

Emotional Correlates of Psychological Well Being Among Young Adults

¹Ramnath, ²Sandeep Singh

ABSTRACT--*In the modern world young adult have many problems that are related with various areas of life such as educational, social and economical. These problems have negative impact on their mental and physical health. Psychological well being of young adults is determined by various personality attributes such as emotional regulation, positive affect and negative affect. Some of these personality attributes promote psychological well being of young adults such as emotional regulation and positive affect whereas negative affect is associated with declined psychological well being of young adults. There are several researches conducted in the area of positive psychology which focus on the role of emotional regulation and positive affect in the prevention of physical illness and mental disorders. Negative affect produces negative feeling such as anxiety, distress and sadness which have negative relations with physical health and psychological well being of young adults. The present study examines how emotional regulation, positive affect and negative affect related to psychological well being. The sample of present study consists of 600 young adults. The sample of the present study is further divided into (300 male and 300 female young adults). Emotional regulation questionnaire by (J. J. Gross & O. P. John, 2003) was used for measuring the emotional regulation abilities of research participants. Positive –negative affect schedule by (Watson & Clark, Tellegen, 1988) was used for assessment of positive-negative affective state of mind and psychological well being scale by (Carol. D. Ryff, 1989) was used for assessment psychological well being of young adults. Descriptive statistics, t-test and Pearson product moment method of correlation were used for analysis of data. The results of the present investigation show significant gender differences among the young adults in overall score of psychological well being, dimensions of emotional regulation and positive- negative affect. The findings of the present research also reveal that emotional regulation and positive affect have significantly associated with psychological well being of young adults.*

Keywords-- *Emotional regulation, positive affect, negative affect.*

I. PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING

Majority of researches in the area of positive and health psychology are mainly focused on health and psychological well being of young adults. Young adults psychological well being is one of the important areas of investigation for researchers. Psychological well being includes various components such as autonomy, purpose in life, environmental mastery, self acceptance, personal growth and positive relations with other (Ryff, 1989). Campbell, (1981) described well being as a subjective feeling or measure of happiness and contentment and also associated with individual experiences that is derived from their perceptions about present and past life events. Positive well being includes satisfaction with life, energy and affective states (Argyle & Crossland; Diener, 2000;

¹ Research Scholar, Department of Applied Psychology, GJUS & T Hisar

² Professor, Department of Applied Psychology, GJUS & T Hisar

Watson & Tellegen, 1985) whereas negative well being includes distress, negative mood and hyper arousal (Clark & Watson; Diener, 2000). Psychological well being of young adults and level of effective functioning in various situations such as educational, social and occupational depends on the development of various positive personality attributes, behaviors and life style. The degree to which young adults exhibit emotional regulation abilities and positive affect is related to their physical, mental and psychological well being. Psychological well being is also described as “engagement with existential challenges of life” (Keys, Shmatkins & Ryff, 2002). Psychological well being includes various components identity, meaning and relatedness (Ryff & Singer, 1996). These components of well being are important for mental and physical health. Psychological well being is related with individual actualizing potential and living with satisfaction. “Psychological well being is a process of fulfilling or realizing one’s true nature” (Deci & Ryan, 2006). Psychological well being is a state characterized by acceptance actualization contribution, coherence and integration with others (Keys & Ryff, 1995).

II. EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Emotion is a basic and universal phenomenon that has important impact on functioning of individual in various situation of life. Emotions also have important effect on adaptation of an individual. Emotions also play an important role in communication of thoughts and feelings to others in social setting. Interaction in social situations is essential for positive relations with other. Regulation of emotion is important for social and psychological well-being. Success of emotion regulation depends on the ability to control negative emotions and arousal related with physical processes with the help of cognitive reappraisal (McRae et al., 2012; Troy et al., 2010). Individual differences shall be observed in emotional regulation strategies. There are two types of emotional regulation strategies both cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression used by different individual for regulation of emotions (Gross & John, 2003). Individual physiological, behavioral and cognitive processes are determined by emotional regulation strategies. In general cognitive reappraisal has been positively linked with optimism, satisfaction with life, self-esteem, coping, social relationship and various components of psychological well being such as environmental mastery, personal growth, self-acceptance and autonomy whereas negatively related with depression and adjustment in various conditions (Garnefski et al., 2001; John and Gross, 2004). Expressive suppression is type of emotional regulation strategy that involves reduction of facial expression and monitoring of positive and negative emotions. Expressive suppression related to decline of life satisfaction, self esteem, optimism and interpersonal relation (Sheldon et al., 1997; John and Gross, 2004). Expressive suppression is a type of emotional regulation strategy that is related mainly with negative psychological outcomes.

