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Cognitive fluidity and happiness among young adults

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Abstract

This study focused on the importance of cognitive fluidity and its relationship with happiness among young adults in an era of rapid global changes and digitalization. The research involved 120 young adults aged 25 to 30, representing different family structures. Using self-prepared scales, their cognitive fluidity and happiness levels were assessed. The findings revealed that most young adults had a moderate level of cognitive fluidity and reported higher levels of happiness. Notably, gender and family type influenced cognitive fluidity and happiness levels among male participants but not among females. However, no significant association was found between cognitive fluidity and happiness based on gender and family type. The study underscores the significance of cognitive fluidity in adapting to a diverse and evolving world, contributing to overall well-being and happiness in early adulthood. As technology continues to shape perspectives, cultivating cognitive fluidity becomes vital in navigating a world with varied viewpoints and potential positive and negative societal outcomes.

Keywords: Cognitive fluidity, happiness, young adults, early adulthood

Introduction

The word adult comes from the Latin word 'adultus,' which implies a person who has reached full size and strength. Young adult refers to the period of 18 years of age to 35 years of age. When a person becomes adult he has reached physiological maturity and he is attempting to establish himself as a self-sufficient individual with a life of his own, which includes leaving home, taking care of himself and even others, completing education, beginning full-time work, achieving economic independence, achieving emotional stability, establishing a long-term intimate relationship and starting a family, and making marital and parental decisions and becoming part of the community. Individual differences are prevalent both within and between all species which enhances the beauty and colour of nature. Psychologists have been attempting to comprehend how and why people differ for centuries. How the characteristics can be different within the individual and species to a variable degree. Individual differences are the uniqueness and variety of people's traits and patterned behaviour. These behaviours are impacted by the individual's characteristics as well as environmental variables. The primary determinant of individual differences among people is intelligence, which enables individuals to adapt their behavior to various situations. According to Anderson (2002) ^[1], cognitive fluidity skills begin developing in early childhood, with a significant increase in abilities between 7 and 9 years of age and reaching substantial maturity by 10 years of age. However, these skills continue to improve throughout adolescence and into adulthood, peaking between the ages of 21 and 30. Notably, adults outperform children on tasks involving cognitive fluidity when the task design accounts for inhibitory and working memory demands. Cañas *et al.* (2003) ^[3] define cognitive fluidity as an individual's capacity to adjust their cognitive processing in response to novel and unexpected environmental circumstances. This adaptability, fostered by consciousness, enhances social intelligence and promotes a cognitively flexible mindset, enabling individuals to anticipate the actions of others. As individuals progress in age, their intelligence tends to develop and expand. The interplay of cognitive, affective, and physical domains is critical in determining an individual's overall happiness.

Objective: To assess the cognitive fluidity and happiness among young adults on the basis of gender and family type.

Methodology

Sample and it's selection

The total sample for the present investigation consisted of 120 respondents from nuclear and joint families. The sample was further classified as nuclear and joint family with 60 samples respectively. Further data of 60 nuclear families were classified based on gender i.e., 60 adults (30 male and 30 female). Then, to collect data, the cognitive fluidity scale and happiness scale was administered to the eligible respondents.

Tools and their description

Cognitive Fluidity Scale This Scale was developed by the investigator related to find out the cognitive fluidity among young adults in the areas of physical fluidity, mental fluidity and social fluidity.

This questionnaire was prepared by the investigator under the guidance of advisor. It was a 3-point scale seeking answers ranking from always to never. It was used to assess the level of cognitive fluidity of the sample regarding the following headings:

Table 1: Dimensions of Cognitive Fluidity Scale

S. No.	Dimensions	Items
1.	Physical fluidity	18
2.	Mental fluidity	18
3.	Social fluidity	18
4.	Total	54

Table 2: Interpretation of Cognitive Fluidity Scale

S. No.	Categories	Dimension wise score range	Overall score range
1.	Poor	18-30	54-90
2.	Good	31-42	91-126
3.	Excellent	43-54	127-162

Reliability

The internal consistency, or reliability, of a group of survey items is measured by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The reliability value of the scale was 0.805.

