

## "A Correlational Study On Emotional Regulation With Distress, Depression, Anxiety And Somatization Among Young Adults"

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aimed at finding out correlation between emotional regulation with distress, depression, anxiety and somatization among young adults. As there are scientific evidence that most of the physical and mental ailments have roots in unhealthy ways of managing ones emotions. Emotion is a complex experience of state feelings at a time. If emotions are not channelized properly, it may lead to many physical and mental problems.

In current scenario, when the youth of entire world are struggling with various issues like career instability, fear of their own life or their loved ones, life, financial crisis, social isolation and worries about future. Healthy way of emotional regulation becomes need of the day. Emotional regulation is a technique of channelizing/ regulation ones emotions in a certain way.

By acknowledging the problems of youth and importance of emotional regulation, researchers framed this study. The sample taken for this study consists of 60 college students between the age of 18 to 24 years of both the genders randomly. The variables which are studied in this paper are emotional regulation (Independent Variable), (Expressive Suppression and Cognitive Reappraisal), distress, depression, anxiety and somatization (Dependent variables). Tools which have been administered on samples were Emotional Regulation Questionnaire by Gross J.J. and John O. P. (2003). Which has two facets i.e. a) Cognitive Reappraisal and b) Expressive Suppression. While four Dimensional Symptom Questionnaire by Berend Terluin, Maartje Terluin, Katinka Prince, Harm Van Marwijk (2008) has been used to assess distress, depression, anxiety and somatization. Findings of the current research paper suggests significant correlation of Expressive Suppression with Distress, Depression, Anxiety and Somatization and no significant correlation has been observed with cognitive reappraisal.

**Key Words:** Emotional Regulation, Expressive Suppression, Cognitive Reappraisal, Distress, Depression, Anxiety and Somatization.

### INTRODUCTION

In this era of a maturing populace, young adults on clinical wards are quite rare, as just 12% of youthful young adults report a long term disability or handicap. Psychological issues stay more common amongst youth populace. In an ongoing report, emotional wellness and weight were recorded as the most well-known issues in young adults. The most successive psychological wellness issues amongst young adults range from Rates of varying depression, self-destructive practices, dietary problems and substance abuse expanding consistently among youngsters in late decades. "Emotional regulation refers to the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express their feelings. Emotional regulation can be automatic or controlled, conscious or unconscious, and may have effects at one or more points in the emotion producing process." (Von Scheve, 2012). Usually two most popular ways of regulating ones emotions are as follows:-

**a) Expressive Suppression:-** "Expressive suppression is changing the way one behaviourally responds to emotion-eliciting events." (Cutuli, 2014)

**b) Cognitive Reappraisal:** "Cognitive reappraisal is changing the way one thinks about potentially emotion-eliciting events". (Lazarus and Alfert, 1964)

**Distress** is a feeling of being upset, worry, sad and pain, it is suffering from being unhappy for a longer period of time extreme sadness. It is a suffering means being in great trouble which causes physical and mental stress. It is a suffering that effects mind and body, it is physical pain and mental pain of an individual. It is feeling of unhappy and sad. The mental distress leads to unhealthy lifestyle and poor well-being. Distress causes major physical problems like migrane, pain in different parts of the body which leads to have irritation in life and causes poor human relations.

**Depression:** As per DSM 5, depression is a persistent and pervasive sadness and disinterest in almost all the activities throughout all the day. (APA, 2015).

**Anxiety** is a mental state which is characterized by feelings of worry, restlessness arising out of anticipation of danger. Anxiety can bring about various bodily changes ranging from increased heart rate to galvanic skin responses, from visceral

changes to various cramps and pains and so on DSM 5 mentions various other disorders under this category like Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, Panic Disorder etc.

**Somatization** is the tendency of experiencing distress in the form of somatic or physical symptoms which may be based on emotional or mental distress (Keller, 1990).

### **Review of Literature:**

**Aldea M. A., Rice K. G. (2006):-** Data from a sample of university students (N= 349) were used to test a model in which emotional dysregulation (a composite of emotional reactivity and splitting) was expected to account for the effect of perfectionism on general psychological distress. Significant positive effects were observed between maladaptive perfectionism and distress, whereas significant inverse effects were found for adaptive perfectionism. Structural equations analyses revealed support for a possibly mediational role of emotional dysregulation. Future research suggestions as well as counselling recommendations are proposed that target emotional regulatory features of the client with perfectionistic tendencies.

**Masuda A., Mandavia A. ,Tully E. C. (2014):-** The present study examined whether psychological inflexibility and mindfulness, 2 major emotion/behavior regulation processes, were uniquely and separately related to somatization, depression, and anxiety in a sample of Asian Americans in the United States. One hundred sixteen participants from various Asian nationality backgrounds completed a Web-based survey that included the measures of interest. Results revealed that both regulation processes were uniquely and separately related to somatization, depression, and anxiety after controlling for age and gender. Greater psychological inflexibility was associated with greater somatic, depressive, and anxiety symptoms, and greater mindfulness was associated with lower somatic, depressive, and anxiety problems. Our findings suggest that the extent to which one is unwilling to contact distressful internal and external experiences as well as the extent to which one is aware of the present-moment experience are useful concepts to understand somatization, depression, and anxiety experienced by Asian American young adults.

