

Examining the Psychological Determinants of Happiness: The Role of Gratitude, Mindfulness, and Emotion Regulation

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Abstract— The persistent pursuit of happiness has led contemporary psychological research to examine the emotional and cognitive factors that foster subjective well-being. Amidst this, gratitude, mindfulness, and emotional regulation have emerged as key psychological strengths associated with enhanced life satisfaction and affective stability. The present study explores the interplay between these constructs and their potential to predict happiness among young adults. Rooted in the frameworks of positive psychology and emotion regulation theory, the study underscores how gratitude broadens emotional experience, mindfulness facilitates present-centered awareness, and adaptive regulation strategies, such as cognitive reappraisal, buffer negative affect. The findings offer meaningful insight into how these positive traits can serve as psychological resources that not only mitigate stress but also actively contribute to the cultivation of happiness. By highlighting the predictive power of these constructs, the study opens avenues for integrative well-being interventions aimed at fostering emotional resilience and flourishing, especially during the formative years of emerging adulthood.

Keywords: gratitude, mindfulness, emotional regulation, happiness, subjective well-being, positive psychology

I. INTRODUCTION

The scientific inquiry into human happiness has undergone a paradigmatic shift in recent decades, moving from a pathology-focused approach to one that emphasizes psychological strengths and well-being. Within the framework of positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), constructs such as gratitude, mindfulness, and emotion regulation have emerged as pivotal determinants of subjective well-being and happiness. Although each of these constructs has individually been linked to positive affect and life satisfaction, their combined predictive value for happiness remains underexplored. The present study seeks to examine the relative contributions of gratitude, mindfulness, and emotion regulation in predicting happiness through a regression design.

Gratitude, broadly conceptualized as the recognition and appreciation of positive aspects of life and the benevolence of others, has been robustly linked to enhanced well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Empirical studies indicate that individuals who regularly engage in grateful reflection exhibit higher levels of life satisfaction, optimism, and positive affect (Wood, Froh, & Geraghty, 2010). Gratitude not only fosters interpersonal connection but also encourages adaptive cognitive patterns, thereby promoting overall happiness.

Mindfulness, defined as the self-regulation of attention toward present-moment experiences with an attitude of openness and non-judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994), has gained empirical support as a mechanism for emotional and cognitive regulation. Mindfulness-based interventions have been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression while enhancing self-awareness and psychological flexibility (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Keng, Smoski, & Robins, 2011). Mindful individuals tend to experience greater emotional clarity and resilience, which are critical to the experience of enduring happiness (Creswell, 2017).

Emotion regulation, the ability to modulate emotional responses in order to meet situational demands, plays a central role in psychological functioning and well-being (Gross, 1998). Adaptive regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal have been associated with increased positive affect and reduced emotional distress (John & Gross, 2004). Conversely, maladaptive strategies such as expressive suppression are linked to psychological maladjustment (Aldao, Nolen-Hoeksema, & Schweizer, 2010). Effective emotion regulation enables individuals to manage stressors constructively, thereby promoting sustained happiness.

Happiness itself is a multifaceted construct, typically operationalized as a combination of affective well-being (frequent positive affect, infrequent negative affect) and cognitive evaluations of life satisfaction (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). It is influenced by both dispositional traits and environmental factors, yet psychological processes such as gratitude, mindfulness,

and emotion regulation have shown consistent associations with increased happiness in both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005).

Despite the extensive literature on these individual constructs, there remains a paucity of integrative research examining how these variables collectively predict happiness. Thus, the present study employs a multiple regression design to explore the unique and shared variance in happiness explained by gratitude, mindfulness, and emotion regulation. Understanding these relationships can inform the development of evidence-based interventions aimed at enhancing well-being through the cultivation of positive psychological traits.

II. THEORY AND HYPOTHESIS

Gratitude is widely recognized as a foundational element of psychological well-being, typically defined as the acknowledgment of the positive aspects of one's life and the appreciation of the support or kindness received from others (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). The theoretical basis for linking gratitude and happiness is primarily derived from Fredrickson's (2001) Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions, which posits that gratitude, as a positive emotional state, broadens individuals' cognitive and behavioral tendencies, leading to the accrual of enduring psychological resources such as optimism, social connection, and life satisfaction.

