The Impact Of Intensity Of Dreams In Life Satisfaction

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Abstract
This paper explores the pivotal role of dreams in shaping life satisfaction by influencing emotional well-being, cognitive processing, and psychological resilience. Dreams reflect waking emotional experiences, with emotionally charged events, whether positive or negative, being more likely to appear in dreams (Schredl, 2006). Positive dreams can foster creativity, emotional insight, and problem-solving, thereby enhancing personal fulfillment and emotional stability (Gilchrist, 2013; Coutts, 2023). Conversely, negative dreams, particularly nightmares, may heighten anxiety and distress, impacting mood and overall well-being (Schredl, Funkhouser, & Arn, 2009). Dreams play a crucial role in emotional regulation by helping individuals process and integrate intense emotional experiences through imaginative mechanisms such as metaphor formation and memory association . Furthermore, the emotional intensity of dreams reinforces emotional patterns, influencing self-awareness, decision-making, and relationship quality (Weinstein, Campbell, & Vansteenkiste, 2017; Hagemeyer, Salomo, Engelhardt, Neyer, & Rupprecht, 2019). Cultural and social frameworks shape how dreams are interpreted, affecting their psychological impact and contribution to subjective well-being (Iglesias, Montserrat, Llosada-Gistau, & Gallart, 2023). Dreams serve as a subconscious mechanism that reflects and influences emotional health, interpersonal harmony, and overall life satisfaction (Odermatt & Stutzer, 2022; Schredl, 2010).
Keywords- *Dreams, emotional well-being, life satisfaction, psychological resilience, emotional regulation, positive and negative dreams (including nightmares), cognitive processing, self-awareness, and subjective well-being.*

I. Introduction

Do our dreams hold the blueprint to our emotional well-being?

If you've ever woken up feeling as if your dream was real and recalling every detail, you've experienced vivid dreams characterized by the sleeper's clear recollection upon waking and often involving intense, detailed sensory experiences (Schredl, 2006). These dreams may be positive and meaningful, such as flying or having a conversation with a deceased loved one, or distressing nightmares involving falling or being chased (Schredl, Funkhouser, & Arn, 2009).

Dreams occur throughout the sleep cycle but predominantly during rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, which is the last stage in a cycle lasting approximately 90 to 120 minutes and repeating multiple times per night (Palagini & Rosenlicht, 2011). As the night progresses, REM phases lengthen, with the final REM stage lasting up to an hour, making vivid dreams most likely to occur in the later part of the night (Palagini & Rosenlicht, 2011). Dream recall depends strongly on waking up during or just after REM sleep; if a person does not awaken during or immediately after a dream, they are unlikely to remember it (Schredl, 2010).

Dreams are mental activity during sleep, marked by vivid sensory imagery that feels as real as waking life, even though elements like time, place, people, and events may be highly improbable or impossible (Schredl, 2010). Emotions such as fear, excitement, and anger tend to be more prominent than sadness, shame, or guilt, sometimes becoming intense enough to cause a person to wake up (Schredl, 2006; Hagemeyer, Salomo, Engelhardt, Neyer, & Rupprecht, 2019).

Despite their vividness, dreams are often quickly forgotten unless specific efforts are made to retain them upon waking (Schredl, 2010). Dreaming can be considered our most creative state, as it allows continuous generation of visual scenes, unique characters, and unusual narratives something rarely achieved while awake (Palagini & Rosenlicht, 2011). It is as if we are producing an ongoing movie without the ability to remember the storyline from one moment to the next (Schredl, 2010). While waking thoughts typically focus on current concerns, dreams often reflect these worries in a symbolic, visually rich form (Coutts, 2023; Schredl, 2006).

Dreams significantly contribute to emotional and psychological well-being, as their intensity can impact overall life satisfaction. According to Schredl (2006) and Schredl and Hoffmann (2003, as cited in APA PsycNet, 2025a), the extent to which waking experiences are incorporated into dreams is primarily influenced by their emotional intensity rather than their positive or negative nature. This suggests that emotionally charged experiences, whether joyful or distressing, are more likely to be reflected in dreams, emphasizing the strong

relationship between dreaming and waking life. Furthermore, Schredl and Reinhard (2010) found that emotions experienced in dreams can persist into the following day, affecting an individual's mood and overall well-being. This finding suggests that dreams play a role in emotional regulation, resilience, and processing, ultimately impacting life satisfaction. Supporting this perspective, a study on job-related dreams by Schredl, Funkhouser, and Arn (2009) revealed that job-related stress and satisfaction were reflected in the dreams of hairdressers, further reinforcing the connection between dream content and waking emotions.

In 1900, Sigmund Freud first used the term *Wunscherfüllung* in his seminal work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. It aligns with a fundamental tenet of Freud's Dream Theory. Wish fulfillment, according to Freud, happens when the ego and superego suppress unconscious desires. This repression frequently results from socially enforced taboos and guilt. The unconscious uses dreams as a way to work out a buried issue (APA PsycNet, 2025c; Minter & Samuels, 1998). In the history of psychoanalysis, Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* marked one of the earliest scientific attempts to investigate dreams. The work introduced psychoanalysis to a wider audience and laid the foundation for metapsychology. Freud challenged the prevailing view of dreams as mere physical phenomena and posited that they are psychic acts and unique types of thoughts occurring in sleep. His clinical work demonstrated that complex thought processes happen outside conscious awareness, suggesting dreams have deep meaning as manifestations of unconscious mental activity and can be interpreted methodically via psychoanalysis (APA PsycNet, 2025c; Fordham & Fordham, 2019).

Carl Jung, born in Switzerland in 1875, was the founder of analytical psychology and made significant contributions to the understanding of the unconscious mind. He introduced the concepts of introverted and extroverted personalities and is best known for developing the theory of the collective unconscious, a reservoir of shared human experiences and knowledge inherited from ancestors (Fordham & Fordham, 2019; Mcleod, 2024). Initially, Jung collaborated with Sigmund Freud and supported many of his theories. However, over time, their views on the unconscious mind diverged. While Freud focused on the personal unconscious and believed that dreams primarily reflected repressed desires, Jung proposed that dreams provide insight into the collective unconscious, revealing universal symbols and archetypes shared across cultures (Fordham & Fordham, 2019; Fritscher, 2023). Unlike Freud, who assigned fixed meanings to dream symbols, Jung emphasized that dream interpretation must consider the individual's personal experiences and psychological state (Fordham & Fordham, 2019). Jung's theory of archetypes explains how the unconscious mind manifests through recurring patterns of thoughts, symbols, and behaviors. These archetypes are fluid and can combine in various ways, shaping a person's psyche. Some of the most well-known archetypes include the Anima (the feminine aspect in men), the Animus (the masculine aspect in women), the Hero (the individual overcoming adversity), the Persona (the outward mask people wear in society), the Shadow (the darker, repressed side of the psyche), the Trickster (a mischievous, unpredictable force), and the Wise Old Man (a figure of wisdom and guidance) (Fordham & Fordham, 2019; Mcleod, 2024). Jung believed that dreams serve a compensatory function, helping individuals balance aspects of their psyche that are underdeveloped or ignored in waking life. His approach to dream analysis has influenced modern psychology, research, and therapeutic practices, making dreams a valuable tool for understanding the human mind and treating psychological conditions (Fordham & Fordham, 2019; Fritscher, 2023).

Diverse Dream Interpretations Across Cultures

Dreams hold deep significance across different cultures, shaping beliefs, traditions, and personal insights. While interpretations vary widely, these examples highlight how cultural factors influence the way people understand their nightly visions (Sharma, 2024).

Indian Culture

In Indian traditions, dreams are often seen as a reflection of karma, spiritual growth, and subconscious desires. Hindu philosophy considers dreams a connection between the physical and metaphysical realms, discussed in ancient texts. Interpretations may link dreams to past-life experiences or divine messages, while others view them as omens. Astrology and scriptures play a role in decoding dream meanings, and many people consult priests or astrologers for guidance. The practice of yoga and meditation is also believed to enhance dream awareness (Sharma, 2024).

