

Moderating Effects of Emotion Regulation Goals on Relationship between Emotional Suppression and Psychological Well-being

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High levels of emotional suppression are generally associated with poor psychological health and psychopathological symptoms. However, cross-cultural studies have yielded mixed results, with suppression sometimes associated with positive outcomes in certain contexts. To address these inconsistencies, we examined whether emotion regulation goals moderate the relationship between suppression and psychological well-being. Data were gathered online from 368 college and graduate students at universities in Korea. The results revealed that contra-hedonic goals and instrumental goals significantly moderated the relationship, with higher levels of contra-hedonic and instrumental regulation goals attenuating the negative effects of suppression on psychological well-being. It is noteworthy that individuals who flexibly use emotional suppression in accordance with their goals may experience better psychological outcomes and various secondary benefits. These findings underscore the importance of considering the motivational aspects of emotion regulation to explain individual differences in the effects of emotional suppression on psychological health.

Keywords: emotional suppression, emotion regulation goals, psychological well-being, motivation

Introduction


As emotions are an essential part of everyday life, adaptive emotion regulation has significant implications for our affect, interpersonal relationships, and well-being (Aldao et al., 2015; Bonanno & Burton, 2013). Specifically, emotion regulation allows individuals to transform current emotions into desired emotions and

determine how they experience and express emotions in accordance with social context or demands (Gross & John, 2003). Considerable research recognizing the importance of emotion regulation has made pivotal contributions, such as delineating a wide array of emotion regulation strategies and their associated outcomes. For instance, emotional suppression, a form of response modulation that involves actively inhibiting emotional expression after fully experiencing the emotion, is considered a maladaptive strategy linked to greater depressive symptoms and poorer interpersonal functioning (Aldao et al., 2010; Gross & John, 2003). However, a new generation of studies provides theoretical evidence that the adaptiveness or maladaptiveness of these strategies may vary based on situational contexts or personal goals (Bonanno, 2005; Sheppes et al., 2012; Tamir et al., 2020). For example, emotional suppression has been shown to be less associated with negative outcomes in Eastern than Western cultures (Butler et al.,

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2007) and even be associated with positive interpersonal impressions in certain circumstances (Kalokerinos et al., 2017). Furthermore, Tackman and Srivastava (2016) found that emotional suppression was preferred over the other emotion regulation strategies when dealing with social conflicts or interacting with individuals of higher status, and Schall (2016) also suggested that individuals are likely to be evaluated more positively when they suppress their emotions in outperformance situations.

The present study posits that the inconsistency in findings regarding the effects of emotional suppression may arise from a neglect of the significance of emotion regulation goals, which leads to a lack of consideration for individual differences in the reasons for suppressing emotions. For example, individuals might use emotional suppression for different reasons, such as avoiding conflict or creating positive impressions (English et al., 2017). Several studies have also found that individuals in collectivistic cultures, who tend to value interdependence and obligations to group members, are more likely to suppress their emotions for social harmony (Huwae & Schaafsma, 2018; Singelis, 1994). Given that emotional suppression is often employed for such secondary benefits, it is reasonable to assume that the consequences of suppression may vary depending on the context. In other words, the negative consequences of emotional suppression may be altered by the objectives pursued through the choice of this strategy. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the impact of emotion regulation goals on the relationship between emotional suppression and psychological well-being, emphasizing the significance of individual differences in the motivational aspects of emotion regulation. This study is also anticipated to elucidate the inconsistent findings of previous studies on the outcomes of emotional suppression and to propose the potential for enhancing adaptive emotion regulation by utilizing specific emotional regulation strategies that align with one's goals or situational contexts.

Emotional Suppression

Emotional suppression refers to the conscious inhibition of emotional expression or behavior while an individual is experiencing emotional arousal (Gross & Levenson, 1993). It is not simply the absence of emotional expression but an active effort to control one's emotional response (Butler et al., 2003). Gross's Process Model of Emotion

Regulation provides a framework for understanding the progression of emotion regulation and differentiates various forms based on their primary impact on the emotion-generative process (Gross, 1998). Emotion expression is considered a type of "response-focused" emotion regulation as it down-regulates emotional responses once they have begun. Several studies have argued that emotional suppression leads to negative biological reactions due to the cognitive effort required to monitor and suppress ongoing emotional responses (Dan-Glauser & Gross, 2011). Similarly, other studies have reported that emotional suppression adversely affects psychological well-being, including decreased life satisfaction, increased anger and anxiety, and heightened stress (Cote, 2005; Larsen et al., 2012).