Gratitude influences how individuals appraise their experiences, redirecting focus from deficiencies to abundance. This attentional shift promotes a sense of contentment and enhances one's emotional resilience (Watkins, 2004). In turn, this process contributes to greater subjective happiness by increasing the frequency and intensity of positive affect, a key component of well-being (Diener et al., 1999). Moreover, empirical evidence supports that gratitude-focused practices—such as journaling or counting blessings—consistently lead to significant increases in self-reported happiness and reductions in depressive symptoms (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Wood, Froh, & Geraghty, 2010).

From a social-functional standpoint, gratitude has also been found to reinforce interpersonal bonds and encourage prosocial behavior (Algoe, Haidt, & Gable, 2008). These relational benefits further serve to elevate life satisfaction and emotional support, both of which are closely linked to sustained happiness. Individuals high in dispositional gratitude tend to have stronger social ties and more frequent experiences of meaningful interpersonal engagement—factors that are integral to psychological flourishing.

Given these established mechanisms, it seems particularly important to study the relationship between gratitude and happiness in the current context. Understanding the extent to which gratitude independently predicts happiness can inform well-being interventions that leverage gratitude as a cost-effective, low-barrier psychological strategy. Additionally, exploring its predictive power alongside other positive psychology variables can help determine its unique and combined effects within a broader model of well-being. Therefore, it is hypothesized that gratitude will significantly and positively predict happiness.

H1: Gratitude will significantly and positively predict happiness.

Mindfulness, commonly defined as the intentional, non-judgmental awareness of the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994), has been increasingly recognized as a core psychological capacity that enhances emotional balance and well-being. Rooted in Eastern contemplative traditions and integrated into Western clinical science, mindfulness has been empirically linked to a variety of mental health benefits, including reductions in anxiety, stress, and depressive symptoms (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Keng, Smoski, & Robins, 2011).

The hypothesized positive association between mindfulness and happiness is supported by multiple theoretical frameworks. Most notably, the Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) suggests that mindfulness enhances autonomous functioning by increasing self-awareness and reducing automaticity in thoughts and behavior. This conscious engagement with experience promotes psychological needs satisfaction—namely autonomy, competence, and relatedness—which are directly tied to subjective well-being.

In addition, the Mindfulness-to-Meaning Theory (Garland et al., 2015) posits that mindfulness fosters positive reappraisal and enhances the ability to derive meaning from adverse experiences. This capacity for emotional reframing allows individuals to cultivate positive affect and purpose, both of which are essential components of happiness (Fredrickson, 2001). Neuropsychological findings also support this relationship: regular mindfulness practice has been associated with increased activation in brain regions related to emotional regulation and reward processing (Tang, Hölzel, & Posner, 2015).

Empirical studies confirm these theoretical assertions. Brown and Ryan (2003) found that higher trait mindfulness was significantly associated with greater levels of self-reported happiness, vitality, and life satisfaction across multiple samples. Similarly, mindfulness-based interventions such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) have demonstrated effectiveness in promoting positive emotional states and enhancing global well-being (Creswell, 2017).

Given the increasing psychological burden associated with modern life stressors, it seems especially relevant to investigate the predictive role of mindfulness on happiness. Understanding how moment-to-moment awareness influences well-being outcomes can inform evidence-based strategies for enhancing mental health and emotional flourishing. Thus, it is hypothesized that mindfulness will significantly and positively predict happiness in the present study.

H2: Mindfulness will significantly and positively predict happiness

Emotion regulation refers to the cognitive and behavioural processes by which individuals influence the experience and expression of emotions (Gross, 1998). Among the many strategies available, cognitive reappraisal—reframing the meaning of an emotional stimulus—and expressive suppression—inhibiting outward emotional expressions—are two widely studied dimensions (Gross & John, 2003). The quality and adaptability of these strategies are central to psychological functioning, and they play a significant role in long-term well-being.

The link between emotion regulation and happiness can be explained through the Process Model of Emotion Regulation (Gross, 1998), which posits that antecedent-focused strategies such as cognitive reappraisal tend to yield more positive psychological outcomes than response-focused strategies like suppression. Cognitive reappraisal has been consistently associated with increased positive affect, decreased depressive symptoms, and higher life satisfaction (John & Gross, 2004; McRae et al., 2012), all of which are core components of happiness (Diener et al., 1999).

