Impact of Life Events on Happiness through Moderating Role of Belief in Just World among Adults

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Abstract:

This study was designed to investigate how a person's life events affect his general happiness as well as relationship between life events, belief in just world, and general happiness among adults. Further, age differences, family structure, living style and educational status etc. on all constructs were determined. For this purpose, data *N=* 200 was taken from different government and non-government university students by using the purposive sampling technique. Pearson Product Moment correlation, Multiple Regression Analysis, Moderation analysis, t-test, were used to analyze the data. The results elaborated that there is a significant positive correlation between positive life events and general happiness as well as significant positive correlation between positive life events and belief in just world while significantly negative relationship of positive life events with negative life events. Negative life events negatively associated with belief in just world as well as general happiness; belief in just world significantly positively associated with general happiness; belief in just world significantly moderate in the relationship between positive life events and general happiness. The research emphasizes the importance of personal attributes in understanding how an individual's belief strengthens happiness in 'troubled' populations.

Keywords; Positive life events, negative life events, general happiness, belief, just world

INTRODUCTION

Introduce the belief that in life people get what they deserve is widespread (Lerner, 1998). Believing that the world is a just place enables people to tolerate and cope with injustices experienced by themselves and others. Such a belief can rationalize an acceptance for social inequality, lack of access to health care, poverty, and the mistreatment of others by the system. Holding a view of the world as just or unjust can also lead to social activism and motivate people to take action, as the recent "Black Lives Matter" movement has done in the United States. It is

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possible that believing that the world is fair and just will likely lead to less anxiety and greater life satisfice (Lerner, 1987).

With so many innocent people suffering in the world how can good citizens feel good and keep their confidence in the future? The belief in a just world (BJW) theory (Lerner, 1980) tries to explain this apparent paradox asserting that people develop a BJW that is a fundamental delusion that enables the feeling of invulnerability to persist, even when people are confronted with injustice. According to that belief all of us get what we deserve, that is, "good things happen to good people" (Lerner, 1987) and "bad things happen to bad people" (Lerner, 1998).

"The two forms of belief in a just world: Some thoughts on why and how people care about justice". According to Lerner this belief is needed to maintain wellbeing: (Lerner, 1998). "People want to and have to believe they live in a just world so that they can go about their daily lives with a sense of trust, hope, and confidence in their future "Subsequent empirical research has confirmed the positive association between BJW and wellbeing (Dalbert, 2001; Dalbert & Sallay, 2004; Hafer & Bègue, 2005), but not the causal direction from BJW to wellbeing. In fact, all the results are cross-sectional and we cannot rule out the alternative explanation that people in a good mood, having a more positive view of their life (Schwarz & Clore, 1988) also evaluate it as more just. The studies presented in this paper are the first systematic attempt to determine the direction of the causal relations between BJW and wellbeing. Before the description of the studies and the processes by which BJW can lead to wellbeing and vice versa, a brief review of the empirical evidence of association between BJW and subjective wellbeing (SWB) is presented.

Data from the World Values Survey (Alesina, Glaeser & Sacerdote 2001 Keely 2002) show that only 29 percent of Americans believe that the poor are trapped in poverty and only 30 percent that luck, rather than effort or education, determines income. The figures for Europeans are nearly double: 60 percent and 54 percent, respectively. Similarly, Americans are about twice as likely as Europeans to think that the poor "are lazy or lack willpower" (60 percent versus 26 percent) and that "in the long run, hard work usually brings a better life" (59 percent versus 34–43 percent) (LaddandBowman 1998). Large disparities in attitudes also exist within Europe, especially between OECD and Eastern European countries (Suhrcke 2001).

