

MEDIA RELATED MALADAPTIVE DAYDREAMING, EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to study the relationship between media related maladaptive daydreaming, emotional regulation and psychological distress in university students. The present study aimed to explore the predicting role of media related maladaptive daydreaming on emotional regulation and psychological distress in university students. The correlational research design was used while convenient sampling technique was used. Data was collected from (N=156) university students. The 16-item Maladaptive Daydreaming Scale (MDS-16; Somer et al., 2017); Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross & John, 2003) and Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10; Kessler & Mroczek, 1992) were used to measure media related maladaptive daydreaming, emotional regulation and psychological distress, respectively. The result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis revealed that media related maladaptive daydreaming has a significant relationship with cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression (subscales of Emotion Regulation) and psychological distress. Cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression were found to be significantly positively related to psychological distress. Regression analysis revealed media related maladaptive daydreaming to be a positive predictor of cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological distress. Independent Sample t test revealed that cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological distress come out to be higher in women as compare to men. This study is very useful in enhancing emotional regulation skills among university students, and providing valuable insights for developing effective mental health support programs.

Keywords: Media related Maladaptive Daydreaming, Emotional Regulation, Psychological Distress, Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive Suppression

INTRODUCTION

The study conducted by Bigelsen and Schupak (2011) suggests that media usage serves as both a catalyst and a concurrent factor in the manifestation of maladaptive daydreaming. First and foremost, the authors Bigelsen and Schupak classify maladaptive daydreaming as a form of behavioral addiction, hence highlighting the presence of "triggers" that might potentially instigate an excessive indulgence in daydreaming. While some research suggests that daydreaming might help with creativity and idea production (Baird et al., 2012) other research indicates that excessive daydreaming can affect concentration and academic performance (Seli et al., 2018). Maladaptive daydreaming (MD) is a mental illness that has been recently postulated, and it is

defined by an excessive engagement in imagination that serves as a substitute for human connection. As a result, it significantly hampers an individual's everyday functioning and overall well-being (Bigelsen & Schupak, 2011; Somer, 2002). While MD has not yet received official recognition as a mental disease, recent research has placed greater emphasis on its therapeutic importance (Bigelsen et al., 2016; Schimmenti et al., 2019). Since effective emotional regulation can improve positive feelings, lessen negative emotions, and help people manage with stress, effective emotional regulation is essential for mental health and wellbeing. Psychological discomfort can have both immediate and long-term effects on people's lives, including

their physical health, social interactions, and academic or occupational performance (Neria et al., 2008). This research can provide universities and educators with insights into potential factors that contribute to students' psychological distress and compromised academic performance. Secondly, effective emotional regulation is a cornerstone of mental health and well-being, making it crucial to investigate how media-related maladaptive daydreaming may disrupt this critical aspect of students' lives. By uncovering the relationships between media-related maladaptive daydreaming, emotional regulation, and psychological distress, this research has the potential to inform targeted interventions and support mechanisms to enhance students' mental health, academic success, and overall quality of life. The study aims to investigate predicting role of the media-related maladaptive daydreaming on emotional regulation and psychological distress in university students.

The behavioral model of addiction explains the model. It talks about reward circuit. The reward circuit is a brain reaction that is thought to be triggered by specific behaviors, or acts, according to the behavioral model of addiction. When this occurs, the brain experiences joy and frequently continues to experience joy in response to comparable stimuli (McKinnon, 2022). Even when students try to focus on their schoolwork or other vital responsibilities, some students may find it difficult to restrain the urge to daydream excessively. Excessive daydreaming can have detrimental effects on academic performance, including poor grades, missed deadlines, and disregard of duties, all of which can add to mental stress. Psychological distress can be both a cause and a consequence of behavioral addiction. You can investigate how media-related maladaptive daydreaming can serve as a way for university students to temporarily alleviate emotional distress but might contribute to increased distress in the long run due to negative academic and personal consequences. This behavioral addiction can cause difficulty in emotional regulation and person can lead to using unhealthy coping strategies. According to the hypothesis of cognitive dissonance, people feel uneasy when their views, attitudes, or actions run counter to their values (Leon Festinger, 1950). In the

context of media-related maladaptive daydreaming, individuals may experience cognitive dissonance if they value productivity and academic success but engage in excessive daydreaming instead. This dissonance can contribute to psychological distress as individuals grapple with the inconsistency between their values and behavior.