The importance of studying this relationship is underscored by the fact that individuals' default emotion regulation styles are often automatic yet modifiable. By identifying which strategies are most predictive of happiness, targeted interventions—such as cognitive reappraisal training—can be developed to enhance emotional health. Therefore, it is hypothesized that emotional regulation will significantly and positively predict happiness.

H3: Emotion regulation (specifically cognitive reappraisal) will significantly and positively predict happiness.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

III.I. SAMPLE AND DATA COLLECTION

This study aimed to examine the predictive influence of gratitude, mindfulness, and emotional regulation on happiness among emerging adults in an academic setting. In alignment with the theoretical framework and research objectives, the sample comprised undergraduate and post graduate students aged between 18 and 24 years enrolled in degree colleges across Raebareli district, Uttar Pradesh, India. Participants were selected through purposive sampling to represent the target demographic of young adults experiencing transitional life phases, often associated with heightened psychological exploration and emotional development.

III.II. PROCEDURE

Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided informed consent prior to participation. They were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and informed of their right to withdraw at any point without penalty. Data collection was carried out using a structured questionnaire consisting of standardized psychological scales.

The sample was collected by using purposive sampling method. Once all the responses had been collected, the invalid or duplicate entries had been removed, the data were then included in a database for analysis.

III.III. MEASURES

THE EMOTION REGULATION QUESTIONNAIRE (ERQ)

The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ), developed by Gross and John (2003), is a 10-item self-report scale designed to assess two distinct emotion regulation strategies: Cognitive Reappraisal (6 items) and Expressive Suppression (4 items). Participants rate each item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate a greater tendency to use that particular emotion regulation strategy. The ERQ has demonstrated good internal

consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.79 to 0.83 for the Cognitive Reappraisal subscale and 0.73 to 0.76 for the Expressive Suppression subscale, making it a reliable tool widely used in psychological and behavioural research.

THE GRATITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

The Gratitude Questionnaire–Six Item Form (GQ-6), developed by McCullough, Emmons, and Tsang (2002), is a widely used self-report measure designed to assess the disposition to experience gratitude in daily life. The scale consists of 6 items, each rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Higher scores reflect greater levels of dispositional gratitude. The GQ-6 has demonstrated strong psychometric properties, with reported Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients typically ranging from 0.76 to 0.87, indicating good internal consistency.

MINDFUL ATTENTION AWARENESS SCALE (MAAS)

Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS), developed by Brown and Ryan (2003), is a widely used self-report instrument designed to assess a core characteristic of mindfulness—namely, the individual's awareness and attention to present-moment experiences. The scale consists of 15 items, each rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (almost always) to 6 (almost never), with higher scores indicating greater mindfulness. Items are framed in terms of lapses in attention and awareness, and are reverse scored to reflect mindfulness levels. The MAAS has demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values typically ranging from 0.80 to 0.87, making it a reliable and valid tool in both clinical and non-clinical populations across various cultural contexts.

THE HAPPINESS SCALE

The Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS), developed by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999), is a brief self-report measure designed to assess an individual's global subjective assessment of happiness. The scale consists of 4 items, each rated on a 7-point Likert scale, with varying anchors depending on the item (e.g., from "not a very happy person" to "a very happy person"). The SHS captures both absolute and comparative judgments of happiness and is scored by averaging responses across the four items, with higher scores indicating greater subjective happiness. The scale has demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha typically ranging from 0.79 to 0.94 across diverse populations, indicating high reliability and suitability for research in well-being and positive psychology.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The sample included students aged 18 to 24 years, with a near-equal gender distribution. Most participants belonged to middle-income nuclear families, consistent with regional demographic profiles. In terms of educational background, all respondents were pursuing undergraduate or post graduate degrees in disciplines such as humanities, commerce, and science. These control variables—age, family structure, and education level—were considered to account for possible extraneous influences on psychological outcomes. The overall distribution across demographic variables indicated a well-balanced sample for the intended analyses.

DATA ANALYSIS

To analyse the data collected from the participants, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 25 was used. The analysis included descriptive statistics to summarize the central tendency and variability of the key study variables: gratitude, mindfulness, cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression, emotional regulation, and happiness.

