EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND WELL-BEING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

C Regina Mary 1*, Vijay M 2, R Sundaresan 3, P Mohana Sharmila 4

1. Faculty, Department of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu, India.
2. Faculty, Department of Psychology, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu, India.
3. Faculty, Department of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu, India.
4. Faculty, Department of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli, Tamilnadu, India.

Abstract
Emotional regulation and well-being are the two considerable constructs, which influences on individuals life in various domains. Emotion regulation denotes an ability to express their emotions properly. It is believed to help the individuals to solve their day to day problems in many situations. Well-being indicates an individual’s sense of comfort or security in different context and domains. This study made an attempt to explore the relationship between emotional regulation and well-being of college students. 228 students had participated in this study and data were collected with the help of “Emotion regulation Self-report Inventory” by Gross and John (2003) and “Well-being Index” by Chauhan and Sharma (2016). The result and discussion will be presented in detail in this article.

Key Words: Emotional Regulation and Well Being

Introduction
People are experiencing many emotional events in their all over life span developmental stage. Emotions have been considered as a very integral part of human existence. Emotion regulation processes are “those mechanisms that serve to modulate, inhibit and enhance emotional experiences and expressions and may be both effortful and automatic”. Individuals tend to engage in usage of some kind of emotion regulation strategy as part of their waking life, therefore
management and control of emotions have important health implications. Emotion regulation involves “the process of regulating emotional arousal and emotional expressions flexibly according to environmental demands and it tend to affect individual wellbeing. “Well-being is conceptualized as some combination of positive affective states such as happiness and functioning with optimal effectiveness in individual and social life”. It focuses on a good or satisfactory condition of existence a state characterized by health, happiness and prosperity. Generally adolescence is believed to be the future of the nation. In this stage they are subsequently meet many problems and some point they are struggled lot. In this situation they may not be able to know how to regulate their emotion in problematic situations. In this context emotional regulated strategies could help the individuals to cope their problematic events and tend to get a positive well-being in their lives.

Emotional Regulation

Emotions are described as “coordinated sets of responses to internal or external events which have a particular significance for the organism” (Lazarus, 1993). These responses may involve cognitive, behavioral, physiological and neural mechanisms and aim to orchestrate the best possible response to significant events. The subjective experience of an emotion is called a feeling. Emotions and feelings refer to distinct and rather brief phenomena. In contrast moods refer to” less specific and longer lasting experiences”. Emotion regulation refers to “the process of initiating, maintaining, modulating or changing the occurrence, duration, and intensity of internal feeling states and motivations, often in the service of accomplishing one’s goals” (Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2004). Berking & Wupperman, 2012 emotion regulation strategy has an “important influence on experience and emotion expression as well as physical and mental health” (Gresham & Gullone, 2012; Gross & Thompson, 2007; Koole, 2009). By using “adaptive emotion regulation strategies are necessary to have adaptive function and nonfunctional emotion regulation leads to negative consequences including poor well-being” (Gross & Muñoz, 1995). Emotion regulation defined as “the process of observing, assessing, and altering emotional reactions in order to meet one’s goals”. Active dimensions of emotion regulation include the capacity to (i) be aware of understand and accept emotions (ii) act in goal-directed, non-impulsive ways during negative emotion states (iii) use adaptive regulation strategies that are context-dependent and (iv) cultivate an awareness that negative emotions are a part of life (Buckholdt et al., 2015). It determined that “the process of emotion regulation differs from attempts to exert control over emotions, eliminate emotions, or
suppress emotions in which researchers have found that controlling, eliminating, or suppressing emotions can create higher levels of emotion dysregulation and physiological distress” (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). The emotion regulation strategies have been linked with the internalizing spectrum consists of cognitive reappraisal, emotional suppression, ruminative reflecting, ruminative brooding and avoidance.

