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Will Experience of Violence, Self Worth and Dispositional Factors Influence The Subjective Happiness of Women?

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Abstract

Purpose: The present study examines the joint and independent influence of violence against women, self esteem and personality factors on subjective happiness.

Methodology:The study adopted a cross sectional research design and a purposive sampling approach in the selection of participants. Three hundred and two university students were selected from two Institutions. Data was collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire on socio-demographic profile, violence against Women scale, self esteem scale, personality scale and subjective happiness scale to participants. Retrieved data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, t- test analysis and regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results reveal that VAW independently influenced subjective happiness and there is a joint prediction of VAW, self esteem and personality factors on subjective happiness($R^2 = .14$; $F = 6.92$; $P < .05$). Thus, this study has implications for intervention to prevent women from violence being perpetrated against them in order to ensure their subjective happiness or ensure they have a good life. In order to reduce the impact of violence on subjective happiness, it is important to investigate the personality traits of victims as well as improve their level of self worth.

Keywords: *Violence against Women, Self esteem, Personality factors, Subjective happiness.*

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women (VAW) is a great public health challenge and a long term problem in many countries all over the world, particularly in African countries where Men have been reported to be violent against their women. However, research on gender based violence (GBV) in Nigeria has mainly investigated its prevalence, social and educational implications. Happiness is the degree to which an individual assesses the overall quality of his life positively and denotes an overall evaluation of life (Akin, 2014). It is an emotional state of well-being used to identify an individual's subjective state of well-being (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2003). Happiness is an indicator of how an individual is doing from moment to moment and the combination of these momentary experiences can be added together to create a measure of well-being (Wren-Lewis, 2014). Therefore, it may be stated that life satisfaction and quality of life are crucial factors to be considered in relation to the concept of happiness and subjective well-being (Diener, 2000 : Simsek, 2009). The term happiness has different meanings to different people and so the concept of subjective happiness was suggested to be the balance of positive-negative effect, life satisfaction, psychological well-being, joy, and contentment (Diener, 2000: Lyubomirsky, 2001). Subjective happiness is said to have two dimensions such as: emotional and cognitive dimensions. The emotional dimension includes positive feelings and lack of negative feelings while the cognitive dimension is referred to as life satisfaction. Lee & Im (2007) suggested that individuals who score high on subjective happiness scale are likely to have more positive feelings and control over their personality (Larson, 1989), they may view their past experiences as positive (Matlin & Gawron, 1979) and react to positive events in a more emotional manner; however, they are less long lasting on the face of negative experiences (Seidlitz, Wyer, & Diener, 1997). Therefore, subjective happiness is considered to be among the components of a good life (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2003).

VAW is said to be the largest single cause of ill health and death among women all over the world (Murthy, 2009). Sunmola et al. (2018) have revealed that controlling and domineering attitudes of Nigerian husbands are positively associated with women's experience of intimate partner violence (IPV) which is an act that includes physical violence, sexual violence, or psychological harm by a current or former partner against another in the relationship (Breiding et al. 2015). The United Nations (2010), view VAW as any act that is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats or acts of coercion, arbitrary deprivation of liberty, private or public, in the family or community. Therefore, VAW includes issues such as: IPV, domestic violence and other forms of violence against women (WHO, 2005). Jekayinka (2010) noted that VAW such as, domestic violence, female genital mutilations and forced prostitution are still being practiced in Nigeria till date. He argued that GBV is practiced against everyone but it affects mainly women and girls and its carried out in all settings, including work places, schools, families, and communities (Jekayinfa, 2011). According to WHO (2013), 35% of women around the world experience some form of violence over the course of their lives, either sexual or physical. Amnesty International (2012) also reported that about two thirds of women in Nigeria have experienced IPV at least once in their lifetime. However, Tenkorang et al., (2016) observed that most women do not report their violence experience to relevant authorities, which makes it more difficult to resolve the issue. VAW is not a new problem but deeply rooted in many cultural and traditional values (OECD Development Centre, 2013). Nnadi (2012) noted that it is either VAW is

regarded as a normal attitude or simply condoned but the United Nations (2009) considers it the most pervasive violation of human rights.