Literature Review

Studying the correlation between elevated levels of maladaptive daydreaming and COVID-19 lockdown, preexisting psychiatric diagnoses, and exacerbated psychological dysfunctions, Somer et al. (2020) undertook a global study. Suspects of MD reported greater increases in a variety of psychological distress following the pandemic than did those with apparently normal daydreaming.

According to studies by Abbu rayya et al. (2019), women who have survived sexual abuse as children are more likely to engage in maladaptive daydreaming, which is linked to worsening psychosocial problems. Researchers found that CSA survivors had higher MD scores than controls. Those CSA survivors who suspected MD exhibited higher levels of psychological distress, social anxiety, and isolation than those who didn't, suggesting that MD may exacerbate the psychosocial problems already associated with CSA.

According to the study "Trapped in a Daydream: Daily Elevations in Maladaptive Daydreaming Are Associated with Daily Psychopathological Symptoms" (Dudek & Somer, 2018), daydreaming might lead to negative mental health effects. The results demonstrate that a rise in MD is strongly correlated with an increase in all other symptoms, a reduction in positive feeling, and a negative mood. MD was followed by a period of poor mood, distancing, and OCD symptoms. Only indications of obsessive-compulsive disorder acted as a consistent temporal antecedent to MD.

The effects of maladaptive daydreaming on academic performance were investigated by Alenizi et al. (2020), as was the link between this behavior and GAD. The data demonstrate a large prevalence of MDers and GAD patients among

our individuals, and it seems that MD is associated to both GAD and GPA.

The study conducted by Greene et al. (2020) explores the relationship between maladaptive daydreaming and issues in emotional regulation through the use of network analysis. The findings of this study indicate that individuals diagnosed with MD have significant difficulties in self-control, highlighting a primary characteristic of the disorder. Furthermore, there is evidence to imply a potential correlation between MD and atypical emotional regulation. In their study, West and Somer (2019) investigated the relationship between empathy, emotion regulation, and creativity in the context of immersive and maladaptive daydreaming. The results of the study indicate that the maladaptive components of MD are positively associated with affective empathy, negatively associated with effective emotional regulation, and negatively associated with creative output. The immersive components of daydreaming were found to have a significant correlation with increased empathy towards fictitious characters and a decrease in emotional control.

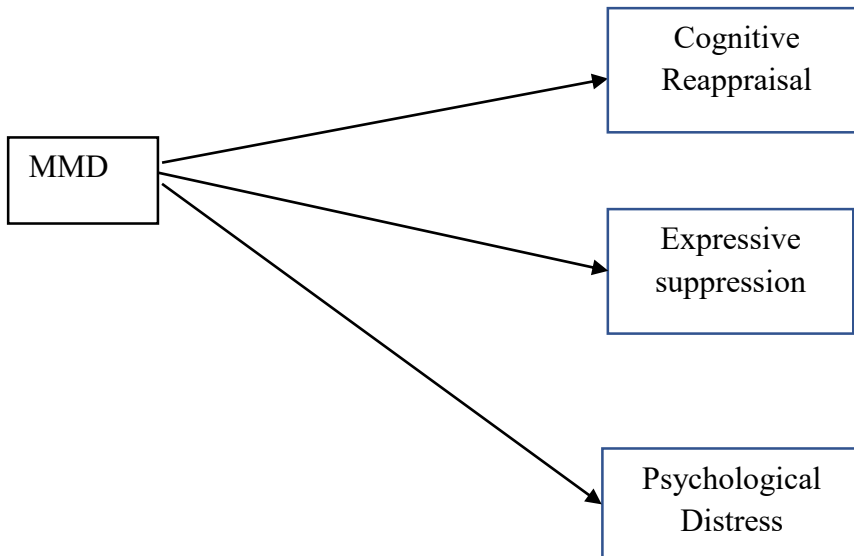
The study conducted by Brummer et al. (2013) aimed to examine the impact of age on emotion regulation strategies and psychological distress. The findings suggest that individuals in the older age group tend to employ suppression, which is an emotion control strategy, with more frequency compared to younger ones. There was no observed association between the escalating utilization of suppression among older individuals and the manifestation of heightened levels of psychological distress. In contrast, younger people who exhibited notable degrees of repression also reported elevated levels of psychological distress. Furthermore, it was observed that older individuals exhibited lower

levels of anxiety and stress compared to their younger counterparts, whereas no significant variations in levels of depression were seen across different age groups.