IV. RESULTS

IV.I. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

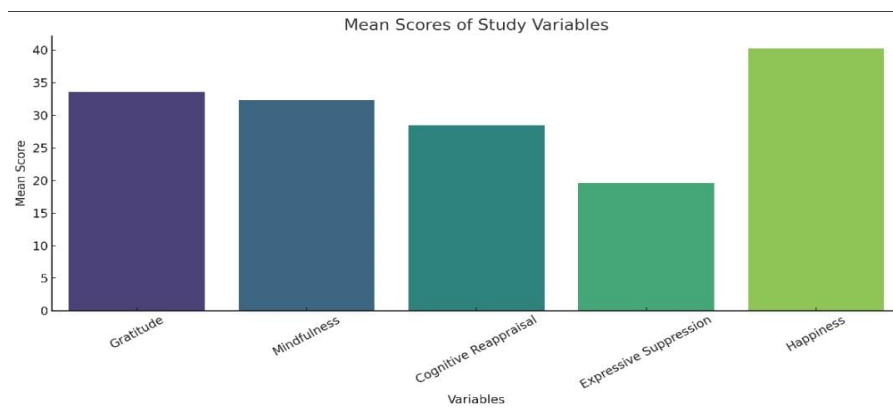
Table no. 01 shows descriptive statistics the mean, standard deviation, and range for each of the psychological variables. Gratitude (GRATI): The mean score was 24.90 (SD = 5.92) with a range of 29, suggesting a moderate level of gratitude among the participants. Mindfulness (MAAS): Participants reported a mean of 29.92 (SD = 10.23), with a wide range of 52, indicating substantial variability in mindfulness experiences. Cognitive Reappraisal (COGNI): The mean was 25.48 (SD = 7.47), with a range of 32, showing that cognitive reappraisal strategies were moderately used. Expressive Suppression (SUPRESS): The suppression dimension had a mean of 14.58 (SD = 4.50) with a smaller range of 20, indicating lower but varied use among respondents. Emotional Regulation (EMOTION): Overall emotional regulation showed a mean of 23.06 (SD = 11.10), with a range of 49, suggesting significant individual differences. Happiness (HAPPI): The mean score was 16.27 (SD = 4.36), with a

range of 22, reflecting a moderate level of subjective happiness among participants. The standard deviations across variables suggest a reasonable distribution without extreme skewness. The sample size across variables was consistent ($N = 120$), indicating no missing data for the main scales.

Table no. 01

Descriptive statistics of studied variables (N=120)

Variables	Range	Mean	S.D.
Gratitude	29.00	24.90	5.92
Mindfulness	52.00	51.91	10.23
Cognitive	32.00	25.47	7.47
Suppression	20.00	17.57	4.50
Emotional regulation	49.00	43.05	11.10
Happiness	22.00	16.26	4.36



IV.II. CORRELATIONAL ANALYSIS

To examine the relationships between the core psychological variables, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients were computed. Table no.02 represents correlation matrix revealed several significant associations among gratitude, mindfulness, cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression, emotional regulation, and happiness.

Gratitude was significantly and positively correlated with mindfulness ($r = .325, p < .01$), cognitive reappraisal ($r = .270, p < .01$), emotional regulation ($r = .236, p < .01$), and happiness ($r = .348, p < .01$). These findings suggest that individuals with higher gratitude levels also reported greater awareness, emotional regulation skills, and subjective well-being.

Mindfulness was positively associated with cognitive reappraisal ($r = .218, p < .05$), emotional regulation ($r = .200, p < .05$), and happiness ($r = .269, p < .01$), indicating that mindful individuals tend to use adaptive emotional strategies and experience higher happiness.

