



EMOTIONAL SUPPRESSION AND QUALITY OF LIFE AMONG WORKING AND NON-WORKING WOMEN

¹Shobika S, ²Eshwar R

III B. Sc Psychology, Assistant Professor

Department of Psychology, Rathinam College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore, India

Abstract

Emotional suppression is the intentional stopping of emotional expression, which is often shaped by social and cultural norms. Women are more likely to hide their feelings, especially in cultures that value peace and self-sacrifice. This review study looks at research published between 2015 and 2024 to see how emotional suppression affects the quality of life of both working and non-working women. We looked at studies we found on Google Scholar and ResearchGate that met our criteria for including and excluding studies about emotion regulation and women's health. The results consistently show that emotional suppression is linked to a lower quality of life. This suggests that regularly holding back your emotions can make your mental and social health worse. The review also points out differences in emotional needs between working and non-working women. Implications stress the need for emotional regulation programs that help women express themselves in healthier ways and feel better about their lives. Emotional suppression, quality of life, working women, non-working women, emotional regulation, and well-being are some of the key words.

Index Terms - Emotional suppression, quality of life, working women, non-working women, emotional regulation, well-being

Introduction

Emotions have a big effect on how people act, how they get along with others, and their mental health. People who can control their emotions well can deal with stress, keep their social connections strong, and stay mentally healthy. One of the most studied ways to control emotions is emotional suppression, which is the deliberate attempt to hide or hold back emotional expression (Gross & John, 2003). Research shows that chronic emotional suppression is linked to negative psychological effects, such as emotional exhaustion, lower life satisfaction, and worse relationships (Gross, 2015; Taylor & Stanton, 2007). It may help people fit in with social norms or avoid conflict, but it is not a good long-term strategy.

Culture and gender are very important for controlling emotions. Women are often taught to put the needs of others first and keep the peace, which may make them more likely to hide their negative feelings (Matud, 2017). In India, women who work and women who don't work both face emotional problems because of the different social roles and expectations they have. Working women must balance their professional and personal lives, while women who don't work often have to deal with the emotional stress of being a caregiver and being stuck at home.

To make gender-sensitive mental health programs work, we need to know how emotional suppression affects quality of life (QoL), which is a broad term that includes physical, mental, social, and environmental well-being (WHO, 1997). The study's goal is to look at and analyse all the studies that have looked at the link between emotional suppression and quality of life for both working and non-working women.

Review of Literature

Pamar (2018) examined the psychological well-being of working and non-working women in Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The sample consist of 120 women aged 25-55 years. Psychological well-being measure using Sudha Bhogles psychological well-being scale (1994), Gujarati version by Suvera (2001), and the data were analyses using t-test. The results show that working women had significantly higher psychological well-being than non-working women, while age did not significantly influence well-being within either group. Overall, the study highlighted employment status as a key factor contributing to women psychological well-being.

Extremera and Rey(2014) conducted a cross-sectional study on 1125 unemployed adults using the cognitive emotional regulation questionnaire(ERQ) and SF-12 health survey, the results showed that maladaptive strategies, such as self-blame, rumination, catastrophizing, were negatively associated with health-related quality of life, whereas adaptive strategies, like positive appraisal and planning, were positively related. The study concludes that cognitive emotion regulation strategies play an important role in the well-being of unemployed individuals

Growney and English (2024) examined the correlation between daily and laboratory emotion regulation in young adults, cognitively intact older adults, and older adults with mild cognitive impairment through experience sampling and laboratory tasks. The results showed that daily strategy use only predicted more success in the lab for older adults who were cognitively normal. Older adults who had mild cognitive impairment used the strategies more but did not do better in the lab. The study found that cognitive status affects how well emotion regulation skills work in different situations

Peng et al. (2017) investigated age-related variations in emotional suppression through two longitudinal samples of Chinese workers (N = 340; N = 280). First, we looked at how well people could control their emotions. A month later, we looked at how much physical strain and emotional well-being they had. The results showed that older workers who suppressed their emotions had less physical strain and, in one sample, better emotional well-being, which suggests that this behavior may become more adaptive as people get older. .