Kohler-Reissman, (2000) indicated that VAW has devastating effects on the health of women. It has been identified as a major contributor to poor reproductive issues among women. Silverman & Raj (2014) argued that abused women are more likely to report unwanted pregnancies and early child bearing experience as adolescents compared to those not experiencing any violence. Similarly, Madhani et al., (2017) noted that women who have experienced IPA are likely to experience injuries, mental distress, and low quality of life. Furthermore, Mutahir (2013) observed that families with only female children are stigmatized because of the preference for male children over females. WHO (2010) indicated that abused girls are more likely to suffer depression, anxiety and psychosomatic symptoms. Violence against the girl child also affects her ability to learn and the willingness to take part in school activities. UNICEF (2010) suggested that 6% of female children were absent from school because of physical violence. Bitangaro,(1999) noted that a girl child who has witnessed violence may become withdrawn, anxious, or depressed on one hand, and on the other hand, the child may become aggressive and exert control over younger siblings. Male children usually carry out the aggressive form of behavior and as adults, may beat-their spouses. VAW has also been associated with the risk of acquiring HIV/AIDS (Maman, Campbell & Sweat, 2000). Machtinger, Wilson & Haberer (2012) suggested that approximately 55% of women who were HIV-positive experienced IPA. Therefore, there are chances that individuals who are living with HIV may be at a higher risk of experiencing violence as a manifestation of stigma and discrimination, as a result of negative gender norms (Maman, et al. 2000).

Gender-inequality theories recognize that women's location, experience and social situations are not only different but also unequal to that of men. Feminists have argued that women have the same reasoning capacity as men but that the sexist method of division of labour, has historically denied women the opportunity to express and practice this reasoning. Women have been isolated to the private aspect of the household and therefore denied the opportunity to function in the public aspect. Even if women are engaged in the public aspect, they are still often expected to manage the private aspect of taking care of household duties and child rearing. Theories of gender oppression suggests that women are actively oppressed, subordinated, and even abused by men. Radical feminists argue that being a woman is a positive thing but that this is not acknowledged in male dominated societies where women are oppressed. They identify physical violence as being at the base of male dominated societies but they think that such violence and oppression can be defeated if women recognize their own value and strength, establish trust with other women, confront oppression critically and create female networks in the private and public aspects of life.

Rosenberg (1979), views self-esteem as the individual's global positive or negative attitude towards the self, he considers it a global attitude which demonstrates the psychological well being. Carr & Browne (2015) describe self-esteem as the most important factor in an individual's mental health and it is also said to be related to quality of life and physical and mental well-being. Kilic, Sokmen, & Ada (2013) refer to self esteem as a basic human characteristic which addresses the capacity of human being for the aim of increasing their sense of self-worth by means of coping mechanisms. In addition, Yap, & Baharudin (2015) suggested that concepts such as self-efficacy and self-respect play significant roles in individuals' healthy self-esteem. There is a relationship between self-esteem and happiness due to the fact that high level of self-esteem leads to happy and productive lives (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003; Brown, 2010; Santos et al.,

2014). However, research has found that the level of the relationship between self-esteem and happiness could be affected by a variety of factors. For example, Uchida et al., (2008) reported that the association between self esteem and happiness varies between cultures and self esteem tends to be more strongly related to happiness in Western cultures than in East Asian cultures. Similarly, Yuki, et al., (2013) noted that there can be significant cross-regional differences within one nation.

The Big Five Factors have been widely used in examining the relationship between personality and subjective well-being (Onyishi, Okongwu, &Ugwu, 2012). Research evidence has revealed that an individual's satisfaction or happiness is largely determined by his or her personality traits (Ho, Cheung & Cheung (2008). Based on this argument, the differences in people's happiness are partly due to their biological differences. This implies that whether an individual is happy or not, is explained by individuals' personality traits and it is not influenced by environmental factors. Cloninger (2013) has defined personality as simply the underlying causes within the person of individual behavior and experience. McCrae and Costa (1987) describes personality as the combination of five main dimensions, commonly known as the Big Five factors model. These five traits include neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience.

Considering the public health implication of VAW, not much studies have been conducted on the subjective happiness of victims. Most research in Nigeria have mainly concentrated on the prevalence, social and educational implications of violence on women and the girl child. However, it is necessary to examine its influence on the levels of happiness or quality of life of its victims. The examination of the subjective happiness of women who have experienced violence is also necessitated by Madhani et al., (2017) who asserted that women who have suffered violence are likely to experience, mental distress, and low quality of life. The present study investigates the joint and independent prediction of happiness by VAW, self esteem and personality factors. In the present study, happiness is used as synonyms of quality of life, subjective well-being and life satisfaction (Diener, 1985; Schwarz & Strack, 1999, Veenhoven, 2009). The study is relevant in emphasizing the negative effects of VAW and the significant role of self esteem and personality factors in the investigation of the levels of happiness and life satisfaction. The following research questions are raised: Can VAW predict subjective happiness? Can self esteem predict subjective happiness? Can personality factors predict subjective happiness? Can VAW, self esteem and personality factors independently and jointly predict subjective happiness?

