

# Activity Engagement, and Meaning in Life Satisfaction among young Adults

## Abstract

6 The present research aims to study the relationship between meaningful activity engagement and life  
7 satisfaction among young people adults 18 to 25 years. The engaging in meaningful activites provides  
8 individual with a sense of purpose and fulfillment which enhance over all life satisfaction. The study  
9 follows a descriptive and correaltional design to examine how participation in purposeful activites  
10 influence well being. The samples 250 contrast non college student from convenient sampling from  
11 various education and occupational background in Tamil Nadu. Data collect using the scale are The  
12 Engagement Meaning activity engagement and life satisfaction (Diener 1995) were used to measure  
13 key variables. Data were collected by using the structured questionnaire and analyzed through SPSS  
14 using descriptive statistics Pearson correlation and regression analysis. The results are expected to  
15 reveal a significant positive relationship between individual higher meaningful activity engagement  
16 will report with greater satisfaction with life. This study highlights the importance of meaningful  
17 experience in promote mental well being among contrast young adults

18 Keywords : Meaningful activity engagement , life satisfaction , young adults , well being , purpose in  
19 life , fulfillment , mental health , correlational study

## 1. Introduction

22 In modern society, young adults manage multiple academic, occupational, and social demands  
23 that significantly shape their psychological well-being. The transition into adulthood is marked by  
24 identity exploration, career preparation, and the search for purpose, often accompanied by heightened  
25 stress and uncertainty. Within this context, the manner in which individuals engage in daily activities  
26 and develop meaning from them plays a crucial role in determining overall life satisfaction.

Activity engagement refers to the extent to which individuals actively, attentively, and emotionally involve themselves in purposeful activities such as academic work, employment, hobbies, social participation, and personal development. Meaningful engagement is not simply about being occupied but involves psychological presence, intrinsic motivation, and a sense of capability. Individuals who are deeply engaged in activities often experience fulfillment, personal growth, and a stronger sense of control over their lives.

34 Meaning in life represents the perception that one's life has purpose, coherence, and value.  
35 According to Frankl (1963), the pursuit of meaning is a fundamental human motivation, and  
36 individuals who perceive their lives as meaningful demonstrate greater resilience and psychological  
37 health. Meaning often emerges through sustained engagement in activities that align with personal  
38 values, goals, and identity.

40 Life satisfaction, a component of subjective well-being, refers to an individual's cognitive  
41 evaluation of their overall quality of life based on self-defined standards (Diener et al., 1985). Rather  
42 than temporary emotions, life satisfaction reflects a global judgment about whether life circumstances  
43 meet personal expectations and aspirations.

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45 Research increasingly suggests that these three constructs—activity engagement, meaning in life,  
46 and life satisfaction—are closely interconnected. Meaningful engagement in daily activities fosters a  
47 stronger sense of purpose, which in turn enhances life satisfaction. Conversely, low engagement or  
48 involvement in activities lacking personal significance may result in feelings of emptiness,  
49 dissatisfaction, and reduced well-being. Understanding this relationship is essential, particularly  
50 among young adults, as this life stage lays the foundation for long-term psychological health and  
51 fulfillment

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54 **1.1 Background of the Study**

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56 Young adulthood is a period of many changes and new responsibilities. During this time,  
57 individuals face challenges such as managing studies, planning careers, building relationships, and  
58 making important life decisions. The way young adults spend their time and involve themselves in  
59 activities can strongly affect their happiness and mental health.

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61 Research in positive psychology over the last ten years shows that being actively involved in  
62 activities and finding meaning in life are important for well-being. Seligman's (2011) PERMA model  
63 highlights engagement and meaning as two key parts of a happy and fulfilling life. People who are  
64 fully involved in activities often experience "flow," a state of complete focus and motivation, which  
65 supports personal growth and satisfaction.

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67 Studies also show that individuals who take part in daily activities actively have better mental  
68 health, feel less stress, and report higher life satisfaction (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Ryff & Singer,  
69 2008). Meaningful activities provide structure, help set goals, and allow self-expression, which  
70 strengthens a person's sense of self.

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72 Meaning in life is connected to positive outcomes, including higher life satisfaction, optimism,  
73 and emotional stability (Steger et al., 2006). People who find purpose in their daily activities cope  
74 better with stress and challenges because they see difficulties as meaningful.  
75 Life satisfaction depends on both internal factors, like thoughts and feelings, and external experiences,  
76 such as daily activities.

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78 Young adults who engage in valued activities and perceive their life as meaningful report greater  
79 satisfaction, even during challenges (Diener et al., 2018)  
80 Although research supports these ideas, few studies have examined how activity engagement,  
81 meaning in life, and life satisfaction are linked together, especially among young adults in educational  
82 or non-clinical settings. Studying these relationships can help promote well-being and life satisfaction  
83 in early adulthood.

