

USE OF ADAPTIVE AND MALADAPTIVE EMOTION REGULATION BY ADULTS IN RELATION TO THEIR LIFE SATISFACTION

Dr. Sunita Singh

Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology

*Raghunath Girls (Post Graduate) College,
Meerut*

E-mail: sunitamrt82@gmail.com

Abstract

The current research work has been conducted to study the contribution of anger and various cognitive strategies of regulating emotions in satisfaction with life in old age. The present research has examined the relationship of adaptive and maladaptive emotion regulation strategies with the life satisfaction of adults. A sample of 120 individuals (age 30 to 55) was taken with a simple random sampling method. For data collection, the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire and Satisfaction with Life Scale, were used. Mean, One-way-ANOVA, and Tukey's posthoc test was used to analyze the data. The result of this study showed that life satisfaction is positively associated with adaptive emotion regulation and negatively with maladaptive emotion regulation. Adults with high life satisfaction were found to show significantly greater use of adaptive emotion regulation strategies and lower use of maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, whereas those with poor life satisfaction were to show poor use of adaptive emotion regulation strategies and greater use of maladaptive emotion regulation strategies.

Keywords

Adaptive and Maladaptive Emotion Regulation, Satisfaction with Life.

Reference to this paper
should be made as follows:

Received: 11.08.2021

Approved: 30.08.2021

Dr. Sunita Singh

USE OF ADAPTIVE AND

MALADAPTIVE EMOTION

REGULATION BY ADULTS IN

RELATION TO THEIR LIFE

SATISFACTION

Article No.40

RJPSS Apr.-Sept. 2021,

Vol. XLVI No. 2,

pp. 333-344

Online available at:

<https://anubooks.com/rjpss-2021-vol-xlvi-no-2/>

<https://doi.org/10.31995/rjpss.2021.v46i02.040>

Introduction

The quality of life is the most crucial and distinctive issue for humans. The cognitive evaluation of the quality of life is referred to as the life satisfaction related to entire or specific areas of life, such as marriage, work, etc. The affective aspect of quality of life is evaluated in terms of positive and negative emotions, which covers a wide spectrum of experiences. In Short Life, satisfaction is often defined as the perception or evaluation of one's own life (Diener, Emmons, Larson & Griffin, 1985), which includes the desire to change an underlying aspect of life, the past or relationships and thoughts about the future (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999). Life satisfaction, defined by Pavot and Diener (2008) as an overall assessment of the quality of life, is associated with influential components of subjective well-being (Diener, Scholan and Lucas, 2009) and contributes to psychophysiological prediction.

The research findings essentially delineate two components that underlie overall subjective well-being: these are positive and negative affective components and life satisfaction (Arthoud-Day, Rode, Mooney & Near, 2005; Diener, Oishi & Lucas, 2009). Shimmack, Diener, and Oishi (2002) demonstrated it as a tendency of people to rely on the same types of information (related to jobs, relationships, education, etc.) to assess their quality of life in order to obtain a stable life satisfaction over time. According to Seligman & Siskzentmihali (2000), family life, professional life, health, financial situation, leisure activities, and self-concept are the main criteria for assessing and determining the personal level of life satisfaction.

The study of Chung and Kim (2017) studied 325 Korean mothers of young children (age 25 to 47). The results of the study stated that anger management was positively associated with maternal life satisfaction while adult anger suppression was negatively associated with maternal life satisfaction.

Regulation of Emotions and Life Satisfaction

Emotion regulation is a process of managing emotions regarding their own internal states and motivation by initiating, maintaining, modifying, or altering to achieve its goal in terms of occurrence, duration, and intensity (Eisenberg and Spinrad, 2004). Emotion regulation strategies are important in influencing physical and mental health by regulating the expression of emotional experience (Gresham & Gullon, 2012; Gross & Thompson, 2007; Cooley, 2009). The emotion regulation strategy of responding to stressful events by modulating the emotional experience is known as the "cognitive emotion regulation strategy" (Abdi, Taban & Ghamian, 2012). Passive regulation of emotions can lead to poor well-being (Gross & Munoz, 1995). Self-blame, rumination, sabotage, and the others are maladaptive strategies

and are positively associated (Lei et al., 2014) while acceptance, positive reassessment, refocus on planning, positive reassessment and perspective-taking, which are adaptive strategies, is negatively associated with depression and anxiety (Garnefsky & Kreuz, 2007; Martin & Dahlen, 2005). Self-efficacy in regulating negative emotions has been shown by longitudinal research studies to be a significant predictor of life satisfaction (Lightsey Jr. et al., 2013). Positive reappraisal is a cognitive strategy for changing the way we think about an emotional event, is an effective strategy for reducing negative emotions and increasing positive emotions (Gross & John, 2003; Mitrofan & Siulovic, 2012). Suppression, which is also a type of emotion regulation strategy, has been shown to correlate negatively with life satisfaction (Haga et al., 2009; Yu, Matsumoto, & Leroux, 2006). Research has shown that the cognitive emotion regulation strategies used by men are different from those used by women (Zlomke & Hahn, 2010).