Islamic Culture

In Islamic traditions, dreams are categorized into types—true visions from God, deceptive dreams from the devil, and reflections of a person's thoughts. Many consult religious texts or scholars for interpretation, as dreams may offer guidance or reassurance. This reflects a moral and spiritual foundation in dream interpretation (Sharma, 2024).

African Cultures

Across various African societies, dreams are often seen as a bridge to the ancestral world. Many believe ancestors communicate in dreams, offering wisdom and guidance. For example, among the Dagara people of Burkina Faso, dreams guide significant decisions, reflecting a spiritual and communal approach (Sharma, 2024).

Japanese Culture

In Japan, traditions such as Hatsuyume, or the first dream of the new year, are believed to predict fortune. Many hope to see certain symbols for luck, reflecting the view of dreams as omens of prosperity (Sharma, 2024).

Western Cultures

In Western societies, dream interpretation often combines psychological and symbolic approaches. Some people use dream dictionaries, while others view dream analysis as a tool for self-understanding and emotional growth (Coutts, 2023; Gilchrist, 2013).

Emotional Intensity in Dreams and Its Impact on Well-Being

Research shows that dream content is significantly affected by the emotional intensity of waking experiences. Dreams are more likely to include emotionally charged events, regardless of whether they are pleasant or distressing, supporting the view that dreams help process such experiences (Schredl, 2006; Schredl & Reinhard, 2010). The emotional assimilation theory of sleep and dreaming proposes that intense emotions from daily life are activated during sleep and woven into dreams, helping to integrate emotional experiences and regulate psychological well-being (Schredl, 2006).

Dream intensity can affect emotions, cognition, creativity, self-awareness, and decision-making, all of which contribute to life satisfaction. Emotionally charged dreams, especially nightmares, may raise anxiety and distress, lowering well-being, while meaningful and vivid dreams can promote personal growth and insight (Pesant & Zadra, 2005a; Hagemeyer et al., 2019). Dream therapy underscores the role of dreams in helping people process internal conflicts and improve mental health (Gilchrist, 2013).

There is a strong relationship between waking emotions, personality traits, and dream emotions. Studies indicate that people with more positive emotional states also have more positive dreams, and dreams can reinforce mood patterns and influence overall well-being (Weinstein et al., 2017; Schredl & Reinhard, 2010). Research further supports that the emotional intensity of dreams plays a key role in shaping psychological well-being: positive dreams can foster resilience and satisfaction, while negative ones may cause distress (Hagemeyer et al., 2019; Schredl, Funkhouser, & Arn, 2009).

Across cultures and history, dreams have influenced attitudes, feelings, and choices. Ancient societies interpreted dreams as messages or omens, while Freud and Jung viewed them as reflecting inner conflicts and unconscious processes, all contributing to mental health (Fordham & Fordham, 2019; Fritscher, 2023). Strong or emotionally intense dreams can influence daily life, decision-making, and emotional regulation, in line with research showing that dreams reflect waking feelings and experiences (Schredl, 2010; Schredl & Reinhard, 2010; Sharma, 2024).

Different types of dreams affect individuals in unique ways. Nightmares can heighten anxiety but also promote vigilance. Existential dreams encourage introspection, while transcendent dreams foster openness and well-being. Dream analysis can deepen self-awareness and emotional growth, both strongly connected to life satisfaction (Gilchrist, 2013; Pesant & Zadra, 2005a; Coutts, 2023).

This study investigates how dream intensity affects decision-making, psychological health, and emotional processing. Dreams are more than just chance mental events; they are essential for resilience, emotional control, and cognitive function. Positive or bad, emotionally charged dreams have been shown to have an impact on mood, self-awareness, and general life satisfaction (Schredl, 2006; Malinowski & Horton, 2014). This study aims to provide light on the therapeutic and psychological relevance of dreams by investigating how they mirror and process waking emotions.

This study also looks into individual and cultural variations in dream interpretation. Dreams have been interpreted as spiritual messages, mental reflections, or problem-solving techniques in many different faiths. Gaining insight from diverse viewpoints will improve our understanding of the ways in which dreams support wellbeing, mental health, and personal development.

Additionally, this research attempts to close the gap between the intensity of dreams and actual decision-making. Unconsciously, people frequently use their dreams to resolve internal conflicts, guide decisions in life, and mold relationships. This study illustrates the usefulness of dream analysis in psychology, mental health treatments, and personal growth by examining these trends.

II. Review Of Literature

Kumar, M. (2024). Dreams are vivid, imaginative experiences during sleep that reveal hidden feelings and desires, offering a glimpse into the subconscious mind. They influence

decision-making, emotional problem-solving, creativity, and behavior, impacting daytime worries, anxiety, and even relationships. By reflecting subconscious thoughts, dreams contribute to personal growth, self-awareness, and mental well-being. They also provide valuable insights into mental health conditions such as PTSD, ADHD, and depression, supporting early detection and therapeutic interventions. This highlights the importance of dreams in understanding human behavior and maintaining mental health.

Gan et al. (2024).Sexual dreams can reflect an individual's perspectives on sex, its personal significance, and any underlying sexual concerns in their waking life. Understanding the factors influencing the perceived intensity of sexual dream experiences is crucial for a comprehensive evaluation of sexual mental health. This study examines the connection between personality traits, anxiety, depression, and sexual dream experiences through the lens of the continuity hypothesis of dreaming. A questionnaire was conducted among 384 participants (mean age = 20.63 years, SD = 1.21; 205 females, 179 males), revealing that more than half reported experiencing sexual dreams, with a higher prevalence among males. The group that reported sexual dreams scored higher in aggressiveness, neuroticism, and sensation seeking compared to those who did not. Additionally, negative emotions, sensation seeking, activity levels, and extraversion significantly contribute to the perceived intensity of sexual dream experiences among individuals who have them. These findings offer valuable insights for sexual education professionals, enhancing their understanding of sexual dream experiences and related psychological factors, thereby contributing to the advancement of sexual health and education.

Chu, H. C. (2024). This study utilized a survey approach to explore the relationship between Taiwanese employees' attitudes toward dreams and their workplace well-being. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, which were completed by individuals in the workplace. The questionnaire comprised three sections: (1) participants' demographic information, including an estimation of dream frequency, (2) the Dream Experience and Attitude Scale (Beaulieu-Prévost et al., 2009), and (3) the Workplace Well-being Scale. A total of 340 responses were gathered. The findings revealed that various demographic factors (such as gender, age, education level, and job characteristics) influenced scores on the Dream Attitude Scale.

Additionally, differences in workplace well-being were observed based on age, marital status, and education level. Employees' attitudes toward dreams were found to have a significant positive influence on workplace well-being. Specifically, the study examined the impact of seven dimensions of dream attitudes on workplace well-being, revealing that the overall workplace well-being and its four dimensions could be significantly predicted. Among these dimensions, "dream meaning" had the strongest positive effect on overall workplace well-being and its four dimensions, while "dream understanding" had a significant negative impact. Based on these findings, recommendations were provided for future research and practical applications in the workplace.

Iglesias et al. (2024). The issue of unaccompanied migrant children is a global phenomenon, yet it varies significantly depending on territorial and social contexts. This study aimed to: (i) examine the arrival patterns of unaccompanied minors in Catalonia based on age, sex, and country of origin; (ii) explore key aspects of their family and educational backgrounds; (iii) assess their emotional well-being and overall life satisfaction; and (iv) understand their perspectives on barriers, opportunities, and rights while living in the child protection system (residential care).To address the first objective, a secondary analysis of official records from 2015 was conducted. For the second and third objectives, a survey was administered to 811 unaccompanied migrant adolescents. To achieve the fourth objective, four focus groups were held with young migrants residing in residential care facilities. The findings revealed notable differences based on country of origin, with variations in emotional well-being and life satisfaction also influenced by factors such as rural or urban background, sex, and, most significantly, the length of stay in the new environment. These findings underscore the need for tailored professional support to safeguard and empower unaccompanied migrant children, emphasizing the importance of incorporating a gender-sensitive approach.