84  
85 Life satisfaction depends on both internal factors, like thoughts and feelings, and external  
86 experiences, like daily activities and social life. Young adults who take part in activities that they

87 value and see as meaningful report greater satisfaction with life, even when facing challenges (Diener  
88 et al., 2018).

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## 91 **2. Methodology**

92 **2.1 Aim**

93 To examine the relationship between meaning activity engagement, and life satisfaction  
94 among young adults.

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### 96 **2.2 Objectives**

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- 98 • To assess the levels of activity engagement, meaning in life, and life satisfaction among  
99 young adults.
- 100 • To examine the relationship between activity engagement and meaning in life.
- 101 • To analyze the association between meaning in life and life satisfaction
- 102 • To determine whether activity engagement contributes to higher life satisfaction through  
103 enhanced meaning in life.

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### 105 **2.3 Hypothesis**

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- 107 • There is a significant positive relationship between activity engagement and meaning in life  
108 among young adults.
- 109 • Meaning in life is positively associated with life satisfaction
- 110 • Higher levels of activity engagement are associated with greater life satisfaction.
- 111 • Meaning in life mediates the relationship between activity engagement and life satisfaction.

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### 113 **2.4 Inclusion Criteria**

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- 115 • Young adults aged 18–30 years.
- 116 • Individuals currently engaged in academic, occupational, or structured daily activities.
- 117 • Participants are able to read and understand English.
- 118 • Willingness to provide informed consent.

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### 120 **2.5 Exclusion Criteria**

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- 122 • Individuals diagnosed with severe psychological disorders that may impair self-reporting  
123 ability
- 124 • Participants are currently undergoing intensive psychiatric treatment.
- 125 • Incomplete or inconsistent questionnaire responses.

129 **3. Procedure**

130 The study was conducted using a structured and systematic procedure to examine the relationship  
131 between meaning activity engagement, and life satisfaction among young adults. Prior to data  
132 collection, moral approval was obtained from the concerned authority, and informed consent was  
133 secured from all participants. Participants were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.  
134 Young adults who met the eligibility requirements were approached through educational institutions  
135 and online platforms. The purpose of the study was clearly explained, and participants were assured of  
136 confidentiality and anonymity. They were informed that participation was voluntary and that they  
137 could withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences. Data were collected using  
138 standardized self-report questionnaires. Participants were first asked to complete a demographic  
139 information sheet, which included details such as age, gender, educational  
140 status, and occupation. Following this, the participants were administered the Activity Engagement  
141 Scale to assess their level of involvement in daily activities. The Meaning in Life Questionnaire was  
142 then used to measure the presence of meaning and purpose in their lives. Finally, the Satisfaction with  
143 Life Scale was administered to assess overall life satisfaction. Clear instructions were provided  
144 before administering each questionnaire to ensure accurate responses. Participants were encouraged to  
145 answer all items honestly and were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaires without any  
146 pressure. The entire data collection process was carried out either individually or in small groups in a  
147 calm and comfortable environment. After completion, the questionnaires were collected and checked  
148 for completeness. Incomplete or inconsistent responses were excluded from the analysis. The  
149 collected data were coded and entered into statistical software for analysis. Appropriate statistical  
150 techniques were employed to examine the relationships among activity engagement, meaning in life,  
151 and life satisfaction.

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154 **4. Discussion**

155 **4.1 The Psychological Significance of Activity Engagement in Young Adulthood**

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157 The reviewed literature collectively highlights activity engagement as a central  
158 psychological factor influencing well-being during young adulthood. This developmental phase is  
159 characterized by exploration, identity formation, and the establishment of long-term personal and  
160 professional goals. Active engagement in daily activities—such as academic pursuits, employment,  
161 creative interests, and social participation—provides young adults with structure, purpose, and a sense  
162 of agency. Rather than task completion, engagement involves psychological presence, emotional  
163 investment, and intrinsic motivation. Consistent with flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), engaged  
164 individuals experience absorption and enjoyment in activities, which enhances competence and self-  
165 efficacy. When young adults are deeply involved in meaningful tasks, they are less likely to  
166 experience feelings of emptiness or disengagement. Conversely, low engagement may contribute to  
167 boredom, lack of direction, and dissatisfaction, especially in environments that fail to support  
168 autonomy and personal interests. Thus, activity engagement functions as a foundational mechanism  
169 through which young adults regulate emotions and derive fulfillment from everyday experiences.

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173 **4.2 Meaning in Life as a Cognitive and Emotional Integrator**

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175 Meaning in life emerges as a crucial psychological resource that integrates activity  
176 engagement with broader life evaluation. Meaning is not experienced in isolation; rather, it develops  
177 through sustained involvement in activities that align with personal values, goals, and identity.  
178 Engaged activities provide individuals with narratives that help them understand who they are and  
179 why their efforts matter. Frankl's (1963) existential framework emphasizes that the presence of  
180 meaning enables individuals to endure challenges and maintain psychological stability. The literature  
181 suggests that meaning in life acts as a lens through which young adults interpret their experiences.  
182 When activities are perceived as meaningful, daily stressors are reframed as purposeful efforts than  
183 overwhelming demands. This cognitive reappraisal strengthens emotional resilience and promotes a  
184 sense of coherence in life. In contrast, engagement in activities lacking personal significance may fail  
185 to generate meaning, leading to feelings of alienation and reduced well-being.