Three hypotheses were tested:

- 1.Participants who experience low levels of VAW will report significantly higher levels of subjective happiness than those who experience high levels of VAW.
2. Participants who report high self esteem will report significantly higher levels of subjective happiness than those with low self esteem.
- 3.VAW, self esteem and personality factors will independently and jointly influence subjective happiness.

METHOD

Design and Participants

The study was a cross sectional research design. The Independent variables of the study are VAW (high and low), self esteem (high and low) the Big Five personality factors (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism) while the dependent variable is subjective happiness. The participants recruited for this study were students of private and public universities. University students were selected because the working group on higher education (WGHE,2006), have shown that campuses tend to be male dominated and therefore create male tolerant cultures and environment and hotbeds of deviant gender behaviour with females mostly at the receiving end. Only female participants were purposively selected for this study. A total of 302 female participants were used in the study. Age ranged between 18 to 40 ($X = 20.53$; $SD = 3.65$). In terms of academic levels, 116(38.4%) of the participants were in their first year in the university, 67(22.2%) of the participants were in their second year, 62(20.5%) of the participants were in their third year, 48(15.9%) of the participants were in their fourth year, and 9(3%) of the participants were in their fifth year. For institutions of learning, 167(55.3%) of the participants were drawn from a private university, and 135(44.7%) of the participants were drawn from a federal university. On types of religion, 170(56.3%) of the participants practice Christianity, 131(43.4%) of the participants practice Islam, and 1(0.3%) of the participants practice traditional religion. Regarding relationship status, 167(55.3%) of the participants were in relationships, 114(37.7%) of the participants were married, 18(6%) of the participants were separated, and 2(1%) of the participants were divorced.

Research setting and sampling procedure

The study was carried out in two private and public tertiary institutions. These institutions were therefore purposively selected to address the research question. A sample size of 302 consisting of only female students was purposively selected from both schools. Convenience sampling was used to select individual participants.

Measures

The instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire divided into five sections. Section one taps demographic information including questions on participant's relationship status. Section two measured the self-esteem of participants, section three measured personality factors, section four measured gender-based violence and section five measured subjective happiness.

Self-esteem was measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale developed by Rosenberg (1965). The Rosenberg Scale is one of the most widely used self-esteem measures in social science research. It is a 10 item scale with a four-point likert response format ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). Sample item include "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself", "At times I think I am no good at all" etc. Total scores range from 10 to 40. The higher the score, the higher the level of self-esteem of respondents. George and Mallery(2003) reported an excellent reliability coefficients for the scale with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.93 to 0.97. In Nigeria, Olanrewaju et al (2014) reported an internal consistency of between 0.75 and 0.90.

Personality factors was measured using a 44 item Big Five personality Inventory. The scale uses a 5-point Likert scale response format. This scale included 8 items assessing Extraversion, 9 assessing Agreeableness, 9 assessing Conscientiousness, 8 assessing Neuroticism, and 10

assessing Openness to Experience. The co-efficient alpha reliability for Extraversion was .86, for Agreeableness was .79, for Conscientiousness was .82, for Neuroticism was .87, and for Openness to Experience was .83 (John & Soto, 2007). The scale has been validated for use with Nigerian samples. Onyishi, et al., (2012) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83 while Balogun (2014) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78.

VAW was measured using the World Health Organization' violence against women(VAW) scale. The VAW instrument measures exposure to psychological, physical and sexual violence. This instrument consists of sets of questions designed to capture information critical to assessing the prevalence, frequency and severity of different forms of violence against women, perpetrated both by intimate partners and others. Four items of the scale measures psychological violence, six items measures physical violence and three items measures sexual violence. Cronbach's Alpha coefficient reported for the subscales are 0.80 for physical violence and 0.72 for sexual intimate partner violence (Lanset 2006). Lotta et al, (2012) revealed a Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.79 for the psychological violence dimension, 0.80 for the physical violence dimension, 0.72 for the sexual violence dimension and 0.88 for the total scale.