**Lavanya T. P., Manjula M. (2017):-** This study examined emotion regulation and psychological problems among college youth as well as the relationship between the two. Four hundred and nineteen students, who were divided into two groups (older adolescents, aged 16-17 years - group 1, n = 217; young adults aged 18- 25 years - group 2, n = 202) participated in this exploratory study. The results predicted predominantly positive emotion regulation strategies were used by group 1 (positive refocusing, refocus on planning, and positive reappraisal, respectively). The sample as a whole used more positive strategies (positive refocusing: 82% and 64% and refocus on planning: 93% and 87% in groups 1 and 2, respectively). Significant correlations between emotion regulation strategies (CERQ) and psychological problems (YSR/YASR) were found, thereby indicating that negative emotion regulation strategies were associated with psychological problems and vice versa. Females were found to have more of anxiety problems as opposed to males with more of conduct problems. However with increase in age, increase in the percentage of psychological problems and usage of negative emotion regulation strategies was observed. The findings of the present study contribute to understanding the patterns of emotion regulation in various emotional disorders. Findings could also contribute to developing an intervention program to help students having difficulty in regulation of their emotions.

**Yen J. Y. , Yeh Y, Wang P. W.,Liu T. ,Chen Y. , Ko C. (2018)** conducted a study and found people diagnosed with Internet gaming disorder (IGD) have been frequently reported to experience depression, anxiety, and hostility. Emotional regulation contributes to these mood symptoms. This study evaluated emotional regulation in subjects with IGD and examined relationships between emotional regulation, depression, anxiety, and hostility in young adults with IGD. We recruited 87 people with IGD and a control group of 87 people without a history of IGD. All participants underwent a diagnostic interview based on the IGD criteria of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, and they completed a questionnaire on emotional regulation, depression, anxiety, and hostility. They also found that subjects with IGD were less likely to practice cognitive reappraisal and were more likely to suppress their emotions. Linear regression revealed the higher cognitive reappraisal and lower expressive suppression associated with depression, anxiety, and hostility among subjects with IGD. The emotional regulation strategies that characterize those with IGD could be contributing factors to the depression and hostility tendencies of these people. When treating patients with IGD, in addition to providing appropriate interventions to relieve depression and hostility, practitioners should effectively assess emotional regulation strategies and provide emotional regulation therapy to prevent a vicious cycle of negative emotions.

### **RATIONALE :**

Nowadays emotions is something where people are unable to control due to which most of the young adults deals with many psychological problems which is one of the biggest reason for bad human relations. Also emotions is one of those

essential part of a person which directly affects the personality and behavior of an individual.

The current scenario of young adults is they are unable to regulate their emotions through which they have drastic mood swings feels lonely gets irritated anger issues and bad at expressing themselves due to all this it leads to poor physical, mental and psychological health.

Emotions can be regulate easily if people start talking about that and give a little attention to their mental health and do care for their emotions and try to understand them. If emotions are not regulated easily then definitely it will cause a poor physical health like distress, anxiety, depression and somatization.

## METHODOLOGY

**Objective:** To study the Correlational study on Emotional Regulation with Distress, Depression, Anxiety and Somatization among Young Adults.

### Hypothesis:

1. There will be no significant correlation between Distress and Cognitive Reappraisal.
2. There will be no significant correlation between Distress and Expressive Suppression
3. There will be no significant correlation between Depression and Cognitive Reappraisal
4. There will be no significant correlation between Depression and Expressive Suppression
5. There will be no significant correlation between Anxiety and Cognitive Reappraisal
6. There will be no significant correlation between Anxiety and Expressive Suppression
7. There will be no significant correlation between Somatization and Cognitive Reappraisal
8. There will be no significant correlation between Somatization and Expressive Suppression

**Sample Size :** The sample size is 60 college students between the age of 18- 24 years of mixed gender.

**Sampling Technique:** Simple Random Sampling

**Research Design:** Correlational Research Design

### Description of the Variables:

- i) **Independent Variable:** Emotion Regulation
- ii) **Dependent Variables:** Distress, Depression Anxiety and Somatization

### Description of the tool:

1. **Emotional Regulation Questionnaire by Gross J.J. and John O. P. (2003)** has been used to assess the emotional regulation of the participants. This questionnaire comprises of 10 items divided in to two facets I.e.

- 1) Cognitive Reappraisal
- 2) Expressive Suppression.

2. **Four Dimensional Symptom Questionnaire by Berend Terluin, Maartje Terluin, Katinka Prince, Harm Van Marwijk (2015)**, for measuring distress, depression, anxiety and somatization.