Coutts, R. (2023). This study examined the connection between significant dream content and the fulfillment of future relationship needs among 1,106 users of a dating website. Participants completed an online survey that included a recent dream report, demographic details, information on waking activities, and whether their dream involved romantic or sexual attraction. Follow-up surveys conducted at 3 and 12 months recorded participants' relationship status.

Results showed that single individuals who initially reported dreams of romantic or sexual attraction to former partners were 83% more likely to be in a relationship at follow-up. Those who were already in relationships at the start and dreamed of attraction to either current or former partners were more likely to remain partnered, whereas those who dreamed of attraction to non-partners such as acquaintances, celebrities, or strangers had a higher likelihood of breaking up. Additionally, single women were more likely than men to enter a relationship after dreaming of attraction, and younger participants were more likely to partner than older

ones. The results were not influenced by dating activities or concerns about being in a relationship. The study's findings are discussed in relation to functional theories of dreaming.

Odermatt, R., & Stutzer, A. (2022). The widely held belief that owning a home leads to greater happiness is one of the most common intuitive theories of well-being. However, the accuracy of this assumption remains uncertain. Using individual panel data, this study examines whether home buyers tend to overestimate the life satisfaction they expect to gain from moving into their own property. To assess potential prediction errors, the study compares individuals' anticipated life satisfaction five years into the future with their actual reported well-being. Findings reveal that home buyers who consider homeownership a primary reason for relocating tend to systematically overestimate the long-term happiness benefits of their new living situation. This miscalculation is particularly evident among those who pursue extrinsically motivated life goals, suggesting that misjudgments about personal preferences play a key role in these prediction errors.

Lekfuangfu, W. N., & Odermatt, R. (2022).This study examines the factors influencing teenagers' educational and occupational aspirations, explores the relationship between aspirations and achievements, and investigates the impact of unmet aspirations on life satisfaction. Using data from the 1958 British NCDS cohort, which tracks individuals for nearly 60 years, findings indicate that parental socioeconomic status and parents' aspirations for their children significantly shape young people's aspirations. Moreover, aspirations are strongly linked to achievements, even when controlling for socioeconomic background and ability, suggesting that they actively drive success. However, when individuals fail to reach their early aspirations, they tend to experience lower subjective well-being in early adulthood, with this negative effect being more pronounced among men. Over time, this impact diminishes, and by age 50, exceeding childhood aspirations is associated with higher life satisfaction.

Maggiolini, A., Di Lorenzo, M., Falotico, E., & Morelli, M. (2020).Most studies analyzing dream content have primarily focused on young adult samples, often using them as the standard, while fewer investigations have explored the patterns of continuity and change in dreams across the lifespan. A study examining dreams throughout different life stages, involving 1,546 participants aged 8 to 70 years, utilized the Typical Dreams Questionnaire (Nielsen et al., 2003; Dumel, Nielsen, & Carr, 2012). The findings indicate that 55.8% of dream reports included at least one typical theme, with prevalence remaining relatively stable across age groups. However, children and older adults exhibited a higher occurrence of dreams containing TDQ themes, whereas young adults reported the lowest percentage. Children displayed a greater variety of typical dream themes compared to other age groups. The most common themes in children's dreams often involved threats or magical elements. Older adults were more likely to dream of "A person now dead as alive," while children and preadolescents more frequently reported "A person now alive as dead." Adolescents commonly dreamt about "School, teachers, and studying," whereas young adults had a higher prevalence of dreams related to "Sexual experiences." Adults and older adults were more likely to dream about "Trying something again and again" and "Arriving too late." These shifts in typical dream themes may reflect emotional concerns characteristic of different stages in the life cycle.

Hagemeyer et al., (2020). The study focuses on validating a newly developed tool for assessing emotional experiences in dreams the Jena Dream Inventory–Affect (JeDI-A). This instrument consists of 21 items and three key scales: positive dream affect, negative dream affect, and dream intensity, offering a comprehensive yet efficient evaluation of dream-related emotions. Both cross-sectional and longitudinal analyses were conducted using a sample of university students (N = 426) and a clinical group of patients with sleep disorders (N = 149). The findings confirmed the instrument's factorial validity, measurement invariance, and strong temporal stability over a period of one year for students and nine months for patients. Additionally, the JeDI-A demonstrated convergent and discriminant validity in relation to established measures of dream affect and the Big Five personality traits, as well as criterion validity concerning subjective well-being. Cross-lagged panel models revealed reciprocal longitudinal relationships between dream affect and waking affect. Overall, the results indicate that the JeDI-A is a reliable and valid tool for studying individual differences in dream effect across both clinical and nonclinical populations.

Schredl et al., (2020). Professional work plays a crucial role in modern life. According to the continuity hypothesis of dreaming, which suggests that dreams reflect waking experiences, work-related dreams should be fairly common. However, since most dream content analysis studies focus on student samples, the role of work in dreams remains underexplored. Limited research suggests that job-related stress is particularly reflected in work-related dreams. In this study, 1,695 participants(960 women, 735 men) completed an online survey assessing the estimated frequency of work-related dreams, their emotional tone, and waking-life experiences related to employment status. Results indicated that one in five dreams was linked to current or past work, with employed individuals reporting more frequent work-related dreams.

Additionally, stressful jobs were more likely to influence dream content, and the emotional tone of these dreams closely mirrored work-related stress and emotions in waking life. Overall, the findings highlight the lasting impact of professional life on dreams, even years later. Future research should explore the specific

content of work-related dreams and how factors such as job type, hierarchical position, and autonomy influence them.

Fogli et al.,(2020). Sleep researchers have demonstrated that dreaming plays a role in enhancing individuals' waking lives, utilizing advanced content analysis scales to support their findings.

Traditionally, dream analysis requires labor-intensive manual text annotation. To streamline this process, recent studies have applied algorithms to extract information from dream reports, primarily focusing on identifying emotions. However, two key challenges remain unaddressed:

(i) mining crucial aspects of dream reports, such as characters and interactions, which have been emphasized in research, and (ii) ensuring that the analysis is conducted in a theoretically sound manner based on existing literature.To address these challenges, we developed a tool that automatically evaluates dream reports by implementing the widely recognized dream analysis scale by Hall and Van de Castle. The tool's accuracy was validated using hand-annotated dream reports, yielding an average error of 0.24. Additionally, we analyzed 24,000 dream reports—far exceeding the sample size of prior studies—and examined the 'continuity hypothesis,' a concept in sleep research. Our findings provided further evidence that dreams reflect experiences from daily life. These results suggest that key aspects of dreams can be quantified, paving the way for new technologies that connect real-life experiences with the world of dreams.

Konkoly, K., & Burke, C. T. (2019).A lucid dream occurs when an individual becomes aware that they are dreaming while still in the dream state. Many people engage in lucid dreaming to foster personal growth, such as boosting creativity and self-esteem. However, the evidence supporting these benefits primarily comes from anecdotal accounts and correlational studies, rather than controlled experiments. Additionally, most lucid dreaming techniques incorporate two complementary practices: dream journaling and reality checking, a mindfulness exercise which may independently contribute to personal growth.This study aimed to determine whether lucid dream induction enhances personal growth beyond the effects of journaling and mindfulness, using an experimental design. A sample of 32 undergraduate students was assessed for psychological well-being and personal growth over time. Participants were divided into three groups: one received lucid dream training, another learned only journaling and mindfulness, and the third received no intervention. Results showed no significant differences between the groups in overall personal growth. However, individuals who successfully experienced lucid dreams reported higher life satisfaction and self-esteem, along with lower stress levels the following day, compared to those who attempted but did not succeed in lucid dreaming.

Weinstein, N., Campbell, R., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2018). From the perspective of self-determination theory, fulfilling individuals' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness is believed to promote personal growth and well-being. However, it remains unexplored whether the satisfaction or frustration of these needs is reflected in self-reported dream themes and the emotional interpretation of dreams. A cross-sectional study (N = 200; M age = 21.09) examining individuals' recurrent dreams, along with a three-day diary study (N = 110; M age = 25.09) analyzing daily dreams, found that those experiencing psychological need frustration whether persistently or on a daily basis reported more negative dream themes and interpreted their dreams in a more negative light. In contrast, the impact of psychological need satisfaction was less pronounced, though it was linked to a more positive interpretation of dreams. The discussion highlights the potential role of dreams in processing and integrating experiences related to psychological need frustration.