III. POSITIVE –NEGATIVE AFFECT

Positive affect and negative affect are the main aspects of self-reported mood (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1984 1985). Negative affect is pervasive predisposition related with negative emotions, cognition and self- concept of an individual. It is also affect how an individual perceive the world (Watson & Clark, 1984) whereas positive affect is important aspects of self reported mood that reflects individual delightful obligation in various situations. People with high positive affect are energetic, deterministic and active whereas individual with low positive affect showed negative emotions and fatigue. Positive affect is an important pervasive trait related with positive

emotional experience, well-being, competence and effective interpersonal relation but negatively correlated with fatigue and sadness. Young adults with high positive affect experiences positive emotion, a sense of well being, effective interpersonal relation and competence in various areas. There are numerous researches in the area of psychology which shows relationship between positive- negative affective style and well being.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

1. To study the gender differences in positive affect, negative affect, dimensions of emotional regulation and overall score of psychological well being among young adults.
2. To study the relationship between positive- negative affect and psychological well being of young adults.
3. To study the relationship between emotional regulation and psychological well being of young adults.

V. HYPOTHESES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

1. There shall be gender differences in positive affect, negative affect, dimensions of emotional regulation and overall score of psychological well being among young adults.
2. There shall be significant relationship between positive- negative affect and psychological well being of young adults.
3. There shall be significant relationship between emotional regulation and psychological well being of young adults.

VI. METHOD

SAMPLE

The sample of the present study consists of 600 young adults. This sample of the study further divided into 300 male and 300 female young adults. We contacted the head of educational institutions to obtain their consent for collection of data. The sample of the study was randomly selected from various colleges from state of Haryana. The age range of the sample is 18 to 21 years. College Students who volunteered to participate in the study were included in the sample. The sample of the present study was selected on the basis of stratified random sampling method.

VII. MEASURES

The Ryff's Psychological Well Being Scale

Psychological well being scale is developed by Carol D. Ryff, (1989, 2007). This scale consists of 42 items that are related with measurement of six subcomponents of psychological well being such as autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self-acceptance. All the participants were advised to rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 indicating strong disagreement and 6

indicating strong agreement. For each dimensions a high score shows that the subject has mastery in that particular aspect of well being whereas low score on any subcomponent shows that the subject struggles to feel comfortable with that particular aspect.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule: Watson & Clark, Tellegen (1988)

Positive-negative affect schedule is propounded by Watson et al., (1988). Positive-negative affect schedule is used for assessment of positive and negative affect. In this schedule there are two general dimensions that measures positive and negative affect. This scale consists of 20 items in which 10 positive mood adjectives and 10 negative mood adjectives. In this schedule participants were asked to report the extent to which they had experienced each particular emotions within a specified period of time by using a 5- point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Very Slightly) to 5 (Extremely).

The Emotional Regulation Questionnaire: J. J. Gross & O. P. John (2003)

Emotional regulation questionnaire is developed by J. J. Gross and O. P. John, (2003). This scale consists of 10 items, all these items designed to measure a person tendency to monitor and regulation of emotions. The emotional regulation questionnaire is related with assessment of two emotion regulation strategies: the expressive suppression includes 4 items and cognitive reappraisal includes 6 items. Each item is scored or rated on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Item no. 1,3,5,7,8,10 is related with the measurement of cognitive reappraisal strategies and item no. 2,4,6,9 is designed to measure expressive suppression. High score on one of its factors indicates a greater potency to use that strategy of emotional regulation.

Procedure

The sample of present study consists of 600 young adults (300 male and 300 female) taken from different educational institutions of Haryana state. The selection of the subjects was done randomly. After establishing the rapport, study related information was explained to the participants and asked to complete all the tests related with the present investigation. Instructions of tests were given separately to subjects. Later on scoring were done with the help of manual. After that statistical analysis is done by using appropriate statistical tools.

Statistical Analysis

The obtained data were analyzed by using SPSS program (version 20.0). In the present research we have studied gender differences in positive affect, negative affect, dimensions of emotional regulation and total well being score by using independent sample t-test. The present investigation also studies and analyzes relationship between positive- negative affect, emotional regulation and psychological well being and its dimensions by using coefficient of correlation through Pearson Product Moment Method of correlation.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the present study show significant gender difference between male and female young adults in positive-negative affect, dimensions of emotional regulation and overall score of psychological well being. The present investigation reveal positive significant relationship between positive affect, cognitive reappraisal (dimension of emotional regulation) and psychological well being among young adults whereas negative relationship between negative affect, expressive suppression and psychological well being. First of all we describe descriptive characteristics of the total sample (Mean, S.D) in table no.1 after that gender difference in positive-

negative affect, dimensions of emotional regulation and overall score psychological well being among young adults explained in table no.2 and correlation coefficient among different variables are explained through table no. 3 and 4 respectively.

