DYSFUNCTIONAL EATING BEHAVIOR, EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENEGES AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this to my parents, whose endless love, support, and encouragement have been my greatest strength. Without their love, support and belief in me, this journey would not have been possible. Thank you for always being there. Through every challenge and success, they have always been there, giving me advice, comfort, and love. I am deeply grateful for their sacrifices and the many ways they have supported and encouraged me to follow my dreams. This achievement belongs to them as much as it does to me

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between dysfunctional eating behavior, emotional regulation, and mental health challenges among young adults using a correlation research design. A sample of 400 participants aged 18-25, from both genders, was analyzed. Various demographic factors were considered, such as religion, education, family system, marital status, income, and parental education. Most participants were Muslim, had completed a Bachelor's degree, came from nuclear families, attended private institutions, and were single. The study employed the Eating Aptitude Test to assess dysfunctional eating behavior, the Emotional Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) to measure emotional regulation strategies, and the DASS scale to evaluate depression, anxiety, and stress. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, t-tests, and ANOVAs were used for data analysis. Results indicated a significant negative correlation between dysfunctional eating behavior and emotional regulation through emotional suppression (ERES) and mental health challenges. Specifically, individuals using cognitive reappraisal (ERAP) as an emotional regulation strategy exhibited fewer dysfunctional eating behaviors. No significant gender differences were found for any of the variables. Additionally, an ANOVA revealed no significant differences across family income groups, showing that income level did not influence dysfunctional eating behavior, emotional regulation, or mental health challenges.

Keywords: Dysfunctional eating behavior, emotional regulation, mental health challenges, university students, young adults.

Table of Content

Approval for Examination I

Author's Declaration II

Plagiarism Undertaking III

Dedication.....iv

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....v

ABTRACT.....VI

List of Tables: X

List of Figures:……XI

List of Symbols:…….XII

List of Abbreviations… XIII

List of Appendices:.....XIV

CHAPTER 1

- Introduction.....1
- 1.1 Background.....1
- 1.1.1 Dysfunctional eating behavior.....2
- 1.1.2Emotional regulation.....5
- 1.1.3Mental health challenegs.....8
- 1.2 Research Gap.....10

1.3 Problem Statement.....11

1.4 Hypotheses.....12

1.5 objectives.....12

1.6 Significance of the Study.....13

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review.....14

2.1 Theoretical Framework.....23

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology.....27

3.1 Research Method.....27

3.2 Research Design.....27

3.3 Population and Sampling.....27

3.4 Data Collection.....28

3.5 Measures.....29

3.6 Procedure.....32

3.7 Data Analysis.....32

3.8 Ethical Consideration 33

Chapter 4

4.1 Descriptive & Demographic Analysis.....35

4.2. Psychometric properties for demographics 41

4.3. Psychometric properties for scale.....42

4.4 Test of normality 43

4.5 Corelation matrix.....44

4.6 Mean differences in male and female.....45

4.7 Mean differences in govt and private institutes.....46

4.8 Analysis of variance (ANNOVA) 48

CHAPTER 5

5.1 Discussions.....49

5.3 Implications of the Study.....56

5.4 Strength of Study… 57

5.5 Limitations of the study.....58

5.5 Further Discussion.....58

5.6 Conclusion.....59

References…..... 60

1 LIST OF TABLES:

Descriptive of the demographic… 36

Psychometric properties for demographics..... 41

Psychometric properties of scales. 42

Test of normality.....43

Correlation matrix for ED, ERAP ,ERES, and DASS variables..... 44

Mean differences in ED and Life ERAP, EREP and DASS in males and females 45

Mean differences in ED and Life ERAP, EREP and DASS in govt and private institute..... 46

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) for DASS, ED, ERES, and ERAP by Family Income.....47

2 LIST OF FIGURES:

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework… 23

3 LIST OF SYMBOLS:

α..... Cronbach'salpha

M… .....mean

SD..... Standard Deviation

≤….....Less than or Equal to

≥….....greater than or Equal to

SE… ..... Standardized Error

p…..... Significance Level

% .....Percentage

f..... Frequency

β..... Beta

n….....Sample size

N…..... Size of participant

4 LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SPSS..... statistical package for social sciences

ED .....Dysfunctional eating behavior

ER.....Emotional regulation

ERAP ..... Emotional regulation cognitive appraisal

ERES.....Emotional regulation Expressive suppression

DASS-21…….Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale-2

5 LIST OF APPENDICES:

APENDIX A .....Permission Letter

APENDIX B….....Informed Consent

APENDIX C.....Demographic form

APENDIX D .....Mail of Author(ERQ)

APENDIX E..... Evidence of Free use of ED

APENDIX F ..... Evidence of Public Domain Use(DASS-21)

APENDIX G .....Eating aptitude scale

APENDIX H .....Emotional regulation questioner

APENDIX I..... Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale(DASS-21)

APENDIXJ .....Turnitin Similarity Index Report