Human perceptions of happiness vary and depend on a wide range of factors. (Lear, 1998). Efforts to define and understand happiness date back long ago to include, for instance, Buddhist traditions and practices. However, the origins of western thought in this area can be found only a few decades later than Buddhist scripts in the work of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. In particular, Aristotle, in his work Nicomachean Ethics, attempted to give an answer to the question: what is the good life for man (Lear, 1998) For Aristotle (born almost exactly a century after Gautama Buddha died), happiness is the highest good achieved by human action. Aristotle suggested that the attainment of happiness involves the satisfaction of the human desires that are necessary to live a full and rich life. However, Aristotle believed that the question of what is a full and rich life cannot be answered for an individual in abstraction from the society in which they live, in contrast to some Buddhist traditions. The meaning of happiness varies through space and time and there have been numerous attempts to understand and define happiness since the work of Aristotle. Attempting to determine the factors that make individuals happy has long been represented as a research challenge that spans many academic disciplines. There have been numerous recent studies of happiness and well-

being issues, often from very different perspectives. On the one hand there are critiques of the idea that happiness can be measured such as by (Sumner, 1996) who argues that happiness is subjective and that no objective theory about the ordinary concept of happiness has the slightest plausibility. Nevertheless, there have been several researchers who suggested that happiness can be measured (Griffin, 1986) should be measured, Shah, (2004) and there has been an ongoing debate over how to measure it (Little, 1957).

Objectives of The Study

The objective of the study is to determine relationship of, belief in just world, and life events with consequence of happiness.

Hypotheses

There is significant correlation among life events, belief in just world, and happiness. Belief in just world is moderate in the relationship between life events and happiness. Positive life event is significantly associate with happiness than negative life events. Negative life event is significantly negatively associate with positive life events.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
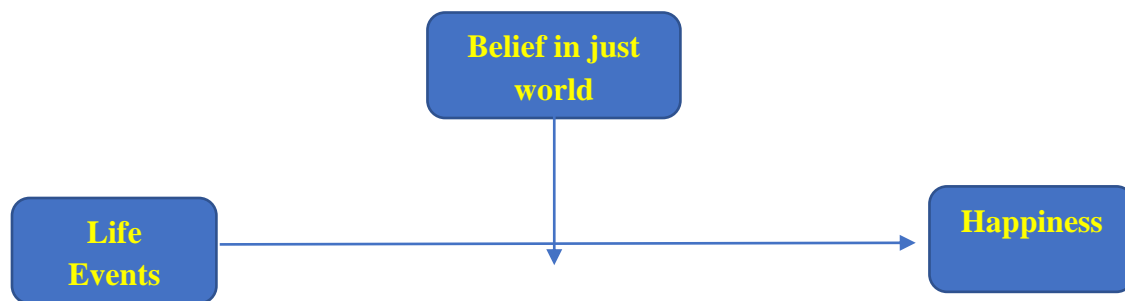
METHODOLOGY

This section addresses the current study's material and method step by step to help and understand the research's strengths

Research Design

The current study correlational research design was used in this research.

Sample of variables

The study's sample consists of 200 (N=200) male population. Participants were approached from different universities of Islamabad. The participants belong to the different department of sciences and social sciences. Their age ranges will be 20 to 28. Convenient sampling technique was used in this research.

Inclusive Criteria

The current study's inclusive criteria is only male adults and there age ranges from 20 years to 28.

Exclusive Criteria

Female participants are not the part of the current research. only male under the age of 18 as well as above the age of 65 years are also exclusive criteria.

INSTRUMENTS

Demographic Sheet

An appropriate demographic sheet is attached along with scales to obtain the necessary demographic information of the participants. This information is included age, duration of disease, mode of treatment, profession, socio-economic status, family structure, and education level of parents. The necessary analysis will also be computed for these variables.