However, recent cross-cultural studies have produced inconsistent results regarding the negative impacts of emotional suppression, which raises questions about its effects. Some studies have indicated that emotional suppression negatively affects self-esteem and psychological well-being (Hagemann et al., 2006), while others have found weak or no negative effects (Butler et al., 2003; Consedine et al., 2002). We postulate that these inconsistent results may be due to individual differences in emotion regulation goals, specifically people's reasons for suppressing their emotions. Some individuals may use emotional suppression to protect themselves or avoid social threats, while others may suppress their emotions for prosocial reasons (Butler et al., 2007). For example, someone may hide anger to avoid confrontation or suppress feelings of joy when winning a competitive game to prevent hurting someone's feelings (Butler et al., 2007; Friedman & Miller-Herringer, 1991).

It is worth mentioning that the frequency and purposes of suppression vary based on cultural values. In Western cultures that prioritize independence and self-assertion, emotional suppression is associated with negative outcomes and is often used for self-protective purposes (Butler et al., 2007). On the other hand, in Eastern cultures that value interdependence and relationship harmony, emotional suppression is encouraged, and people frequently suppress their emotions for prosocial goals during social interactions (Wei et al., 2013). Cross-cultural studies have reported that individuals in Eastern cultures experience fewer negative consequences from suppression than those in Western cultures and that emotional suppression may even have positive consequences (Cheung & Park, 2010; Consedine et al., 2002). For example, Consedine and

colleagues (2002) have argued that if an individual or culture values emotional suppression, the negative effects can be mitigated, leading to enhanced self-esteem and intimate relationships. These findings suggest that the outcomes of emotional suppression may differ by culture and the goals underlying this strategy.

Emotion Regulation Goals

Emotion regulation goals involve specific reasons for regulating emotions and the direction of emotion regulation, whether aimed at increasing or decreasing particular emotions (English et al., 2017). Tamir (2009) has proposed two main categories that distinguish emotion regulation goals based on inherent motives: hedonic goals and instrumental goals. Hedonic goals primarily focus on momentary emotional experiences and can be divided into pro-hedonic and contra-hedonic goals. Pro-hedonic goals refer to the desire to experience more positive emotions or fewer negative emotions, such as wanting to feel happier at a party or trying to reduce sadness when one's around romantic partner or friends (Eldesouky & English, 2019). In contrast, contra-hedonic goals refer to the desire to experience fewer positive emotions or more negative emotions, which are sometimes used for instrumental purposes (Tamir, 2009). For instance, individuals may listen to plaintive music to evoke sadness, aiming to put themselves into a somber mood before delivering bad news (Riediger, 2015). Additionally, individuals with depression, who perceive negative affect as more congruent with their self-image, desire to experience less happiness and more sadness compared to non-depressed individuals. This is because the preference for a stable self-view enhances the predictability of events and thereby fosters a sense of control (Brandão et al., 2023; Riediger, 2015). Riediger (2015) further posited that seeking negative experiences may be driven by the relief or pleasure that follows in the aftermath.

Meanwhile, instrumental goals focus on the outcomes expected to be achieved by changing emotional experiences or expressions and can be categorized as performance, prosocial, and impression management goals. Performance goals describe the desire to excel in an activity, prosocial goals involve maintaining or improving relationships with others, and impression management goals pertain to the desire to present oneself in a specific way to influence relationships (Eldesouky & English, 2019). For instance, individuals

control negative emotions for greater marital satisfaction for both partners (An et al., 2022), and runners who believe that anger improves their running speed might try to intensify their anger before a race (Lane et al., 2011).

