

## Comparison of the Cognitive Emotion Regulation, Locus of Control and Meaning in life in Native and Non-Native Students

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### Article Info

Received: Aug 29, 2018

Received in revised form:

Nov 4, 2018

Accepted: Nov 12, 2018

Available Online: Dec 22, 2018

### Keywords:

Cognitive emotion regulation

Locus of Control

Meaning in life

Native and Non-Native Students

### Abstract

**Background and Objective:** One of the critical periods in youth is the studentship period, which is a dynamic transitional period. Several factors can influence university students' psychological health. They can be generally divided into personal, university, and social factors.

The purpose of this study is to compare the cognitive emotion regulation, locus of control and meaning in life of native and non-native students in Mohaghegh Ardabili University.

**Method:** The method of this study is causal-comparative. Statistical population of this study comprised all native and non-native students in Mohaghegh Ardabili University in the year 2015. From among this population, 100 students (50 native students and 50 non-native students) were selected as sample by convenience sampling method. The used tools were Granefski et al.'s cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire, Rutter's locus of control survey and Steger's meaning in life questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed through multivariate analysis of variance. All ethical issues were observed in this study and the researchers declared no conflict of interests.

**Results:** The results showed that the average score of external locus of control among non-native students was significantly higher than that of native ones. Furthermore, the mean score of internal locus control was significantly lower for non-native students ( $p < 0.001$ ). Additionally, compared to their non-native counterparts, native students used a larger repertoire of positive emotions and efficient strategies (acceptance, positive refocusing, refocus on planning, positive reappraisal, putting into perspective) ( $p < 0.001$ ). Also, native students registered significantly higher scores in terms of meaning in life in comparison with the non-native students ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** According to the obtained results, their frequent use of internal locus of control, positive cognition, emotion, and more frequent search for life indicate the better psychological condition and performance of non-native students. It is therefore essential to pay attention to these aspects and try to develop them.

**Please cite this article as:** Sadri Damirchi E, Esmacili Ghazivaloyi F, Asadi Shishegaran S, Mohammadi N. Comparison of the Cognitive Emotion Regulation, Locus of Control and Meaning in life in Native and Non-Native Students. *J Res Relig Health*. 2019; 4(5): 5- 16.

### Summary

**Background and Objective:** One of the critical periods in youth is the studentship period, which is a dynamic transitional period (1). Several factors can affect students' mental health, which can be categorized in three groups: personal factors, university factors and social factors (2). Entrance to the university is

accompanied by special excitement that can affect the mental and physical health of the student (3). In this course, with their physical, psychological, social, and sexual progression, explicitly young people, they gradually accept their health responsibilities. This transitional period is the best time for instilling healthy behavior among university students (1). One of the factors that can have a deeper effect on the performance and general health of students is

emotional reactions and cognitive management strategies (4). There is some evidence that many problems and problems of students are due to the locus of control (5, 6). Many studies have shown that the locus of control plays an important role in the lives of students and affects their physical and psychological well-being in a wide range of areas (7). Another factor associated with problems and inadequacies in students is the acquisition of the concept and meaning of life. One of the main goals of this study was to pay attention to positive psychological factors in the transplantation of non-native students with dormitories and universities. The purpose of this study is to compare the cognitive emotion regulation, locus of control and meaning in life of native and non-native students in Mohaghegh Ardabili University.

**Method:** The design of the present study is descriptive and the method of data collection is causal-comparative. The statistical population of this study comprised all native and non-native students in Mohaghegh Ardabili University in the year 2015. From among this population, 100 Students (50 native students and 50 non-native students) were selected as sample by convenience sampling method. The used tools were Granefski et al.'s cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire, Rutter's locus of control survey and Steger's meaning in life questionnaire. First, the researcher attracted the attention of the participants and asked them to cooperate and talked about the objectives of the study. Then, the three questionnaires were given to the participants and the two groups filled in the questionnaire, and the data were collected. Finally, descriptive and inferential statistics (MANOVA) were used to analyze the data. In MANOVA, observing some assumptions, such as the homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices and homogeneity of error variances is necessary. This study first discussed the investigation of the mentioned assumptions.

**Results:** The results of the Box-plot test for the investigation of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices and the results of Levene's test for the investigation of the homogeneity of error variances and the research variables of indicated all the pre-assumptions were met to run a parametric test. Therefore, MANOVA was used to compare mean scores of cognitive emotion regulation, locus of control and meaning in life in the two groups of native and non-native students. Positive emotional strategies, the source of internal control, meaning in life registered statistically higher scores in the native students, and the mean scores of external control resources and negative emotional strategies in non-native students were higher than native students ( $P < 0/01$ ). The result of MANOVA showed that all the four parameters, namely Pylayy effect ( $P < 0/05$ ,  $F = 175/57$ ), Wilks Lambda ( $P < 0/05$ ,  $F = 175/57$ ), the effect of Hotelling ( $P < 0/05$ ,  $F = 175/57$ ) and the largest root ( $P < 0/05$ ,  $F = 175/57$ ) were significant; thus, it becomes clear that between the two groups of students, at least one of the dependent variables is significantly different.

**Conclusion:** Taken together, according to the results of this study, it can be said that non-native students experience more psychological and social pressures than native students which can affect cognitive emotion regulation, locus of control and meaning in life. However, it is possible to compensate the damages. As a result, it can be concluded that special measures should be taken to increase the positive and effective cognitive emotion strategies, source of internal control and meaning in life in non-native students in order to enhance their psychological and educational qualities.

### Ethical Considerations

#### Compliance with ethical guidelines

The research and technology deputy of the University of Mohaghegh Ardebili has confirmed this research. Ethics Code:95,04,27.923

#### Funding

The Research and Technology Deputy of Mohaghegh Ardabili University has sponsored this research.

#### Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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