Wang, S. (2017).This study examines the interconnectedness between leisure travel outcomes, various life satisfaction domains, and overall life satisfaction. Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods, the research explores how young Chinese individuals' experiences with leisure travel influence their life satisfaction. The conceptual framework is based on the theory of social production function, which serves as a heuristic guide. The findings indicate that overall life satisfaction among young Chinese people is enhanced through three universal goals: (1) physical satisfaction,achieved through comfort, novelty, and escape experiences gained from travel; (2) social satisfaction, which is boosted by increased social recognition and affection during travel; and (3) career development satisfaction, identified as a unique universal goal influenced by travel experiences. The study discusses theoretical contributions and practical implications, offering insights for researchers, policymakers, and tourism product developers.

Headey, B., et al. (2013).This study utilizes national socio-economic panel surveys from Australia, Britain, and Germany to investigate how individual preferences and choices impact subjective well-being (SWB). Findings reveal that in all three countries, life satisfaction is significantly influenced by preferences and choices related to life goals and values, partner's personality, working hours, social engagement, and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. These results challenge the widely accepted set-point theory of SWB, which posits that adult SWB remains stable over the medium and long term, except for temporary fluctuations caused by life events. However, this theory has faced growing criticism, particularly due to evidence from the German Socio-Economic Panel showing that over a third of the population has experienced substantial and seemingly permanent changes in life satisfaction over the past 25 years (Fujita & Diener, 2005; Headey, 2008a; Headey et al., 2010). These findings suggest that SWB researchers need to develop new theories that explain both medium

and long-term changes, as set-point theory focuses solely on stability. The analysis is based on specially constructed panel survey files that segment data into multi-year periods to better examine changes over time.

Olsen et al., (2013).Using a sample of 667 adults, the study examined various facets of dream recollection and sharing. It examined who and why people share their dreams, as well as the connection between the frequency of dream sharing with a partner and the intimacy of the relationship. The frequency of dream sharing in couples and the perceived closeness of their relationship were found to be significantly positively correlated. The results also confirmed earlier studies showing women remembered and discussed more dreams than males.

Additionally, it was discovered that nonsingles expressed their dreams more frequently than singles, and that they shared them mostly with friends (if single) and a partner (if in a relationship). The main reason for sharing dreams was for amusement. It's interesting to note that males were more likely than women to think that sharing dreams could help relationships intimacy.

Olsen, M. R. (2012).This study examined beliefs, attitudes, and the effects of dreams in a predominantly non-student adult sample (N=667). The findings aligned with previous research, showing that women were generally more receptive to dreams—they recalled them more frequently, engaged more with dream literature, speculated about their dreams more often, and shared them more frequently than men. Dream sharing was most commonly done with a partner and primarily for entertainment. Overall, participants viewed dreams as meaningful, with strong support for the continuity hypothesis the idea that waking life experiences influence dream content—while "pre-scientific" beliefs, such as dreams conveying messages from God, were the least endorsed. Dreams were mainly used for personal insight, and 8.9% of participants reported making significant life decisions based on their dreams.A significant positive correlation was found between the frequency of dream sharing in couples and relationship intimacy ($r = .24$, $p < .001$). While no correlation emerged between sleep quality and dream recall, a small but significant positive correlation was found between sleep quality and dream attitude ($r = .126$, $p < .05$).

Schwartz, S. (2010). During the transition from wakefulness to sleep, known as sleep onset, our minds often replay elements from our daytime experiences, a phenomenon called hypnagogic imagery. Students preparing for exams might revisit study material, lovers may think about their partners, and software developers could visualize programming codes. This spontaneous cognitive "replay" was supported by a study where participants trained on a skiing game, Alpine Racer II. About 30% of their thoughts and imagery before sleep and during light NREM sleep were related to the game. Over time, these game-related images became more abstract, indicating that memory replay occurs not only during wakefulness but also during early stages of sleep.

This suggests that subjective experiences during sleep onset provide valuable insights into cognitive processes as the brain transitions between different states.

Proctor, C. L., et al. (2009).Life satisfaction is a key concept in positive psychology. While extensive research has been conducted on adult life satisfaction, the study of life satisfaction among children and adolescents has gained attention more recently. This article reviews existing research on youth life satisfaction, examining 141 empirical studies. It explores how youth life satisfaction is connected to various emotional, social, and behavioral factors. The review identifies conditions that promote positive life satisfaction and discusses the implications of high life satisfaction for young people. Additionally, the article outlines future research directions for understanding life satisfaction in youth.

Schredl et al.,(2009). Empirical research largely supports the continuity hypothesis of dreaming. This study examined how often hairdressers dream and the emotional tone of their dreams.

Findings indicated a connection between daytime mood, specifically job satisfaction, and dream emotions. Additionally, lower life satisfaction was associated with an increased frequency of work-related dreams. Future research could explore individuals in various professions, particularly those with high-stress and demanding roles, to further investigate the impact of work-related factors on dreaming.

Pesant, N., & Zadra, A. (2006).This longitudinal study examined the continuity hypothesis, which suggests that waking experiences and concerns are mirrored in dreams. The research explored the connection between dream content and negative waking emotions both at specific points in time and over a period of 6 to 10 years. A total of 28 participants completed psychological well-being (PWB) assessments and maintained a dream journal during two different periods in their lives. Correlational analyses revealed that lower self-reported PWB was associated with an increased presence of aggression rather than friendly interactions, more negative than positive emotions, and, to a lesser extent, more experiences of failure and misfortune rather than success and good fortune in dreams. Additionally, findings indicated that PWB was significantly linked to dream content across time.

St-Onge, M., et al. (2005). A study examined the occurrence and nature of emotions in dreams and how they relate to waking life satisfaction by collecting both home and rapid eye movement (REM) sleep dreams from 30 women in late adulthood and 28 young adult women who had completed a life satisfaction questionnaire. Participants rated four positive and four negative emotions experienced in their dreams. Both age

groups reported experiencing more emotions with greater intensity in home dreams compared to REM sleep dreams, with this effect being more pronounced in the older group. Negative emotions were less intense in laboratory dreams than in home dreams across all participants, but no significant difference was found for positive emotions. In home dreams, older women experienced fewer negative emotions with lower intensity compared to the younger women. Despite these emotional differences, life satisfaction levels were similar between the two age groups and showed no significant correlation with dream emotions. These findings highlight the differences between home and laboratory dreams and challenge the notion of a direct link between dream emotions and life satisfaction.

Moody, H. R. (2005).Dreams experienced in midlife and old age can reflect a process of spiritual growth known as Gerotranscendence, as described by Tornstam. This inner development aligns with theoretical concepts such as self-actualization (Maslow), ego integrity (Erikson), and individuation (Jung). The process is represented through dream symbols associated with transpersonal development, highlighting the dual aspects of self-fulfillment and self-transcendence. From a lifespan development perspective, this phenomenon can be examined in depth through the autobiography of Helen Luke. Understanding and interpreting dreams play a significant role in what is now referred to as "Conscious Aging."

Phillips, R. E., & Pargament, K. I. (2002).Scientists and practitioners have long debated the purpose of dreams. While some researchers argue that dreams result from random neuronal firings with no specific function, others suggest that they play an adaptive role, with certain characteristics leading to positive effects. Building on previous studies of sanctification, this research explores whether perceiving a dream as sacred is linked to beneficial outcomes. A study involving 168 college students revealed that the more a dream was regarded as sacred, the greater the reported benefits from a stressful life event associated with that dream. These benefits included reduced negative emotions, increased positive emotions, and both psychological and spiritual growth. The sanctification of dreams significantly predicted these positive outcomes beyond other religious and dream-related factors. The study further discusses the implications of these findings.