Subjective happiness was measured with a four item Subjective Happiness Scale developed by Lyubomirsky & Lepper (1999). The items were rated on a 7-point likert scale format. It is a summative scale where item 4 is reverse scored. The level of subjective happiness is found by means of the summation of all answers, where the highest number reflects the highest level of subjective happiness. Thus, the possible range of scores on the subjective happiness scale is from 1.0 to 7.0. In all samples, the four items showed good to excellent internal consistency across samples of varying ages, occupations, languages and cultures. The internal consistency ranged from 0.79 to 0.94. (Lyubomirsky & Ross, 1997).

Procedure for data collection:

Having obtained the necessary permission from the university authorities, participants were informed that the purpose of the research was purely academic and requested to respond to the questions honestly. Having been assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses, participants' consents were sought and obtained. The questionnaires were administered to students who gave their consent and were available in all the lecture rooms, hostels and departments visited. All questionnaires were administered in English and participants were not given any incentive for participation. Trained research assistants were available to answer any questions that might be raised by respondents. Questionnaire administration took two weeks, while some were retrieved immediately, others were collected later. A total of 320 questionnaires were administered out of which 302 that were adequately filled were retrieved and analyzed with the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences 20 (SPSS) software. **Hypothesis one and two were analyzed using t test analyses while hypothesis three was tested using multiple regression analyses.**

Inclusion/ Exclusion criteria:

All male students were excluded and female participants that were single and have never been in a relationship were excluded from this study. All female undergraduates who were qualified and expressed desires to be part of the study were included in the study, particularly those who were either married or in relationships. This was due to the study focus being on gender-based violence

and participants in relationships will likely experience intimate partner violence, in addition to domestic and other forms of violence compared to those not in any relationship.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Happiness	-							
2 Self Esteem	-.104	-						
3 Violence against women	-.264**	.146	-					
4 Extraversion	.223**	-.191**	-.087	-				
5 Agreeableness	.270**	-.191**	-.291**	.062	-			
6 Conscientiousness	.220**	-.231**	-.245**	.180**	.555**	-		
7 Neuroticism	-.247**	.192**	.331**	-.224**	-.643**	-.568**	-	
8 Openness to experience	-.028	-.127*	-.007*	.142*	-.021	-.057	.188**	-

RESULTS

Table 1. Summary table of Pearson correlation analysis showing the relationship between self-esteem, gender-based violence, personality factors and happiness.

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

It was revealed in table 1 that VAW has a significant negative relationship with subjective happiness ($r = -.104$, $p < .05$). This implies that the higher the experience of VAW, the lower the level of subjective happiness. Extroversion has a significant positive relationship with subjective happiness ($r = .223$, $p < .05$). This shows that the more extroverted a participant is, the higher the level of happiness. Agreeableness has a significant positive relationship with happiness ($r = .270$, $p < .05$). This indicates that the more agreeable a participant is, the higher the level of happiness.

Conscientiousness has a significant positive relationship with happiness ($r = .220$, $p < .05$). This shows that a more conscientious participant will be happier; neuroticism has a significant negative

relationship with happiness ($r = -.247, p < .05$). This shows that the more neurotic a participant is, the lesser the level of happiness.

HYPOTHESIS ONE

It was hypothesized that participants who experience low levels of VAW will report significantly higher levels of subjective happiness than those who experience high levels of VAW. This hypothesis was tested using t -test of independent analysis. Table 1 presents the results

Table 2: Summary table of t-test showing the difference between students who reported low VAW and students who reported high VAW on subjective happiness.

Violence against women	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Low	155	20.71	3.31	300	5.48	<.05
High	147	18.10	4.79			

Results from table 2 revealed that there was a significant difference between students that experienced low VAW and those that experienced high VAW on levels of subjective happiness ($t = 5.484; df = 300; p < .05$). A further observation of means revealed that participants who scored low on VAW ($X = 20.71; SD = 3.31$) scored higher on subjective happiness than those who scored high on VAW ($X = 18.10; SD = 4.79$). Consequently, hypothesis one was accepted.

HYPOTHESIS TWO

This stated that there will be a significant difference between students that score low on self-esteem and students that score high on self-esteem on happiness. This hypothesis was tested using t -test of independent analysis. Table 3 presents the results

Table 3: Summary table of t-test showing the difference between students that scored low on self-esteem and students that scored high on self-esteem on happiness.

Self Esteem	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	P
Low	167	19.72	4.23	300	1.29	<.05
High	135	19.08	4.36			

Results from table 3 show that there was no significant difference between students that score low on self-esteem and students that score high on self-esteem on subjective happiness ($t = 1.290; df = 300; p > .05$). Consequently, hypothesis two was rejected.