According to Gross (2003), emotion regulation is considered to play a crucial role in life satisfaction through handling negative emotions. Cognitive reappraisal, which is considered as an adaptive emotion regulation approach leads to a change in emotional responses of a person to an emotion-provoking stimuli by looking at them from a new viewpoint. Persons who more frequently used adaptive emotion regulation reported more positive feelings and less negative feelings and displayed improved interpersonal operation and well-being. On other hand, maladaptive strategies of emotion regulation are in which persons constrain the outward expression of their feelings. Those who more frequently used such strategies, tend to report less positive feelings and more negative feelings and show poorer interpersonal operation.

According to Haga and colleagues (2009), there are numerous studies that show a positive association between diverse emotion regulation strategies and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Explicitly, indications from the long-term longitudinal investigation show that self-efficacy for the regulation of negative emotions forecasts life satisfaction, as proposed by Lightsey et al. (2013). One of the emotion regulation approaches is cognitive reappraisal. It has been suggested that cognitive reappraisal could be implemented to reduce negative sentiments and raise positive sentiments and adaptive behavior, however, another emotion regulation strategy is negatively associated with life satisfaction (Haga et al., 2009)

Objectives of the Study

Following objectives were aimed to be investigated:

1. To test the significance of differences among levels of lifesatisfaction with regard to adaptive emotion regulation.

2. To test the significance of differences among levels of life satisfaction with regard to maladaptive emotion regulation.

Hypotheses of the Study

Following hypotheses have been formulated in the light of proposed objectives:

1. There are no significant differences among levels of life satisfaction with regard to adaptive emotion regulation.

2. There are no significant differences among levels of life satisfaction with regard to maladaptive emotion regulation.

Method

Design: In order to investigate the significance of the difference in the use of adaptive and maladaptive emotion regulation strategies by adults in relation to their sense of life satisfaction, an Ex-post-facto research design has been employed.

Participants: To test the formulated hypotheses with empirical evidence, a total of 120 adults were selected for data collection from the Saharanpur and Shamli districts of Uttar Pradesh, with a simple random sampling technique.

Variables

i. Independent Variables: Satisfaction with Life

ii. Dependent Variable: Cognitive Emotion Regulation Strategies

Tools for Data Collection

Following tools were used for data collection:

1. The Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire: Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire is a 36-items self-report questionnaire (developed by Garnefski, Kraaij and, Spinhoven) which Hindi-adaptation, prepared by the author, was used to measure nine different cognitive emotion regulation strategies. The adapted questionnaire has an internal consistency ranging from .68 to .80, and stability from .48 to .65 for all nine subscales. Its factorial and construct validity are quite satisfactory.

2. Satisfaction with Life Scale: Life Satisfaction Scale constructed by Dr. Q.G. Alam & Dr. Ramji Srivastava. This scale has 60 items, which responses are recorded in terms of yes or no alternatives. Every 'Yes' response is assigned one mark and no is zero. Its test-retest reliability is .84 and criterion validity ranges from .74 to .82.

Result and Discussion

Talking about adaptive emotion regulation differences across three levels of life satisfaction, a linear relationship can be seen to take place. Table-1 shows that adults with high life satisfaction scored a highest mean value ($M = 54.16$; $n = 37$) and adults with low life satisfaction shows lowest mean value ($M = 48.45$; $n =$

44) regarding the use of adaptive emotion regulation strategies. Adults having moderate life satisfaction tended to show moderate use of adaptive emotion regulation ($M = 51.43$; $n = 39$). F-value for the difference among the three groups has been found significant to demonstrate it as to be significant ($F = 5.84$; $\tilde{n} < .004$), as shown in table-2. Although, post-hoc statistics delineates that the only pair is high low life satisfaction, which is significant (Mean Difference = 5.71; $\tilde{n} < .003$) out of three pairs. It means that the adults with moderate life satisfaction neither differ from those with high life satisfaction nor those with low satisfaction in terms of adaptive emotion regulation.