Table 1: Showing Mean, SD of total sample.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Positive Affect	600	61.61	7.945
Negative Affect	600	25.01	6.363
Cognitive Reappraisal	600	29.07	5.328
Expressive Suppression	600	17.10	4.632
Psychological Well Being	600	170.01	17.73
Valid N (listwise)	600		

Table 2: Showing t-ratios of variables across gender.

Variables	Gender						t-ratios
	M			F			
		Mean	SD		Mean	SD	
Positive Affect	300	61.26	8.370	300	61.97	7.494	1.100
Negative Affect	300	25.04	6.473	300	24.98	6.262	-.115
Cognitive Reappraisal	300	28.53	5.514	300	29.62	5.087	2.509*
Expressive Suppression	300	16.50	4.510	300	17.70	4.681	3.198**
Psychological well being	300	167.97	18.17	300	172.04	16.46	2.827*

Perusal of table no. 2 revealed that female young adult have scored significantly higher on various variables such as cognitive reappraisal ($t = 2.509, p < .05$) and expressive suppression ($t = 3.198, p < .01$) and overall score of psychological well being ($t = 2.827, p < .05$), but non-significant on positive affect whereas young adults male have scored higher on negative affect but non-significant. It depicts that female young adults tend to higher level of positive affect, cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological well being than male young adult. However, gender differences are not found significant for positive affect and negative affect. The results of the present investigation are in line with some of the previous studies. There are numbers of researches that examine gender differences in psychological well being. These researches have showed mixed results about gender differences in subjective well being. Some of the researchers have showed men have significant higher level of subjective well being (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2009; Haring et al., 1984). Some other investigation also observed that women scored higher on subjective well being (Fujita et al., 1991). Man had lower level of life satisfaction (Wood, Rhodes and Whelam, 1989). Romer and colleagues (2008) observed that the gender inequality in society is responsible for gender differences in subjective well being. A study was done by Meisenbreg and Woodley

(2008) on the sample that was taken from 90 countries and noticed that some gender equality criterion and dignity of female in a given society are associated to their satisfaction with life. In comparison to men, women experience more positive and negative affect (Simon & Nath, 2004; Plant et al., 2000). In present society girls are trained to control emotional expression in various situations in compare to boys whereas boys more than girls are trained to prohibit and control expression of negative emotions such as fear and sadness (Fischer, La, France, 2015; Hess, 2015; Underwood & Coie & Herbsman, 1992).

Table 3: Showing coefficient of correlation of Dimensions of emotional regulation, positive- Negative Affect and psychological well being.

Variables		Cognitive Reappraisal	Expressive Suppression	Positive Affect	Negative Affect
Psychological well Being	Male	.142*	-.140*	.158**	-.292**
	Female	-.016	-.171**	.181**	-.087

**p<.01

Perusal of table no. 3 revealed that cognitive reappraisal had marked significant positive correlations with psychological well being of male young adults (male: $r = .142$, $p < .05$), but negative non significant negative correlation in female sample. There is negative significant correlation between expressive suppression and psychological well being (male: $r = -.140$, $p < .05$; female: $r = -.171$, $p < .01$) whereas positive significant relationship between positive affect and psychological well being (male: $r = .158$, $p < .01$; female: $r = .181$, $p < .01$) and there is significant negative correlation between negative affect and psychological well being of male young adults (male: $r = -.292$, $p < .01$). It reveals that there is negative correlation between expressive suppression, negative affect and psychological well being in both male and female sample. There is significant positive correlation between positive affect and psychological well being in both male and female young adults. Difficulty in emotional regulation associated with negative affect, interpersonal difficulty, behaviors and health problem and decreases resilience in adverse situation (Aldao et al., 2010; Gross, 2007; Moore et al., 2008; Webb et al., 2012). Cognitive reappraisal is positively related to psychological health and higher level of life satisfaction in adults (Haga, Krafts & Corby, 2009) and positive affect (Balzarott, John & Gross, 2010; Cabello et al., 2013) whereas expressive suppression produced more negative outcomes such as associated with greater negative affect (Gross & John, 2003), lower level of life satisfaction (Haga et al., 2009) and risk of development of depression and anxiety (Moore et al., 2008).

Table 4: Showing correlation among emotional regulation, positive – negative affect with the dimensions of well being.