**Statistical Analysis:** Pearson correlational has been calculated with the help of SPSS software.

## RESULT

**Table 1.0** Showing correlation between Cognitive Reappraisal facet and Expressive Suppressive facet with Distress, Depression, Anxiety and Somatization.

	Cognitive Reappraisal Facet	Expressive Suppressive Facet
<b>Distress</b>	<i>0.018</i>	<i>0.34*</i>
<b>Depression</b>	<i>0.028</i>	<i>0.75*</i>
<b>Anxiety</b>	<i>0.038</i>	<i>0.44*</i>
<b><u>Somatization</u></b>	<i>0.018</i>	<i>0.68*</i>

Table 1.0 shows correlation between both the facets of Emotional Regulation (Cognitive Reappraisal and Expressive suppression) with Distress, Depression, Anxiety and Somatization.

It is evident in the above table that the correlation between Distress and Cognitive Reappraisal is 0.018 which is not significant at 0.05 level of confidence, thus null hypothesis is accepted.

Correlation between Distress and Expressive suppression is 0.34 which is significant at 0.05 level of confidence, thus the null hypothesis is not accepted.

The correlation between Depression with Cognitive Reappraisal is .028, which is not significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Thus null hypothesis is accepted.

While correlation between Depression and Expressive Suppression is 0.75, that is significant at 0.05 level of confidence, thus null hypothesis is not accepted.

As it is depicted in the above table, that the correlation between Anxiety and Cognitive Reappraisal is .038, which is not significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Thus null hypothesis is accepted.

On the other hand the correlation between Anxiety and Expressive Suppression is 0.44, which is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Thus null hypothesis is not accepted.

Further the correlation between Somatization and Cognitive Reappraisal is .018 which is not significant at 0.05 level of confidence, thus null hypothesis is accepted.

While the correlation between somatization and Expressive Suppression is 0.68, which is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. Thus null hypothesis is not accepted.

## DISCUSSIONS

The term “Emotion regulation” usually used to describe an individual’s ability to manage and respond to an emotional experience effectively. People most of the time unconsciously use various emotion regulation strategies to handle challenging situations so many times throughout each day. People use a variety of emotion regulation strategies and try to apply them to different situations to adapt with environmental demands. Two most popularly known and used emotional regulation strategies are Cognitive reappraisal and Expressive Suppression. Where cognitive reappraisal is the technique of re-evaluating emotions eliciting situations in such a way that I can modify the emotional impact of the situation. It is evident in researches that this is healthier way of emotional regulation.

While on the other hand Expressive suppression is the way in which an individual behaviorally suppress or change the response towards any emotion - eliciting situation. It is considered as unhealthier way of regulating one’s own emotions. Simultaneously, it is being observed that rate of mental illness is raising with alarming pace worldwide, which is touching peak in this COVID scenario. Considering these two facts current study is farmed to find out the correlation between emotional regulation and distress, depression, anxiety and somatization (Ma and Fang, 2019).

Now, as it is evident in the findings distress is significantly correlated with Expressive Suppression and not significantly correlated with Cognitive Reappraisal, which simply means participants using Cognitive reappraisal are less likely to get distressed as compared to people relying more on Expressive suppression during handling emotion provoking incidents. Next, it also being observed in the present study that depression is highly correlated with expressive suppression and very less correlated with Cognitive Reappraisal. This also indicates that individuals depending more on expressive suppression for managing their emotions are more prone for depression than the individuals using Cognitive Reappraisal.

Furthermore, Anxiety is also significantly correlated with Expressive Suppression (ES) and not significantly correlated with Cognitive Reappraisal (CR). Which indicates people utilizing ES experience more anxiety as compared to those of utilizing CR for channelizing their emotions in any emotion - eliciting situation.

Lastly, researchers also found that there is significant correlation between Somatization with ES while not significant correlation with CR. Which indicates that more use of ES more vulnerability towards Somatization and more practice of CR would lead to less chances of somatization.

Now, considering above research findings, researchers can conclude regulating ones emotions in healthier way can prevent you mental illness to great extent. There are ample researches indicating connections between emotional disturbance and not only mental but also physical illness. Psychoneuroimmunology believes that all the physical ailments are somehow connected with psycho-social factors. Surprisingly almost all the diseases and disorders, ranging from cancer to common cold, AIDS to COVID are studied in this science. Further, emotions play vital role in one’s daily living and if it is dis-regulated it affects every aspect of life, personal or professional, physical health or mental health, more precisely his/her overall existence. This research will give an insight to everyone how important is to take their emotional health seriously. Not only this, findings of this research also point out just by regulating ones emotions in healthier way all of us can secure our better mental health.

## Significance of the Study

As researchers have already discussed that people using cognitive reappraisal method to regulate their emotions are less likely to suffer from Distress, depression, Anxiety and Somatization disorder when compared to people using Expressive Suppression method to regulate their emotions. This paper will give a vision to people that how important emotional regulation is. Having said this much, researchers would like to summarize the significance of this paper as “Healthier mode of emotional regulation would ensure better mental and physical health”.

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