According to Gross (2003) proposed that “emotions can be regulated at five stages of process such as situation selection which involves in making a decision, situation modification, an effort to modify a situation, attention deployment which involves directing one’s concentration towards or away from an emotional situation. Cognitive change which involves changing how one appraise a situation and responses modulation which involves an attempt to directly influence behavior to physiology and cognitive response system”. These strategies enable people to regulate their emotions. However, individual differences exist with respect to usage of a particular strategy as well as the success with which they apply the strategies. Cultural differences have been observed with respect to impact and usage of emotion regulation strategies. Regardless of studies in the area of emotion regulation is one of the core features of various forms of psychopathology and has been linked to outcomes in mental health. Deficits in emotion regulation have often been manifested as internalizing and externalizing disorders.

Well-Bing

Wellbeing is a good or satisfactory condition of existence a state characterized by health, happiness and prosperity. Psychological well-being (PWB) attempts to understand individual’s evaluations of their lives. These evaluations may be mostly cognitive (e.g., life satisfaction or marital satisfaction) or may consist of the occurrence with which people who experience pleasant emotions (e.g., joy as measured by the experience sampling technique) and unlikable emotions (e.g. depression). Researches in the field strive to understand not just undesirable clinical states but also difference between people in positive levels of long term well-being. Kasser & Ryan (1993) proposed most people evaluate what is happening to them as either good or bad so they are normally able to offer judgments about their lives. Furthermore, people virtually always experience moods and emotions which have a hedonic component that is pleasant, signaling a positive reaction or unpleasant, signaling a negative reaction. Thus the people have a level of psychological well being even if they do not often consciously think about it and the psychological system offers virtually a constant evaluation of what is happening to the person. Ryff (1989) gave
following dimensions of psychological wellbeing such as Autonomy described there is considerable emphasis on such qualities as self-determination. Independence and the regulation of behavior from within. Self-actualizers are described as showing autonomous implementation and resistance to enculturation. The fully functioning person is described as having an internal locus of evaluation whereby one does not look to others for approval but evaluates oneself by personal standards. Individuation is seen to involve liberation from convention in which the person no longer clings to the collective fears, beliefs, and laws of the masses. The process of turning inward in the later years is also seen by life-span develop mentalists to give the person a sense of freedom from the norms governing everyday life. As well as he proposed psychological functioning such as a positive attitude toward oneself and one’s past life, high quality, satisfying relationships with others, a sense of self-determination, independence, freedom from norms and having life goals and a belief that one’s life is meaningful, the ability to manage life and one’s surroundings and being open to new experiences as well as having continued personal growth.

Need for the study

Emotion has considered being one of the cognitive processes of the individual which affects over all well-being in both positive and negative aspects. Individuals face many problems in their life. Due to problems they are in the stress full live. To overcome from the problems and stress full situation individuals use many strategies. In this context, emotion regulation is play as a defense mechanism in individuals’ life. Niven et al. (2012) highlighted that individual’s emotions is negatively associated with affective well being and relationship closeness. In the sense students having good emotion regulation can pay attention to classroom activities and ignore distractions and remember a task to take long enough to carry on. In educational setting, students are committed to many academic works; due to these academic activities they may have the chance to invite fear, anxiety, stress and worry. In this context emotional regulation will help the students to cope with many stressful situations. Hence it is essential to study emotional regulation and well-being among college students.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to explore the relationship between emotion regulation and well-being among college students.

➢ To find out the significant difference in emotional regulation and well-being among college students on the basis of various demographic variables.
Hypotheses

1. There will be a significant relationship between emotional regulation and well-being of college students.
2. There will be a significant difference in emotional regulation of college students on the basis of their gender.
3. There will be a significant difference in well being of college students on the basis of their gender.
4. There will be a significant difference in emotional regulation of college students with regards of their course of study.
5. There will be a significant difference in well being of college students with regards to their course of study.
6. There will be a significant difference in well being of student with regard to their year of study.
7. There will be a significant difference in well being of student with regard to their birth order.
8. There will be a significant difference in emotional regulation and well being of student with regard to their type of family.

