

## Role of Anger and Strategies of Regulating Emotions in Satisfaction with Life in Old Aged Persons

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### Abstract

The study was conducted to examine the contribution of anger and various cognitive strategies of regulating emotions in satisfaction with life in old age. Previous studies have demonstrated that the health, quality of life and subsequent satisfaction are negatively influenced by the experience of anger, aggressive or hostile behavior. The present research is concerned with the various cognitive strategies to deal with negative emotion, specifically anger, which were hypothesized to predict life-satisfaction of old-age people. For this purpose, a sample of 126 participants, who were 60 plus in age, was taken with purposive sampling method. Data, collected through administering 'Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire', 'Negative Emotion Scale' and 'Satisfaction with Life Scale', was analyzed with the help of 'Pearson Product-moment Correlation' and 'Multiple Regression Analysis'. The results showed that 'positive reappraisal', 'putting into perspective' and 'refocus on planning' were positively, whereas 'self-blame', 'rumination', and 'anger' were found to be negatively associated with life-satisfaction. These strategies of regulating emotional experience and expression and anger, predict 37 percent of the variance in the scores on satisfaction with life. Positive Reappraisal was found to be the most significant predictor.

**Keywords:** Cognitive Emotion Regulation, Anger, Satisfaction with Life.

Research findings portray two components, basically, which underlies overall subjective well-being. They are positive as well as negative affective component and life satisfaction (Arthaud-Day, Rode, Mooney, & Near, 2005; Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2009). Satisfaction with life is defined as the perception or evaluation of one's own life (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985), which involves will of changing the underlying aspect of life, relationships and views about the past or future at a given moment (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999). Life-satisfaction, which Pavot & Diener (2008) defined as an overall evaluation of the quality of life, is associated with the affective components of subjective well-being (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2009) and contributes to predict mental-physical health and longevity of people (Bowling, & Grundy, 2009; Hirdes & Forbes, 1993; Lightsey Jr et al. 2013). Schimmack, Diener, and Oishi (2002) demonstrated the people's tendency to rely on the same type of information, (related to the job, relationships, education etc.), to evaluate their quality of life for stable life satisfaction over time. According to Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000) one's family life, professional life, health, financial condition, leisure activities, and self-concept are the major criteria to weigh and determine one's personal level of satisfaction with life.

### Life Satisfaction and Anger

People often go through some negative emotional experiences in various situations including interpersonal conflicts or discontentment. Anger is one of those negative emotions, which has been defined as a normal emotional response (Abrams, 2010), as an emotional state (Spielberg, 1991), to deal with stress and health problems (Baltas & Baltas, 1997). Researchers found that high rate of anger-related emotional response causes dissatisfaction with interpersonal relationships and therefore with life (Durak-Batigun, Hisli-Sahin, and Karlı-Demirel,

2011). Korkut's study (2012) revealed that childhood traumatic experiences enhance angry behavior and negatively influence adolescents' satisfaction with life. Sahin (2015) did not find any significant gender difference in terms of trait anger, anger expression and satisfaction with life. In their study, Chung and Kim (2017) found that satisfaction with life is positively associated with anger control but negatively with anger expression.

### Emotion Regulation and Life-satisfaction

Emotion regulation is a process of handling the feeling about one's own internal states and motivation in terms of its occurrence, duration, and intensity by initiating, maintaining, modulating, or changing in order to reach one's goal (Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2004). Emotion regulation strategy is crucial to influence one's physical and mental health by regulating emotional experience expression (Gresham & Gullone, 2012; Gross & Thompson, 2007; Koole, 2009). Emotion regulation strategy of responding to stressful events by modifying the emotional experience is known as 'cognitive emotion regulation strategy' (Abdi, Taban, & Ghaemian, 2012). Dysfunctional regulation of emotion may lead to poor well-being (Gross & Munoz, 1995). Self-blame, rumination, catastrophizing, and other-blame are maladaptive strategies and positively associated (Lei et al., 2014) whereas acceptance, positive refocusing, refocus on planning, positive reappraisal, and putting into perspective, which are adaptive strategies, are negatively associated with depression and anxiety (Ehring, Fischer, Schnulle, Bosterling & Tuschen-Caffier, 2008; Garnefski & Kraaij, 2007; Martin & Dahlen, 2005). It has been demonstrated with longitudinal research studies that self-efficacy for regulating negative emotions can significantly predict life satisfaction (Lightsey Jr et al., 2013). Reappraisal, a cognitive strategy of changing the way of thinking about the emotional event is an effective strategy to decrease negative feelings and to

increase positive feelings as well (Gross & John, 2003; Mitrofan & Ciuluvica, 2012). Suppression, which is also a sort of emotion regulation strategy, has been found to be negatively correlated with life satisfaction (Hagaet. al., 2009; Yoo, Matsumoto, & LeRoux, 2006). Research revealed that the cognitive emotion regulation strategies used by males are different from used by females (Zlomke & Hahn, 2010).