Happiness Scale: This Scale was developed by the investigator related to find out the Happiness among young adults in the areas of roles and responsibilities, goal orientation, coping strategies and interpersonal relationships. This questionnaire was prepared by the investigator under the guidance of advisor. It was a 3-point scale seeking answers ranking from always to never. It was used to assess the level of happiness of the sample regarding the following headings:

Table 3: Dimensions of Happiness Scale

S. No.	Dimensions	Items
1.	Roles and responsibilities	13
2.	Goal orientation	13
3.	Coping strategies	13
4.	Interpersonal relationships	13
5.	Total	52

Table 4: Interpretation of Happiness scale

S. No.	Categories	Score-range	
		Dimension wise score range	Overall score range
1.	Never	13-21	52-86
2.	Sometimes	22-30	87-121
3.	Always	31-39	122-156

Reliability

The internal consistency, or reliability, of a group of survey items is measured by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The reliability value of the scale was 0.836.

There was total 54 items in the cognitive fluidity scale and 52 items in happiness scale. The scores were given as: -

Table 5: Scores of scale

1.	Always
2.	Sometimes
3.	Never

Statistical analysis

The data collected were analysed in the following ways in light of the objectives set forth for this study.

Frequency and percentage were used to analyse the data to assess the cognitive fluidity and happiness among young adults.

Results

Assessment of cognitive fluidity on the basis of gender

Table 6: Percentage distribution of young adults for cognitive fluidity on the basis of gender n=60

Dimensions	Category	Level of Cognitive fluidity f (%)					
		Low		Moderate		High	
	Male = 60 Female = 60	f	%	f	%	f	%
Physical Fluidity	Male	3	5	35	58.33	22	36.67
	Female	0	0	43	71.67	17	28.33
Mental fluidity	Male	0	0	40	66.67	20	33.33
	Female	0	0	43	71.67	17	28.33
Social fluidity	Male	4	6.67	41	68.33	15	25
	Female	5	8.33	37	61.67	18	30
Overall Cognitive fluidity	Male	0	0	42	70	18	30
	Female	0	0	41	68.33	19	31.67

Physical fluidity

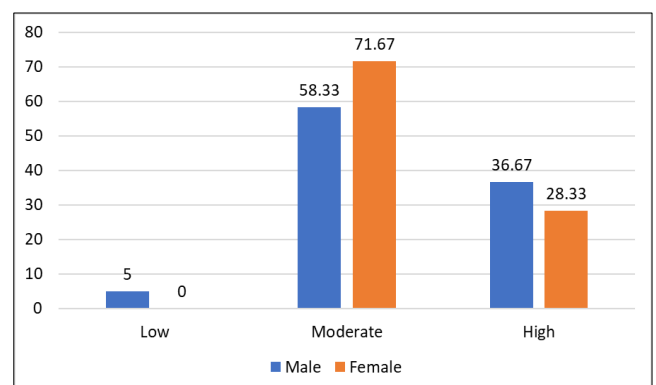


Fig 1: Percentage distribution of young adults for physical fluidity on the basis of gender

According to table 6 and figure 1, data for females revealed that 71.67 percent had moderate level, followed by 28.33 percent by having high level of fluidity regarding physical aspect almost same trend was noted in their counterparts by having 58.33 percent in moderate and 36.67 percent in high level of physical fluidity.