Research Method

A survey method was adopted in this study which is association in nature. The population of this study consisted of college students in Tiruchirappalli city, Tamil Nadu. This study aimed to assess the relationship between emotional regulation and well being among college students. 228 college students had participated in this study. Simple random sampling method was used in this study. The data was collect with the help of appropriate psychological tools Emotional regulation Gross and John (2003), Well being Chouhan, Sharma (2016). The data was analyzed with the help of SPSS - V 22.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Relationship between emotional regulation and well-being among college students
Table 1 revealed that relationship between emotional regulation and well-being. It is found that cognitive reappraisal dimension of emotional regulation had a significant positive relationship with most of the dimensions of well-being among college students. It is interesting to note down from the table that there is no significant relationship between expressive suppression dimension of emotional regulation and well-being of college students. Hence the hypothesis is partially accepted. From above the table it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between emotional regulation and well-being among college students. This study in line with the findings of Lavanya and Manjula (2017) reported that emotional regulation had a significant positive association with well-being of college students. In general emotional regulation is considered to be one of the defense mechanism of the individuals. In educational setting, students are committed with more academic activities, apart from these; students experienced with lot of extracurricular activities and may have the chance to involve many social relations. In this situation, students may have the higher chance to develop variety of problems which associated with mental and physical health issues. In this context, emotional regulation plays a vital role in to overcoming all those problems. Hence, the positive association between emotional regulation and well-being among college students is quite logical.

Table 2: Gender differences in the emotional regulation among College Students

Dimensions of Well-Being
\[ \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline
\text{Dimensions of Emotional Regulation} & \text{Cognitive Reappraisal} & \text{Expressive Suppression} \\
\hline
\text{Emotional Well-being} & 0.114^{NS} & 0.115^{NS} \\
\text{Psychological Well-being} & 0.252^{*} & 0.079^{NS} \\
\text{Social Well-being} & 0.271^{*} & 0.091^{NS} \\
\text{Spiritual Well-being} & 0.186^{*} & 0.021^{NS} \\
\text{Self Awareness} & 0.215^{*} & 0.079^{NS} \\
\text{Physical Well-being} & 0.193^{*} & 0.052^{NS} \\
\text{Overall Well-being} & 0.337^{*} & 0.118^{NS} \\
\hline
\end{array} \]

*-Significant at the 0.05 level  \quad \text{NS- Not Significant}
Dimensions of Emotional Regulation | Male N=121 | Female N=107 | “t”
---|---|---|---
Cognitive Reappraisal | M1 SD1 | M2 SD2 | Value
26.32 5.66 | 29.34 6.09 | 3.87*
Expressive Suppression | 16.45 3.70 | 17.09 5.14 | 1.09NS

*Significant at 0.05 level; NS-Not significant

From table 2 it is noticed that the ‘t’-values are significant for the cognitive reappraisal dimension of emotional regulation with regards male and female college students. Whereas, expressive suppression dimension of did not significantly differ between male and female students. Hence the hypothesis is partially accepted. It is concluded that male and female students were significantly differ in their emotional regulation.

Cognitive reappraisal indicated that cognitive responses to stressful events that modify one’s emotional experience (Abdi, Taban, & Ghaemian, 2012). This could help an individual to focus on their walking life in which they develop their own potentials continuously. Male and female students rely on differ in the cognitive activities than their expressive suppression. Female students displayed higher score in their cognitive reappraisal dimension than their counter part. There is a common belief in the world that women are different from men. Women’s are emotionally connected than men. Hence, it is concluded that male and female college students significantly differ in their emotional regulation.

