



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LIFE SATISFACTION AND PRESENT TIME PERSPECTIVE: A STUDY ON EMERGING ADULTHOOD

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Abstract

Since healthy psychological functioning is the one of the most significant challenges faced during emerging adulthood, the present study attempts to examine the relationship of present fatalistic time perspective (PFTP) and life satisfaction (LS) and how much PFTP contributes in predicting life satisfaction among emerging adults. The participants were 90 emerging-adults of these, 95.5% (n=86) were male and 4.4% (n=4) were female students. The mean age of students was 18.5 years; all are student of Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee. The present study is correlational in nature. Responses of the participants have been taken on two questionnaires: Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI) (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999) and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS- 5, Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin 1985). Data has been analyzed through Correlation and Regression analysis. The results of the study show that there is a negative relationship between the variables. The Regression analysis shows that PFTP predicts Life Satisfaction (-.21) however it has very little contribution in that. This study contributes to a growing body of research focusing on PFTP as an important psychological construct associated with LS. This study develops our understanding and predicting emerging adults' behaviour.*

Keywords: life satisfaction; emerging adulthood; time perspective; present fatalistic; time perspective

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Introduction

Emerging adulthood is a phase of human developmental stage between adolescence and full-fledged adulthood (Syed & Seiffge-Krenke, 2013). This stage of life extends from the late teens to the early twenties, and defined as a new phase of life where young people have to adopt new adult roles and make efforts to build a constructive relationship with society (Arnett, 2004). In this stage of development, young people become more independent and start exploring new possibilities in their life (Syed & Seiffge-Krenke, 2013). During this life stage, the transition to college is an especially challenging period for students given the need to meet extended academic demands within new social networks (Salmela-Aro & Upadyaya, 2014). Emerging adult especially college going students experience increased level of depression, and stress (Mahmoud Staten, Hall, & Lennie, 2012) so, the most important challenge for the psychologist to identify those factors which influence one's happiness and wellbeing. But there is ambiguity that what individual and external factors help students in decreasing these mental health concerns and enhance their satisfaction with life. So the present study is concerned about to youth's life satisfaction and other individual factors which influence it, especially in this stage of life. Life satisfaction is characterized as a cognitive component of subjective well-being (SWB) and plays an important and crucial role in healthy psychological development. It is defined as cognitive evaluations of one's life, assessed globally or by specific domains (Diener, 1985). It may reflect conscious inner pleasant experiences which motivate people to pursue goals (Frisch, 1999; Frisch, Clark, Rouse, Rudd, Paweleck, Greenstone, & Kopplin, 2005).

One individual variable or factor that has not been investigated previously as a possible predictor of life satisfaction separately, and that may add to our predictive power, is time perspective. The basic reason for considering this variable is that TP is a very important construct which influences many aspects of human behaviour, attitude and values, such as academic achievement (Volder & Lens, 1982; Brown & Jones, 2004), health promoting behaviour (Luszczynska, Gibbons, Piko, & Tekozel, 2004; Crockett, Weinman, Hankins, & Marteau, 2009), sleep and dreaming pattern and substance uses (Keough, Zimbardo, & Boyd, 2010). Lewin (1951) describe time perspective as "the totality of the individual's views of his psychological

future and psychological past existing at a given time” (p. 75). Time perspective (TP) can be defined as the manner in which individuals, and culture, partition the flow of human experience into the distinct temporal categories of past, present, and future. Basically “it is a non-conscious process whereby the continual flows of personal and social experiences are assigned to temporal categories, or time frames, that help to give order, meaning, and coherence to those events” (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999). Conceptually, time perspective also affects one’s decision making ability by locating the primary set of psychological influences within the temporal frames of either the present, past, or future. ‘Present-Oriented’ individuals tend to rely on the immediate, salient aspects of the stimulus and social setting when making decisions and taking actions. By contrast, the decisions of ‘Future-Oriented’ individuals tend to be based on anticipated consequences of imagined future scenarios, while those of ‘Past-Oriented’ individuals tend to rely on recall of reconstructed past scenarios. So, in present study researchers have taken present fatalistic time perspective (PFTP) that may influence one’s perception of satisfaction with life. Present fatalistic time perspective directly as well as indirectly influences many behavioral outcomes among emerging adults.

Objectives

This study is designed to explore the relationship between present fatalistic time perspective and life satisfaction. Although psychological dispositions, such as present fatalistic time perspective, clearly influence one’s life satisfaction, little previous research has studied these constructs together. The basic idea of the current study is that one’s healthy behaviour is positively associated with one’s life satisfaction (Larson, 2000; Maton, 1990; Holstein et al., 1990). Literature argues that healthy behaviour is to a large extent shaped by one’s time orientation (Zimbardo et al., 1997; Keough et al., 1999; Wills et al., 2001). Previous studies indicate that PFTP is negatively linked to healthy behaviour (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999; Keough et al., 1999). Given these connections between LS and PFTP, it is important to identify how these two constructs associate to each other. We specifically hypothesized the following: PFTP will be negatively associated with life satisfaction of emerging adults.

Method

Participants

The total number of undergraduates who participated in this study was 90; of these, 95.5% (N=86) were male and 4.4% (N=4) female. The mean age of students was 18.5 years; all are student of Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee. The students were informed that the purpose of the study was to evaluate their quality of life. Questionnaires were administered during their tutorial classes. Before the distribution of questionnaire sheet, the students were as to how to fill the questionnaire properly. They took approximately 35 to 45 minutes to filling the questionnaires.

