Poster Presentation   **Research**

The Relationship between Social Anxiety, Irrational Beliefs and Emotional Intelligence with Homesickness in the University of Tehran Dormitory Students

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Abstract

Moving away from home always lead most university students to feel homesick that negatively impacts their academic performance and excessive acculturative stress can contribute to eating and sleeping problems, low energy and headaches. Severe homesickness is classified as an adjustment disorder with mixed anxiety and depressed mood that in some critical cases leads to suicide. To consider this issue, the purpose of this study was to examine the correlation between social anxiety, irrational beliefs and emotional intelligence with homesickness in University of Tehran dormitory students. Three hundred and fifty-five undergraduate students (198 males and 157 females) were selected using cluster sampling method. Participants responded to the social anxiety questionnaire (SAQ) (Watson & Frend, 1969), irrational beliefs test (IBT) (Jones, 1968), emotional intelligence scale (Petrides & Furnham, 1998) and the homesickness scale (Van vliet, 2001). Multiple regression analysis showed that social anxiety and irrational beliefs had significant positive correlation with homesickness ($P<0.01$), respectively (r=0.56), (r=0.28), while emotional intelligence had significant negative correlation (r=-0.52) with homesickness ($P<0.01$). Overall, the results of multiple regression analysis predicted 0.55 changes of homesickness. Results suggest that social anxiety is the most effective factor among other tested variables to predict homesickness. In fact, behavioral responses of people from a new culture are not predictable enough for immigrant students and it is because of this that they experience more anxiety in social situations and cannot create suitable social bonds to be supported by others that results in feeling more homesick. This has significant implications for educators to instruct social skills and rational thinking to immigrant students in dealing with a new environment since emotional intelligence and irrational beliefs can affect homesickness and social anxiety as well.

Keywords: Social Anxiety, Irrational Beliefs, Emotional Intelligence, Homesickness.

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