



A Study on Perceived Stress, Sleep Quality, Life Satisfaction, and Happiness Among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the relationship between perceived stress, sleep quality, life satisfaction, and happiness among young adults. Happiness is considered an important aspect of psychological well-being and is influenced by various emotional and behavioral factors. Young adults, especially university students, often face academic pressure, emotional stress, irregular sleep patterns, and social challenges, which may negatively affect their mental health and overall happiness.

The study used a quantitative correlational research design. A sample of 50 university students aged between 18–25 years was selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using Google Forms and standardized psychological tools, namely the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS), Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ). Mean, standard deviation, and Pearson correlation were used for statistical analysis.

The findings revealed that perceived stress had a negative relationship with happiness, sleep quality, and life satisfaction. Sleep quality showed a positive relationship with happiness, while life satisfaction demonstrated the strongest positive relationship with happiness. The results suggest that higher stress levels reduce emotional well-being, whereas better sleep quality and greater life satisfaction contribute positively to happiness among young adults.



The study highlights the importance of stress management, healthy sleep habits, and improving life satisfaction to enhance psychological well-being and happiness among young adults. The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between perceived stress, sleep quality, life satisfaction, and happiness among young adults.

Keywords: Perceived Stress, Sleep Quality, Life Satisfaction, Happiness, Young Adults, Psychological Well-being

CHAPTER – I : INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Happiness in young adulthood has become a significant area of research in psychology due to its impact on mental health, academic performance, and long-term life outcomes. Young adults, particularly university students, often face high level of stress, irregular sleep patterns, and varying degrees of life satisfaction, all of which may influence their overall happiness.

Perceived stress has been shown to negatively affect well-being, with higher stress levels associated with reduced positive emotions and lower happiness. Young adults are particularly vulnerable, as academic, financial, and social pressures can increase stress, which in turn reduces happiness.

Sleep quality is another essential factor influencing happiness. Studies show that poor sleep is strongly related to higher perceived stress and lower well-being. Students reporting poor sleep often report lower happiness and greater psychological distress.

Life satisfaction, a key component of subjective well-being, has been identified as an important factor related to happiness. Individuals with higher life satisfaction tend to report more happiness, optimism, and emotional stability.

While prior studies have examined these variables separately, there is limited research that examines perceived stress, sleep quality, and life satisfaction together in relation to happiness among young adults. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between perceived stress, sleep quality, life satisfaction, and happiness among young adults.

Need and Significance of the Study

Understanding the factors that influence happiness in young adults is essential, as this stage involves major academic, social, and emotional transitions that can significantly impact mental health and overall well-being. High level of perceived stress, poor sleep quality, and declining life satisfaction are increasingly common among young adults, particularly students, contributing to issues such as anxiety, depression, low productivity, and reduced quality of life.

Examining how these variables are related to happiness can help identify important psychological factors that promote positive mental health. The findings of this study may help educational institutions, counselors, psychologists, and policymakers in designing stress-management programs and sleep-hygiene strategies to improve well-being. Understanding these factors can help in improving emotional well-being, academic performance, and overall life satisfaction among young adults.



Literature review

Happiness in young adults is shaped by multiple psychological and behavioral factors, particularly perceived stress, sleep quality, and life satisfaction. Existing research highlights the close interplay between these variables, though most studies have examined them in isolation.

The relationship between sleep and stress has been a recurring focus. Findings from the Community Health Survey in Korea demonstrated that individuals who slept fewer hours—especially six hours—reported significantly higher levels of perceived stress. Younger participants were especially vulnerable, indicating that sleep duration plays a vital role in the psychological well-being of young adults (Kang & Chen, 2009).

Similarly, Nikolaev et al. (2024) found that sleep satisfaction correlated positively with happiness and overall health but negatively with perceived stress. These effects remained consistent across cultural and gender groups, underscoring the universal importance of sleep satisfaction in maintaining happiness among youth.

Lund et al. (2010) reported that approximately 79% of young adults experienced poor sleep quality, with stress, anxiety, and dysfunctional sleep beliefs emerging as major predictors. Their findings point to a bidirectional cycle in which stress worsens sleep, which then decreases well-being and happiness.

Life satisfaction has also been identified as a central predictor of happiness. Diener et al. (1999) found strong associations between optimism, life satisfaction, and reported happiness in young adults, suggesting that cognitive evaluations of life experiences play an important role in emotional well-being.

