Research on the Dispositional Optimism and Forgiveness of Middle School Teachers in the Naxi Area

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Abstract—To do research on the dispositional optimism category and forgiveness of the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area, a questionnaire survey was conducted against 3,786 middle school teachers in the Naxi Area by the means of dispositional optimism scale and forgiveness scale. The dispositional optimism and forgiveness of the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were scored as 3.49 ± 0.49 and 4.68 ± 0.64, respectively. The forgiveness of the middle school teachers with various dispositional optimism types in the Naxi Area was scored as below: 4.95 ± 0.62 for Typical Optimism Category, 4.37 ± 0.55 for Typical Pessimism Category, 4.56 ± 0.60 for Undefined Category, and 4.71 ± 0.60 for Double Category. The dispositional optimism and forgiveness of the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were both in the middle upper level as a whole, but there was a little pessimistic tendency. The middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were involved in Typical Optimism Category, Typical Pessimism Category, Undefined Category and Double Category. There was a positive correlation between the optimistic tendency & forgiveness scale and the subscale. The middle school teachers in Typical Optimism Category in the Naxi Area showed the highest level of forgiveness.

Keywords—Middle school teachers; Dispositional optimism; Forgiveness; Naxi area

I. INTRODUCTION

On the basis of positive psychology, the dispositional optimism is treated as a good expectation to which it is good rather than bad for an individual in the future, [1] including two independent [2-3] and stable personality traits such as optimistic trait and pessimistic trait [4]. Optimists hold the best expectations for the external environment, life adversity and adverse events, etc., while pessimists oppose it. From the psychological point of view, domestic researchers believe that forgiveness is a process of mood transition to positive emotions from complex negative emotions like panic, anger, hate, fear, suspect, sad and shame, etc. [5]

The existing research rarely explores the relationship between dispositional optimism and forgiveness. The research is proposed to explore the dispositional optimism, forgiveness and relationship between both, aiming at the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area, with reference with subsequent research.

II. RESEARCH OBJECTS AND METHODS

A. Research objects

Through convenient sampling, the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were selected as research objects, including junior middle school teachers and senior middle school teachers. A total of 4,000 questionnaires were distributed, of which 3,786 questionnaires were valid, excluding the omitted and incomplete questionnaires, etc.

B. Research methods

1) Optimism scale

In the research, the Life Oriention Test (LOT) [6] was adopted to measure the dispositional optimism. The scale consisted of six topics, including sub-tests in two dimensions: The optimistic tendency questions (1, 3, and 6) were scored in a forward manner, while the pessimistic tendency questions (2, 4, and 5) were scored in a reverse manner. The higher the total score during the test was, the more optimistic was, and vice versa for pessimist. The Krenbach alpha coefficient during the subtest and the whole test were 0.67, 0.64, and 0.72, respectively [7]. The internal consistency coefficient of this questionnaire survey is 0.73.

2) Forgiveness scale

Through Thompson's Mental Forgiveness Questionnaire, the scale had a total of 18 topics, with a 7 - point scale, including three subscales such as Forgiving Yourself (1-6), Forgiving Others (7-12), and Forgiveness Scene (13-18). [8] Total points for forgiveness was the sum of points of 18 topics (the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 7th, 9th, 11th, 13th, 15th, and 17th topic are designed to reverse scoring), and higher score was, greater flexibility and trust was, and the lower hostility, silence and depression was. The internal consistency coefficient of this questionnaire survey was 0.80.

C. Statistical methods

All data were compiled and statistically processed by the of EXCEL2010 and spss20.0, and descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and variance analysis, etc. were conducted on the data. Test level α =0.05.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS

A. Information on the dispositional optimism of the middle school teachers

The total average level of dispositional optimism of the middle school teachers was scored as 3.49 ± 0.49, the optimistic tendency was scored as 3.84 ± 0.58, and the pessimistic tendency was scored as 3.03 ± 0.69 (in the case of 5-point scale, 3 points means medium level), which showed that the middle school teachers were generally optimistic, but there was a slightly pessimistic tendency. The difference test was conducted based on the optimistic tendency and pessimistic tendency (pairing t=53.21, df=3785, P<0.001) to find that the correlation between the two was not significant (r=0.25, P>0.05), which indicated that middle school teachers were more likely to hold both optimistic and pessimistic cognitive tendencies. According to the existing classification method [9], we divided the middle school teachers into four dispositional optimistic categories, as shown below: 1,282 people were classified in the Typical Optimism Category, accounting for 33.90%, and the total score was 3.99 ± 0.28; 971 people were classified in the typical pessimism category, accounting for 25.60%, and the total score was 2.95 ± 0.33; 522 people were classified in the undefined category, accounting for 13.80%, and the total score was 3.49 ± 0.28; 1,011 people were classified in the double category, accounting for 26.70%, and the total score was 3.35 ± 0.23.