### Objectives

Following objectives have ignited the current research:

To test the significance of the relationship between anger and satisfaction with life.

To test the significance of the relationship between various cognitive emotion regulation strategies and satisfaction with life.

To test the significance of the predictability of anger and various cognitive emotion regulation strategies for satisfaction with life.

### Hypotheses

Following hypotheses have been formulated:

There is no significant relationship between anger and satisfaction with life.

There is no significant relationship between various cognitive emotion regulation strategies and satisfaction with life.

There is no significant predictability of anger and various cognitive emotion regulation strategies for satisfaction with life.

### Method

**Participants:** For this study, 126 elderly people, who were 60-plus in age, were taken from district Saharanpur, UP as the sample using purposive

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.

**Negative Emotions Scale (NES):** Negative Emotion Scale (originally constructed by the author to measure three basic negative emotions: anger, anxiety, and sadness) was used to assess the emotion of anger. This 15 items 5-points subscale for anger has an Alpha coefficient of .78, and test-retest reliability .61.

**Satisfaction with Life Scale:** The Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) is a 5-item and 7-point Likert type scale was used to assess the life satisfaction of participants. The correlation coefficient of this scale with subjective well-being measures has been found to be ranging from 0.47 to 0.66, according to Diener et al. (1985).

**Data analysis:** collected data on 126 participants was analyzed with Pearson product-moment correlation and stepwise regression analysis. In addition to descriptive statistics, skewness and kurtosis also were calculated to know the normality of distribution of data.

### Results and Discussion

Collected data for the present research was analyzed with SPSS. Table-1 shows the descriptive statistics for all the variables, which are the part of the current study. In addition to the mean and SD, this table also reports that the data does not severely violate the assumption of normality of distribution.

**Table-1: Showing Descriptive Statistics**

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Satisfaction with Life	20.8810	5.48249	-.157	.016
Anger	40.5159	9.32930	.292	-.300
Self Blame	09.1111	2.33657	.452	-.269
Acceptance	11.9127	3.08809	.401	-.826
Rumination	10.0317	2.12014	.566	.122
Positive Refocusing	10.0476	2.77375	-.068	-.038
Refocus on Planning	10.2143	3.21399	.279	-.461
Positive Reappraisal	9.5238	2.65545	.131	-.118
Putting into Perspective	10.4841	2.89754	.435	-.396
Catstrophizing	9.0635	3.04301	.685	.374
Other Blame	8.3571	2.89680	.346	.262

sampling technique.

### Tools

To meet the objectives of the current research following tools have been used:

**The Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire:** Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire is a 36-

Table-2 shows the degree of association among all the variables included in the present study. The only dependent variable- 'Satisfaction with Life' has been found to be negatively correlated with anger and two maladaptive cognitive emotion regulation strategies- rumination and catastrophizing, whereas positively

correlated with positive reappraisal and putting into perspective-adaptive cognitive emotion regulation perspective. Other blame has a significantly positive association with ‘refocus on planning’, ‘rumination’,

**Table-2: Showing Correlation of Anger and Cognitive Emotion Regulation Strategies with Life-Satisfaction**

	Satisfaction with Life	Anger	Self-Blame	Acceptance	Rumination	Positive Refocusing	Refocus on Planning	Positive Reappraisal	Putting into Perspective	Catstrophizing	Other-Blame
<b>Anger</b>	<b>-.331**</b>	-	.077	-.021	<b>.191*</b>	.014	.048	-.121	<b>-.183*</b>	.118	.108
<b>Self Blame</b>	-.174	.069	-	.098	.166	<b>-.250**</b>	<b>-.366**</b>	.173	<b>.378**</b>	.129	<b>-.189*</b>
<b>Acceptance</b>	.076	-.021		-	-.173	<b>.206*</b>	<b>.289**</b>	-.059	<b>.381**</b>	.005	.063
<b>Rumination</b>	<b>-.278**</b>	<b>.191*</b>			-	-.011	-.096	.021	-.028	<b>.380**</b>	<b>.242**</b>
<b>Positive Refocusing</b>	.089	.014				-	<b>.544**</b>	-.069	<b>-.288**</b>	-.115	.177
<b>Refocus on Planning</b>	.152	.048					-	<b>-.183*</b>	<b>-.281**</b>	-.108	<b>.334**</b>
<b>Positive Reappraisal</b>	<b>.375**</b>	-.121						-	<b>.334**</b>	-.081	-.169
<b>Putting into Perspective</b>	<b>.279**</b>	<b>-.183*</b>							-	-.008	-.121
<b>Catstrophizing</b>	<b>-.177*</b>	.118								-	<b>.265**</b>
<b>Other-blame</b>	-.119	.101									-

\*\* $\rho < .01$ . \* $\rho < .05$ .

strategies, significantly. This table gives information about the correlation between various cognitive emotion regulation strategies.