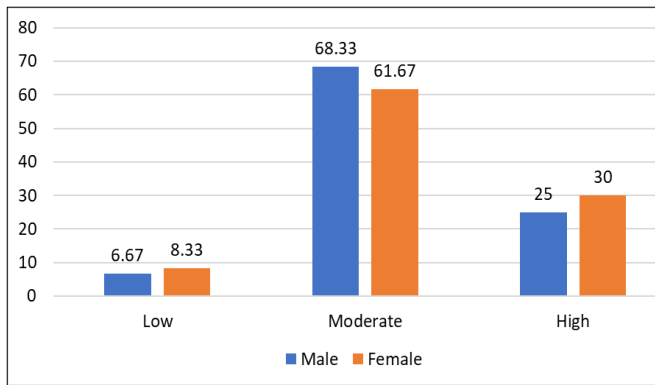


Fig 2: Percentage distribution of young adults for mental fluidity on the basis of gender

Mental fluidity

The results shown in table no. 7 and figure 2 clearly show that majority (68.33%) of the males were having moderate level of mental fluidity, followed by 25 percent of those who had high level and 6.67 percent with low levels. The table also shows that the majority of females (61.67%) had a moderate level of mental fluidity, followed by 28.33 percent who had high level of mental fluidity and 8.33 percent were having low level of mental fluidity. Having 5 percent of males in the category of low-level mental fluidity is an indication for the need of sensitization towards these particular aspects as since log we are living in patriarchal society and this is the era of fast changing socio-cultural scenario. To bring them into the compatible mode for social wellbeing ensuring enhancement in their mental fluidity is must.

Social fluidity

The results shown in table no. 8 and figure 3 clearly envisaged almost same picture regarding the social fluidity. It's clear that majority (66.67%) of the males were belonging to the category of moderate level in social fluidity, with 28.33 percent in high level and 71.67 percent females had moderate level of social fluidity, with 28.33 percent were having high level. None of the respondent was in low level means the society plays the same role for both of them to a great extant now a days. It's a reflection of the efforts of governmental organizations and non-governmental organizations towards the direction of gender equity & equality as well.

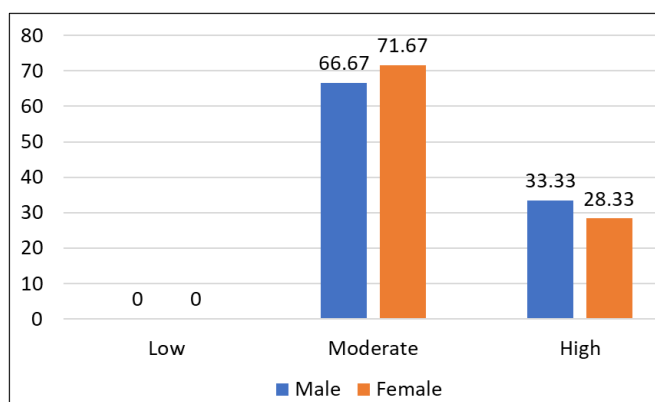


Fig 3: Percentage distribution of young adults for social fluidity on the basis of gender

Overall Cognitive fluidity

The results are shown in table no. 8 and Figure 4 clearly shows that majority (70%) of the males had moderate

Cognitive fluidity, with 30 percent having high cognitive fluidity. The table also demonstrates that majority (68.33%) of the females had moderate Cognitive fluidity, followed by 28.33 percent by having high level of cognitive fluidity. Higher cognitive fluid individuals are more extroverted, open and self-restrained, resulting in greater pleasure. Males as compared to females, primarily employ their cognitive fluidity to perceive events from several perspectives to create and enhance their own sense of enjoyment. The reason may be the parenting, more opportunities to explore and express themselves.

This result was contradictory to the study of Chunyu *et al.* (2022) [2], who found that males have higher cognitive fluidity and females have higher emotional expressivity.