Wang and Boros (2019) conducted a cross-sectional study with 292 adults and found that perceived stress significantly predicted poor sleep quality, while life satisfaction did not show a direct effect after controlling for stress. A sedentary lifestyle also predicted higher stress, indicating the broader behavioral context of well-being.

Qayyum, Maryam, and Zahra (2021) reported that both perceived stress and poor sleep quality significantly predicted reduced mental well-being among Pakistani young adults, with stress emerging as the strongest predictor.

In occupational contexts, Kaliterna, Prizmic, and Zganec (2004) found that shift workers displayed lower happiness and life satisfaction due to irregular sleep and elevated stress, emphasizing the importance of sleep regularity.

Wright (2018) showed that strong emotional attachment to pets was associated with lower stress and higher life satisfaction, highlighting the buffering role of social and emotional support systems in enhancing well-being.

Expanding on the stress–sleep dynamic, Yoo et al. (2007) demonstrated that sleep deprivation impaired emotional regulation and heightened stress sensitivity among young adults, suggesting that emotional instability may partly explain reductions in happiness.

Similarly, Pilcher and Ott (1998) found that sleep-deprived individuals reported lower life satisfaction and higher negative affect, highlighting that fatigue can diminish both mood and overall sense of well-being.



Suh, Kim, and Cho (2019) reported that subjective sleep quality predicted emotional well-being more strongly than sleep duration, suggesting that how individuals perceive their sleep may influence happiness more than objective hours slept.

A longitudinal study by Steptoe et al. (2008) showed that chronic stress predicted long-term reductions in happiness and life satisfaction among young adults, highlighting stress as a powerful long-term determinant of psychological well-being.

Zhou and Lin (2016) found that perceived stress mediated the relationship between social support and happiness in university students, suggesting that strong social ties reduce stress, which in turn enhances happiness.

Satici and Uysal (2017) demonstrated that life satisfaction significantly predicted happiness among emerging adults and acted as a buffer against the negative effects of stress and sleep disturbances.

Extending this, Li et al. (2020) found that poor sleep quality increased negative emotions, which reduced happiness, while higher life satisfaction moderated the emotional impact of poor sleep.

A study on college students by Park et al. (2014) revealed that stress was significantly associated with lower sleep quality and diminished subjective happiness, reinforcing the importance of stress management interventions.

In a study examining well-being determinants, Schiffrin and Nelson (2010) found that excessive stress paired with low life satisfaction predicted lower happiness and higher emotional exhaustion among university students.

Similarly, Gilbert et al. (2015) reported that perceived stress predicted depressive symptoms and reduced happiness, while sleep quality acted as a partial mediator, showing how sleep disruptions amplify the emotional effects of stress.

Extending beyond psychological factors, Lemma et al. (2012) found that students who experienced poor sleep quality were twice as likely to report low life satisfaction and happiness, suggesting broader health implications.

Finally, Bastian et al. (2014) examined emotional functioning and concluded that individuals with high perceived stress were less capable of sustaining positive emotions, resulting in lower overall happiness.

Statement of the Problem

To examine the relationship between perceived stress, sleep quality, life satisfaction, and happiness among young adults.

Objective of the study

- To examine the relationship between perceived stress and happiness among young adults.
- To examine the relationship between sleep quality and happiness among young adults.
- To examine the relationship between life satisfaction and happiness among young adults.
- To examine the relationship between perceived stress and sleep quality.
- To examine the relationship between life satisfaction and sleep quality.



Variables of the study

In psychology, variables are characteristics or conditions that can change or vary and are used to examine whether one factor is related to another factor. In this study, variables are used to understand how certain factors are related to happiness among young adults.

Independent Variables

- Perceived Stress
- Sleep Quality
- Life Satisfaction

Dependent Variable

- Happiness

Formulation of the Hypothesis

H1: Perceived stress will be negatively related to happiness.

H2: Sleep quality will be positively related to happiness.

H3: Life satisfaction will be positively related to happiness.

H4: Perceived stress will be negatively related to sleep quality.

H5: Life satisfaction will be positively related to sleep quality.

CHAPTER – II : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

The present study used a quantitative correlational research design to examine the relationship between perceived stress, sleep quality, life satisfaction, and happiness among young adults.