Belief in Just World Scale (BJW) Melvin Lerner's (1974)

Belief in just-world hypothesis states that we all need to believe in a just world in which people get what they deserve. The scale indicates degree of agreement or disagreement with each of the 20 statements in the blank space next to each item with the mean of N=21.805 and standard deviation =2.025. Participant responds to every statement by using the following scale. 0 - strongly disagree1 - moderately disagree ,2 - slightly disagree ,3 - slightly agree ,4 - moderately agree ,5 - strongly agree. According to the belief in just world scale quartile score the BJW is categories into three categories (Low, High & moderate) which include: score below 46(1st quartile) is considered as low BJW and scores above 55 (3rd quartile) is considered as the high BJW while the others fall in moderate range. *Reliability and validity:* For the BJW measure (Rubin & Peplau, 1973), the mean reliability coefficient for the 22 studies reporting internal consistency was 0.64 (SD = 0.08; standard error [SE] = 0.016) with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.61 to 0.68 (cf. Henson & Thompson, 2002).

General Happiness Scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper 1999)

This scale was developed by Lyubomirsky Lepper in (1999). This scale contains 4-item designed to measure subjective happiness. Each of items is completed by choosing one of 7 options that finish a given sentence fragment. The options are different for each of the four questions. Sum the scores for each item together. Keep scores continuous. Internal consistency, demonstrating comparability, across samples of varying, aging, occupations, languages and culture, the alpha's ranged from o.79 to 0.94. No significant sex or age differences were observed for the Subjective Happiness Scale.

The internal consistency among the four items comprising the Subjective Happiness Scale was tested using Cronbach's alpha reliability. In all samples, the four items showed good to excellent internal consistency, demonstrating comparability across samples of varying ages, occupations, languages, and cultures. The alpha's ranged from 0.79 to 0.94 (*M* = 0.86). Only one of the 14 coefficients fell below the conventional minimum of 0.80 (0.79 was observed within the Russian adult community sample). Furthermore, principal component analyses performed separately for each sample showed that the four items of the Subjective Happiness Scale load onto a single factor. Table I displays the reliability coefficients obtained for each sample, as well as the means and standard deviations of the composite scale scores. (Lyubomirsky & Lepper 1999) Test-Retest Reliability: Longitudinal data was collected in five separate samples, and the Subjective Happiness Scale demonstrated stability over time. test-retest reliability ranged from 0.55 to 0.90 (*M*= 0.72).

The lowest temporal stability coefficient ($r = 0.55$) was observed in the U.S. adult community sample, which was tested 1 year apart. (Lyubomirsky & Lepper 1999). Convergent Validity*:* Presents the findings, which revealed substantial correlations, ranging from 0.52 to 0.72 ($M = 0.62$), between the Subjective Happiness Scale and other happiness measures. These correlations were similar across the four different samples. Second, convergent validity was tested using a number of dispositional constructs with which happiness has been theoretically and empirically associated in previous research (e.g., Costa and McCrae,1980, 1984; Diener, 1996; Myers, & Diener, 1995) Correlations with related constructs were moderate, ranging from 0.36 to 0.60 ($M = 0.51$). (Lyubomirsky & Lepper 1999).

Life Events (Brugha 1985)

This life Events questionnaire has been developed from one devised by Brugha et al (1985), with 9 additional items. The scale aims to look at recent life events, those occurring in the last 12 months and whether the respondent thinks they have a continuing influence. However, it can be used to evaluate events and impact over a longer period if desired. However, it can be used to evaluate events and impact over a longer period if desired. It can contribute to a social history, or provide an opportunity to re-evaluate whether known events are continuing to exert an influence. The initial scoring is binary 1. If the life events have happened, and 0 if it has not. The questionnaire does not have a cutoff point. It is scored on the basis that the more life events the adult has been through, the higher the score, and therefore the greater the likelihood of some form of longer-term impact on the adult, child and or family. This will be particularly so fi the person considers the events still affect them.

Procedure

The participants are provided informed consent before administering questionnaires. At the start, the researcher informed the participants that they are given questionnaires for getting information from them. A demographic information sheet used to obtain psychological and background information on the socio-economic status, age, etc. from the participants. Participants instructed regarding the nature, objectives and importance of the research. Participant meeting the inclusion criteria approached and inform consent obtained. Brief description explained about the purpose of the data collection and participants assured that the data collected from them will only be used for research purpose and will be keep confidential. In the end, the research the researcher would be thanked for their valuable contribution to the study.