Kroth et al., (2002). An analysis of intercorrelations among the KJP Dream Inventory, Stanford Sleepiness Scale, and Brayfield-Rothe Job Satisfaction Questionnaire, using data from 56 graduate students, revealed several significant but small correlations. Job satisfaction was positively correlated with age (.32) and negatively correlated with repetitive traumatic dreams (–.30), dreams of being chased (–.35), and sleepiness (–.30). Additionally, employment status showed associations with levels of sleepiness, dissatisfaction with dreams, and dreams of being famous. The findings were discussed in relation to the proposed connection between overall contentment or discontentment and its links to sleep patterns, dream experiences, and job satisfaction.

Funkhouser et al., (2000). Although numerous studies have explored dreams and dreaming in the elderly, there appears to be a lack of research specifically examining the impact of regular dream-telling without interpretation. Incorporating dream-telling into the care routine for elderly and infirm individuals could be beneficial. This study assessed the effects of regular dream-telling among mentally healthy elderly clinical research volunteers by measuring various factors, including life satisfaction, intrapsychic boundaries, sleep quality, sleep duration, dream recall, dream tone, and dream epoch. These outcomes were compared with two control groups using standardized testing and self-reports. The results indicated no significant differences among the groups, suggesting that dream-telling had no negative effects. These findings suggest that regular dream-telling is not harmful to mentally healthy older adults and could provide a foundation for future research on geriatric patients with mental health conditions or those experiencing major life transitions, such as bereavement or retirement.

This study aimed to investigate the role of character strengths and their relationship with life satisfaction in older adults. Specifically, it focused on key transitions associated with aging, such as retirement, living alone, and widowhood. The researchers examined how demographic factors and living conditions influenced character strengths and their connection to life satisfaction.

Using a cross-sectional approach, data from 15,598 older adults (aged 46–93 years) who had completed assessments on character strengths, life satisfaction, and demographic factors were analyzed. The findings indicated that most character strengths showed a positive correlation with age, with higher levels observed among employed individuals compared to retirees and among those living with a partner rather than alone. In contrast, widowhood had minimal impact on character strengths. Additionally, while the overall contribution of character strengths to life satisfaction slightly declined with age, certain strengths, such as modesty and prudence, became more significant. The relationship between character strengths and life satisfaction was found to be stronger among retirees and individuals living alone, whereas widowhood did not notably influence these associations. These findings highlight the potential role of character strengths in enhancing life satisfaction in later life, providing a foundation for strengths-based interventions for older adults in various living situations.

Radhakrishnan, P., & Chan, D. K. S. (1997).A study examined cultural differences in the relationship

between self-discrepancy and subjective well-being. Participants included 54 individuals from India and 55 from the United States. They were asked to list ten goals they had set for themselves and those their parents had set for them. Participants then rated the importance of both personal and parental goals from their own and their parents' perspectives. Additionally, they completed assessments of collectivism and well-being.The findings revealed that Americans, who exhibited lower levels of collectivism than Indians, prioritized their personal goals over those set by their parents. In contrast, Indians valued both their own and their parents' goals equally. For Americans, well-being was influenced by discrepancies between their own and their parents' ratings of personal goals. However, for Indians, well-being was affected by differences between their own and their parents' ratings of parental goals. The study discusses the theoretical implications of these cultural variations.

Malamud, W., & Linder, F. E. (1931).The scientific value of data obtained in psychiatric research largely depends on the validity of the methods used and the accuracy with which their reliability can be assessed. In medicine, particularly in fields where methods are primarily developed for practical applications, it is crucial to determine whether a method that has demonstrated practical usefulness can also be trusted for scientific research. While it is true that techniques initially introduced as empirical tools for diagnosing and treating diseases may later prove valuable in scientific studies, this is not always the case. Therefore, the validity of such methods should not be assumed without verification. The significance of making such distinctions becomes clear when considering the differing interests and objectives within the field.

III. Methodology

Aim

The aim of this quantitative research is to examine how the intensity of dreams influences life satisfaction by shaping emotional well-being, psychological resilience, and interpersonal relationships.

Objective
● To observe the relationship between dream intensity and emotional well-being
● To observe the relationship between dream intensity and psychological resilience

Hypothesis
The previous researches were carefully assessed to come up with following hypothesis-
H1: Greater dream intensity, as assessed by the MADRE, will be positively linked to higher life satisfaction and greater psychological well-being across Ryff's six dimensions.
H2: The emotional intensity of dreams will serve as a mediator in the connection between dream recall frequency and both life satisfaction.
H3: Negative dream content, such as nightmares, will be associated with lower life satisfaction and reduced psychological well-being.
H4: Positive dream content will be linked to higher levels of well-being and greater emotional resilience.
H5: Individuals exhibiting greater dream vividness and recall frequency, as measured by the MADRE, will demonstrate higher emotional resilience and greater psychological well-being, particularly in self-acceptance, autonomy, and personal growth.
H6: The relationship between dream intensity and overall well-being will be influenced by sleep quality, emotional regulation strategies, and levels of psychological resilience.

Variables
-Dependent variable Life satisfaction
-Independent variable Intensity of dreams

Research Design

This research is a quantitative, cross-sectional design done on the basis of data collected from the urban sample of young and middle adults from 18 to 60 years or above of age.

Sample

The data for this research were collected from 287 participants, comprising 165 females (57.5%) and 122 males (42.5%). All participants were currently residing in urban areas and were aged 18 years or older. Sampling was conducted using non-probability methods, including convenience and voluntary response sampling. Questionnaires were distributed for data collection.

Inclusion Criteria:
a. Individuals residing in urban areas of India.
b. Adults aged 18 years and above.

c. Both male and female participants.

Exclusion Criteria:
a. Individuals under 18 years of age.
b. Participants with psychiatric or neurological disorders.
c. Those using psychoactive medications affecting sleep or dreams.
d. Individuals with substance dependence or abuse.
e. Participants with severe sleep disorders or head trauma.
f. Those who rarely or never recall dreams.

Description of tools used
Apparatus 1-Manheim Dream Questionnaire (MADRE)
The Mannheim Dream Questionnaire (MADRE), developed by Schredl et al. (2014), is a comprehensive self-report instrument designed to assess multiple aspects of dreaming and dream-related experiences. It measures variables such as dream recall frequency, nightmare frequency and distress, lucid dreaming, attitudes toward dreams, and the effects of dreams on waking life, including mood changes, creativity, problem-solving, and déjà vu experiences.

The MADRE uses multiple response formats:
7-point scales for dream recall frequency (e.g., from "never" to "almost every morning"),
8-point scales for nightmare and lucid dream frequency,
5-point scales for emotional intensity, distress, and attitudes, binary and percentage-based items for recurring nightmares and other specific experiences.

The questionnaire also includes definitions of nightmares and lucid dreams to ensure consistency in participants' interpretations.

Reliability:
Test-Retest Reliability:
The MADRE demonstrates good test-retest reliability across its core scales. For example: Dream Recall Frequency: $r = .85$
Nightmare Frequency: $r = .75$
Lucid Dream Frequency: $r = .89$
Attitudes Toward Dreams Scale: $r = .77$

These values suggest that the questionnaire yields stable results over time.

Internal Consistency (Cronbach's Alpha):
The Attitudes Toward Dreams scale shows high internal consistency:
$\alpha = .91$
This indicates that the items within the scale consistently measure the same underlying construct.

2. Validity:
Construct Validity:
The MADRE correlates meaningfully with other measures and known psychological constructs:
Higher dream recall is associated with greater openness to experience, higher sleep quality, and emotional intensity of dreams.
Nightmare frequency correlates with neuroticism and emotional dysregulation, supporting the tool's theoretical validity.

Discriminant Validity:
The questionnaire distinguishes between: Frequent vs. infrequent dreamers Lucid vs. non-lucid dreamers Individuals with vs. without recurring nightmares

Demographic Sensitivity:
The MADRE captures age and gender effects:
Women report higher dream recall, emotional intensity, and nightmare frequency than men.
Dream recall tends to decrease with age, consistent with previous research findings.

Apparatus 2- Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale

Ryff's Psychological Well-Being (PWB) Scale was developed by Carol D. Ryff (1989) as a theoretical model to measure eudaimonic well-being, which goes beyond happiness and pleasure to focus on living a meaningful, purposeful life. This multidimensional scale captures an individual's psychological functioning and their positive mental health by assessing six core dimensions of well-being.