B. Information on forgiveness of the middle school teachers

The total score of the middle school teachers was 4.68 ± 0.64 for the forgiveness, and the three subscales were scored as below: 4.55 ± 0.76 for Forgiveness of Self, 4.71 ± 0.81 for Forgiveness of Others and 4.79 ± 0.78 (in the case of 5-point scale, 4 points means medium level) for Forgiveness of Situations. Therefore, both total score and subscale score of the forgiveness level of the middle school teachers were above the medium level.

C. The relationship between dispositional optimism and forgiveness of the middle school teachers

1) The forgiveness of the middle school teachers with various dispositional optimisms

The information on the middle school teachers with various dispositional optimisms is shown in Table 1. The forgiveness level of the middle school teachers with various dispositional optimisms was scored from high to low: Typical Optimism Category > Double Category > Undefined Category > Typical Pessimism Category. The forgiveness of the Typical Optimism Category got the highest score, while the forgiveness of the Typical Pessimism Category got the lowest score. Through the analysis of the forgiveness variance of the middle school teachers with various dispositional optimisms (see Table 1), there was a significant difference in the forgiveness of the middle school teachers with various dispositional optimisms (F = 184.34, P < 0.01). Further, LSD test showed that the forgiveness level of the middle school teachers in the Typical Optimism Category got higher scores than that of the middle school teachers in the Typical Pessimism Category, Undefined Category and Double Category, with significant differences (all P values were <0.01); The middle school teachers in the Typical Pessimism Category had lower forgiveness scores than that of the Undefined Category and Double Category, and there were significant differences (all P values were <0.01); The forgiveness score of the middle school teachers in Undefined Category was lower than that of the Double Category, and there were significant differences (P <0.01).

TABLE I   FORGIVENESS ($\overline{x} \pm$ S) OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH VARIOUS DISPOSITIONAL OPTIMISMS

Categories	n	$\overline{x} \pm$ s	F value	P value
Typical Optimism Category	1282	4.95±0.62		
Typical Pessimism Category	971	4.37±0.55		
Undefined Category	522	4.56±0.60	184.34	0.00**
Double Category	1011	4.71±0.60		
Total	3786	4.68±0.64		

Note: *P <0.05, **P <0.01, the same applies hereinafter.

2) The relationship between the dispositional optimism and forgiveness of the middle school teachers

Through relevant statistics on dispositional optimism and forgiveness of the middle school teachers, the statistical results showed that there was a significant positive correlation between optimistic tendency and total forgiveness score, Forgiveness of Self, Forgiveness of Others and Forgiveness of Situations (R=0.49, 0.38, 0.39 and 0.47, and all P values were <0.01), but the correlation between pessimistic tendency and total forgiveness scores and the three dimensions was not significant (P > 0.05), as shown in Table 2.

TABLE II   CORRELATION COEFFICIENT BETWEEN THE DISPOSITIONAL OPTIMISM AND FORGIVENESS (N=3786, R)

	Total Forgiveness Scores	Forgiveness of Self	Forgiveness of Others	Forgiveness of Situations
Optimistic tendency	0.49**	0.38**	0.39**	0.47**
Pessimistic tendency	0.16	0.13	0.14	0.10

3)   Regression analysis of the dispositional optimism and forgiveness of the middle school teachers

Forced regression analysis was performed, of which the dispositional optimism was taken as the independent variable and forgiveness as the dependent variable. The basic steps were: Firstly, the category of dispositional optimism was converted into a dummy variable, because it was a non-continuous variable. [10] Through statistical processing, three dummy variables were obtained, including "Temperament Type Virtual _2" is the Typical Pessimism Category & Typical Optimism Category; "Temperament Type Virtual _3" is Undefined Category & Typical Optimism Category; "Temperament Type Virtual _4" is Double Category & Typical Optimism Category. Secondly, the above three dummy variables were included in the regression analysis. The results showed that: The multiple correlation coefficient between the three dummy variables and forgiveness was 0.46, the coefficient of determination (R2) was 0.22, the adjusted R2 was 0.22, and the estimated standard error of the regression

model mean square error (MSE) was 5.72. Finally, a regression model was obtained. All the three dummy variables were included in the regression equation, which indicated that the variance level of the "forgiveness" of rural primary school teachers has reached 46%, and the regression model showed a significant level of variation as a whole (F = 184.35, P <0.01).