Population and sample

The population of the study consisted of young adults. The sample consisted of 50 university students between the age range of 18–25 years.

Sampling structure/participants

Participants were university students selected for the study. Both male and female students participated in the study.



Inclusion criteria

- Participants aged between 18–25 years
- University students
- Participants who agreed to participate

Exclusion criteria

- Participants below 18 or above 25 years
- Incomplete responses.

Sampling technique

The sampling technique used was convenience sampling.

Data collection

Data was collected using Google Forms. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and their consent was taken. They were assured that their responses would remain confidential.

Description of the tools

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) – Measures perceived stress level.

Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) – Measures life satisfaction (5 items).

Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) – Measures sleep quality.

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) – Measures happiness level.

Techniques of Statistical analysis

Mean

Standard Deviation

Pearson Correlation



CHAPTER – III : RESULTS

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation (N = 50)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Perceived Stress	19.80	5.00
Sleep Quality	6.10	1.56
Life Satisfaction	24.34	3.80
Happiness	38.64	5.91

Statistical interpretation

The mean perceived stress score was 19.80, indicating a moderate level of stress among participants. Sleep quality mean score was 6.10, indicating moderately good sleep quality. Life satisfaction mean score was 24.34, indicating moderate to high life satisfaction. Happiness mean score was 38.64, indicating relatively high happiness among participants.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Stress	Sleep	Life Satisfaction	Happiness
Stress	1	-0.45	-0.52	-0.60
Sleep	-0.45	1	0.28	0.54
Life Satisfaction	-0.52	0.28	1	0.68
Happiness	-0.60	0.54	0.68	1

Interpretation of Correlation

Perceived stress showed a negative relationship with happiness, life satisfaction, and sleep quality. Life satisfaction showed a strong positive relationship with happiness. Sleep quality showed a moderate positive relationship with happiness. Life satisfaction and sleep quality showed a weak positive relationship.

CHAPTER – IV : DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

The findings of the study show that perceived stress, sleep quality, and life satisfaction are related to happiness among young adults. Life satisfaction showed the strongest positive relationship with happiness, which means that students who are more satisfied with their life are more likely to be happy.

Sleep quality also showed a positive relationship with happiness, which means that students who sleep better tend to have better emotional well-being and happiness.



Perceived stress showed a negative relationship with happiness, which means that higher stress reduces happiness. Stress also showed a negative relationship with sleep quality and life satisfaction, indicating that stress affects both sleep and overall life evaluation.

These findings are supported by previous studies which show that stress reduces well-being, while good sleep and higher life satisfaction improve happiness and mental health.

CONCLUSION

The present study concludes that perceived stress, sleep quality, and life satisfaction are significantly related to happiness among young adults. Among these variables, life satisfaction emerged as the strongest predictor of happiness, indicating that individuals who evaluate their lives positively tend to experience higher levels of happiness and emotional well-being. Sleep quality also showed a meaningful positive relationship with happiness, suggesting that adequate and restful sleep plays an important role in maintaining psychological health. In contrast, perceived stress demonstrated a negative relationship with happiness, highlighting that increased stress levels can reduce overall well-being and life satisfaction.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that perceived stress not only directly affects happiness but also indirectly influences it through its negative impact on sleep quality and life satisfaction. This suggests that stress acts as a critical factor in determining the overall mental health of young adults. The interrelationship among these variables reflects the complex nature of psychological well-being, where multiple factors interact to influence an individual's level of happiness.

The study emphasizes the importance of promoting healthy lifestyle habits among young adults. Improving sleep quality through proper sleep hygiene, managing stress through relaxation techniques and coping strategies, and enhancing life satisfaction through positive thinking and goal setting can significantly contribute to better mental health outcomes.

In addition, the findings of this study have practical implications for educational institutions, mental health professionals, and policymakers. Interventions such as stress management programs, counseling services, and awareness about the importance of sleep can be beneficial in improving the overall well-being of students.

However, the study is limited by its small sample size and the use of convenience sampling, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. Future research can include larger and more diverse samples and explore additional variables such as social support, physical activity, and emotional regulation to gain a more comprehensive understanding of happiness among young adults.

Overall, the study highlights that reducing perceived stress, improving sleep quality, and increasing life satisfaction are essential for enhancing happiness and psychological well-being among young adults.



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