By observing the correlational coefficient among nine cognitive emotion regulation strategies we find that self-blame is negatively associated with positive reappraisal, positive refocusing, and other-blame, whereas positively associated with putting into

and ‘catastrophizing’. Positive refocusing and refocus on planning are positively associated with which putting into perspective is negatively associated. Putting into perspective is positively associated with acceptance and positive reappraisal.

Next is table-3 which presents the summary of the model of Stepwise Regression analysis. Summary table reported ‘Positive Reappraisal’<sup>1</sup>, the first

**Table-3: Showing Summary, F-value, and Significance of Regression Model**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Collinearity (Tolerance)	F-value
1	.375 <sup>1</sup>	.141	<b>.134</b>	.87		20.32**
2	.473 <sup>2</sup>	.223	<b>.211</b>	.92		17.68**
3	.534 <sup>3</sup>	.286	<b>.268</b>	.75		16.25**
4	.580 <sup>4</sup>	.336	<b>.314</b>	.74		15.33**
5	.612 <sup>5</sup>	.374	<b>.348</b>	.95		14.34**
6	.636 <sup>6</sup>	.405	<b>.374</b>	.83		13.47**

\*\* $\rho < .01$ .

**Table-4: Showing Unstandardized and Standardized Regression Coefficient.**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
		B	Std. Error	Beta
6	(Constant)	20.878	3.863	
	Positive Reappraisal	.720	.156	<b>.349**</b>
	Anger	-.120	.043	<b>-.204**</b>
	Self Blame	-.582	.189	<b>-.252**</b>
	Putting into Perspective	.509	.156	<b>.269**</b>
	Rumination	-.473	.183	<b>-.188*</b>
	Refocus on Planning	.326	.132	<b>.191*</b>

\*\* $\rho < .01$ . \* $\rho < .05$ .

variable to be included in the model, which explained 13 percent of the variance in the scores of satisfaction with life. The second variable, 'Anger'<sup>2</sup> was added by the model to explain 21 percent of the variance. 'Self-blame'<sup>3</sup>, 'Putting into Perspective'<sup>4</sup>, 'Rumination'<sup>5</sup> and 'Refocus on planning'<sup>6</sup> were added to produce the variance of 26, 31, 34, and 37 percent, respectively. F-value for each model has been reported significant. High tolerance values validate the inclusion of the six variables into the model to predict the criterion variable. Table-4 shows the regression coefficient for six predictor variables. Because stepwise regression considers only those variables which strengthen the model to predict criterion variable, therefore all six variables included in the model significantly contribute to predicting satisfaction with life in elders. This table reports 'Positive Reappraisal' ( $\beta=.35$ , significant at .01), 'Putting into Perspective' ( $\beta=.27$ , significant at .01) and 'Refocus on Planning' ( $\beta=.19$ , significant at .05) to predict an increase in the scores of satisfaction with life. 'Anger' ( $\beta=-.20$ , significant at .01), 'Self-blame' ( $\beta=-.25$ , significant at .01) and 'Rumination' ( $\beta=-.19$ , significant at .05) to predict the decrease in the scores of satisfaction with life.

### Conclusions and Suggestions

Purpose of the present research was to identify the pattern of relationship of anger and various cognitive emotion regulation strategies with life satisfaction among elders. As Chung and Kim (2017) found in their study, present research finding also revealed anger to be negatively associated with and a significant predictor of life-satisfaction in old age. Such finding can be said to indicate the association between anger and satisfaction with life to be continued from adolescence to elder-hood as Korkut's (2012) found adolescents' angry behavior to be linked negatively with their life satisfaction. According to Chung and Kim (2017), satisfaction with life is associated positively with anger control as well. And so was revealed by the present study. Positive appraisal, putting into perspective and refocus on planning are the adaptive cognitive strategies, and have been found to enhance life satisfaction of old-age people by regulating negative emotions. Rumination and catastrophizing were to be negatively associated with life-satisfaction, and rumination was found to predict to reduce satisfaction with life in old age. Longitudinal research also demonstrated that one's efficacy for regulating negative emotions can significantly predict life satisfaction (Lightsey Jr et al., 2013).

It is often seen that anger influences not only the interpersonal relationship but family life, professional life, health, therefore overall satisfaction with life and well-being. The findings of current research are useful in understanding the regulation of anger by cognitive means in order to enhance the sense of satisfaction with life among elders. But it is important to understand the process of cognitive emotion

regulation in the light of socio-economic, religious, educational, gender and other psychological factors.

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