Table 3: Gender differences in the wellbeing among college students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of Well-being</th>
<th>Male (N=121)</th>
<th>Female (N=107)</th>
<th>‘t’-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M1 SD1</td>
<td>M2 SD2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional well-being</td>
<td>19.07 3.348</td>
<td>20.07 3.953</td>
<td>2.066*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological well-being</td>
<td>31.33 4.506</td>
<td>33.31 4.974</td>
<td>3.150*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social well-being</td>
<td>49.39 5.765</td>
<td>51.63 5.872</td>
<td>2.900*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual well-being</td>
<td>16.93 3.222</td>
<td>19.86 4.008</td>
<td>6.104*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td>30.60 3.618</td>
<td>31.98 4.644</td>
<td>2.529*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.turkjphysiotherrehabil.org 29963
From table 3 it is noticed that the ‘t’-values are significant for most of the dimensions of well-being along with its overall well-being. Hence the hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that male and female students significantly differ in their well-being. It is important to notice that female students had displayed higher score in most of the dimension of well-being such as, emotional well being, psychological well being, social well being, spiritual well being and self awareness than their counter part. Emotional well-being indicated that person has a positive mental health. Psychological well-being refers to inter and intra relationship of positive functioning that can include one’s relatedness with others. Social well being indicated that people are connected with a community and having a strong support network and good friends. Spiritual well-being refers to peoples are having integral part of mental, emotional and physical health. This could help an individual to focus on personal growth in which they develop their own potentials continuously. Self awareness is a person health of knowledge. Physical well being did not significantly differ between male and female students in this study. Hence, it is concluded that male and female college students were differ significantly in their well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical well-being</th>
<th>20.31</th>
<th>3.291</th>
<th>20.80</th>
<th>3.934</th>
<th>1.040&lt;sup&gt;NS&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall well-being</td>
<td>167.62</td>
<td>15.417</td>
<td>177.64</td>
<td>16.053</td>
<td>4.806*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at 0.05 level; <sup>NS</sup>-Not significant

Table 4: Emotional Regulation of college students based on their course of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotional Regulation</th>
<th>Arts N=80</th>
<th>Science N=148</th>
<th>“t” Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M1</td>
<td>SD1</td>
<td>M2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Reappraisal</td>
<td>26.84</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>28.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive Suppression</td>
<td>15.98</td>
<td>4.406</td>
<td>17.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at p<0.05; <sup>NS</sup>-Not significant
From table 4 it is observed that the ‘t’-values are significant for expressive suppression did not significant for the cognitive reappraisal dimension of emotional regulation. Hence, the hypothesis is partially accepted. It is concluded that arts and science students differ significantly in their emotional regulation. In educational setting both male and female students have chance to interact with others. Students from science background have the higher chance to do academic works such as, writing assignments, class tests, doing experimental research than their counter part. Due to various academic over load they have the chance to invite stress. In this context, expressive suppression plays a significant role in their emotional regulation.

Table 5: Well-being among college students based on their course of study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of Psychological Well-being</th>
<th>Arts (N=80)</th>
<th>Science (N=148)</th>
<th>‘t’-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M₁</td>
<td>SD₁</td>
<td>M₂</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional well being</td>
<td>20.15</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>19.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological well being</td>
<td>32.33</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>32.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social well being</td>
<td>49.33</td>
<td>5.55</td>
<td>51.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual well being</td>
<td>17.63</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>18.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td>30.78</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>31.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical well being</td>
<td>20.49</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>20.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Well-being</td>
<td>170.69</td>
<td>17.86</td>
<td>173.21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at p<0.05; NS-Not significant

From table 5 it is observed that the ‘t’-values did not significant for most of the dimension of well being and only significant for the social, spiritual and emotional well being. Hence the hypothesis is not accepted. It is concluded that arts and science students do not differ significantly in their well being.

Students have a little opportunity for the expression of some dimension. In many cases it is witnessed that science students behave like a book worm, focused on the lab activities and restricting themselves from social obligations. In contrast, the students in arts course enjoying a lot of freedom, having a very little control and exploring the world rather than the subject. These kinds of activities enjoyed by the arts students could have contributed to their well-being. Hence
the significant difference in emotional, social, spiritual well-being between arts and science students is quite reasonable.