DATA ANALYSIS

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) used for the analysis of data. The suitable analysis is done by using Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS-26). Initially, descriptive statistics are calculated. Pearson product-moment correlation, multiple hierarchical regression analysis, mediation analysis, moderation analysis, independent sample t-test, and ANOVA were applied testing to hypotheses and differences respectively.

Ethical Consideration

All ethical considerations are followed accordingly by American Psychological Association (APA). Ethical procedure maintained throughout the research. Ethics standard were strictly followed

throughout the study which addressed following issues. Ethical approval was attained from Ethical Review Board, Department of Psychology, IIUI, Ethics Committee, along with head of the institutes. Voluntary participation and informed consent were ensured so that participants selected in the study can participate on their own free will. After ensuring that the subjects were eligible to make participation they were informed. Participants were assured that their records will be kept secured and their information will be kept confidential.

Table 1 Demographic

Variables	N	Percentage	Variables	N	Percentage
Age			Educational status		14.3
19-24	123	61.5	BS	98	49.0
25-28	77	38.5	MSc	77	38.5
Family Structure			MS/MPhil	25	12.5
Nuclear	127	63.5	Monthly Income		
Joint	73	36.5	Middle	122	61.0
Living Style			Upper	78	39.0
Rural	110	55.0			
Urban	90	45.0			

Note: N = 200

In current age, family structure, living style of participants, educational status of participants as well as socio economic status of participant are decided as demographic variables.

Table 2 Measurement Analysis

Variable	K	M	SD	α
PLE	11	84.92	10.60	.76
NLE	10	57.27	11.68	.71
BIJW	20	74.87	10.65	.81
GH	4	15.01	6.68	.73

Note; N = 200

The above table shows that the current study used three scales as Life Events Questionnaire, the Belief in Just World Scale (BJW), and General Happiness Scale while Life Events Questionnaire has two sub-scales such as, Positive life events (PLE) and Negative life events (NLE). Similarly, positive life events (PLE) have 11 items and its Cronbach value is .76 which reveals satisfaction while negative life events (NLE) have 10 items with a .71 Cronbach value which reveals good reliability of the scale. Furthermore, BIJW (Belief in Just World Scale) has 20 items and its Cronbach is .81 which is excellent. Moreover, General Happiness has 4 items with a .73 Cronbach value that show this scale is reliable.

Table 3. Measurement Analysis

Variable	N	M	SD	1	2	3
Positive Life Events	200	84.92	10.60	-		
Negative Life Events	200	57.27	11.68	-26***	-	
Belief in Just World	200	74.87	10.65	.77***	-.25**	-
General Happiness	200	15.01	6.68	.62***	-31**	.52***

Note: n= 200 ***$p < .001$

The above table reveals that positive life events significantly positively associated with general happiness ($r = .62$, ***$p < .001$) and belief in just world ($r = .77$, ***$p < .001$) while negatively linked with negative life events ($r = -.26$, ***$p < .001$). Whereas negative life events negatively associated with belief in just world ($r = -.25$, **$p < .01$) as well as ($r = -.31$, **$p < .01$) general happiness. Furthermore, belief in just world significantly positively associated with general happiness ($r = .52$, ***$p < .001$).

Table 4

Moderating Analysis of BIJW on the relationship between PLE and GH

Variables	Model 1				Model 2	
	B	B	*SE*	*B*	B	*SE*
Constant	84.43***		1.61	84.08		1.24
PLE	3.00**	.63**	1.82	3.32**	.33**	1.27
BIJW	2.41**	.42**	1.02	2.87**	.82**	1.21
PLE x BIJW				1.60***	.29**	1.92
R^2		.17			.21	
ΔR^2					.02	

Note: n= 200 ***$p < .001$

Table 4 shows the moderation of BIJW the association between PLE and GH. Similarly, above reveals BIJW significantly moderated in the relationship between PLE and GH. Therefore, H5 was supported.