Dimensions Of Psychological Well Being						
Variables	Autonomy	Personal Growth	Environmental Mastery	Positive Relation With Others	Purpose in Life	Self Acceptance

Emotional Regulation	.176**	.105*	.214**	.186**	.231**	.311**
Positive Affect	.201**	.134**	.125**	.066	.129**	.172**
Negative Affect	-.009	-.178**	-.136**	-.190**	-.060	-.181**

**p<.01, *p <.05

Table no. 4 of the present investigation explained that emotional regulation is positively associated with all the dimensions of well being of young adults. Emotional regulation and autonomy ($r = .176, p < .01$); emotional regulation and personal growth ($r = .105, p < .05$); emotional regulation and environmental mastery ($r = .214, p < .01$); emotional regulation and positive relation with others ($r = .186, p < .01$); emotional regulation and purpose in life ($r = .231, p < .01$); emotional regulation and self acceptance ($r = .311, p < .01$). There are several studies revealed that emotional regulation difficulties in adolescents associated with various mental disease like mood disorder, anxiety and problematic behaviors (Garnefski et al., 2001; Mclaughlin et al., 2011). Adolescent with expressive suppression showed positive association with depression whereas cognitive reappraisal was negatively correlated with depressive symptoms (Gullone & Taffe, 2012). Adolescent those use cognitive reappraisal more effectively, that is negatively related with internalizing problems like mood disorder, anxiety and social anxiety Loughheed and Hollenstein (2012).

A study was conducted by Ena Yadav & Srishti Chanana, (2018) on the sample of 200 (100 males and 100 females). The age range of the study sample was 65 to 80 years. The results of the investigation showed that there is comprehensive and bidirectional relationship between emotional regulation and well being. Emotional regulation may also have protective role in well being because of emotional regulation skill is helpful for adaptive functioning.

Another study was conducted by Chiara Verzeletti et al., (2016) on the sample of 633 Italian adolescents. The results of the study observed that greater level of cognitive reappraisal is positively related to psychological well being whereas greater level of expressive suppression is negatively associated to lower level of adolescents well being.

Positive affect is significantly related with dimensions of psychological well being among young adults. Positive affect and autonomy ($r = .201, p < .01$); positive affect and personal growth ($r = .134, p < .01$); positive affect and environmental mastery ($r = .125, p < .01$) positive affect and purpose in life ($r = .129, p < .01$); positive affect and self acceptance ($r = .172, p < .01$) but non-significant relationship with positive relations with others.

The nuns who had expressed more positive content in autobiographical stories lived average 6 to 9 years longer than those who expressed less positive emotionality (Snowdon & Friesen, 2001). Several researchers also have been observed that participants those demonstrates more positive affect during the working time is associated with lower cortisol, lower heart rate and lower stress related response (Steptoe, Wardle & Mormat, 2005).

Positive affect reduces the risk of ailment and also promote recovery, People with more positive affect have almost three times as many possibilities to recover in one year after health problems such as heart attack and stroke (Ostir et al., 2002). Positive affect is important in adapting during the stressful events. Positive affect helps in returning faster to normal state after stressful events (Fredrickson & Levenson, 1998).

Negative affect is negatively related with the various dimensions of well being. Negative affect and personal growth ($r = -.178, p < .01$); negative affect and environmental mastery ($r = -.136, p < .01$); negative affect and positive relation with others ($r = -.190, p < .01$); negative affect and self acceptance ($r = -.181, p < .01$), whereas negative but non-significant relationship with autonomy and purpose in life of young adults.

Various researches that were conducted in the field of psycho-immunology extensively studied relationship between negative affect and health related behaviors. Some of these investigations have observed that agitated people display a bad immune reply toward vaccines. One of the studies was conducted by Fang et al., 2008 reveals that women who had been vaccinated but exhibited more stress that was related to weaker immune response towards Papillion virus.

People those exhibits negative emotions have greater vulnerability to infection and more prone to rehabilitation of implicit virus in their system Glaser & Kiecal, Glaser, (2005). It also has been noticed that negative affective states promotes the production of pro-inflammatory cytokines (Kiecal & Glaser et al., 2003; Lutgendorf et al., 1999) which are related with cardiovascular problems after the effect of another variables such as virus, body mass, age, educational level.

IX. CONCLUSION

The Present study concludes that the substantial effect of emotional regulation strategies and positive-negative affect on mental health and physical health of young adults which have further effect on their psychological well being. Lack of positive psychological attributes such as emotional regulation skills and positive affect are associated with decline of psychological well being in young adults. Moreover female young adults have reported high degree of positive affect, cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and overall score of psychological well being. Male young adults have found to have lower psychological well being, emotional regulation skills and positive affect as compared to female young adults. In the present investigation we also found that both cognitive reappraisal and positive affect are positively and significantly related to dimensions of psychological well being and overall score of psychological well being among young adults.

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