From this perspective, considering that emotional suppression is often used to make positive impressions or avoid conflicts (Butler et al., 2007; Consedine, 2002; English et al., 2017; Wei et al., 2013), suppression is expected to be associated with instrumental goals, particularly prosocial and impression management goals. Suppression employed for instrumental goals appears to have different consequences from previous studies that revealed the detrimental effects of suppression. For instance, individuals who suppress their emotions to improve their romantic relationships reported higher satisfaction and were better protected against the negative consequences of suppression (Le & Impett, 2013). Similarly, Wei et al. (2013) found that individuals often suppress emotions to improve relationships, and this suppression was associated with positive interpersonal harmony. These findings suggest that the negative effects of emotional suppression may be mitigated depending on the motivations for the suppression, such as improving interpersonal relationships or preserving social harmony.

According to the functional theory of emotion, the success of emotion regulation in achieving one's goals is crucial for an individual's well-being. Bonanno (2005) also found that individuals whose emotion regulation aligns with their emotion regulation goals have better psychological well-being than those whose emotion regulation does not, regardless of the emotions' valence. From this perspective, the effectiveness of emotion regulation is not determined by the resulting emotion itself but rather by how well it enables an individual to achieve their goals. In other words, even if a person pursues goals that increase negative emotions, it can still be considered adaptive regulation if it aligns with their goals or circumstances. Therefore, recent studies have argued that even pursuing contra-hedonic goals is not always maladaptive but can be functional as long as it is consistent with ultimate goals (Tamir, 2009). Riediger et al. (2009) also argued that contra-hedonic goals have an instrumental value that can be utilized in social interactions or to achieve personal goals. For example, Park and Kim (2014) found that psychologically healthier individuals were more willing to experience anger during confrontations with others, and

Tamir and Ford (2012) found that individuals perceived anger as being potentially useful in confrontation situations were more likely to be associated with better psychological well-being, higher academic achievement, and life satisfaction.

The Present Research

The present study aimed to investigate whether emotion regulation goals could explain the inconsistent findings regarding the negative effects of emotional suppression. Considering that emotional suppression has been associated with positive consequences in specific contexts, we hypothesized that the adverse effects of suppression on subjective well-being may vary depending on an individual's pursued goals in emotion regulation as well as the extent of the pursuit. Specifically, we hypothesized that contra-hedonic and instrumental goals (such as social harmony, academic achievement, and positive impression) would mitigate the negative impact of suppression on subjective well-being. Since the use of suppression tends to increase negative emotions and provide secondary benefits, aligning with the objectives of these goals, we expected these goals to act as buffers. Furthermore, regarding the pro-hedonic goals, we hypothesized that the negative effects of emotional suppression on psychological well-being would be more pronounced in individuals pursuing pro-hedonic goals. This is because suppression is less likely to enhance positive emotions. The present study was expected to provide additional insights into why individuals suppress their emotions and to further examine how the impact of emotional suppression on psychological well-being varies based on the extent to which individuals pursue specific goals. Additionally, this study aimed to highlight the importance of flexibly regulating emotions in a manner suitable for the emotion regulation goals, as demonstrated by previous studies (Westphal & Bonanno, 2004). Taken together, the findings would provide an important extension of past work by evaluating the motivational component of emotion regulation and its impact on the effectiveness of emotion regulation strategies.

Methods

Participants

The participants were 368 college and graduate students (32.6%

male, 67.4% female) aged 18-33 ($M = 23.86$, $SD = 3.17$). Advertisements for recruitment and the online survey were posted after obtaining ethical approval from the Institutional Review Board. Each participant provided prior informed consent.

Materials

Emotion Regulation Goals Scale

We utilized the Emotion Regulation Goals Scale, a self-report measure developed by Eldesouky and English (2019), to assess emotion regulation goals. The original English version of the scale was translated into Korean using forward-backward translation. Two independent translators with master's degrees in clinical psychology and experience in cultural translation performed the forward translation of the 18-item scale into Korean. Subsequently, a bilingual individual conducted the backward translation into English without reviewing the original English version. A professional translator then carefully examined and compared the original and translated versions. The translation process involved multiple rounds of review and discussion until a unanimous agreement on the translation was reached.

The Emotion Regulation Goals Scale evaluates the pursuit of pro-hedonic, contra-hedonic, performance, prosocial, and impression management goals. The scale comprises 18 items divided into five subscales, and responses are rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = never, 7 = always; $\alpha = .85$). The five subscales are pro-hedonic (e.g., "to feel more positive emotion"), contra-hedonic (e.g., "to feel more negative emotion"), performance (e.g., "to get work done or to learn"), prosocial (e.g., "to maintain a close relationship with others"), and impression management (e.g., "to avoid being rejected by others"). The original scale reported Cronbach's alphas of .74, .80, .83, .84, and .85 for each subscale, while in the present study, the respective Cronbach's alphas were .67, .81, .80, .87, and .85.