HYPOTHESIS THREE

It was stated that there will be a significant joint and independent influence of self-esteem, VAW and personality factors on subjective happiness. This hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis. Table 4 presents the results.

Table 4: Summary table of multiple regression analysis showing the prediction of self-esteem, gender-based violence, and personality factors on happiness.

Variables	R	R ²	F	P	β	t	P
Violence against women					-.184	-3.156	<.05
Self esteem					-.005	-.084	>.05
Extraversion					.179	3.063	<.05
Agreeableness	.379	.144	6.920	<.05	.182	2.369	<.05
Conscientiousness					.051	.722	>.05
Neuroticism					.008	.099	>.05
Openness to experience					-.038	-.653	>.05

Table 1.4 demonstrate a significant joint influence of VAW, self-esteem and personality factors on subjective happiness ($R^2 = .144$, $F(7,288) = 6.920$, $p < .05$) with 14.4% explanation of the variability on the outcome variable. Also, VAW has a significant independent influence on happiness ($\beta = -.184$; $t = -3.156$; $P < .05$). Extraversion has a significant independent influence on happiness ($\beta = .179$; $t = 3.063$; $P < .05$); and agreeableness has a significant independent influence on happiness ($\beta = .182$; $t = 2.369$; $P < .05$). but there was no independent influence of self esteem, neuroticism, conscientiousness and openness on subjective happiness. Therefore, hypothesis three was partially accepted.

Discussion

Results obtained in this study reflect the influence of VAW on subjective happiness. The findings indicate that women who were exposed to high level of violence reported low level of happiness compared to women who experienced low level of violence. This outcome was confirmed by previous reports that have shown that VAW is perpetuated by males who seek power and control (UNFPA, 2013) and, in places where traditionally there has been a high level of acceptance of male violence against women (Lievore & Fairbairn- Dunlop, 2007). This outcome is in agreement with earlier research findings that suggested that men have negative attitudes towards women and

are likely to be violent against them, as well as embrace the practice of wife beating and gender inequality (Icddr,b, 2011). Another study found that 15 to 71% of women experience physical or sexual violence or both from their intimate partners in their lifetime (García-Moreno et al., 2005). The study findings also concur with reports of the United Nations Commission on human rights in the United States, where a woman is beaten every 18 minutes and domestic violence regarded as the leading cause of injury among women of reproductive age and increase visit to emergency rooms (United Nation, 1996).

VAW in Nigeria is as a result of the complex issues of religion and socio-cultural factors. This is probably why the law, inspite of the societal agitation against abuse of women has not been very effective in curbing it. Previous studies have suggested the introduction of a more gender-sensitive policy (Johnston & Naved, 2008). There is the growing recognition that the role of men is important in changing these devastating treatment of women, since men are believed to be the major perpetrators of violence against women. There is therefore an effort to include men in the fight to end VAW by focusing on men's roles and responsibilities.

Violence against women has continued in some African countries because according to the United Nation Human Right Report (2009) women and girls are usually ascribed the second class status and many cultures have legalized the acts of violence against women (Heise et al., 1999). Maluleke (2012) noted that VAW in Africa is a socio-cultural behaviour that is rooted in the tradition for several generations and still being practiced up-to date. According to him, the men in Africa have always been regarded as the head and leaders of women in the community. The cultural model of violence (Jewkes, Levin, Penn-Kekana, 2002) provides a contextual explanation for understanding aggressive behaviours against women. According to the model, societal norms and customs have been imposed to make women subservient to men in terms of power and status, and this has direct implications for VAW by men. The model suggests that men are culturally expected to be violent against their partners which implies that men who engage in violent acts against their partners are acting on the basis of cultural expectations (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). In African culture, men are culturally the head of the home and responsible for all major decisions in the family which everybody obeys.

However, other researchers have attributed the major causes of VAW to the personality or behaviour of the perpetrators, stress, substance abuse, family history of violence, feelings of jealousy, possessiveness and desire to be in control (Hagemann-White, 2010).