Chirico et al. (2022) conducted a study that examined the association between Maladaptive Daydreaming and Psychopathological Symptoms, Emotion Regulation, and Problematic Social Networking Sites Use using a Network Analysis Approach. The findings of the study indicated that, except for cognitive reappraisal, individuals with Maladaptive Daydreaming (MD) exhibited considerably higher performance compared to individuals without MD across all measured variables. The network analysis of individuals with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) revealed several noteworthy findings. The heightened prevalence of psychopathological symptoms seen in individuals with Maladaptive Daydreaming (MD) provides empirical evidence in favor of conceptualizing MD as a clinical disorder, wherein Obsessive-Compulsive (OC) symptoms may hold significant relevance.

- H1: There is likely to be significant relationship between media related maladaptive daydreaming, emotional suppression and psychological distress in university students
- H2: Media related maladaptive daydreaming is likely to predicts cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological distress in university student.
- H3: There is likely to be significant gender difference in media related maladaptive daydreaming, cognitive reappraisal and emotional suppression in university students.

Hypothesized Model



Method

Convenient sampling was used as a sampling strategy for this research. This research consists of sample(N=156) university students that are Media related Maladaptive daydreamers. After selecting the topic with supervisor, permission was seek from departmental head of institute. Permission was taken from the author of the questionnaire. The 16-item Maladaptive Daydreaming Scale (MDS-16) was adapted to create a specialized scale tailored to assess maladaptive daydreaming specifically related to media use. The original scale was modified by contextualizing its items to capture daydreaming behaviors and experiences in the context of media consumption. The adaptation process involved pilot testing to ensure its reliability and validity as a measure of media-related maladaptive daydreaming. Data was collected through field work. Participant were readily available. Form were given to different participant that were related to our sample i.e., university students. Instruction was given that only people who had age from 18 to 25 can only participate in this research and the purpose of the research was explained to them. Researcher assured the participants about the full confidentiality of all the information obtained from them. Participant were given consent form, they were informed that they had the right to leave the research at any

point, however, their participation were much appreciated. Approximately, 20 minutes were taken by participants to fill the questionnaire. After collecting the data, it was analyzed by SPSS.

The 16-item Maladaptive Daydreaming Scale (MDS-16; Somer et al.,2017)

The measurement of Maladaptive Daydreaming involved the utilization of the 16-item Maladaptive Daydreaming Scale (MDS-16) developed by Somer et al. (2017). The MDS-16 has 16 items and does not include any subscales. The objective of this study was to develop a measurement tool for assessing maladaptive daydreaming. Reverse score elements are not included in the dataset. The assessment of maladaptive daydreaming items is conducted through the utilization of a scoring scale that spans from 0 (indicating a complete absence) to 100 (indicating an exceptionally high presence).The maximum allowable length is 40.The reliability estimates, denoted by ρ , have been determined to be 0.95.

Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross & John ,2003)

The measurement of emotion regulation was conducted through the utilization of the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross

& John, 2003), which has ten questions and two subscales. The subscales encompass cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. The primary purpose of the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) is to evaluate and measure variations among individuals in their regular utilization of two distinct techniques for regulating emotions: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. The reappraisal items selected for this study are items 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10. Conversely, the suppression items chosen are items 2, 4, 6, and 9. Reverse scoring is not available in this context. The participants in the ERQ study provided self-descriptions using a 7-point scale, which encompassed the spectrum from "Strongly disagree" (1) to "Strongly agree" (7). The reliability coefficients for the reappraisal and suppression measures were found to be .79 and .73, respectively.

Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10, Kessler & Mroczek, 1992)

Psychological distress was assessed utilizing the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10; Kessler & Mroczek, 1992), which comprises 10 questions and lacks any subscales. The objective of this study was to develop a tool for assessing psychological discomfort. Reverse score elements are not included in the dataset. Participants are required to indicate their level of psychological distress by selecting a response on a scale that ranges from one, indicating "none of the time," to five, indicating "all of the time." The reliability estimates, denoted by ρ , have been determined to be 0.84.