Table-1: Descriptive Statistics for Difference in Life Satisfaction with regard to Adaptive Emotion Regulation

Life Satisfaction Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Low Life Satisfaction	44	48.4545	6.05192	.91236	36.00	62.00
Moderate Life Satisfaction	39	51.4359	9.20182	1.47347	39.00	74.00
High Life Satisfaction	37	54.1622	7.07308	1.16281	42.00	71.00
Total	120	51.1833	7.80647	.71263	36.00	74.00

Table-2: F-value for Difference in Life Satisfaction with regard to Adaptive Emotion Regulation

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	658.441	2	329.220	5.842	.004
Within Groups	6593.526	117	56.355		
Total	7251.967	119			

Table-3: Post-hoc Statistics (Tukey) for High, Moderate, and Low Life Satisfaction Differences in Adaptive Emotion Regulation

(I) SL	(J) SL	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Low	Moderate	-2.98135	1.65100	.172	-6.9007	.9380
	High	-5.70762*	1.67448	.003	-9.6827	-1.7325
Moderate	Low	2.98135	1.65100	.172	-.9380	6.9007
	High	-2.72626	1.72282	.257	-6.8161	1.3636
High	Low	5.70762*	1.67448	.003	1.7325	9.6827
	Moderate	2.72626	1.72282	.257	-1.3636	6.8161

Table-4 describes about differences in scores on maladaptive emotion regulation across high, moderate, and low life satisfaction among adults. Participants with high life satisfaction showed lowest use ($M = 37.89$; $n = 37$) and those with low life satisfaction showed highest use ($M = 42.04$; $n = 44$) of maladaptive emotion regulation strategies.

Adults having moderate life satisfaction showed a moderate use of maladaptive emotion regulation ($M = 41.49$; $n = 39$). Findings seem to uncover significantly negative relationship between life satisfaction and maladaptive emotion regulation ($F = 5.01$; $\tilde{n} < .008$), as shown in table-5. Post-hoc statistics, given in table-6, demonstrate that adults with high life satisfaction, significantly differ from those with moderate (Mean Difference = 3.59; $\tilde{n} < .037$) as well low life satisfaction (Mean Difference = 4.15; $\tilde{n} < .010$). Moderately satisfied and poorly satisfied adults with their life were not found to have any significant difference in their use of maladaptive emotion regulation strategies.

Figure-1 shows a graphical comparison of adaptive and maladaptive emotion regulation strategies use by adults having high, moderate, and poor life satisfaction.

Table-4: Descriptive Statistics for Difference in Life Satisfaction with regard to Maladaptive Emotion Regulation

Life Satisfaction Level	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
Low Life Satisfaction	44	42.0455	5.77869	.87117	30.00	57.00
Moderate Life Satisfaction	39	41.4872	8.03568	1.28674	29.00	63.00
High Life Satisfaction	37	37.8919	4.43336	.72884	30.00	53.00
Total	120	40.5833	6.47631	.59120	29.00	63.00

Table-5: F-value for Difference in Life Satisfaction with regard to Maladaptive Emotion Regulation

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	393.946	2	196.973	5.013	.008
Within Groups	4597.220	117	39.292		
Total	4991.167	119			

Table-6: Post-hoc Statistics (Tukey) for High, Moderate, and Low Life Satisfaction Differences in Maladaptive Emotion Regulation

(I) SL	(J) SL	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Low	Moderate	.55828	1.37859	.914	-2.7144	3.8309
	High	4.15356*	1.39820	.010	.8344	7.4728
Moderate	Low	-.55828	1.37859	.914	-3.8309	2.7144
	High	3.59529*	1.43856	.037	.1803	7.0103
High	Low	-4.15356*	1.39820	.010	-7.4728	-.8344
	Moderate	-3.59529*	1.43856	.037	-7.0103	-.1803