Measures

Zimbardo Time Perspective Inventory (ZTPI): This inventory was developed by Zimbardo and Boyd (1999). In the present study, only one dimension of the inventory has been used: present time perspective (9 items; $\alpha=.61$) that evaluates how much individuals involve in enjoying spontaneous pleasure and act impulsively taking risks without concern for future consequences (e.g. "I feel that it is more important to enjoy what you are doing than to get work done on time"). Scale responses are ranging from 1 (very uncharacteristic) to 5 (very characteristic).

Satisfaction with Life Scale - Participants' life satisfaction is measured by Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985). It contains five items and responses are given on 7-point scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Reliability coefficient of scale is .87 (Diener et al., 1985).

Statistical Analysis

Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS statistical software (version 21.0). In the first phase of analysis, descriptive statistics were used to describe the responses of the sample on scales among students. To examine the relationship of PFTP with life satisfaction, Pearson correlation was used. To determine whether PFTP is accounting for life satisfaction, simple regression was run, using LS as dependent variable. Magnitude (R^2 change) was used to determine the amount of contribution of the significant independent variable in the model to the dependent variable. Standardized Beta (β) was used to

determine the relative influence of significant predictor in the model on the dependent variable.

Results

The mean scores of students' on present fatalistic orientation of time and life satisfaction scale were found to be normal and equal to 44.23 (SD=5.08) and 22.58 (SD=4.7), respectively. Results of the Pearson coefficient demonstrate significant but negative (-.21*) relationship between PFTP and life satisfaction (Table 1). Students who score higher on the scale of this (PF) dimension of time perspective indicate that they are not able to evaluate their life in positive manner.

Table 1. Mean, Standard Deviation (SD) and correlation of variables (n=90)

	Mean	SD	1	2
Life satisfaction	22.58	4.7	1	
Present Fatalistic	44.23	5.08	-.210*	1

Note: *p<.05

Regression model represents that the significant independent predictor of life satisfaction were PFTP (Table 2). The overall model F(4.042), p<.05 accounted for 3% of the variance of life satisfaction, which means PFTP has little contribution in predicting LS.

Table 2. Regression Coefficient (n=90)

	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Standardized Coefficients	p
PFTP	0.044	0.033	4.042	-0.21	.047

Note: *p<.05

Discussions

We studied young adults' life satisfaction within the context of the campus culture. The purpose of the present study was to gain insight into the determinants of life satisfaction among emerging adults, with a particular emphasis on the contribution of PFTP. Regression analysis has been used for understanding the nature of relationship between PFTP and LS and the predicting power of PFTP. When we see the result of regression analysis, PFTP emerges as a significant predictor of life satisfaction but R² change demonstrates the little contribution of PFTP in the prediction of it. This means

there is others individual as well environmental factors that could influence youth's positive evaluation of their life but still we can't reject the crucial role of present orientation of time. Results demonstrate that the argument given in favor of the present study is fulfilled. We argue that one's health-promoting behaviour (including exercise, no or less substance uses, safe sex, seat belt use, no smoking, sun protection, fruit intake, fat consumption, and fiber intake etc.) are directly associated with one's life satisfaction (Grant et al., 2009). Previous studies such (Lindsay et al., 2012) support this argument that positive well-being during this stage of life was significantly associated with reporting better perceived general health during emerging adulthood. PFTP is positively associated with risky health behaviour such as risky driving (Zimbardo et al., 1997) more sexual partners and having frequent sexual behaviour (Rothspan & Read, 2001). Studies also suggest that participants who scored higher on present-fatalistic scales were unable to foresee the positive aspect of their life because PFTP is characterized as fatalistic, helpless, and hopeless attitude toward life. So, there is a high probability that PFTP and LS would negatively associate with each other which is supported by the findings. There might be high chances that youths were unable to positively evaluate their life. Drake et al. (2008) argues that PFTP is the most ruinous factor which is positively associated with higher level of aggression, anxiety and depression (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999), which also directly or indirectly, influences one's subjective happiness.

Conclusions

However, the hypothesis is supported by the data and the data shows the significant role played by PFTP in youth's life. In this context PFTP emerges as an important and pervasive cognitive filter that affects the quality of one's cognitive evaluation of life and wellbeing. This study suggests that time perspective can influence the formation and maintenance of one's health, promoting behaviors that is linked with LS. The findings reported here and of previous researches show that this time orientation (PF) may render individuals more susceptible to negative affective states (Boniwell & Zimbardo, 2003). TP plays a critical but implicit role in promoting psychological health and well-being (Holman & Silver, 2005). Study demonstrates that TP may affect many

dimension of individuals' life and focusing on PFTP as well other dimensions of TP may allow us for more accurate predictions of complex human behaviors.

Several unanswered questions remain for future research concern. More research is obviously needed, in order to clarify the relationship between PFTP and life satisfaction. There is further need to examine in future studies that how PFTP and other dimensions of time perspective such as past (positive and negative), present (hedonistic) and future time perspective are associated to eudaimonic aspect of wellbeing and they can also use the balance time perspective. Researchers may also examine the moderation effect of age and other demographic variable such as socio economic status in the relation of PFTP and life satisfaction.

Limitation

The study has several limits. It is unbalanced for gender (95.5% boys and 4.4% girls), so we cannot verify that how gender influences to this proposed relationship. The results of the study are limited to a population in which our research sample was based. As the sample size is small, therefore generalization of the findings to other groups, or individuals in other countries is not recommended. Future studies should use more participants from different educational institutions and areas to find a relationship between PFTP and life satisfaction.

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