DISCUSSION

Despite evidence to the contrary, people have a need to represent the world as a just and fair place where prosaically behavior is rewarded and negative acts are punished (Zikriya et al., 2021; Hassan et al., 2022; Hassan, Bhatti & Zaidi, 2022; Hassan, Habib & Zaidi, 2022). This cognitive bias is termed the Belief in a Just World (BJW). Previous research assumes the BJW to be symmetrical, i.e., one believes to the same extent that a negative action will be punished and that negative events in one's life are punishments for previous negative actions. Similarly, good deeds are expected to be rewarded and positive events are interpreted as rewards for previous positive actions (Dalbert, 2001).

The present work tests this symmetry assumption. We show multiple asymmetries in the way people endorse positive and negative BJW statements for the past and the future that concern the self or other people. The results are discussed in terms of the interaction of BJW with other cognitive biases. (Lerner, 1980).Religious friendly country where people tend to follow religion and have believe that religious faith cause happiness in their life and happiness promotes high religious faith because all happiness come from God as a result when they happy they tend to have more religious faith (Biswas-Diener, Diener & Tamir, 2004). Positive experiences tend to develop good self-efficacy as if any person has positive experience, he likely to give credit himself as a result he will show high self-efficacy. Positive life experiences also developed high religious. Researchers who study subjective well-being essentially focused on people's cognitive and emotional reaction toward life conditions (Biswas-Diener, Diener & Tamir, 2004). Subjective well-being includes

positive, negative emotions and life satisfaction (Diener, Scollon & Lucas, 2006). Positive and negative affects reflect the basic experiences related to the incidents that occur in a person's life (Xue et al., 2021). While negative affect dimension covers the personal experiences in negative emotional states such as fear, anger, sorrow, guilt, abasement and hatred, positive affects dimension reflects the personal experiences in positive states like cheer, curiosity, trust and vigilance (Webster, & Watson, 2022).

Pearson's product moment correlation indicated both the hypotheses as partially proved as it is clear that there is significant positive relationship of religious faith, happiness, and general self-efficacy with positive life experiences, whereas belief in just world is positively and general self-efficacy is negatively related with negative life experiences. If a person has negative life experience he tends to blame himself for negative life experience as a result his self-efficacy low. It can be vice versa if a person has low self-efficacy there are chances, he will have negative life experience. For example, a student with low self-efficacy have more chances of failure as compared to the student of high self-efficacy the failure would be negative life experience for him. Maes and Kals (2002) In another study on school students, reported that belief in immanent justice was positively related to school anxiety and fear of others and belief in ultimate justice was negatively related to stress.

Maes and Kals (2004) Showed that belief in ultimate justice was positively related with students' satisfaction with their achievement, with one's school and with one's private life. Belief in immanent justice was also positively related to satisfaction with achievements and with school, but relationship was significantly weaker for satisfaction with school. Moreover, belief in immanent justice was negatively related with satisfaction with one's private life. Graziano and Eisenberg (1997) Positive personality traits extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience help people in coping events of their daily life and result in high belief in just world. Belief in just world serves as personal resource that affects only under specific adverse conditions. Individuals high on these positive personality traits is thought to reflect individual differences to be extrovert, kind, considerate, emotionally stable, likable, cooperative, and helpful, and have better coping against specific adverse conditions. Wolfradt and Dalbert (2003) studied personality, values, and their relationship with belief in a just world. The results showed that extraversion was positively correlated whereas neuroticism was negatively associated with belief in a just world.