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### 187 **4.3 Life Satisfaction as an Outcome of Meaningful Engagement**

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189 Life satisfaction represents a global cognitive judgment about one's life circumstances and  
190 achievements. The findings across studies indicate that life satisfaction is strongly influenced by both  
191 activity engagement and meaning in life. Young adults who perceive their daily activities as  
192 meaningful tend to report higher satisfaction with life, regardless of temporary stress or external  
193 challenges. Meaning plays a mediating role in this relationship by transforming engagement into  
194 fulfillment. Activity engagement alone may not guarantee life satisfaction if the activities do not align  
195 with personal values or aspirations. However, when engagement is accompanied by a sense of  
196 meaning, individuals are more likely to evaluate their lives positively. This aligns with Diener et al.'s  
197 (1985) conceptualization of life satisfaction as a subjective evaluation based on internal standards  
198 rather than objective conditions.

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### 201 **4.4 The Interconnected Cycle of Engagement, Meaning, and Life Satisfaction**

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203 The relationship between activity engagement, meaning in life, and life satisfaction can be  
204 understood as a dynamic and self-reinforcing cycle. Meaningful engagement enhances a sense of  
205 purpose, which increases life satisfaction, and higher life satisfaction, in turn, motivates continued  
206 participation in valued activities. This cycle promotes sustained psychological well-being and  
207 adaptive functioning among young adults. Disruptions in this cycle—such as disengagement from  
208 activities, lack of purpose, or dissatisfaction—may contribute to emotional distress, apathy, and  
209 reduced motivation. This is particularly relevant in modern contexts where young adults face  
210 academic pressure, career uncertainty, and social comparison. Strengthening engagement and  
211 meaning may therefore serve as protective factors against psychological distress and declining well-  
212 being.

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### 214 **4.5 Cultural and Developmental Considerations**

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216 While the existing literature supports the positive role of engagement and meaning, limited  
217 research has examined these constructs within specific cultural and developmental contexts. In  
218 collectivist societies, activity engagement may be influenced by familial expectations and social roles,  
219 which can either enhance or restrict the development of personal meaning. Young adults may engage  
220 in activities due to external pressure rather than intrinsic interest, potentially weakening the link

221 between engagement and life satisfaction. Most studies focus on Western populations, leaving a gap in  
222 understanding how cultural values shape the experience of meaning and satisfaction. Future research  
223 should explore culturally grounded interpretations of engagement and meaning to develop  
224 contextually relevant interventions that support young adults' well-being.

#### 227 **4.6 Need for integrative and Meaning centered Approaches**

229 The discussion highlights the need for integrative approaches that address both behavioral  
230 engagement and cognitive meaning-making processes. Interventions focusing solely on increasing  
231 activity levels may be insufficient unless they also help individuals reflect on the purpose and value of  
232 their activities. Meaning-centered counseling, strengths-based approaches, and value clarification  
233 strategies may enhance the effectiveness of engagement-based interventions.

### 237 **5. Conclusion**

238 This study concludes that activity engagement, meaning in life, and life satisfaction are  
239 closely connected aspects of young adults' well-being. When individuals actively engage in activities  
240 that are meaningful and aligned with their personal values, they are more likely to experience a  
241 stronger sense of purpose and satisfaction with life. Meaning in life plays an important role in  
242 transforming everyday activities into fulfilling experiences, thereby enhancing overall life  
243 satisfaction. Promoting meaningful engagement can therefore support positive psychological  
244 functioning and long-term well-being among young adults.

### 247 **6. Implications**

- 248 • Encouraging meaningful activity engagement among young adults can enhance their sense of  
249 purpose and overall life satisfaction.
- 250 • Educational institutions can design academic and co-curricular programs that promote active  
251 involvement and personal value alignment.
- 252 • Mental health professionals can incorporate meaning-centered and engagement-based  
253 interventions in counseling and well-being programs.
- 254 • Career guidance services can help young adults identify activities and career paths that align  
255 with their interests and values, fostering long-term satisfaction.
- 256 • Community and youth development initiatives can create structured opportunities for  
257 engagement that support psychological well-being.

### 259 **7. Limitations**

- 260 • The study relies on self-report measures, which may be influenced by response bias or social  
261 desirability.
- 262 • The cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among the  
263 variables.
- 264 • The sample may be limited to a specific age group or educational background, restricting  
265 generalizability.

266     ● Cultural and contextual factors influencing activity engagement and meaning in life were not  
267       examined in depth.  
268     ● Individual differences such as personality traits, socioeconomic status, and life circumstances  
269       were not controlled, which may have influenced the results.

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