Results

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Sample

<i>Variables</i>	<i>f%</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Age		20.71(1.89)
Gender		
Women	102(65.4)	
Men	54(34.6)	
Sector		
Public	80(51.3)	
Private	76(48.7)	
Residence		
Day scholars	114(73.1)	
Hostilities	42(26.9)	
Family System		
Nuclear	100(64.1)	
Joint	56(35.9)	
Weekdays screen time		
2 to 6 hours	63(40.4)	
7 to 11 hours	51(32.7)	
12 to 17 hours	32(12.8)	
17 or more	22(8.8)	
Weekend screen time		
2 to 6 hours	59(37.8)	
7 to 11 hours	48(30.8)	
12 to 17 hours	30(19.2)	
17 or more	19(12.2)	
Daydreaming is trigger by		
Listening to music	32(20.5)	
Watching television	32(20.5)	
Watching videos online	53(34.0)	
Reading	24(15.4)	
Surfing the Internet	15(9.6)	
Number of years daydreaming		
Less than one year	32(20.5)	
1-3 years	94(60.3)	
4-6 years	12(7.7)	
6-9 years	6(3.8)	
10 or more years	12(7.7)	

Table 2
Psychometric Properties of Scales

Scales	k	M	S.D.	Potential	Actual	α
Media Related Maladaptive Daydreaming	16	53.69	10.27	40-85	40-85	.70
Emotion Regulation						
Cognitive reappraisal	6	24.72	7.27	6-42	7-42	.79
Expressive Suppression	4	16.46	5.42	4-28	4-28	.72
Psychological distress	10	29.96	7.64	10-50	10-49	.82

Note, M=Mean; SD= standard deviation; Potential= potential values; Actual= Actual value; α =Cronbach's Alpha.

k=No of items

Table 4.1 reveals that the assessment scales used for the current study have good reliability with Cronbach alpha ranging from .72 to .89.

Pearson product movement correlation was used to find the relationship between the study variables. Result has been shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Correlation for Media related Maladaptive Daydreaming, Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive Suppression and Psychological distress in University Students

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.Age	-	0.01	-0.01	-.14*	-0.02	0.00	-.15*
2.Gender ^a		-	0.07	-0.13	-.21**	-.20**	-.21**
3.Weekend screentime for 2 to 6hours			-	-.15*	0.07	0.02	-.26**
4. Media related maladaptive daydreaming				-	.31**	.21**	.26**
5.Cognitive reappraisal					-	.68**	.21**
6. Expressive suppression						-	.17*
7.Psychological distress							-

Note: a 0 = women and 1= men

**p<.01, p*<.05.

Result in table 4.1 showed that media related maladaptive daydreamers is positive related with psychological distress. Media related Maladaptive daydreaming has significant positivity relationship with Cognitive reappraisal and Expressive Suppression subscale of emotional regulation .

Furthermore, In Media related Maladaptive daydreamers ,Cognitive reappraisal and Expressive Suppression is significantly positive related with psychological distress. Cognitive reappraisal has positive relationship with Expressive Suppression. Additionally,

relationship between demographic variables were checked. Gender has negative relationship with Cognitive reappraisal and Expressive Suppression in media related maladaptive daydreamers. Gender has negative relationship with psychological distress. People who tend to use media for only 2 to 6 hours on weekened tend to do less media related maladaptive daydreamers..

Hierarchal regressions was used in order to assess the predictive role media related maladaptive daydreaming, cognitive appraisal, emotional suppression.

Table 4

Hierarchical Regression Predicting Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive suppression and Psychological Distress in University students.

Variables	Cognitive reappraisal		Expressive Suppression		Psychological Distress	
	B	SE B	B	SE B	B	SE B
Step 1						
Constant	26.83	6.34	17.24	17.24	44.67	6.40
Age	-0.07	0.30	-0.01	0.23	-0.59	0.31
Gender ^a	-3.25**	1.21	-2.26	0.90*	-2.99*	1.22
Weekend screen time 2 to 6 hours	1.23	1.19	0.40	0.89	-3.90**	1.20
Step 2						
Contant	10.96	7.23	9.65	5.58	34.38	7.51
Age	0.10	0.29	0.08	0.23	-0.48	0.30
Gender ^a	-2.68*	1.16	-1.99	0.90*	-2.62*	1.21
Weekend screen time For 2 to 6 hours	1.90	1.14	0.72	0.88	-3.46**	1.19
Media related Maladaptive daydreaming	0.22***	0.06	0.11*	0.04	0.14*	0.06
R2	.14		.08		.159	
ΔR2	.09***		.04*		.035*	

Note: a women and 1= men

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4.3 shows that media related maladaptive daydreaming, come out to be the significant predictor of cognitive appraisal. Age, gender and weekend screentime were entered at Step 1, explaining 5% of the variance in Cognitive Reappraisal. After entry of the media related maladaptive daydreaming variable at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 14%, $F(4, 155) = 6.223$, $p < .001$. The media related maladaptive daydreaming variable measures explained an additional 9% of the variance in Cognitive Reappraisal, after controlling for age,gender and weeknedscreeentime, R squared change = .09, F change $(3, 151) = 16.063$, $p < .001$.