Table 6 it is observed that the ‘F’-values are not significant of the well-being. Hence the hypothesis is not accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference in well-being of first year, second year and third year students.

Table 6: Significant Difference in Well-being of College Students with regard to their Year of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>I year(N=84)</th>
<th>II year(N=89)</th>
<th>III year(N=55)</th>
<th>“F”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Well-being</td>
<td>173.25</td>
<td>14.88</td>
<td>170.46</td>
<td>18.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at p<0.05; NS-Not significant

In many cases it is witnessed that year of students behave like a book worm, focused on the lab activities and restricting themselves from social obligations and having lack of impulse control. In contrast, studying the year of students are taking advantages from the parents as well as the institutions, enjoying a lot, having a very little control on their emotions and exploring the world rather than the subject. These kinds of activities enjoyed by the students could have contributed to their affective well being and emotional regulation.

Table 7 it is observed that the ‘F’-values are not significant for the well-being. Hence the hypothesis is partially accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference in well-being of college students with regards to their birth order.

Table 7: Significant difference in Well-being among college students based on their birth order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>First Born(N=91)</th>
<th>Second Born(N=25)</th>
<th>Middle Born(N=26)</th>
<th>Last Born(N=61)</th>
<th>Only Child(N=25)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“F”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In many cases it is witnessed that the first born, last born and only child getting advantages from their parents and easily get attention towards their parents and emotionally attached with the parents. In contrast, the students in first born, last born and only child enjoying a lot of freedom and having a very little control and exploring the world rather than the subject when comparing the second born and middle born. These students have the higher chance to regulate their own emotion and show good well-being. Hence, there is no significant difference in well-being of college students with regards to their birth order is quite logical.

**Table 8: Significant difference in Emotional Regulation and Well-being among college students based on their type of family**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Joint Family (N=71)</th>
<th>Nuclear Family (N=157)</th>
<th>“t” Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Well-being</td>
<td>170.63</td>
<td>17.173</td>
<td>173.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Emotional Regulation</td>
<td>44.68</td>
<td>7.418</td>
<td>44.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at p<0.05; <sup>NS</sup>-Not significant

From table 8 it is observed that the ‘t’-values are not significant for the well-being and emotional regulation. Hence the hypothesis is not accepted. It is concluded that there is no significant difference in well-being and emotional regulation of college students with regards to their type of family. It is concluded that the college students from nuclear and joint families do not differ significantly in their well-being and emotional regulation.
The environment mastery refers to the ability to choose or create suitable environment according to one’s own psychological conditions. The ability to manipulate and control complex environment requires a lot of personal effort and autonomy. Generally in nuclear families children have a very little opportunity to express their positive emotions, regulating behavior and handling relationship. In the sense nuclear family children’s are less likely to be emotionally stable and may get anxious and irritable easily. Nuclear family are used to receiving a lot of attention to their wishes and may have less impulse control in comparison to the one from the joint family. In contrast in joint families children get a lot of opportunities for elderly guidelines which made them to handle the external environment at ease. Joint family are likely to socially adjustable when comparison to the one from nuclear family. In general students from nuclear and joint families do not differ significantly in their well-being and emotional regulation.

Implications

The findings of the study provided many eye opening issues regarding the student’s emotional regulation and well-being. Teachers should mentor the student’s emotions on the regular basis and should develop goal setting behavior and taking decision by their own. Counselling and awareness programmes should develop students to improve their well-being and regulate their proper emotion. The curriculum planners should include the activities which promote the self regulating capabilities; thereby we can help the students to face the problems and also help them to cope up with stress exerted by the knowledge based society.

References


133. University Hospital. *IOSR Journal of Nursing and Health Science (IOSR-JNHS)*, 6(1), 14-23


Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/29453322