Emotion Regulation Questionnaire

Emotional suppression was assessed using the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) developed by Gross and John (2003) and translated into Korean version by Lee et al. (2009); The ERQ has been studied in the general population, emphasizing individual variations and links to psychological symptoms (Sörman et al.,

2021). Therefore, this study employed the ERQ, a well-validated and widely recognized questionnaire. Only four items (e.g., “I keep my emotions to myself”) related to emotional suppression were included. Each item is rated from 1 (never) to 7 (always), with higher ratings indicating higher emotional suppression ($\alpha = .78$).

Psychological Well-being Scale

Psychological well-being was assessed using the Psychological Well-being Scale developed by Ryff (1989) and adapted by Kim et al. (2001). The scale comprises 46 items across six subscales: self-acceptance (e.g., “In general, I feel confident and positive about myself”), environmental mastery (e.g., “In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live”), positive relations with others (e.g., “People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others”), autonomy (e.g., “I tend to worry about what other people think of me”), personal growth (e.g., “I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world”), and purpose in life (e.g., “My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me”). Participants rated each item on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), with higher ratings indicating greater psychological well-being ($\alpha = .93$).

Statistical Analysis

All data analyses were performed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and SPSS Process Macro, version 20, with the following specific procedures: First, a frequency analysis was conducted to ascertain the demographic characteristics of the participants, and descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the means and standard deviations of each variable. Second, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to evaluate the intercorre-

lations among all variables. Lastly, hierarchical multiple regression analysis, a widely recognized method for examining the effect of a moderator while controlling for other variables (Aguinis, 1995), was employed to determine whether emotion regulation goals (pro-hedonic, contra-hedonic, instrumental goals) moderate the impact of emotional suppression on psychological well-being. To address potential multicollinearity among the first-order terms and interaction terms, the emotional suppression and three emotion regulation goals variables were mean-centered.

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The means, standard deviations, and correlations for the variables are presented in Table 1. Consistent with our expectations, emotional suppression exhibited positive associations with pro-hedonic, contra-hedonic, and instrumental emotion regulation goals ($r = .22, p < .01$; $r = .33, p < .01$; $r = .27, p < .01$) and a negative association with subjective well-being ($r = -.17, p < .01$). The positive correlation between emotional suppression and pro-hedonic goals is unexpected given the numerous studies highlighting the detrimental effects of suppression on psychological well-being. However, this finding is consistent with previous studies which suggest that individuals with hedonic goals also employ emotion suppression strategies, though less frequently (Eldesouky & English, 2019; Gross, 1998). Furthermore, the positive associations between emotional suppression with contra-hedonic and instrumental goals replicate the findings from previous studies (Deng & Ding, 2019; Eldesouky & English, 2019), suggesting that individuals suppress their emotions when engaged in contra-hedonic and instrumental regulation.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations for Variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Emotional suppression	1				
2. Pro-hedonic goals	.218**	1			
3. Contra-hedonic goals	.331**	.122**	1		
4. Instrumental goals	.266**	.475**	.052	1	
5. Psychological well-being	-.173**	.108*	-.240**	-.024	1
Scaled means	3.83	4.36	2.55	4.76	3.96
Standard deviation	1.18	1.10	1.26	.89	.66

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

Emotion Regulation Goals

We conducted a regression analysis to examine the impact of emotional suppression and emotion regulation goals on psychological well-being. The results of the regression analyses on pro-hedonic, contra-hedonic, and instrumental goals are shown in Tables 2-4, respectively.