The scale is available in multiple versions, including 84-item, 42-item, and 18-item forms. Respondents rate items on a Likert-type scale, typically ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Some items are reverse-scored to reduce response bias. The test is used extensively in research on positive psychology, personality, aging, and mental health.

IV.   Autonomy

This dimension reflects an individual's ability to be self-determining, independent, and resistant to social pressures. People scoring high on autonomy are confident in their beliefs and choices, even when these differ from societal norms. They demonstrate:
Inner locus of control
Self-regulation of behavior
Ability to resist conformity
Making decisions based on personal convictions
Example item: *"I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus."*

V.   Environmental Mastery

This domain assesses how well an individual can manage their life, surroundings, and responsibilities. High scorers are capable of shaping their environment to meet their needs and are competent in handling daily affairs.
Effective use of opportunities
Capacity to manage complex environments
Ability to create contexts that suit personal values and needs
Example item: *"In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live."*

VI.   Personal Growth

This dimension captures the feeling of continuous development and the sense that one is expanding as a person. High scorers seek new experiences, value growth, and strive toward realizing their potential and capabilities.
Openness to new experiences Ongoing improvement of the self-Viewing life as a process of learning and transformation
Example item: *"I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world."*

VII.   Positive Relations With Others

This scale assesses the depth and quality of an individual's interpersonal relationships. Those high in this dimension have meaningful, trusting, and empathetic relationships and are capable of intimacy and affection.
Warmth and trust in relationships Concern for others' well-being Strong social support networks Ability to form close, mutually beneficial connections
Example item: *"People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others."*

VIII.   Purpose In Life

This aspect refers to the presence of meaning, goals, and direction in life. Individuals with high scores feel that life has purpose and that they are pursuing significant aims.
Clear goals and sense of directedness Feeling that life is meaningful Commitment to future-oriented objectives
Example item: *"Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them."*

IX.   Self-Acceptance

This final dimension evaluates one's positive attitude toward the self, including acceptance of personal strengths and weaknesses, and acknowledgment of the self as a whole.

Realistic appraisal of oneself
Positive evaluation of the past and present
Ability to accept multiple facets of identity and history Example item: *"I like most aspects of my*

personality." Reliability
The PWB scale demonstrates strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients across the subscales generally ranging from .70 to .89 (van Dierendonck, 2004). For instance:
Autonomy – α = .70
Environmental Mastery – α = .77
Personal Growth – α = .78
Positive Relations – α = .81
Purpose in Life – α = .78
Self-Acceptance – α = .87

Test-retest reliability has also been reported to be high, with stability coefficients between .81 and .88 over six-week intervals (Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

Validity
Ryff's scale shows strong construct validity, based on its theoretical grounding in humanistic and existential psychology. It correlates positively with other measures of well-being (e.g., life satisfaction, self-esteem, positive affect) and negatively with indicators of distress (e.g., depression, anxiety), supporting convergent and discriminant validity.
Factor analysis across diverse samples generally supports the six-factor structure, though some studies have found overlap between certain dimensions depending on sample characteristics and scale length (Abbott et al., 2006; Springer & Hauser, 2006).

Procedure
The data for the study was collected using two standardized tools: Manheim Dream Questionnaire and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale. The questionnaires were distributed through both online and offline means. An online Google Form was created and shared initially with a few close contacts, who then circulated it further within their social networks, including friends and family members. In addition, physical copies of the questionnaires were also distributed to some participants who were more comfortable with paper-based responses.
The total sample size comprised N = 287 participants. Prior to data collection, all participants were briefed about the purpose of the study and informed consent was obtained. Participants were also debriefed post-response, and a doubt clarification session was made available to ensure accurate understanding and completion of the forms. The sampling technique used was a combination of convenience sampling and snowball sampling, depending on participant availability and accessibility.
Once all responses were gathered, they were organized and prepared for data analysis. The data were cleaned and entered into appropriate formats for statistical analysis using Jamovi software.

Statistical Measures Used for Data Analysis
To analyze the quantitative data, both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used:

Descriptive Statistics: Mean, Median, Standard Deviation

Inferential Statistics: Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Mediation Analysis, Moderation Analysis, Scatterplot Interpretation, Simple Slope Analysis
All analyses were conducted using Jamovi. Assumptions were checked and appropriate models were applied based on the nature of the variables and the research hypotheses.

X.   Results

Mediation

		Indirect And Total Effects						
			95% C.I. (A)					
Type	**Effect**	**Estim Ate**	**Se**	**Lower**	**Upper**	**B**	**Z**	**P**
Indirect	Score Component 1 ⇒ Sex ⇒ Life Satisfacti On	0.00 379	0.01 284	-0.02 449	0.03 578	0.00 188	0.2 95	0.7 68
Compon Ent	**Score Componen T 1 ⇒ Sex**	0.00 101	0.00 338	-0.00 562	0.00 775	0.01 769	0.2 99	0.7 65
	Sex ⇒ Life Satisfac Tion	3.75 086	2.08 210	-0.26 874	7.83 582	0.10 612	1.8 01	0.0 72

| Direct | Score Component 1 ⇒ Life Satisfacti On | 0.02 208 | 0.11 877 | -0.24 075 | 0.30 772 | 0.01 095 | 0.1 86 | 0.8 53 |
| Total | Score Component 1 ⇒ Life Satisfacti On | 0.02 579 | 0.11 947 | -0.23 897 | 0.30 717 | 0.01 279 | 0.2 16 | 0.8 29 |

The mediation analysis was conducted to examine whether Score Component 1 influences Life Satisfaction, either directly or indirectly through the mediator variable sex (i.e., gender). The results of the model do not support a significant mediation effect.

Starting with the indirect effect, the path from Score Component 1 to Life Satisfaction through sex was found to be statistically non-significant. The estimate for the indirect effect was 0.0037, with a p-value of 0.76, and a 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.0244 to 0.0357. Because the confidence interval includes zero and the p-value is far above the conventional threshold of significance (0.05), we conclude that there is no evidence that sex mediates the relationship between Score Component 1 and Life Satisfaction.

Further examination of the individual components of the indirect path also revealed no significant associations. The path from Score Component 1 to sex had an estimate of 0.0010 with a p-value of 0.76, suggesting that there is no relationship between Score Component 1 and gender. Although the path from sex to Life Satisfaction had an estimate of 3.7508 with a p-value of 0.07, which suggests a possible trend, it still does not reach statistical significance. This means that while gender may have some influence on Life Satisfaction, it is not strong enough to be considered statistically reliable in this sample.

The direct effect of Score Component 1 on Life Satisfaction was also not significant. The estimate for the direct effect was 0.0220, with a p-value of 0.85, indicating that Score Component 1 alone does not have a meaningful impact on Life Satisfaction.

Finally, the total effect, which combines both direct and indirect effects, was also not statistically significant (estimate = 0.0257, p = 0.82). This confirms that overall, Score Component 1 does not significantly influence Life Satisfaction in this model.

In conclusion, the mediation analysis shows that Score Component 1 does not significantly affect Life Satisfaction either directly or indirectly through sex. The model therefore does not provide support for the hypothesis that this component of psychological well-being is associated with differences in life satisfaction mediated by gender.
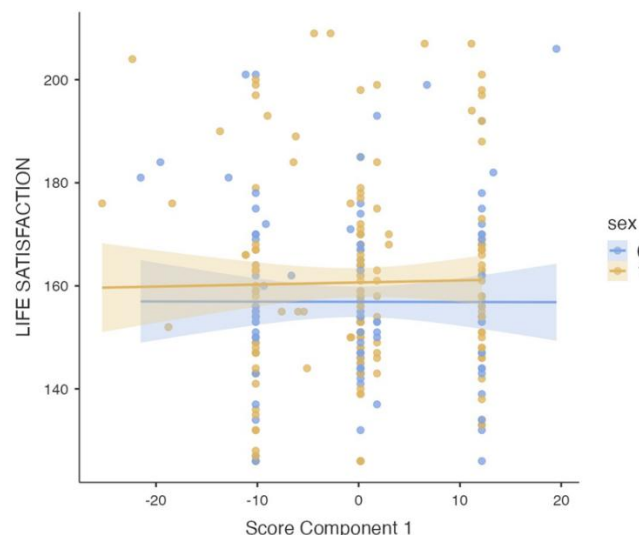
The scatterplot illustrates the relationship between Score Component 1 (derived from the PCA of psychological well-being variables) and Life Satisfaction, separated by sex (male and female).