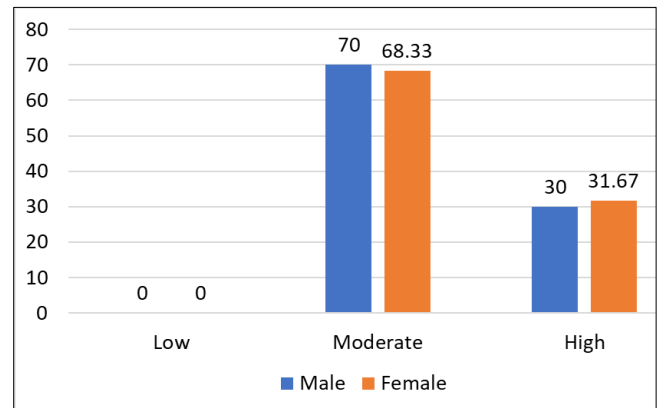


Fig 4: Percentage distribution of young adults for overall cognitive fluidity on the basis of gender

Assessment of Happiness on the basis of gender Happiness and it's Dimensions

People from across the world typically share a common definition of happiness and can spot it in others. Because of this, the particular emotion of happiness is frequently regarded as one of a select group of basic emotions that cannot be further subdivided into more basic emotions and that may combine to create other, more complex emotions (in fact, it is occasionally the only positive emotion that is regarded as basic). As a result, the concept of happiness is crucial for researchers who study emotions. Happiness was more than just a positive attitude or a cheery grin. It's the sensation of genuinely enjoying life and the desire to live it to the fullest. The "secret sauce" that can enable us to be and perform at our best is happiness.

Table 9: Percentage distribution of young adults for happiness on the basis of gender n=120

Dimensions	Category	Level of Happiness f (%)					
		Low		Moderate		High	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
Roles and responsibilities	Male = 60						
	Female = 60						
Goal orientation	Male	0	0	21	35	39	65
	Female	0	0	7	11.67	53	88.33
Coping strategies	Male	2	3.33	48	80	10	16.67
	Female	0	0	19	31.67	41	68.33
Interpersonal relationships	Male	2	3.33	26	43.44	32	53.33
	Female	1	1.67	27	45	32	53.33
Overall happiness	Male	1	1.67	23	38.33	36	60
	Female	1	1.67	17	28.33	42	70
Overall happiness	Male	0	0	22	36.67	38	63.33
	Female	0	0	48	80	12	20

Roles and Responsibilities

Table No. 9 and figure 5 make it very evident that 65 percent of males had high level of roles and responsibility, while 35 percent had moderate levels. The table also shows that 88.33 percent females were more likely to have high level of role and responsibility than male's 11.67 percent Who were having moderate level of role and responsibility. The main reason for a heading the female may be the greater gender equality has been demanded in recent decades and the need to close the gender pay gap has grown.

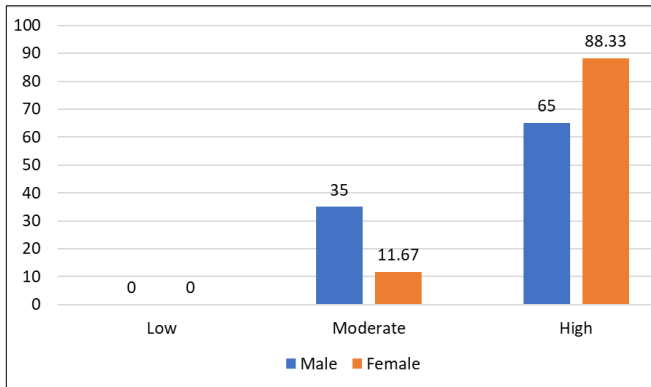


Fig 5: Percentage distribution of young adults for roles and responsibility on the basis of gender

Goal Orientation

The findings, which are presented in table and figure 6, unambiguously demonstrate that 35 percent of males were having high level of goal orientation, whereas 80 percent of males had moderate level of goal orientation. The table also shows that 80 percent of females who were having moderate level of duties and responsibility 68.33 percent were followed by 80 percent of females who have high level of goal orientation. The main reason for being ahead of females may be because female outperform guys in roles and responsibility because they have a greater tendency to make plans, establish objectives and work hard to achieve them.