The pro-hedonic goals did not significantly moderate the link between emotional suppression and psychological well-being ($F(1, 36) = 1.53, p = .22$). In contrast, as shown in Table 3, we observed

statistically significant moderating effects of contra-hedonic goals on the relationship between emotional suppression and psychological well-being ($F(1, 36) = 5.35, p < .05$). Figure 1 indicates that the relation between emotional suppression and subjective well-being differs based on levels of contra-hedonic goals. Specifically, the slope of subjective well-being on suppression was positive for individuals with high contra-hedonic emotion regulation goals but negative for individuals with low goals. This suggests that the harmful effects of suppression on well-being are not observed and

Table 2. Regression Analysis Predicting Psychological Well-being from Emotional Suppression, Pro-hedonic Goals, and Their Interactions

Model	Predictor	B	β	t	R ²	ΔR^2	F
1	Emotional suppression	-1.117	-.173	-3.369***	.027	.030	11.349***
2	Emotional suppression	-1.332	-.207	-3.961***	.047	.022	8.580**
	Pro-hedonic goals	1.411	.153	2.929**			
3	Emotional suppression	-1.309	-.203	-3.890***	.049	.004	1.534
	Pro-hedonic goals	1.514	.164	3.100**			
	ES × PHG	.116	.064	1.239			

ES = Emotional suppression; PHG = Pro-hedonic goals.
** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 3. Regression Analysis Predicting Psychological Well-being from Emotional Suppression, Contra-hedonic Goals, and Their Interactions

Model	Predictor	B	β	t	R ²	ΔR^2	F
1	Emotional suppression	-1.117	-.173	-3.369***	.027	.030	11.349***
2	Emotional suppression	-.680	-.106	-1.972*	.062	.037	14.610***
	Contra-hedonic goals	-1.642	-.205	-3.822***			
3	Emotional suppression	-.460	-.071	-1.293	.073	.013	5.345*
	Contra-hedonic goals	-1.934	-.241	-4.343***			
	ES × CHG	.211	.123	2.312*			

ES = Emotional suppression; CHG = Contra-hedonic goal.
* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 4. Regression Analysis Predicting Psychological Well-being from Emotional Suppression, Instrumental Goals, and Their Interactions

Model	Predictor	B	β	t	R ²	ΔR^2	F
1	Emotional suppression	-1.117	-.173	-3.369***	.027	.030	11.349***
2	Emotional suppression	-1.158	-.180	-3.362***	.025	.001	.199
	Instrumental goals	.068	.024	.446			
3	Emotional suppression	-1.198	-.186	-3.498***	.038	.015	5.638*
	Instrumental goals	.126	.045	.829			
	ES × CHG	.068	.123	2.374*			

ES = Emotional suppression; IG = Instrumental goal.
* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

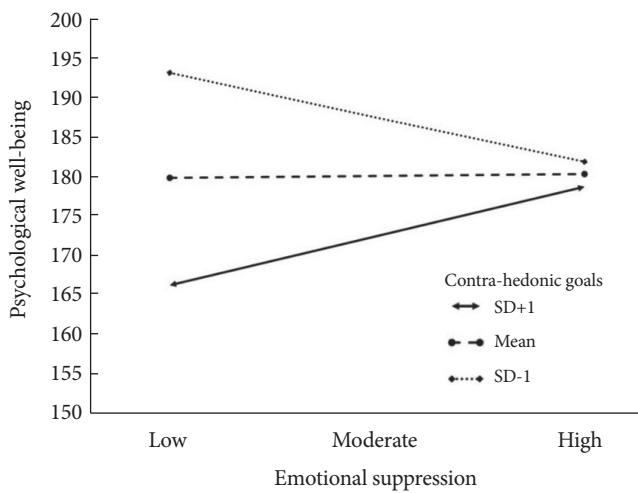


Figure 1. The interaction effect of contra-hedonic goals and emotional suppression on psychological well-being.

even yielded positive impacts in individuals with high levels of contra-hedonic goals. Given that employing strategies aligned with one's ultimate emotional regulation goals is expected to enhance psychological well-being (Bonanno, 2005), the frequent use of emotional suppression, known to reduce positive emotions and increase negative emotions, is anticipated to be associated with better psychological well-being in those with high contra-hedonic goals.