Media related maladaptive daydreaming, come out to be the significant predictor of Expressive Suppression. Age,gender and weekend screentime were entered at Step 1, explaining 4% of the variance in Expressive Suppression. After entry of the media related maladaptive daydreaming variable at Step 2 the

total variance explained by the model as a whole was 8%, $F(4, 155) = 3.181$, $p < .05$. The media related maladaptive daydreaming variable explained an additional 3% of the variance in Expressive Suppression., after controlling for Gender, R squared change = .038, F change $(3, 151) = 6.167$, $p < .05$.

Table 4.3 shows that media related maladaptive daydreaming, come out to be the significant predictor of psychological distress. Age,gender and weekend screentime were entered at Step 1, explaining 5% of the variance in psychological distress. After entry of the media related maladaptive daydreaming variable at Step 2 the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 12%, $F(4, 155) = 7.145$, $p < .001$. The media related maladaptive daydreaming variable measures explained an additional 16% of the variance in psychological distress, after controlling for age,gender and weekend screentime, R squared change = .035, F change $(3, 151) = 6.250$, $p < .05$.

Emerged Model

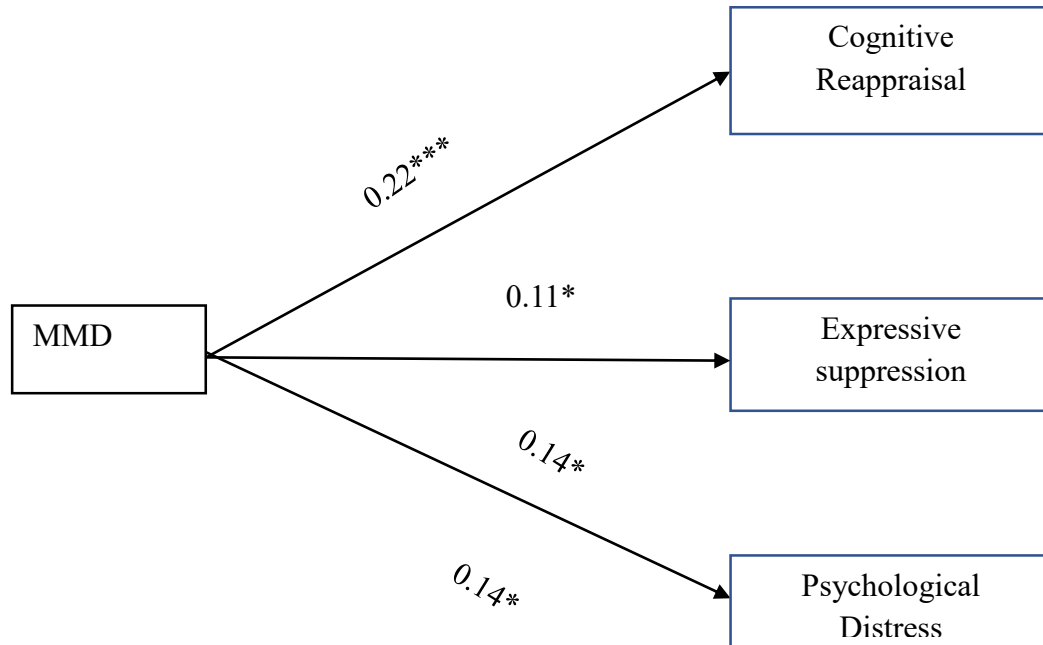


Figure 1: Emerged Regression Model Showing Media related Maladaptive Daydreaming as Predictors of Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive Suppression and Psychological Distress

Independent-Samples t-test was used in order to assess the gender difference in study variables.