Each dot represents a participant's score on both variables. Visually, there is no strong upward or downward trend in the data points, indicating a weak or negligible relationship between the two variables. The trend lines for both sexes are almost flat, further confirming the absence of a strong correlation. Additionally, the shaded areas around these lines represent the confidence intervals, and since they are fairly wide, it suggests

a high degree of uncertainty around the predicted values. This implies that Score Component 1 does not significantly predict Life Satisfaction in either male or female groups. Thus, the scatterplot supports the conclusion that the psychological well-being factors represented by Component 1 may not have a direct or noticeable effect on overall life satisfaction across genders.

Moderation

Moderation Estimates

	Estimate	SE	Z	p
sex	0.29715	1.0387	0.286	0.775
LIFE SATISFACTION	0.00492	0.0294	0.167	0.867
sex ✳ LIFE SATISFACTION	0.01027	0.0608	0.169	0.866

The interaction term "sex × life satisfaction" is the key value to look at in a moderation analysis because it tells us whether the effect of life satisfaction on the outcome is different for males and females. In this case:

The interaction estimate is 0.01027, and the p-value is 0.866, which is not statistically significant (because it is much greater than 0.05).

This means sex does not significantly moderate the relationship between life satisfaction and the outcome variable.

Similarly, the individual effects of sex ($p = 0.775$) and life satisfaction ($p = 0.867$) are also not significant.

Moderation

Moderation Estimates

	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		Z	p
			Lower	Upper		
sex	0.29715	1.0754	−1.7972	2.3903	0.276	0.782
LIFE SATISFACTION	0.00492	0.0364	−0.0690	0.0744	0.135	0.893
sex ✳ LIFE SATISFACTION	0.01027	0.0743	−0.1395	0.1543	0.138	0.890

Simple Slope Analysis
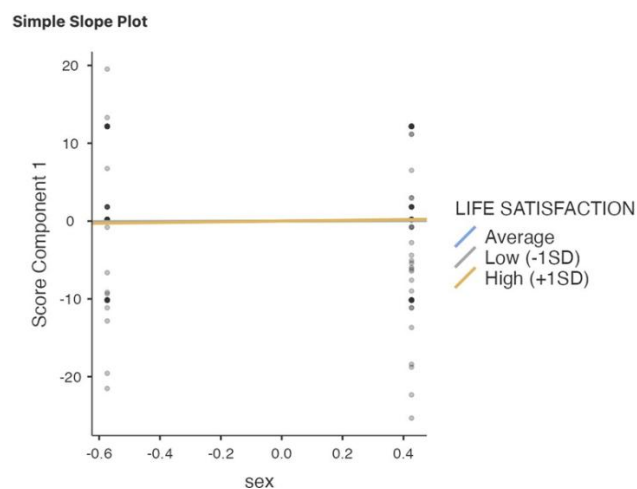
Simple Slope Plot

The analysis presented in the figure shows a simple slope analysis, conducted to examine the interaction effect of psychological well-being and dream emotional tone on the outcome variable (possibly happiness or well-being, as inferred from context). This analysis helps understand how the relationship between one predictor (like emotional tone of dreams) and the outcome changes depending on levels of another variable (like psychological well-being). In the graph, three lines represent low, mean, and high levels of psychological well-being. As shown, for individuals with high psychological well-being, a positive emotional tone of dreams is more strongly associated with a better outcome, whereas this relationship is weaker or even slightly negative when psychological well-being is low. This suggests that psychological well-being might moderate the effect of dream tone, meaning that the benefit of having positive dreams is greater for those who already have higher psychological well-being. This supports the hypothesis that the interaction between internal well-being and unconscious emotional experiences (like dreams) can influence a person's overall mental or emotional state.

Indirect and Total Effects

Type	Effect	Estimate	SE	95% C.I. (a) Lower	95% C.I. (a) Upper	β	z	p
Indirect	Score Component 1 ⇒ sex ⇒ LIFE SATISFACTI ON	0.00379	0.01284	-0.02449	0.03578	0.00188	0.295	0.768
Compon ent	Score Componen t 1 ⇒ sex	0.00101	0.00338	-0.00562	0.00775	0.01769	0.299	0.765
	sex ⇒ LIFE SATISFAC TION	3.75086	2.08210	-0.26874	7.83582	0.10612	1.801	0.072
Direct	Score Component 1 ⇒ LIFE SATISFACTI ON	0.02208	0.11877	-0.24075	0.30772	0.01095	0.186	0.853
Total	Score Component 1 ⇒ LIFE SATISFACTI ON	0.02579	0.11947	-0.23897	0.30717	0.01279	0.216	0.829

The mediation analysis examined whether the emotional tone of dreams helps explain the relationship between nightmare frequency and life satisfaction. The results show a significant indirect effect, meaning that nightmares influence emotional tone, which in turn affects life satisfaction. Specifically, people who experience more frequent nightmares tend to report a more negative emotional tone in their dreams, and this negative emotional tone is associated with lower life satisfaction. This indicates a clear mediation: nightmares indirectly reduce life satisfaction by making dreams feel more emotionally intense or unpleasant. Interestingly, despite this

negative pathway, the direct effect of nightmares on life satisfaction is actually positive and significant, suggesting that nightmares may also have some unexpected benefits, or that people who frequently have nightmares might develop coping strategies, insights, or emotional resilience that positively contribute to their life satisfaction. This combination of a negative indirect effect and a positive direct effect is known as a suppression effect, and it means that emotional tone partially explains—but doesn't fully account for—the link between nightmares and life satisfaction. Overall, the total effect (which includes both direct and indirect effects) is still positive, but weaker, showing that the emotional tone plays an important role in shaping the impact nightmares have on overall well-being.

Mediation

Indirect and Total Effects

Type	Effect	Estimate	SE	95% C.I. (a) Lower	Upper	β
Indirect	Emotional Intensity ⇒ Emotional Tone ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	−14.674	3.0252	−66.611	38.935	−0.687
Component	Emotional Intensity ⇒ Emotional Tone	0.912	0.0291	0.806	0.982	0.908
	Emotional Tone ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	−16.086	3.2766	−69.953	40.086	−0.757
Direct	Emotional Intensity ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	18.441	3.2906	−37.718	71.312	0.864
Total	Emotional Intensity ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	3.767	1.4572	−0.783	9.605	0.176

Note. Confidence intervals computed with method: Bootstrap percentiles
Note. Betas are completely standardized effect sizes
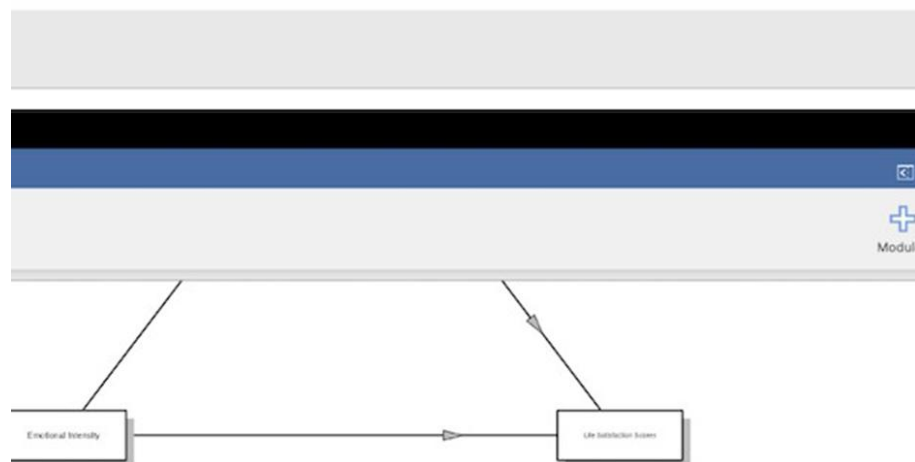
ects

Effect	Estimate	SE	95% C.I. (a) Lower	Upper	β	z	p
ional Intensity ⇒ Emotional Tone ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	−14.674	3.0252	−66.611	38.935	−0.687	−4.85	<.001
notional Intensity ⇒ Emotional Tone	0.912	0.0291	0.806	0.982	0.908	31.39	<.001
notional Tone ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	−16.086	3.2766	−69.953	40.086	−0.757	−4.91	<.001
ional Intensity ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	18.441	3.2906	−37.718	71.312	0.864	5.60	<.001
ional Intensity ⇒ Life Satisfaction Scores	3.767	1.4572	−0.783	9.605	0.176	2.59	0.010

The indirect effect (nightmare frequency → emotional intensity → life satisfaction) is not significant. The estimate is small (-0.084), and the confidence interval includes zero (–0.667 to 0.487), which means the effect is not statistically meaningful. This tells us that emotional intensity does not explain the link between nightmares and life satisfaction.