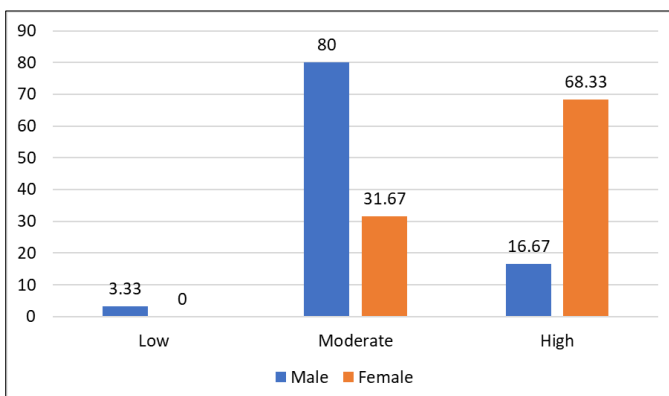


Fig 6: Percentage distribution of young adults for goal orientation on the basis of gender

Coping Strategies

According to the findings in table and figure 7, the majority (53.33%) of males were having high level of coping mechanisms, compared to 43.44 percent who were having moderate level of coping strategies and 3.33 percent who had low levels. The data also shows that most females 53.33 percent have high level of coping strategies, while 45 percent have moderate level and 1.67 percent has low level. Findings

shows that men were having more emotion-focused coping than women during the crisis, whilst women tended to be more active and problem-focused. And after the war, this trend of gender disparities was reversed for dealing with everyday pressures.

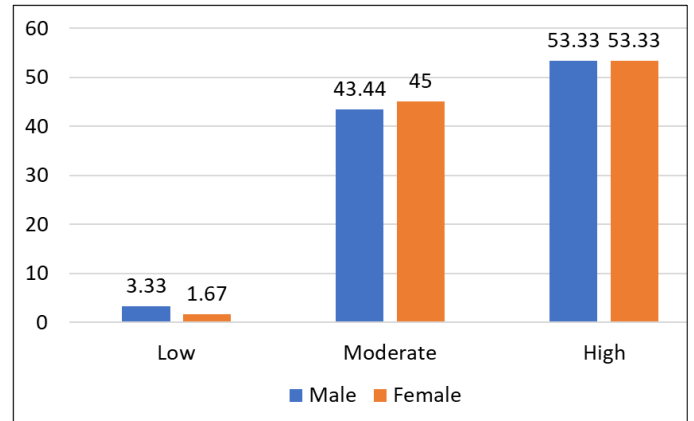


Fig 7: Percentage distribution of young adults for coping strategies on the basis of gender

Interpersonal Relationships

The findings, which are presented in table and figure 8, make it abundantly evident that majority (60%) of the males had high level of interpersonal relationship, while 38.33 percent were having moderate level and 1.67 percent were having low level. The data also shows that the majority of females (70%) were having high level of interpersonal relationships, whereas 28.33 percent were having moderate level and 1.67 percent with low level of interpersonal relationship. Since the bonds made within them, interpersonal interactions are crucial for survival as well as cognitive and social development since they give the chance for learning and socialization. Furthermore, establishing strong interpersonal bonds is crucial for creating a positive sense of self.

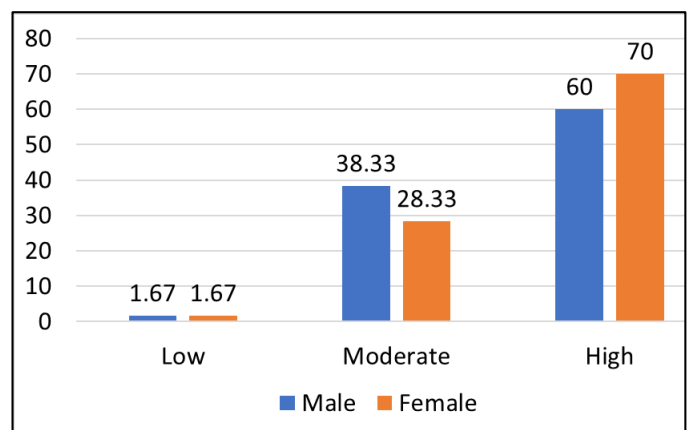


Fig 8: Percentage distribution of young adults for interpersonal relationship on the basis of gender