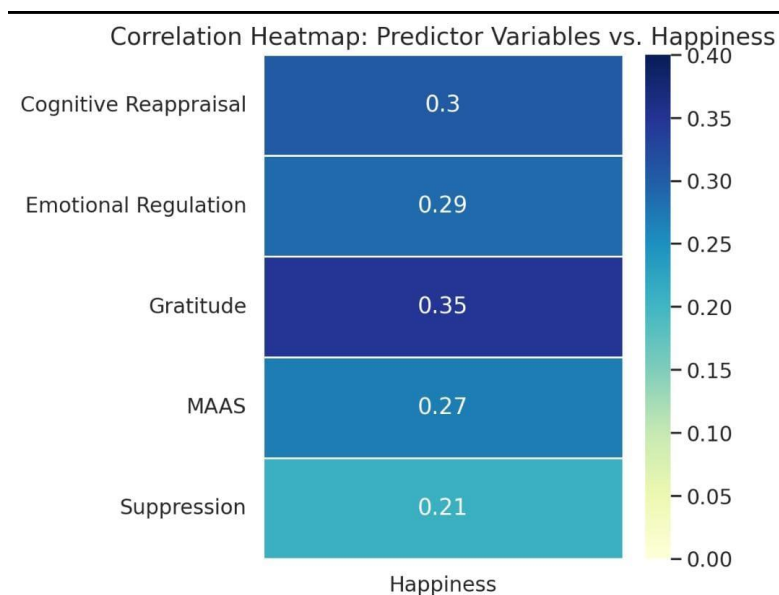
Cognitive reappraisal showed a strong positive correlation with happiness ($r = .304, p < .01$), implying that the tendency to reframe emotions is linked with higher subjective well-being. Interestingly, expressive suppression did not show significant correlations with any variable except a weak, marginal correlation with happiness ($r = .208, p < .05$), suggesting it may not be a beneficial strategy for emotional adjustment or well-being in this sample. Emotional regulation was significantly associated with happiness ($r = .289, p < .01$), reinforcing its role as a key predictor of subjective well-being. Overall, these correlations highlight a consistent pattern: adaptive emotional and cognitive traits like gratitude, mindfulness, and cognitive reappraisal are significantly associated with higher happiness levels.

Table no. 02

Correlation coefficient between studied variable

Predictor variables	Criterion variable (Happiness)
Gratitude	0.348**
Maas	0.269**
Cognitive reappraisal	0.304**
Suppression	0.208*
Emotional regulation	0.289**

**p<0.01, *p<0.05



IV.III. REGRESSION ANALYSIS: PREDICTING HAPPINESS

A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to examine the predictive power of several psychological variables (Gratitude, MAAS, Cognitive Reappraisal, Suppression, and Emotional Regulation) on happiness represented in table no.03, after controlling for demographic variables (age, class, gender, residence, education, family member, family type, stream, and health).

In the first step, the demographic variables accounted for 5.6% of the variance in happiness ($R^2 = .056$), which was not statistically significant ($F = 0.720$, $p < .690$), with degrees of freedom = 9,110. In the second step, psychological predictors were added individually, and the model showed significant improvement: Gratitude accounted for an additional 11.4% of the variance in happiness ($\Delta R^2 = .114$), with a significant change in F ($\Delta F = 14.954$, $p < .001$), and a $\beta = .349$, $p < .001$. MAAS (Mindful Attention Awareness Scale) contributed $\Delta R^2 = .087$, $\Delta F = 11.111$ ($p < .001$), $\beta = .312$, $p < .001$. Cognitive Reappraisal showed a $\Delta R^2 = .108$, $\Delta F = 14.075$ ($p < .001$), $\beta = .337$, $p < .001$. Suppression contributed less significantly with a $\Delta R^2 = .059$, $\Delta F = 7.234$ ($p < .01$), $\beta = .250$. Emotional Regulation explained $\Delta R^2 = .102$, $\Delta F = 13.270$ ($p < .001$), $\beta = .329$, $p < .001$.

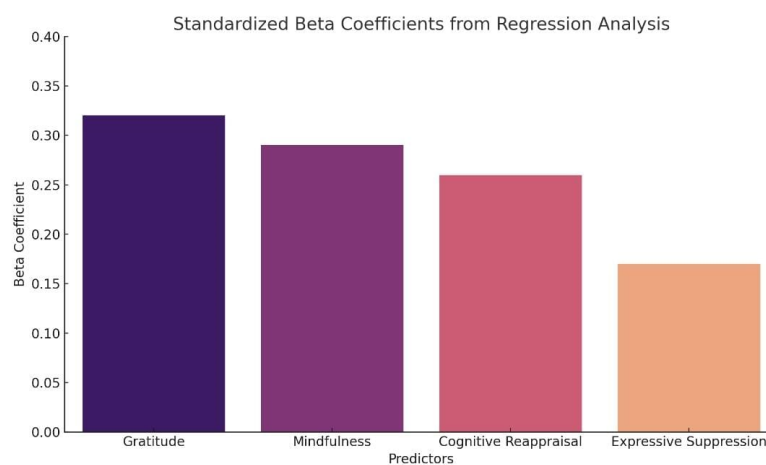
These results suggest that gratitude, mindfulness, cognitive reappraisal, and emotional regulation are significant positive predictors of happiness, while suppression shows a weaker yet still significant contribution.