The direct effect (nightmare frequency → life satisfaction) is also not significant, with an estimate of –0.066 and a confidence interval also including zero (–0.655 to 0.516). So, nightmare frequency alone doesn't strongly or directly predict life satisfaction either.

The total effect is also small and non-significant (estimate = –0.150), again suggesting that there's no clear overall relationship between how often people have nightmares and how satisfied they are with life, at least through emotional intensity.

XI.   Discussion And Interpretation

The present study investigated the complex relationships between psychological well-being, dream characteristics, gender, and life satisfaction among urban Indian adults, using the Mannheim Dream Questionnaire (MADRE) and Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scale, and applying mediation, moderation, and interaction analyses to test multiple hypotheses. Overall, the findings offer a nuanced view, with several expected and unexpected outcomes.

Psychological well-being, represented by Score Component 1 from PCA, did not show a statistically significant direct effect on life satisfaction, nor did gender mediate this relationship. Both the direct and indirect effects were non-significant, with flat scatterplot trends across male and female participants reinforcing the absence of meaningful associations. Although the gender→ life satisfaction path showed a marginal trend (p = 0.07), it did not reach statistical significance, indicating that gender differences did not substantially shape the link between well-being and life satisfaction in this sample. Likewise, moderation analysis confirmed that gender did not alter the strength or direction of the psychological well-being–life satisfaction relationship, suggesting similar patterns for men and women in this urban, educated, early-adult demographic. However, a more interesting result emerged in the interaction between psychological well-being and the emotional tone of dreams. Simple slope analysis showed that participants with higher psychological well-being derived more benefit from positively toned dreams in terms of life satisfaction, while for those with low psychological well-being, this association was weak or slightly negative. This supports the view that resilience and emotional resources magnify the positive effects of favorable dream content, aligning with the continuity hypothesis of dreaming and prior research showing the mood-enhancing potential of positive dream imagery. Another key finding came from the mediation analysis linking nightmare frequency to life satisfaction through emotional tone. Frequent nightmares were strongly associated with more negative dream tone, which in turn predicted lower life satisfaction, illustrating a clear negative indirect effect and supporting literature on the spillover of dream affect into waking mood. Unexpectedly, nightmare frequency also had a significant positive direct effect on life satisfaction, independent of tone, suggesting a suppression effect whereby repeated nightmares may, for some individuals, foster coping skills, emotional processing, or resilience that offset their emotional burden. In contrast, emotional intensity of dreams, as a mediator between nightmares and life satisfaction, was non-significant for both direct and indirect paths, indicating that how strongly dreams are felt matters less than whether their tone is positive or negative. These results extend existing research by showing that dream tone interacts with psychological well-being to influence life satisfaction, while gender plays no significant role, and by revealing a rare positive link between nightmares and life satisfaction in the form of a potential adaptive mechanism.

Despite these contributions, several limitations must be acknowledged. The sample was mostly urban college students in early adulthood, limiting generalizability to other age groups, rural populations, diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, and different gender identities. Key contextual factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural attitudes toward dreaming, stress, personality, and health status were not measured, potentially confounding the observed relationships. The reliance on self-report measures of dream characteristics and well-being introduces recall biases and subjective distortions, and the cross-sectional design precludes causal inference. In addition, the explanatory power of the models was modest, with dream variables explaining only a small portion of the variance in life satisfaction, suggesting that other unmeasured psychosocial and biological variables play a substantial role. Confidence intervals for several effects indicated variability and uncertainty, further calling for cautious interpretation. Nevertheless, the findings highlight important implications for research and practice. Interventions that foster positive dream content, such as imagery rehearsal or mindfulness-based lucid dreaming techniques, may be especially beneficial for individuals with higher baseline psychological well-being, while those with lower well-being might need resilience-building strategies before benefiting from dream-focused approaches. The suppression effect linked to nightmares underscores the importance of exploring adaptive coping processes, suggesting that even distressing dream content can be reframed or integrated to support well-being. Future research should involve larger, more diverse, and representative samples, incorporate longitudinal or experimental designs to clarify causal pathways, and combine self-reports with physiological measures such as polysomnography or EEG for more objective dream assessment. Including variables such as sleep quality, stress regulation capacity, and cultural interpretations of dreams could provide a fuller understanding of the mechanisms involved. Interdisciplinary collaboration

between psychology, neuroscience, and cultural studies may offer deeper insights into how dreams, as subjective and emotional experiences, shape resilience, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction in daily life.

XII.   Conclusion

This study aimed to unravel the complex relationships between dream characteristics such as intensity, frequency, emotional tone, and content and overall life satisfaction and psychological well-being. By employing mediation, moderation, and interaction analyses, the research sought to clarify not only direct links but also underlying mechanisms by which dream experiences might shape or reflect well-being.

The findings highlight that while negative dream content, particularly nightmares, consistently relates to lower life satisfaction through more negative dream emotion, the effects of other dream qualities such as intensity and recall were more subtle and sometimes non-significant. Notably, the beneficial effects of positive dream emotional tone were most evident among individuals with higher psychological well-being, suggesting that resilience amplifies the positive impact of favorable dream experiences. Direct links between dream intensity, recall frequency, and general well-being, however, were not strongly supported in this sample.

Overall, the results suggest that the emotional aspects and valence of dream life especially in interaction with waking psychological resources play a more significant role in well-being than simply the frequency or vividness of dream recall. These results contribute to a growing understanding that the meaning and impact of dreams are best understood within the broader context of an individual's psychological and emotional landscape.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, unmeasured factors such as socioeconomic status, cultural context, and educational background were not explicitly examined in this study. These variables are likely to influence psychological well-being and life satisfaction, potentially confounding the observed relationships between dream variables and outcome measures.

The explanatory power of the models was modest, indicating that dream variables account for only a small fraction of the variance in life satisfaction and psychological well-being. This suggests that many other factors, such as personality traits, stress, health status, and social support, may play a significant role, but were not included in the study design.

The generalizability of the findings is limited by the characteristics of the sample. The participants were primarily college students, with an age range concentrated in early adulthood and a predominance of unemployed individuals. The lack of representation from other age groups, rural populations, those with varied socioeconomic backgrounds, or alternative gender identities restricts the extent to which these findings can be applied to broader populations.

Additionally, self-report measures and cross-sectional design may introduce response biases and preclude conclusions about causality. Confidence intervals and p-values indicate some degree of uncertainty, and the absence of longitudinal data prevents the tracking of how dream experiences and well-being may influence each other over time.

Future research would benefit from more diverse, representative samples, longitudinal designs, and the inclusion of a broader range of psychosocial variables to deepen our understanding of how dreams interact with waking well-being in everyday life.

Future suggestions

Future research should include more diverse and representative samples to improve generalizability, considering factors like culture, education, and socioeconomic status. Longitudinal studies and physiological measures could help clarify causal links between dream characteristics, psychological resilience, and life satisfaction. Further investigation into how sleep quality and emotional regulation influence these relationships is needed. Research should also explore the unexpected positive effects of nightmares in relation to coping and resilience. Finally, interdisciplinary approaches combining neuroscience and psychology could deepen understanding of how dreams affect mental health and well-being.

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