

The Relationship Between Subjective Well Being And Self Control.

Janita Ramani*

Roopa Mathur**

*Research Scholar

**Dr. Roopa Mathur

Department of Psychology

Professor, Department of Psychology

IIS (deemed to be University, Jaipur)

IIS (deemed to be University, Jaipur)

ABSTRACT

There has been an increasing interest in the association between subjective well being and self control. Researchers earlier found a positive relationship between well being and self control. Previous studies show that individuals who have good self control are more likely to be healthier and happier. Overall well being of the general population may be improved by the interventions targeted at making self control stronger. People who have higher levels of self control during childhood continue to have high levels physical and mental health in adulthood. The study concluded that self control positively affects well being and it also shows how having self control improves lifestyle.

Keywords: Well being, Self control, Happiness

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between well being and self control is a growing concern for researchers. Self control supposes to have an important role in human achievement and well being in life. People with high self control report life satisfaction and well being, higher academic achievement, good interpersonal relationships, higher monetary income, emotional stability (Moffitt et al).

Individuals with low self control have academic underachievement, emotional and relationship issues, substance abuse, behavioral issues and poor health (Duckworth & Seigman, 2005, Frieze & Hohmann, 2009).

SUBJECTIVE WELL BEING

In the past two decades, psychologists, philosophers and scientists have shown increasing interest in subjective well being. Earlier, psychologists were interested only in negative emotions like depression, anxiety but now they are also showing interest in positive emotions and feelings

of well being. Happiness and subjective well being have been used interchangeably. Subjective well being is also known as self reported well being. Subjective well being is defined as how people assess their lives and it includes both emotional and cognitive aspects. An individual who is satisfied with his life and who experiences more positive affect and little or less negative affect will be seen as someone having high subjective well being or will be called a happy person.

Subjective well being includes contentment with particular life domains, global satisfaction, and the presence of frequent positive affect and relative absence of negative affect (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999).

The three elements of subjective well being (Diener)

- Life satisfaction is a positive assessment of the conditions of individual's life. It is a general feeling about one's life and how pleased they are with how it is going.
- Positive affect has received a lot of attention in the field of psychology. It refers to an individual's tendency to experience and feel positive emotions and interact with other individuals and life's challenges in a positive way. The main components of positive affect are happiness, optimism, enthusiasm, good mood and love among others.
- Negative Affect involves feeling and experiencing everything in a more negative way and more negative in relationships and surroundings. Negative affect involves many negative emotions such as guilt, fear, nervousness, anger and disgust.

SELF CONTROL

Self control has become the most interesting topic for researchers and psychologists. Researchers who have been exploring this construct define self control as the ability or capacity to regulate, manage and overcome one's desires, impulses and potential actions (Hoffman, et al., 2013). In many ways, self-control is just a small part of self-regulation, which is much more valuable in the long run. Self control is being studied with many variables. In 2011, Moffitt et al found that self control in childhood is a predictor of positive later life outcomes in the domains of socioeconomic status, physical health and criminal propensity. A research done on adults showed high trait self control is associated with favorable outcomes like psychological adjustment, emotional stability, academic success and good interpersonal skills (De Ridder, Lensvelt-Mulders)

The most famous study done on self control is marshmallow test by Walter Mischel at Stanford University in the late 1960's and 1970's. The study was with four year old children who were

asked to eat one marshmallow right away or wait for some time and get one more marshmallow. Later in life, after assessing them at regular intervals it was found that children who showed better self control outperformed their peers in a wide range of domains including well being, life achievement and academic success. After some time Walter Mischel and Janet Metcalf proposed that the desire for instant desire gratification comes from the cool system of brain and the ability to controls oneself comes from the hot system of brain. The cool system refers to limbic system is the lower and the primitive brain which responds emotionally and hot system refers to the frontal lobe or the decision making part(Pinker, 2011).

According to Baumeister, Vohs and Tice (1994) self control can be fatigues by use. They developed a strength model of self control which views self control as a confined resource. This is commonly referred as ego depletion. The self control model proposed that every time self control is used, it becomes weaker. Researchers have done many experiments in which it was observed that participants would be good in their first trial and progressively get worse subsequent second, third and fourth trials.

Self control improves life in three ways – person's well being, relationships and societies.

Person's well being: It is said that a person who has higher self control has a better health, both mentally and physically. They tend to have better sleeps, less physical illness and live longer lives.

Relationships: With good looks and wealth, people also look for partners who have good self control. Everybody wants to spend time with someone whom they can trust, and take wise decisions when things get tough.

Societies: Self control helps societies to flourish. Individuals with greater self control earn well and are more generous than individuals who have less self control.

Self control also contributes in student's success. Students can achieve their goals and have productive, happy and meaningful life by practicing self control. A previous study done on self control indicated that self control not only predict grades but also better adjustment and better interpersonal secure attachment (Tangney, Baumeister and Boone, 2004). Better emotional responses like less aggression and better anger management are seen in individuals with high self control.

SUBJECTIVE WELL BEING AND SELF CONTROL

Studies done on self control and subjective well being show that there is positive relationship between the two. The various characteristics of subjective well being like positive emotion, life

satisfaction, happiness, achievement and good health are positively associated with high scores of self control measures (Baumeister et al, 2011). People who have more self control are successful and happy in their lives than people who have low self control. Researchers have found that self control is something that gets better with age. People who are older have more self control than people with other age groups ((Seligman, 2011). The association between well being and self control is interesting and it challenges the notion of self control as the ability to inhibit unwanted impulses.