People with negative life experiences sometimes did not blame the world for their negative experiences they consider other factor as a cause of negative life experience. As a result, believe in just world remains high. Optimistic people after negative experiences did not lose hope and try again and again for their success, they have high believed in just world so they try again and again. In the present study Andrew, Abeyta and Clay (2018), experienced in life has been identified as a potential mediator of the link between religiousness and psychological health. In the studies, meaning in life mediated the relation between religiousness and life satisfaction, as well as self-esteem and optimism. In addition, using an experience sampling method, the authors found that meaning in life also mediated the relation between daily religious. Behaviors and well-being. The authors discuss these findings and suggest that meaning in life may be an effective conduit through which counselors and clients can discuss "ultimate" matters, even when they do not share similar perspectives on religion (Ross & Flett, 1983).

Bandura's (1993) hypothesized sources of self-efficacy predict the science self-efficacy beliefs of middle school students ($N = 319$), to replicate previous findings that science self-efficacy predicts science achievement, and to explore how science self-efficacy and its antecedents differ by gender. Significant correlations were found between mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasions, physiological arousal, and self-efficacy.

Albert Bandura (1993) stated that belief in just world contributes to cognitive development and functioning. Perceived self-efficacy exerts its influence through four major processes. They include cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection processes. There are three different levels at which perceived self-efficacy operates as an important contributor to academic development. Students' beliefs in their efficacy to regulate their own learning and to master academic activities determine their aspirations, level of motivation, and academic accomplishments. Teachers' beliefs in their personal efficacy to motivate and promote learning affect the types of learning environments they create and the level of academic progress their students achieve. Faculties' beliefs in their collective instructional efficacy contribute significantly to their schools' level of academic achievement. Student body characteristics influence school-level achievement more strongly by altering faculties' beliefs in their collective efficacy than through direct effects on school achievement. This study explores the relationship between the concepts of Happiness, Happiness is the average level of satisfaction over a specific period, the frequency and degree of positive affect manifestations or the extent to which an individual experiences positive emotional states, and the relative absence of negative affect. As positive psychology turns its attention to interventions that cultivate the good life, perhaps interventions that target meaning will prove most fruitful. This is where the correlation of Grit with Happiness.

CONCLUSION

The above table reveals that positive life events is significantly positively associated with general happiness and belief in just world while negatively linked with negative life events. Whereas negative life events are negatively associated with belief in just world as well as general happiness. Furthermore, belief in just world is significantly positively associated with general happiness.

Implications of Study

1. This study continues the tradition of behavior and clinical research into mental illness, and give the direction of positively related to school anxiety and of others and belief in ultimate justice was negatively to stress (Maes & Kals 2002; Xue e al., 2021).
2. Maes and Kals (2002) It investigates these notions showed from their different sources that belief was positively related to satisfaction and achievements.
3. Most available pleasant emotional states, such as joy, amusement, satisfaction, gratification, euphoria, and triumph also related to happiness (Algoe, Sara Haidt & Jonathan 2009; Khan et al., 2022). Also, these finding are supportive and implemented such as joy etc.
4. This publication, on the other hand, disseminates research by delving deeper into how of belief in just world and happiness generate quality of life and how these negative outcomes may induce cognitive impairment.

Delimitation(s) of the Study

As every research in Social Sciences have certain Delimitations, even carefully designed. There are several limitations of this study,

1. First the sample composition is one of the constraints.
2. The sample of 200 including males finding is relatively small that limits the generalizability of the results.
3. It is suggested that in future, researchers should replicate this study by employing an increased sample size, it is expected that then it would have a greater statistical power and validity.
4. Finally, this study will not present findings in terms of gender base data and did not measure the male and females not separately.

Limitations of the Study

1. There are certain limitations to this study that should be considered. First, the cross-Sectional design makes it difficult to draw a causal conclusion between research variables. Second, our study only included adults from universities. As a result, the sample may have an impact on the generalization of the results.
2. In summary, the current study is an attempt to understand how impact of life events on happiness moderating role of belief in just world. It also needed to examined with the experience of life and to detailed work on with different age groups & educated and uneducated persons.

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Date of Publication	October 15, 2022