



The University of Tehran Press

Presenting a Structural Model for Predicting Psychological Well-Being Based on Mindfulness with the Mediation of the Meaning in Life and Cognitive Regulation of Emotion in Female Entrance Examination Students

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Extended Abstract

Aim

Psychological well-being is a key indicator of mental health, significantly shaped by factors such as cognitive emotion regulation and mindfulness. Psychological well-being stems from the ability to use specific types of cognitive regulation of emotions and effectively assess stressful conditions (McRae et al., 2020). Research shows that increased mindfulness is often associated with enhanced psychological well-being (Stolarski et al., 2020). Individuals who perceive their lives as meaningful report higher levels of well-being and health, along with lower levels of psychological distress (Steger, 2012). This study aims to explore the factors affecting the psychological well-being of female university entrance examination students, with a focus on mindfulness, cognitive regulation of emotion, and the meaning of life.

Methodology

This study employed a correlational research design, utilizing structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze complex relationships among variables. The statistical population consisted of second secondary school entrance examination students in Tehran during the academic year 2022-2023, selected through available sampling. A total of 271 female participants were included in the study. Data were collected using validated instruments, including the short-form Psychological Well-being Scale (PWS) (Ryff & Singer, 2006), the Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ) (Garnefsky & Kraaij, 2006), the Five-Faceted Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) (Baer et al., 2008), and the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) (Steger et al., 2006). Statistical analyses included Pearson correlation tests and structural equation modeling using SPSS 24 and AMOS 24.

Findings

The study revealed significant positive correlations among the key variables. Notably, a strong relationship was found between the meaning of life and psychological well-being, suggesting that individuals who perceive their lives as meaningful tend to experience higher psychological well-being. Mindfulness also showed positive correlations with psychological well-being and cognitive regulation of emotion, underscoring its role in fostering resilience and adaptive emotion regulation. Additionally, cognitive regulation of emotion was positively associated with psychological well-being, indicating that effective emotion management enhances overall well-being.

Mindfulness was also positively correlated with the meaning of life, suggesting its potential in promoting existential exploration and the pursuit of meaningful goals. Cognitive regulation of emotion positively correlated with the meaning of life, indicating that individuals who employ adaptive emotion regulation strategies are more likely to find purpose and significance in life ($P < 0.01$).

Also, based on the research results, the mediating role of meaning in life and cognitive regulation of emotion in the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being was positive and significant ($P < 0.01$).

Conclusion

The findings suggest that mindfulness plays a critical role in the psychological well-being of students preparing for entrance examinations. By enhancing emotion regulation and stress management, mindfulness can help students cope with the high levels of anxiety and pressure associated with Entrance Examination. The positive relationship between mindfulness and the meaning of life indicates that mindfulness practices may help students develop a stronger sense of purpose and direction, which is crucial during this transitional period.

The link between cognitive emotion regulation and psychological well-being highlights the importance of teaching effective emotion regulation strategies. Students who manage their emotions effectively are more likely to experience better mental health. The correlation between cognitive emotion regulation and the meaning of life suggests that adaptive emotion regulation may help students find meaning and purpose, contributing to greater psychological well-being.

These findings demonstrate the interconnectedness of mindfulness, cognitive emotion regulation, and the meaning of life in promoting well-being. A holistic approach to mental health, incorporating mindfulness training and emotion regulation strategies, may benefit students facing the challenges of entrance exams. This study deepens the understanding of the mechanisms underlying psychological well-being among entrance exam students. By exploring the relationships between mindfulness, cognitive emotion regulation, and the meaning of life, the research highlights the value of holistic mental health interventions. The results suggest that mindfulness training and emotion regulation strategies could enhance psychological well-being and foster a sense of meaning and purpose among students navigating academic challenges.

Future research could explore the long-term effects of mindfulness and emotion regulation interventions on student well-being. Additionally, further investigation of mediating and moderating variables could provide insights into the relationships between mindfulness, cognitive emotion regulation, and psychological well-being. Understanding these mechanisms could inform more targeted interventions for promoting mental health in student populations.

In summary, this study emphasizes the importance of mindfulness and cognitive emotion regulation in enhancing students' psychological well-being. By fostering a sense of meaning and purpose, these factors can help students better manage the stress of Entrance exams. Educational institutions are encouraged to incorporate mindfulness training and emotion regulation strategies into their mental health programs to support students' overall well-being and academic success.

Keywords: Cognitive Emotion Regulation, Entrance Exam Students, Meaning in Life, Mindfulness, Psychological Well-being.

Ethical Considerations

In line with research ethics, participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, with no need to provide personal information. The research objectives were explained, and participants took part anonymously. The study was approved by the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of Tehran University. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and guidance on completing the questionnaires was provided.

Acknowledgments and Financial Support

We are deeply grateful to all the students and teaching staff who supported this research. This study was conducted without financial support.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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Cite this article: Ahmadi, S., Javaheri Mohammadi, A., Keshavarz Afshar, H., & Reiskarami, S. M. M. (2024). Presenting a Structural Model for Predicting Psychological Well-Being Based on Mindfulness with the Mediation of The Meaning in Life and Cognitive Emotion Regulation in Female Entrance Examination Students. *Journal of Applied Psychological Research, 15*(3), 181-193. doi: 10.22059/japr.2024.372806.644866.



Publisher: University of Tehran Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22059/japr.2024.372806.644866>

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