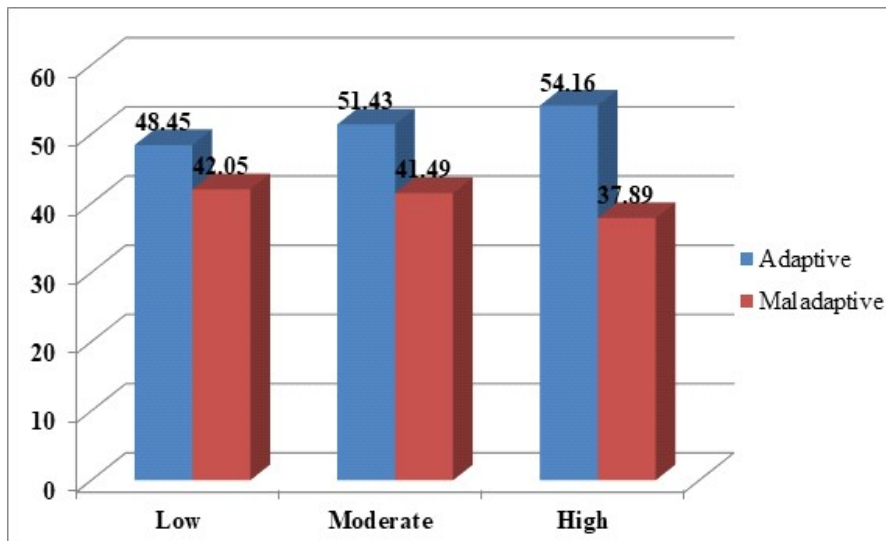


Figure-1: Bar Graph for differences in Adaptive and Maladaptive ER across Low, Moderate and High Life Satisfaction

Conclusions, Suggestions, and Limitations

The aim of this study is to examine the degree of adaptive and maladaptive emotion regulation used by the general population of adults living in Saharanpur Shamli, in relation to their life satisfaction. Three hypotheses were formulated as testing the mean scores on adaptive and maladaptive emotion regulation obtained by three groups of adults. Regarding the first hypothesis, results revealed that adults with high life satisfaction tend to show greater use of adaptive emotion regulation, and those with low satisfaction show lower use of adaptive emotion regulation. Therefore it can be said that life satisfaction and adaptive emotion regulation are positively associated. Chung and Kim (2017) reported that life satisfaction is positively associated with positive reappraisal, putting into perspective, and refocusing on planning, which is adaptive emotion regulation strategies. On other hand, rumination and catastrophizing, the maladaptive emotion regulation strategies, were reported as negatively associated with life satisfaction. Mittal (2020) suggested that emotional suppression and cognitive reassessment had a significant effect on life satisfaction. Esmailinsaband Velvet (2016) concluded that women show greater use of rumination, which negatively predicts the life satisfaction. On the basis of his longitudinal research, Lightsay Jr. et al.(2013) also shown that the effectiveness of regulating negative emotions is a significant predictor of life satisfaction. Basyouni et al. (2021) also reported their results as that emotion regulation and life satisfaction were positively associated with each other. Relationship between the emotion regulation subscales, cognitive reassessment, and expressive suppression, mediating and moderate emotional disturbances (respectively) related to anxiety and life satisfaction.

Limitation of the Study

1. This study was carried out with a small sample.
2. This study has taken the emotion regulation as dependent variable and life satisfaction as independent variable, but theoretically, emotion regulation has been proposed as a causing factor for life satisfaction in related literature.
3. This study hasn't taken the relevant variables, such as gender and age, into consideration.
4. Three comparative groups were not equal in terms of n.

References

1. **Abdi, S., Taban, S., & Ghaemian, A. (2012).** Cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire: Validity and reliability of Persian translation of CERQ-36 item. *Procardia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 32, 2-7.

2. **Arthaud-Day, M. L., Rode, J. C., Mooney, C. H., & Near, J. P. (2005).** The subjective well-being constructs: A test of its convergent, discriminant, and factorial validity. *Social Indicators Research*, 74(3), 445-476.
3. **Basyouni, S. S. and Keshky MESE. (2021)** The role of emotion regulation in the relation between anxiety and life satisfaction among Saudi children and adolescents. *J Psychol Clin Psychiatry*. 12(2):21-30. DOI: 10.15406/jpcpy.2021.12.00698.
4. **Chung, K.-S. Kim, M. (2017).** Anger factors impacting on life satisfaction of mothers with young children in Korea: Does mother's age matter? *Personality and Individual Differences*, 104, 190–194.
5. **Diener, E. D., Oishi, S., & Lucas, R. E. (2009).** Subjective well-being: The science of happiness and life satisfaction. In Sh. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds.), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 187). USA: Oxford.
6. **Diener, E. D., Scollon, C. N., & Lucas, R. E. (2009).** The evolving concept of subjective well-being: The multifaceted nature of happiness. In E. D. Diener (Ed.), *Assessing well-being* (pp. 67-100). Netherlands: Springer.
7. **Diener, E., Emmons, R.A., Larsen, R.J. & Griffin, S. (1985).** The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 49(19), 71-75.
8. **Diener, E., Suh, E. M., Lucas, R. E., & Smith, H. L. (1999).** Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(2), 276–302.
9. **Eisenberg, N., & Spinrad, T. L. (2004).** Emotion-related regulation: Sharpening the definition. *child development*, 75(2), 334-339.
10. **Esmailinasab, M., Khoshk, A., & Makhmal, A. (2016).** Emotion Regulation and Life Satisfaction in University Students: *Gender Differences*. 798-809.
11. **Garnefski, N., & Kraaij, V. (2007).** The cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 23(3), 141-149.
12. **Gresham, D., & Gullone, E. (2012).** Emotion regulation strategy use in children and adolescents: The explanatory roles of personality and attachment. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52 (5), 616-621.
13. **Gross, J. J. and John, O. P. (2003).** Individual differences in two