As shown in Table 4, we observed statistically significant moderating effects of instrumental goals on the relationship between emotional suppression and psychological well-being ($F(1, 36) = 5.64, p < .05$). Similarly, we graphed the interaction between emotional suppression and instrumental emotion regulation goals, as shown in Figure 2. As illustrated in Figure 2, frequent use of emotional suppression was associated with lower psychological well-being, irrespective of the levels of instrumental goals. However, Figure 2 shows that the slope of subjective well-being was marginally negative for individuals with high instrumental goals but steeply negative for those with low instrumental goals. In other words, the reduction in psychological well-being accompanied by frequent use of suppression was more pronounced in the group with low levels of instrumental goals, indicating that individuals with lower instrumental goals experience a more substantial decline in psychological well-being. Conversely, those with higher instrumental goals were able to maintain relatively higher levels of

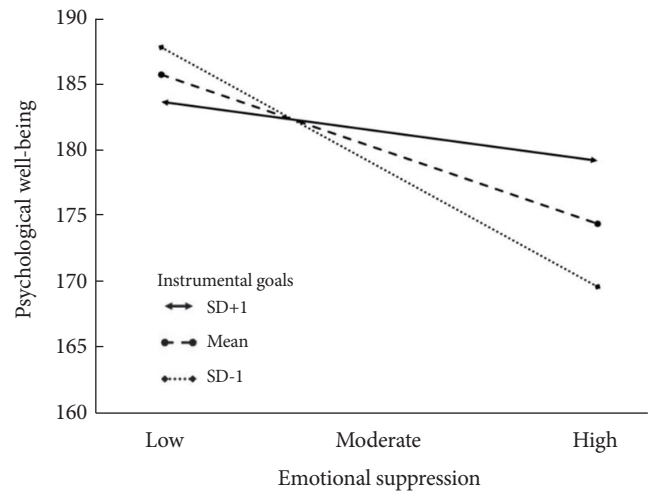


Figure 2. The interaction effect of instrumental goals and emotional suppression on psychological well-being.

psychological well-being even when frequently using emotional suppression. This finding is consistent with previous findings demonstrating that suppression used for instrumental goals yields different outcomes, emphasizing the need to investigate the mitigating effects of emotion regulation goals.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate whether an individual's emotion regulation goals could account for the inconsistent findings regarding the effects of emotional suppression. Specifically, the present study examined the moderating role of emotion regulation goals on the relationship between emotional suppression and psychological well-being. We categorized the emotion regulation goals into three categories: pro-hedonic, contra-hedonic, and instrumental. Our hypothesis posited that contra-hedonic and instrumental goals would mitigate the negative impact of suppression on subjective well-being, while pro-hedonic goals would amplify the adverse effects of emotional suppression on psychological well-being.

As anticipated, contra-hedonic emotion regulation goals moderated the relationship between emotional suppression and psychological well-being. Specifically, a negative relationship between emotional suppression and psychological well-being was observed for those with low contra-hedonic goals. In contrast, emotional

suppression was positively associated with psychological well-being for individuals with high contra-hedonic goals. Although this result contradicts the adverse effects of emotional suppression well-established in earlier studies (Gross & John, 2003; Wegner et al., 1987), it supports the notion that adaptive emotion regulation hinges not on the specific strategies individuals use, but on how effectively the process of emotion regulation aligns with their personal goals (Bonanno, 2005; Rogier & Velotti, 2017). For instance, according to Westphal and Bonanno (2004), individuals who can flexibly regulate their emotions in accordance with their goals and situational demands experience better adjustment than those who cannot. Similarly, Kim (2008) argued that individuals who flexibly use emotion regulation strategies tailored to their motivations and situational contexts tend to exhibit higher psychological well-being.

Considering that individuals who suppress their emotions may experience fewer positive emotions and be more susceptible to depression and anxiety (Eldesouky & English, 2019; Gross, 1998; Gross & Levenson, 1993, 1997), emotional suppression can be seen as a strategy that consists with the direction pursued by contra-hedonic goals (Deng & Ding, 2019; Tamir, 2016). In other words, emotional suppression could be an appropriate strategy for individuals with high contra-hedonic goals to attain their desired emotional states, leading to adaptive regulation and improved subjective well-being. Further support comes from the study reported by Riediger (2015), which suggests that individuals seeking out seemingly aversive experiences tend to appraise them more positively. On the other hand, individuals with low contra-hedonic goals may encounter unintended negative emotions as a consequence of emotional suppression, which could lead these negative emotions being felt more intensely and thereby diminishing psychological well-being. In essence, for individuals with low contra-hedonic goals, emotional suppression is a strategy that does not align with their objectives.