Table 5

Independent-Samples t-test for Gender Difference in Media Related Maladaptive Daydreamers, Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive Suppression, Psychological Distress (N=156)

Variables	Women (n=102)		Men (n=54)		t(df)	p	95% CL		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Media Related Maladaptive Daydreamers	54.67	10.13	51.84	10.37	1.64(154)	.103	- .573	6.220	0.28
Cognitive reappraisal	25.82	6.92	22.65	7.54	2.63(154)	.009	.792	5.538	0.44
Expressive Suppression	17.24	5.16	15.00	5.63	2.49(154)	.014	.463	4.006	0.41
Psychological Distress	31.10	7.79	27.81	6.90	2.60(154)	.010	.799	5.787	0.45

Note: M=Mean, S.D=Standard Deviation, df=Degree Of Freedom, p=Significant Level, LL=Lower Limit, UP=Upper Limit, CI=Confidence Interval

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Result in table 5 showed that there is significant gender difference in cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological distress. Cognitive

reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological distress come out to be higher in women as compare to men.

Discussion

It was hypothesized that there is likely to be relationship between media related maladaptive daydreaming, emotional suppression and psychological distress in university students.

Previous study evidenced current study result as it was observed that maladaptive daydreamers are positive related with psychological distress. (Chirico et al., 2022)(Barbosa et al.,2019)(Abbu rayya et al., 2019) (Dudek and Somer.,2018) Maladaptive daydreaming can interfere with social interactions and relationships. Individuals may find it challenging to connect with others, engage in conversations, or participate in social activities due to their preoccupation with daydreams. This isolation can lead to feelings of loneliness and distress. Despite the immersive and imaginative nature of daydreams, maladaptive daydreaming can sometimes involve distressing or negative themes. These themes may evoke anxiety, fear, or sadness, contributing to psychological distress. Daydreams often involve idealized scenarios or fantasies that may be far removed from reality. Continuously indulging in these unrealistic expectations can lead to disappointment and dissatisfaction with one's actual life, resulting in psychological distress. People experiencing maladaptive daydreaming may feel a lack of control over their daydreaming episodes, which can be distressing. This loss of control might lead to feelings of helplessness and frustration. Maladaptive daydreaming can interfere with sleep patterns, as individuals may find it difficult to stop daydreaming even when they should be resting. Sleep disturbances can contribute to mood fluctuations, irritability, and overall psychological distress. Excessive daydreaming can blur the lines between one's internal fantasies and external reality, making it challenging to establish a clear sense of self-identity. Maladaptive daydreaming can create a cycle where the distress caused by real-life issues prompts more daydreaming, which in turn leads

to more distress due to neglected responsibilities and missed opportunities. This cycle can perpetuate psychological distress. (West and Somer 2019)

According to hypothesis, There is likely to be relationship between media related maladaptive daydreaming, emotional suppression and psychological distress in university students. Maladaptive daydreaming has significant positivity relationship with Expressive Suppression subscale. The findings of the current study align with those of a prior research, where a similar pattern was observed. This consistency in results reinforces the robustness of the research outcomes and adds further support to the current study's conclusions. (Greene et al., 2020) (West and Somer 2019) This result Maladaptive daydreaming could be seen as a way to avoid directly facing and processing difficult emotions. It may be possible to keep emotions under control and keep them from interfering with the deeply relaxing sensation of daydreaming they use cognitive reappraisal and emotional suppression. This potential connection might suggest that those who have an inclination for maladaptive daydreaming also employ these emotion control techniques to support their daydreaming activity. Maladaptive daydreaming and emotional suppression may be positively correlated, as both involve avoiding or escaping from emotions.

Maladaptive daydreaming has significant positivity relationship with Cognitive reappraisal subscale. The findings of the current study does not align with those of a prior research. It can be due to fact that to keep emotions under control and keep them from interfering with the deeply relaxing sensation of daydreaming they use cognitive reappraisal and emotional suppression.

There is likely to be relationship between emotional suppression and psychological distress in university students. Previous studies proved current study result. (Brummer et al.,2013) (Chirico et al., 2022). (Gross & John, 2003) The subscale measuring Expressive Suppression is positively associated with psychological distress because individuals who engage in suppression tend to experience and express fewer positive emotions while experiencing heightened negative emotions. Additionally, employing suppression is linked to poorer interpersonal functioning,

indicating a negative relationship between the use of suppression and interpersonal skills.