Hypothesis two indicated that there was no significant difference between participants with high self esteem and those with low esteem on their levels of subjective happiness. This position is confirmed by Parducci (1995) who reported that even though self-esteem may appear important for happiness, it does not adequately describe happiness and it may not even be connected to many of our most happy or unhappy experiences. Diener et al., (1999) also argued that high self-esteem is not a sufficient condition for happiness in the same way things such as good jobs, good income or a good marriage does not guarantee happiness. This perspective may help explain why the findings on the relationship between self esteem and life satisfaction varies in different cultures (Diener and Diener, 1995). Uchida et al., (2008) reported that the association between self esteem and happiness varies between cultures and self esteem tends to be more strongly associated with happiness in Western cultures than in East Asian cultures. Happiness reports are said to be mostly dependent on mood. Diener (1984) suggested that both current and long-term mood are reflected

in measures of happiness. Individuals' description of their levels of happiness are mostly based on their moods (Ross et al., 1986).

Hypothesis three indicated that there was a significant independent influence of VAW, extraversion and agreeableness on subjective happiness but there was no independent influence of self esteem, neuroticism, conscientiousness and openness on subjective happiness. However, there was a significant joint influence of VAW, self esteem and the big five factors of personality on subjective happiness. The influence of some dimensions of personality is supported by Cloninger (2013) who found that extraverts are observably happier than those who score low on this variable. On the other hand, high levels of neuroticism has been consistently negatively associated with happiness, which is not surprising considering that neuroticism describes one's tendency to experience negative feelings like depression and emotional instability (McCrae & Costa, 1989). However, higher levels of extraversion has been linked to increased positive affect, accounting for feelings of happiness, enthusiasm, and activation (Albuquerque, Lima, Matos, & Figueiredo, 2013). Similarly, higher levels of extraversion are correlated with lower levels of depression (Senf & Liau, 2013).

Agreeableness enhances positive experiences in social situations and increases subjective well-being (Hayes & Joseph, 2003). Boyce, Wood & Powdthavee (2013) also document a bivariate relationship between agreeableness and life satisfaction. Graziano & Tobin (2009) suggested that individuals with agreeable personality tend to be more involved in helping behaviour, such as supporting, cooperating and being respectful to other people. Colquitt, LePine & Wesson (2009) observed that neurotic individuals have a tendency to be less satisfied with life and Seidnitz (1993) confirmed that openness to experience is less strongly and consistently linked to subjective well being because it is a function of environmental influences. The joint prediction of personality dimensions on subjective happiness is observed by Holder et al (2012) who indicated that the connection between personality variables and happiness has been demonstrated across age groups and different cultures. Joshanloo and Afshari (2009), noted that neuroticism and extraversion strongly predicts life satisfaction and self esteem completely mediates the influence of agreeableness and conscientiousness on life satisfaction. Studies have also shown that neuroticism, extraversion conscientiousness and agreeableness accounts for 45 % of the variance in life satisfaction (Lounsbury, Saudargas, Gibson & Leong, 2005). Boyce, et al.(2013) reported an association between neuroticism, extraverted, agreeableness, conscientiousness and subjective well-being.

Conclusion

VAW has been a global problem which requires urgent and decisive actions and policy formation. VAW appears as a tradition, custom and religious practice that is established for the purpose of reducing the status of women in the society. Some of the major consequences of VAW is the inability of women or the girl child to go to school, possibility to experience injuries, unwanted pregnancies, diseases, negative thoughts about the self, low self esteem, poor quality of life and low level of subjective happiness. Therefore, VAW should be totally condemned and efforts should be made through enactment of laws that would prevent acts of violence against women in the society. The findings also reveal that VAW, self esteem and personality factors can jointly predict subjective happiness among the participants of study.

Implications and Recommendations

The above findings suggest that participants' exposure to violence should be considered in investigating their levels of subjective happiness, life satisfaction or well-being. Therefore, in order to alleviate VAW which is considered an issue of serious national concern, women need to be well educated. Education should be made mandatory for the girl child which will serve as a kind of empowerment in order to reduce their chances of being vulnerable to violence. There should be more representation for women in all the sectors of the economy. Laws and policies aimed at eradication of VAW should be formulated and all acts of violence against women in the society should be publicly condemned. The community and religious leaders should join hands with the government in fighting gender based violence. The staff members of universities should ensure that any act of gender based violence on campus is reported and well punished.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Studies

The first limitation of the study relates to the study participants. The sample used in the current study were university students, but future studies may consider samples outside the university community and across a broader range of participants such as households, male dominated professions and organisations, etc. Another limitation of the study is that the results are based on data from one time point, so it is impossible to draw any conclusions about causality. Future studies should use a longitudinal design. Also, since the current study is a quantitative study, future studies may consider using a mixed methods approach, so as to explore individual meaning of the variables of interest.

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