Table no.03

Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Predicting Happiness

Variable	R ²	ΔR^2	ΔF	β	Df
Age, class, gender, residence, education, family member, family type, stream, health	.056	.056	.720		9,110
Gratitude	.170	.114	14.954***	.349***	10,109
MAAS	.143	.087	11.111***	.312***	10,109
Cognitive re	.164	.108	14.075***	.337***	10,109
Suppression	.114	.059	7.234**	.250**	10,109
Emotional regulation	.158	.102	13.270***	.329***	10,109

p<0.01, *p<0.001



V. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study elucidate the pivotal psychological mechanisms by which gratitude, mindfulness, and emotional regulation contribute to happiness among young adults. Each construct offers a unique pathway to subjective well-being, and their predictive power reveals the complex interplay between cognitive, emotional, and attitudinal factors that shape human happiness.

Gratitude, as revealed in the analysis, significantly and positively predicted happiness, echoing an extensive body of literature that situates gratitude as a cornerstone of psychological well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Wood et al., 2010). Gratitude not only promotes the recognition of goodness in one's life but also reinforces social bonds, enhances positive reinterpretation of life events, and counteracts toxic emotional states like envy and resentment (McCullough et al., 2002). According to the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), grateful individuals tend to broaden their cognitive and behavioural tendencies, thereby building enduring psychological and interpersonal resources. This perspective is particularly

relevant for emerging adults navigating developmental transitions—academic pressures, career uncertainties, and shifting relationships—where gratitude acts as a buffer against stress and a promoter of hope and satisfaction (Watkins et al., 2003).

Furthermore, gratitude enhances perceived social support and nurtures reciprocal prosocial behaviour, creating a cycle of positivity that fosters sustained happiness (Algoe, 2012). Individuals high in gratitude are more likely to experience fewer depressive symptoms, higher resilience, and a greater sense of meaning in life (Wood et al., 2008), all of which cumulatively enhance happiness. The positive predictive value found in this study reinforces gratitude's role as not merely an emotion but a dispositional trait and coping resource, especially vital for college students coping with life changes.

Mindfulness also demonstrated a strong positive association with happiness. Mindfulness facilitates the non-judgmental awareness of the present moment, thereby minimizing ruminative and avoidant thought patterns that often underlie psychological distress (Brown & Ryan, 2003). When individuals cultivate mindfulness, they become more attuned to their internal states and external experiences without automatically reacting, which enhances emotional regulation and cognitive flexibility (Shapiro et al., 2008). Such capacities are crucial in developing adaptive responses to life's challenges—key to maintaining happiness.

Mindfulness has been consistently associated with decreased emotional reactivity, reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression, and increased life satisfaction (Keng et al., 2011; Baer et al., 2006). Its role in fostering positive emotional granularity—being able to precisely identify and understand one's emotions—allows for more effective emotion regulation, which in turn supports stable and elevated mood states (Feldman Barrett et al., 2001). Given the cognitive overload and emotional turbulence often experienced during university years, mindfulness helps young adults remain grounded, reduce anticipatory anxiety, and engage more fully with meaningful experiences, thereby nurturing authentic happiness.

Cognitive reappraisal, a form of antecedent-focused emotion regulation, significantly predicted happiness, affirming prior findings that this strategy enables individuals to modulate their emotional responses by altering the interpretation of affect-laden situations (Gross & John, 2003). The adaptive nature of reappraisal lies in its potential to reduce the intensity and duration of negative emotional experiences and foster positive reinterpretations. For instance, reappraising a failed exam as an opportunity to improve rather than as a sign of personal inadequacy may mitigate distress and preserve motivation and self-esteem—both of which correlate positively with happiness.