Methodology

Aim

To examine the relationship between emotional suppression and quality of life among working and non-working women.

Objectives

1. To examine the degrees and trends of emotional suppression in employed and unemployed women.
2. To examine how studies look at how emotional suppression affects quality of life.
3. To identify the similarities and differences between employed and unemployed women regarding emotional regulation and overall well-being.
4. To point out gaps in the existing literature's ideas and methods.

Inclusion Criteria

- Research published in peer-reviewed journals (2015–2024).
- Research involving women aged 20 to 40.
- Studies examining emotional suppression and quality of life or related constructs (e.g., life satisfaction, well-being).
- Ability to read and understand the language of the questionnaire

Exclusion Criteria

- Studies involving clinical populations with severe mental illness.
- Non-empirical commentaries or case reports.
- Studies focusing on adolescents or men.

Procedure

The process of the present study was conducted by means of a secondary qualitative conceptual review approach that took a look at the theoretical as well as empirical literature around the need for cognition's influence on the emotional and attitudinal reactions to persuasive messages. The desired literature was located by an extensive search through different academic databases such as PsycINFO, PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate using keywords, for example, Emotional suppression, quality of life, working women, non-working women, emotional regulation, well-being. The titles and abstracts of the studies were first filtered for their relevance and then full-text let evaluation was done to check the correspondence with the key psychological constructs that were of interest. This review looks at and combines the existing research on emotional suppression and quality of life among working and non-working women in a structured and systematic way. We found studies that were published between 2015 and 2025 that were relevant by searching Google Scholar and ResearchGate. Important search terms were emotional suppression, emotion regulation, quality of life, working women, non-working women, emotional well-being, and women's mental health. The selected studies underwent screening based on established inclusion and exclusion criteria, focusing on research that investigated emotional regulation patterns and quality-of-life outcomes in adult women. A review and comparison of selected studies were conducted to observe well-recurring findings, differences between working and non-working populations, methodological approaches, and deficiencies in existing research. This systematic comparison clearly explains the overall relationship between emotional suppression and quality of life, identifying areas necessitating further empirical inquiry.

Findings and Discussion

Studies have consistently found that emotional suppression is connected to worsen mental health outcomes, such as anxiety, depression, and lower self-esteem (Gross, 2015; Matud, 2017). For example, frequently suppressing your feelings leads to increase in internal stress and stops you from letting them out, which can make you feel burned out and emotionally drained. On the other hand, adaptive regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal are positively associated with well-being (John & Gross, 2004).

Work brings unique emotional challenges. Women who work often hide their feelings at work, where being neutral is important (Rani & Kulkarni, 2022). They need to stay calm and professional even when things are hard. Women who don't work outside the home still have to do emotional labor and care for others at home (Srivastava & Tiwari, 2020). In both cases, suppression leads to low satisfaction and heightened psychological distress.

People in large group societies like India often see emotional restraint as a good thing (Nair & Subhashini, 2019). Women are urged to value positive harmony above emotional authenticity, thereby continue suppression. But this kind of long-term emotional inhibition can affect the closeness with other people and self-expression, which can make life seem worse.

Mindfulness training, programs for emotional literacy, and programs for workplace well-being are all examples of ways to help people deal with their feelings in a healthy way. These can help make the bad effects of holding back less bad. Teaching women how to recognize, express, and handle their emotions in a positive and helpful way could have a big effect on their mental health and general health.

Conclusion

The study shows that emotional suppression is strongly linked to a lower quality of life for both working and non-working women. Emotional suppression may help with social situations in the short term, but using it for a long time can hurt your mental health. Helping women find healthier ways to deal with expressing feelings is important for making life better for every individual.

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