- emotion regulation processes: Implications for affect, relationships, and well being. *J Pers Soc Psychol.* 85:348–362.
14. Gross, J. J., & John, O. P. (2003). Individual differences in two emotion regulation processes: implications for affect, relationships, and well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 85(2), 348.
 15. Gross, J. J., & Munoz, R. F. (1995). Emotion regulation and mental health. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 2(2), 151-164.
 16. Gross, J. J., & Thompson, R. A. (2007). Emotion regulation: Conceptual foundations. *Handbook of emotion regulation*, 3, 24.
 17. Haga, S. M., Kraft, P., & Corby, E. K. (2009). Emotion regulation: Antecedents and well-being outcomes of cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression in cross-cultural samples. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 10(3), 271-291.
 18. Haga, S. M., Kraft, P., and Corby, E. K. (2009). Emotion regulation: Antecedents and well-being outcomes of cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression in cross-cultural samples. *J Happiness Stud*, 10(3):271–291.
 19. Koole, S. L. (2009). The psychology of emotion regulation: An integrative review. *Cognition and Emotion*, 23(1), 4-41.
 20. Lei, H., Zhang, X., Cai, L., Wang, Y., Bai, M., & Zhu, X. (2014). Cognitive emotion regulation strategies in outpatients with major depressive disorder. *Psychiatry Research*, 218(1-2), 87-92.
 21. Lightsey, Jr., McGhee, R., Ervin, A., (2013). Self efficacy for affect regulation as a predictor of future life satisfaction and moderator of the negative affect—Life satisfaction relationship. *J Happiness Stud.*, 14 (1):1–18.
 22. Lightsey Jr, O. R., McGhee, R., Ervin, A., Gharghani, G. G., Rarey, E. B., Daigle, R. P., ... & Powell, K. (2013). Self-efficacy for affect regulation as a predictor of future life satisfaction and moderator of the negative affect—Life satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 14 (1), 1-18.
 23. Martin, R. C., & Dahlen, E. R. (2005). Cognitive emotion regulation in the prediction of depression, anxiety, stress, and anger. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 39(7), 1249-1260.
 24. Mitrofan, N., & Ciuluvică, C. (2012). Anger and hostility as indicators of emotion regulation and of the life satisfaction at the beginning and the

- ending period of the adolescence. *Procardia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 33, 65-69.
25. **Mittal R (2020)**. Emotional regulation and life satisfaction among housewives. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 8(3), 402-411. DIP:18.01.049/20200803, DOI:10.25215/0803.049
 26. **Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2008)**. The satisfaction with life scale and the emerging construct of lifesatisfaction. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 3(2), 137-152.
 27. **Schimmack, U., Diener, E., & Oishi, S. (2002)**. Life Satisfaction Is a Momentary Judgment and a Stable Personality Characteristic: The Use of Chronically Accessible and Stable Sources. *Journal of Personality*, 70(3), 345-384.
 28. **Seligman, M. E. P. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000)**. Positive psychology: An introduction. *American psychologist*, 55 (1), 4-5.
 29. **Yoo, S. H., Matsumoto, D., & LeRoux, J. A. (2006)**. The influence of emotion recognition and emotion regulation on intercultural adjustment. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30(3), 345-363.
 30. **Zlomke, K. R., & Hahn, K. S. (2010)**. Cognitive emotion regulation strategies: Gender differences and associations to worry. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 48(4), 408-413.