Although contra-hedonic goals mitigated the negative effects of emotional suppression on psychological well-being, individuals with high contra-hedonic goals experienced lower psychological well-being compared to those with low levels of contra-hedonic goals, and this pattern remained consistent regardless of whether emotional suppression was high or low. This supports the previous research suggesting that if the goals individuals pursue are dys-

functional, healthy emotion regulation is unlikely to occur, no matter how efficiently and flexibly they regulate their emotions (Westphal & Bonanno, 2004). In other words, effective emotional regulation to achieve one's desired emotional states may be overshadowed by pursuing dysfunctional and maladaptive goals, potentially resulting in adverse outcomes. These results emphasize the importance not only of aligning emotion regulation with personal goals but also of establishing adaptive and positive goals to pursue.

Furthermore, instrumental emotion regulation goals significantly moderated the relationship between suppression and psychological well-being. Specifically, an increase in emotional suppression was associated with decreased psychological well-being for individuals with low and high instrumental goals, but the decrease was more pronounced for those with low instrumental goals. This finding suggests that emotional suppression negatively affects psychological well-being, but this negative effect is attenuated in individuals aiming to derive secondary benefits through emotion regulation. In other words, individuals with high instrumental goals utilize emotional suppression to attain secondary benefits, thereby mitigating the negative emotions or experiences caused by suppression. Consedine (2002), for instance, found that emotional suppression can lead to social approval and increased self-esteem when valued by an individual or their culture. Furthermore, Wei (2013) reported that individuals who suppress their emotions to avoid conflicts with others tend to have better interpersonal relationships than those who do not, supporting the variable effects of emotional suppression found in this study. The results suggest that individuals who flexibly employ emotional suppression in alignment with their goals may derive greater benefits from suppressing emotions and the accompanying secondary benefits thereof.

Several limitations of the present study should be acknowledged. First, our sample consisted solely of undergraduate students, limiting the findings' generalizability. Future research should explore how emotion regulation goals, which reflect one's values, operate across different age groups. For instance, evidence suggests differences in targeted values or cultural tendencies exist between older and younger adults (Cha & Kwon, 2018). Furthermore, while a previous study found no moderating effects of gen-

der on emotion regulation goals and emotional suppression (Elde-souky & English, 2018), we did not specifically investigate gender differences in our study. Given that numerous studies suggest gender plays a pivotal role in emotion regulation (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2012; Simpson & Stroh, 2004), future research would benefit from exploring how gender may have varying implications in this context.

Second, the present study's design was correlational, and data were collected solely through self-report measures. Future studies should consider incorporating a daily diary method or experimental inductions of emotion regulation goals for emotional suppression. These approaches would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how individuals adaptively or maladaptively suppress their emotions based on their goals. Daily diary and experimental studies on emotion regulation goals would capture the dynamic changes in these goals that occur in naturalistic settings and contribute to the development of causal models.

The present study's findings have implications for expanding our understanding of emotional suppression and its associated outcomes. This study highlights the importance of individual differences, which previous cross-cultural research have overlooked (Butler et al., 2003; Dan-Glauser & Gross, 2011). It demonstrates that the suggested negative effects of emotional suppression can vary depending on one's emotion regulation goals. Specifically, we found that contra-hedonic and instrumental emotion regulation goals can attenuate the negative association between emotional suppression and psychological well-being. In other words, the detrimental effects of emotional suppression were mitigated by allowing individuals to achieve desired emotional states or secondary benefits. Collectively, the findings demonstrate the value of an individual difference approach and emphasize the role of motivation/goals in emotion regulation for determining the effects of emotional suppression. Specifically, it is crucial to adaptively regulate emotional suppression in a manner that aligns with one's objectives.

Author contributions statement

J Han, a former graduate student at Sogang University and currently a clinical psychology intern at Hallym Sacred Heart Univer-

sity, conceptualized and designed the research, collected and analyzed the data, and led the manuscript preparation. HS Kim, a professor at Seoul National University, conceptualized and designed the research, supervised the research process, reviewed and edited the manuscript, and acquired funding. All authors participated in revision of the manuscript, and approved the final submission.

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