There is likely to be significant relationship between cognitive reappraisal and psychological distress in university students. Cognitive reappraisal subscale a significantly positive related with psychological distress. The findings suggest that individuals who tend to employ cognitive reappraisal more frequently may experience higher levels of psychological distress. This could imply that, in media related maladaptive daydreamers the strategy of cognitive reappraisal may not be as effective in reducing psychological distress as it is in some other contexts. Exploring potential mediating factors can help in explaining this relationship. For example, cultural, social, or individual factors could be influencing the effectiveness of cognitive reappraisal as an emotion regulation strategy in sample.

Media related maladaptive daydreaming came as predictors of psychological distress. It aligns with previous study.(Chirico et al., 2022)(Barbosa et al.,2019)(Abbu rayya et al., 2019) (Dudek and Somer.,2018) Maladaptive daydreaming can interfere with social interactions and relationships. Individuals may find it challenging to connect with others, engage in conversations, or participate in social activities due to their preoccupation with daydreams.

It was hypothesized that Media related maladaptive daydreaming is likely to positively predicts expressive suppression in university student. Media related maladaptive daydreaming positively predicts Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive Suppression.The findings of the current study align with those of a prior research , where a similar pattern was observed. This consistency in results reinforces the robustness of the research outcomes and adds further support to the current study's conclusions. (Greene et al., 2020) (West and Somer 2019) This result Maladaptive daydreaming could be seen as a way to avoid directly facing and processing difficult emotions. It may be possible to keep emotions under control and keep them from interfering with the deeply relaxing sensation of daydreaming they use cognitive reappraisal and emotional suppression. This potential connection might suggest that those who have an inclination

for maladaptive daydreaming also employ these emotion control techniques to support their daydreaming activity. Maladaptive daydreaming and emotional suppression may be positively correlated, as both involve avoiding or escaping from emotions.

It was hypothesized Media related maladaptive daydreaming is likely to predict cognitive appraisal in university student. Media related maladaptive daydreaming positively predicts Cognitive reappraisal. It can be due to fact that to keep emotions under control and keep them from interfering with the deeply relaxing sensation of daydreaming they use cognitive reappraisal and emotional suppression.

Hypothesis was accepted as there is significant gender difference in cognitive reappraisal emotional suppression and psychological distress in university students. Cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological distress come out to be higher in women as compare to men.It can be due to fact that women might employ cognitive reappraisal more due to socialization that encourages emotional understanding and expression. Social expectations often encourage women to maintain composure and suppress negative emotions, leading to higher use of this expressive suppression. Due to social norms and expectations, women might experience higher psychological distress. This distress could be linked to the societal pressure to manage emotions in specific ways.

Conclusion

Media related Maladaptive daydreaming has significant positivity relationship with Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive Suppression and Psychological distress. Cognitive reappraisal and Expressive Suppression subscale are significantly positive related with psychological distress. Media related maladaptive daydreaming positively predicts Cognitive reappraisal, Expressive Suppression and Psychological distress. Cognitive reappraisal, expressive suppression and psychological distress come out to be higher in women as compare to men

Limitation

- The study's generalizability was hampered due to the small sample size. The study exclusively included students from a single large city in Pakistan, namely Lahore. Hence, the findings of this study lack generalizability to the entire population of Pakistan.
- The research employed a non-probability sampling method known as purposive sampling, which involved a deliberate selection process without equal likelihood of selection.
- The assessment tools used were not indigenous, thus, the results may vary

Suggestions

- Additional research should be undertaken using a larger sample size in order to enhance the generalizability of the findings..
- In future investigations, it is recommended that researchers employ probability sampling techniques to provide equitable opportunities for all persons to be selected.
- Further study is required to enhance our comprehensive understanding of maladaptive daydreaming and its impact on individuals. This can be achieved by further refining and validating measures of maladaptive daydreaming.
- The study might spur further research into the impact of specific types of media consumption (e.g., social media vs. traditional media) on daydreaming and emotional regulation.
- Longitudinal studies could explore changes in these variables over time.

Implementation

The connections between media-related maladaptive daydreaming, emotional regulation, and distress offer valuable insights for potential interventions and guidelines, improving emotional regulation in individuals with maladaptive daydreaming habits. Findings could inform guidelines for healthy media consumption among university students. Educational programs or awareness campaigns might highlight the

potential impact of excessive media use on emotional well-being. Universities might consider integrating strategies into their curriculum to enhance emotional regulation skills among students, potentially reducing psychological distress associated with maladaptive daydreaming.

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