This capacity to cognitively transform the meaning of events is a marker of psychological flexibility and resilience. Research has shown that individuals who habitually use reappraisal experience fewer depressive symptoms, better social functioning, and enhanced interpersonal relationships (John & Gross, 2004; Troy et al., 2010). Importantly, reappraisal promotes a proactive stance toward emotional experiences rather than an avoidant or suppressive one, which enables sustained engagement with goals and values—key ingredients of long-term happiness.

Interestingly, expressive suppression, often regarded as maladaptive in Western contexts, was found to have a modest yet significant positive prediction of happiness in this study. This outcome suggests that the effects of suppression may be contextually and culturally dependent. In collectivistic societies such as India, where emotional moderation and restraint are culturally valued to maintain social harmony and respect for hierarchy (Matsumoto et al., 2008), suppression may not necessarily impair psychological functioning. Rather, it may be perceived as a sign of maturity, emotional control, and interpersonal sensitivity, all of which contribute to social approval and personal satisfaction (Soto et al., 2011).

In this cultural framework, suppression might act as a protective mechanism that helps individuals avoid conflict and preserve relationships, particularly in tightly-knit family or academic settings. Therefore, rather than undermining well-being, suppression in such contexts may support a culturally congruent model of emotional expression that contributes to subjective happiness.

Taken together, these findings reveal the multifaceted nature of happiness and its determinants. The joint roles of gratitude, mindfulness, and emotion regulation strategies reflect an integrative model of well-being in which cognitive reframing, emotional awareness, and prosocial attitudes converge to produce enduring positive affect and life satisfaction. These findings also align with Ryff's (1989) multidimensional model of psychological well-being, which emphasizes self-acceptance, personal growth, purpose in life, and positive relations with others—all influenced by the psychological variables studied here.

From an applied perspective, the results underscore the value of interventions that cultivate gratitude (e.g., gratitude journaling), promote mindfulness (e.g., MBSR programs), and enhance adaptive emotional regulation (e.g., CBT techniques).

Such interventions could significantly benefit student populations, improving not only emotional well-being but also academic engagement and social adjustment.

V.I. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The results of the regression analysis revealed that gratitude, mindfulness, and emotional regulation significantly predicted happiness. Among the three variables, mindfulness emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by gratitude and emotional regulation. These findings are consistent with previous research, which underscores the importance of these psychological factors in promoting subjective well-being (Fredrickson, 2004; Feldman et al., 2007; Gross & John, 2003).

V.II. THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The current study contributes to the growing literature on positive psychology by empirically validating that gratitude, mindfulness, and emotional regulation significantly enhance happiness. This suggests that these constructs can serve as psychological resources in interventions aimed at fostering well-being. The study expands on Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory by confirming that gratitude and mindfulness are key elements in broadening cognitive resources and building emotional resilience.

Furthermore, the findings add nuance to Gross's emotional regulation framework by highlighting its connection not only to stress reduction but also to the broader domain of happiness and positive functioning. This integrative model affirms that emotion regulation is not merely about managing negative affect but also about enhancing positive states.

From an applied perspective, the results emphasize the potential of psychological interventions that cultivate gratitude, mindfulness, and emotional regulation skills. Such interventions could be integrated into school curricula, workplace wellness programs, and mental health services to promote emotional resilience and happiness. Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) programs and gratitude journaling practices can be especially effective for individuals experiencing low well-being.

V.III. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite the contributions of this study, several limitations should be noted. First, the use of a cross-sectional design prevents causal inferences. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine how these psychological traits influence happiness over time. Second, self-report measures may have introduced social desirability bias. Incorporating behavioural measures or peer reports in future research would enhance validity.

Additionally, the sample was limited in terms of age and cultural diversity. Future studies could examine whether these relationships hold across different demographic groups or are moderated by factors such as socioeconomic status, gender, or cultural background. It would also be valuable to explore other mediators or moderators (e.g., resilience, optimism) in the relationship between these predictors and happiness.

STATEMENTS AND DECLARATIONS

The authors declare that there are no financial or non-financial competing interests related to the work submitted for publication. This research was conducted independently and without any conflict of interest between both authors that could have influenced the outcomes or interpretation of the findings.

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