format. For item 1, the lowest which is 1= not a very happy person and the highest which is 7=a very happy person. For item 2, the lowest which is 1= less happy and the highest which is 7= more happy. For item 3, the lowest which is 1= not at all and the highest which is 7= a great deal. For item 4, the lowest which is 1= not at all and the highest which is 7= a great deal.

The instrument was validated in Nigerian by Umeaku (2019) using the sample from the university undergraduates with the reliability of r = .71 and concurrent validity was done with the Openness Domain of the BIG-FIVE Personality Inventory by Gross and John (2003) at r=.475 ($p<0.01$) significant level and the discriminant validity was done with the Domain D of the SCL 90 by Derogatis, Lipman and Covi (1977) at r= -.293 ($p<0.05$) significant level.

Procedure

The researchers made use of three categories of secondary schools which are; mission, private and government schools with the help of a research assistant who the research was explained to, the questionnaires were introduced to the students. One hundred and eighty (180) copies of questionnaires were distributed, but one hundred and seventy (170) were returned out of which one hundred and sixty-seven (167) were valid and used for the study.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.

Design/ Statistics

The study made use of 2x3 factorial design because gender has two (2) levels; male and female and complexion has three (3) levels; dark, chocolate and fair. A 2-way ANOVA statistics was used for the analysis of the data.

RESULTS

Table 1: The summary table two-way ANOVA on the determinants of gender and complexion on happiness

Corrected Model	1.277[a]	5	.255	.201	.962
Intercept	2943.428	1	2943.428	2313.451	.000
GENDER	.065	1	.065	.051	.822
COMPLEXION	.244	2	.122	.096	.909
GENDER * COMPLEXION	.970	2	.485	.381	.684
Error	203.570	160	1.272		
Total	4193.938	166			
Corrected Total	204.847	165			

With respect to table 1, the first hypothesis which stated that Gender will not significantly determine happiness among secondary school students in Awka was confirmed at f (1, .051) = .822, $p<0.05$ level of significance. Also, the second hypothesis which stated that Complexion will not significantly determine happiness among secondary school students in Awka was confirmed at f (2, .096) = .909, $p<0.05$ level of significance. Finally, third hypothesis which stated that Complexion and gender will not differ significantly in determining happiness among secondary school students in Awka was confirmed at f (2, .381) =.684, $p<0.05$ level of significance.

Discussion and Conclusion

The outcomes of the study based on Gender and complexion on happiness among secondary students in Awka were discussed here. The findings of this study showed that there is no significant difference between males and females on determination of happiness. This may not be farfetched from what Tkach and Lyubomisrsky (2006)

found out in their study; they reported that males and females are equally happy, but confirmed gender differences for their use of happiness-enhancing strategies which are also related in their domains of life satisfaction; for example, girls are more satisfied than boys in learning and friendships whereas the opposite is true in the physical activities. Though, the mean difference of the females is higher than that of males it can be explained from the point of view of culture because, the western culture is far different from that of Africa.

The findings disagrees with Stevenson and Wolfers (2009) who reviewed several studies in US and reported that males are happier than females, attesting that for more than three decades, the women's happiness has declined both absolutely and in comparison with their men counterparts. Furthermore, it is in dissonance with the findings of Khodarahimi (2013) who did a study on the roles of gender and age on positive psychological construction employed and two hundred young Iranian adults who responded to varieties of texts found out that males are higher than females on happiness.

Moreso, the findings further proved that there is no significant difference among the three types of complexion as used in the study on determination of happiness and it contradicted the work of Hochschild (2007) which reported that among 66,927 male felons incarcerated for their first offense in Georgia from 1995 through 2002, the dark-skinned received longer prison sentences. Whites' sentences averaged 2,689 days, and blacks' were longer by 378 days. Within the black group, those with the lightest skin received prison sentences averaging three and a half months longer than did whites; medium-skinned blacks received the average for blacks and a year more

than whites; and the dark-skinned got hit with 3,250 days – a year and a half longer than whites which made the white happier than the black.

Furthermore, with respect to the type of offense, socioeconomic status and demographic indicators (which are themselves associated with skin color), light-skinned blacks received sentences statistically indistinguishable from those of whites, while medium- and dark-skinned blacks received sentences 2.7 percent longer than whites. Also, white victims are twice as likely to receive the death penalty if they have dark skin and more Afrocentric facial features than if they do not. This negatively influences their subjective happiness. Though, the current findings contradicted by the western findings, it is a strong proof that in this part of the world complexion is insignificant in determining happiness; mainly because, people are not usually discriminated against on the basis of colour.

Finally, the findings proved that there is no significant difference between gender and complexion on determination of happiness, and is supported by Tkach and Lyubomisrsky (2006) on the ground of gender who found that males and females are equally happy, but it is inconsistent with the findings of Wade etal (2004) with respect to colour; the study reported an experiment. In the experimental setting on hiring, white subjects acting as managers of a firm recommended hiring fair-skinned more than dark-skinned black job applicants, despite identical credentials and this determines the happiness levels of individuals based on colour with the findings showing that the white are happier than the black.

Implication of the Study

The findings of this research have great implications on happiness. It emphasizes that a person's gender and complexion does not play significant roles in their happiness. The results have great implication on Counsellors and Clinical Psychologists as they engage clients in their routine duties. Therefore, things that enhance happiness such as good family environment, good work environment, good academic environment which include teachers, teaching materials peer influence should be given attention to.

Recommendation

The researchers recommend that Counsellors and Clinical Psychologist should map out means of handling this group of persons during psychotherapeutic relationship. Counsellors and Clinical Psychologists should be in-depth in their dealings with this group of persons (secondary school students) as they are mainly within their personality-formative years.

Conclusion

The study examined Gender and Complexion on Happiness among Secondary School Students in Awka. The participants were made up of one hundred and sixty-seven (167) secondary school students. Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) was used in gathering data. The three (3) hypotheses postulated were tested with 2-way ANOVA. The study concludes based on the findings that in this part of the world, gender and complexion do not significantly determine an individual's happiness due to the cultural values and beliefs inherent in

our environment are a result of our norms and values which made none of the variables of interest the basis for discrimination.

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APPENDIX I

Table 1: The summary table of mean, and standard deviation of gender on happiness

GENDER	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Male	4.8769	67	1.16562
Female	4.9192	99	1.08376
Total	4.9021	166	1.11422

Table 2: The summary table of mean, and standard deviation of complexion on happiness

COMPLEXION	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Dark	4.9038	26	.88622
chocolate	4.8434	91	1.15087
Fair	4.9600	50	1.20623
Total	4.8877	167	1.12631

APPENDIX II

Table 3: The summary table two-way ANOVA on the determinants of gender and complexion on happiness

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1.277[a]	5	.255	.201	.962
Intercept	2943.428	1	2943.428	2313.451	.000
GENDER	.065	1	.065	.051	.822
COMPLEXION	.244	2	.122	.096	.909
GENDER * COMPLEXION	.970	2	.485	.381	.684
Error	203.570	160	1.272		
Total	4193.938	166			
Corrected Total	204.847	165			

APPENDIX III

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

not a very happy person 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 a very happy person

2. Compared with most of my peers, I consider myself:

less happy 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 a great deal

4. Some people are generally not very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterization describe you?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 a great deal

Age: ----------

Gender: Male---------- Female----------

Complexion: Dark---------- Chocolate---------- Fair----------