Orkibi, H. and Ronen, T (2017) conducted a study on the relation between students' self control skills and their subjective well-being (SWB) in school. The findings revealed that self control skills was positively and directly to school related positivity ratio and school satisfaction – the cognitive and emotional elements of subjective well being in school. The findings also suggest that both genders (boys and girls) who have higher self control skills may perceive themselves as having higher psychological needs satisfaction and consequently greater school related subjective well being.

Natali Efstathiou (2013) conducted a study on 299 undergraduate psychology students at Tennessee State University. Results showed that students with higher self control showed significantly higher levels of well being than students with lower levels of self control. Students with greater levels of self control also experienced more positive and less negative emotions in their daily lives. , the results also suggest that low self-control leads to harmful effects on well-being regardless of the individual's level of emotional intensity

A study done by Ronen, T et al (2014) explored the role of social support and self control in predicting adolescent's subjective well-being. The study was done on 380 adolescents from junior high and high schools. It was found that during crisis, adolescents with high self control skills presented positive affect. Outcomes showed that self control and social support both predicted higher subjective well being by decreasing negative affect and increasing positive affect and life satisfaction. Younger adolescents showed higher levels of subjective well being than older ones.

Qutaibaa, A and Tamie, R (2010) examined the relation between self control and subjective well being, mental well being and aggression. 397 Arab adolescents of 7th-12th grade participated in the study chosen from four schools. Aggression questionnaire, self control questionnaire, social belonging questionnaire, negative and positive affect for children and satisfaction scale were used in this study. It was revealed that self control skills moderated the link between aggression

and poor subjective well being. Results revealed that there was negative correlation seen between self control and negative affect and positive relation between self control and positive affect.

Yangjun, T and Zhi Yang (2016) conducted on self control, subjective well being and self support. The purpose of the study was to see whether self control mediates or moderated the association between subjective well being and social support among 335 elderly Chinese males and females. It was found that all the three – subjective well being, self control and social support were significantly related. Self control mediates the association between positive affect and social support but not negative affect and life satisfaction. It was also found that self control is an important indicator of subjective well being and it can be useful in differentiating between intervention strategies that increase subjective well being among the elderly by helping them manage positive affect and negative affect.

Walid Briki (2017) conducted a study on passion, trait self control and well being. 5099 volunteers from United States responded being passionate about an activity, Results revealed positive relationship between trait self control and well being. It was also found that self control can grow and this growth can be responsible for well being enhancement.

CONCLUSION

The present study examined the relationship between well being and self control. Self control can influence well being in life. Previous studies on both these variables show that higher self control can lead to being happier in life. The positive relationship was seen between well being and self control. Good self control helps individual to achieve their long term goals in all areas of life like 1) academic and work – it helps a person to focus on a particular goal or purpose. 2) Interpersonal relationships – it helps people to have a good sense of control over their lives and 3) healthy lifestyle -control in exercising regularly, eating habits and it also leads to positive emotions. Self control is positively related to overall subjective well being.

REFERENCES:

Agbaria, Q and Tamie, R. (2010). Self control and a sense of social belonging as moderators of the link between poor subjective wellbeing and aggression among Arab Palestinian adolescents in Israel. *Procedia- Social and Behavioral Sciences*. 5:1334-1345.

Albuquerque, B. (2016). What is Subjective Well-Being? Understanding and Measuring Subjective Well-Being.

Baumeister, R., Vohs, K. & Tice, D. (2007). The Strength Model of Self Control. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 16(6)351-355.

Briki, W. (2017). Passion, Trait Self Control, and Wellbeing; Comparing Two Mediation Models Predicting Wellbeing. *Frontiers in Psychology*.

Duckworth, A. (2011). The Significance of Self Control. *Proceedings of National Academy of Sciences*.

Efstathiou, N. (2013). Self-control and well-being: The moderating roles of frustration intolerance and emotional intensity. *Tennessee State University*

Henden, E. (2008). What is self control? *Philosophical Psychology*, 21(1) 69-90.

Khan, A. and Qureshi, A.M (2017). Can self control influence subjective well being in life? A study assessing the dynamics and association between the constructs. *Journal of Interpersonal violence*.

Ridder, D.D. & Gillebaart, M. (2016). Lessons learned from trait self-control in well-being: making the case for routines and initiation as important components of trait self-control. *Health Psychology review* 89-99.

Ronen, T., Hamama, L., Rosenbaum, M., & Yarlapp-Mishely, Ayla. (2014). Subjective well being in Adolescence: The Role of Self-control, Social Support, Age, Gender, and Familial Crisis. *Journal of Happiness Studies* 17(1):1-24.

Orkibi, H. and Ronen, T. (2017). Basic Psychological Needs Satisfaction Mediates the Association between Self-Control Skills and Subjective Well-Being. *Frontiers in Psychology* 8.

TL Cheung, Tracy et al (2014). Why are people with high self-control happier? The effect of trait self-control on happiness as mediated by regulatory focus. *Frontiers in Psychology* 5(722):722

Yangjun, T. and Yang, Zhi (2016). Self-Control as Mediator and Moderator of the Relationship Between Social Support and Subjective Well-Being Among the Chinese Elderly. *Social Indicators Research* p813-828.