Overall happiness

Table and figure 9 demonstrated that the level of happiness among individuals based on their gender. According to the data presented, it is evident that a significant proportion (63.33 %) of males, specifically exhibit a high degree of happiness in their lives. Conversely, majority (80%) of the females were having moderate level of happiness. These results provide valuable insights into the differential experiences of happiness between males and females, offering

a quantitative understanding of the prevailing trends in their respective states of well-being.

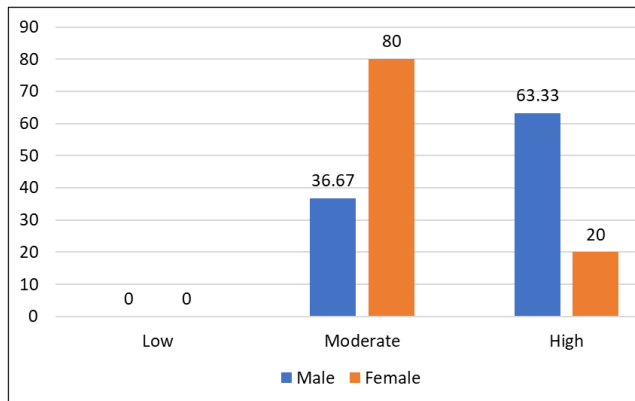


Fig 9: Percentage distribution of young adults for happiness on the basis of gender

Conclusion

It can be concluded that most young adults exhibit moderate to high levels of cognitive fluidity. These findings suggested that young adults had a reasonable degree of adaptability and fluidity across physical, mental and social domains. In case of happiness most young adults were experiencing a high level of happiness, exhibiting a strong sense of roles and responsibility, goal orientation, effective coping strategies and maintaining positive interpersonal relationships. Adult females tended to have higher percentages in these aspects compared to the overall sample, indicating their strong well-being and positive relationships. Moreover, young adults from nuclear families generally reported higher level of happiness compared to the overall sample, suggesting the influence of a supportive family environment. The cognitive fluidity in the pattern of thinking functions was providing joy to the person. An increase in literacy rate, multicultural society, joint family system, collectivist Indian culture and digitalization helped the adults to expand their knowledge by exposure to different scenarios which in turn helped them to be more fluid, adaptable and to be happy in every situation.

Implications

The thorough empirical research described in the earlier chapters can open the door for contributions to numerous varying purposes. Among the study's few implications are:

1. The results of the study will clarify the cognitive fluidity and happiness among young adults.
2. The research will be helpful in determining the relationship between cognitive fluidity and happiness.
3. The findings will be beneficial in enlightening about various needs of young adults.
4. This study will provide insights into the stressful experiences encountered by young adults when dealing with problems related to physical, mental and social domain.
5. The study will serve as useful reference material for further studies in this field.

Recommendation

The current analysis recognizes numerous dimensions that could lead to its growth. The following suggestions can be used in future research projects:

- The current research could encompass young adults from both rural and urban areas to investigate the relationship

between cognitive fluidity and happiness in these populations.

- A comparative study could be undertaken to examine the differences in cognitive fluidity and happiness among young adults residing in rural areas.
- To assess the influence of culture on cognitive fluidity, a cross-sectional study design may be adopted, allowing for a comprehensive examination of this aspect.
- The research may be focused on married young adults to explore the potential connection between cognitive fluidity and happiness within this specific demographic.

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