The coefficients of the three dummy variables were significant (t=-22.98, -12.52, -9.55, and all P values were <0.01), as shown in Table 3, which indicated that the three dummy variables could explain the forgiveness. The *β* (standardized regression coefficients) values of the Typical Pessimism Category & Typical Optimism Category, Undefined Category & Typical Optimism Category and Double Category & Typical Optimism Category were -0.40, -0.21, and -0.17, respectively, which indicated that the forgiveness level of the middle school teachers in the Typical Optimism Category was higher than that of the teachers in the Typical Pessimism Category, Undefined Category and Double Category.

TABLE III   REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF THE FORGIVENESS OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH VARIOUS DISPOSITIONAL OPTIMISMS (N=3786)

Model	Non-standardized coefficient		Standardized coefficient	t value	P value
	B	SE	Beta		
(Constant)	89.12	0.30		297.40	0.00
Typical Pessimism Category & Typical Optimism Category	-10.49	0.46	-0.40	-22.98	0.00
Undefined Category & Typical Optimism Category	-6.97	0.56	-0.21	-12.52	0.00
Double Category & Typical Optimism Category	-4.31	0.45	-0.17	-9.55	0.00

IV. DISCUSSION

The statistical analysis showed that the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were generally optimistic, with a slightly pessimistic tendency, and further were divided into Typical Optimism Category, Typical Pessimism Category, Undefined Category and Double Category. The forgiveness of the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area was medium level. The correlation between the dispositional optimism and forgiveness showed that there was a significant positive correlation between the optimistic middle school teachers and the forgiveness, Forgiveness of Others, Forgiveness of Self and Forgiveness of Situations, but the pessimistic middle school teachers din not suffer such a situation. We could treat the optimistic middle school teachers as individuals who can respond positively to themselves and the outside world and things. It is not difficult to understand that the optimistic

middle school teachers can forgive not only others well, but also themselves and external things, as well as their flexibility and trust.

Through the regression analysis of the dispositional optimism and forgiveness of the middle school teachers, we can find: the forgiveness level of the middle school teachers in the Typical Optimism Category was higher than that of the those teachers in the Typical Pessimism Category, Undefined Category and Double Category.   This shows that the middle school teachers in the Typical Optimism Category are the most forgiving. The middle school teachers are one of the groups who undertake the most difficult education & teaching in all educational stages. The students in the middle school stage are located the most plasticized stage in the process of individual growth, and are prone to growth errors. The Forgiveness of Others is more likely to occur when the middle school teachers

in the Typical Optimism Category are dealing with students at the problem prone stage There are also very similarities between the Forgiveness of Self and Forgiveness of Situations. This further indicates that the middle school teachers in the Typical Optimism Category have higher flexibility and trust, and may also be the result of meeting the psychological balance needs.

V. CONCLUSION

Through questionnaires, data processing, we have found that: Firstly, the scores of the dispositional optimism, optimistic tendency and pessimistic tendency of the 3,786 middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were all slightly higher than the average score and were generally at a medium level. Meanwhile, the middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were divided into Typical Optimism Category, Typical Pessimism Category, Undefined Category and Double Category. Secondly, the scores of total scale and subscale for the forgiveness of the 3,786 middle school teachers in the Naxi Area were slightly higher than the average score and were at a medium level. Thirdly, there was a positive correlation between the optimistic tendency of the dispositional optimism of the 3,786 middle school teachers in the Naxi Area and the total forgiveness scores, Forgiveness of Self, Forgiveness of Others and Forgiveness of Situations, but the pessimistic tendency was not significantly associated with it. Finally, the forgiveness of the 3,786 middle school teachers various dispositional optimisms in the Naxi Area was scored from high to low: Typical Optimism Category > Double Category > Undefined Category > Typical Pessimism Category. The forgiveness of the Typical Optimism Category got the highest score, while the forgiveness of the Typical Pessimism Category got the lowest score.

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