



MINDFULNESS AND HAPPINESS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. More than simply positive mood, happiness is a state of well-being that encompasses living a good life –that is with a sense of meaning and deep satisfaction. Mindfulness and happiness varies from one individual to other individual. This study focuses on relationship between mindfulness and happiness. The total number of 250 sample were estimated for the study that was further again classified into 125 males and 125 females through purposive sampling technique. **Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ)**, by Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietmeyer, Toney (2000), **Oxford Happiness Questionnaire** by Michale Argyle and Peter Hills was used for the study. The mean, standard deviation, correlation and independent t-test were used for the computation of statistical analysis. Significant positive relationship was found between the mindfulness and happiness and significant gender difference exist in mindfulness. But there was no significant gender difference in happiness.

KEYWORDS: MINDFULNESS, HAPPINESS AND GENDER.

INTRODUCTION

Growing literature indicates that mindfulness is a natural quality that promotes adaptive human functioning. Mindfulness is a skill that can be learned and practiced. Happiness is the sense of well being, joy or contentment. Mindfulness increases one's confidence, leads to clearer thinking to make better decisions and helps to improve relationship with friends, family and at work. Mindfulness is the focus on here and now, with no judgment or preconceived notion. Mindfulness means maintaining a moment by moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations. Some popular Mindfulness Definitions: According to Jon Kabat-Zinn, "Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally". According to Tich Nhat Hanh, Mindfulness shows us what is happening in our bodies, our emotion, and our minds and in the world through mindfulness we avoid harming ourselves and others. In Merriam-Webster Dictionary, Mindfulness is a practice of maintaining a non-judgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotion, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis. When you are mindful, you carefully observe your thoughts and feelings without judging them good or bad. Mindfulness means living in the moment and awakening current experience, rather than dwelling on past or anticipating the future.

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CHARACTERISTICS:

The term mindfulness derived from the pail language word "Sati" meaning "to remember" but as a mode of consciousness it commonly signifies "presence of mind". Following are some basic and

also important concepts of important concepts of mindfulness:

- Clarity of awareness.
- Clear awareness of one's inner and outer world, including thoughts, emotions, sensation and actions.
- Non-conceptual, nondiscriminatory awareness. The direct contact with reality that characterized clear awareness. It doesn't compare, or evaluate, categorizing, nor ruminated, reflect, introspect upon events based on memories.
- Flexibility of awareness and attention.
- Empirical stance towards reality.
- Present oriented consciousness.
- Stability or continuity of attention and awareness.

MINDFULNESS AND HAPPINESS:

Mindfulness has been theoretically and empirically associated with psychological well being (Hayes and Feldman, 2007). The elements of mindfulness namely awareness and non judgmental acceptance of one's moment to moment experience are regarded as potentially effective antidotes against common forms of psychological distress-rumination, anxiety, worry, fear, anger and so on (Hayes and Feldman, 2004; Kabat Zinn, 1990). Mindfulness encompasses two components, self regulation of attention and adoption of a particular orientation towards one's experiences. Self regulation of attention refers to non-elaborate observations and awareness of sensations, thoughts or feelings from the moments, (Bishop et al, 2004). There exist many connections between mindfulness (awareness of present experience) and happiness. Mindfulness practices can support savoring, how (The experience of being fully involved in activity), gratitude, engagement and other paths to happiness. The big part of happiness is deciding to be mindful. Mindfulness might actually be a source of happiness within us (Jen, 2016). "Refuge to the man is the mind, refuge to the mind is mindfulness" -Buddha. 4342 Merely observing something without passing judgment, connect us with our inner source of happiness. One key brain area involved in happiness is the left prefrontal cortex, located just behind the left side of your forehead. Richard Davidson of the University of Wisconsin brought in an experienced meditation practitioner, Mattie Richard who was looked up to an EEG scanner and told to start meditating. This showed a positive result and found activity in the left prefrontal cortex (Mindlab, 2016). Buddhist philosophy maintains that mindfulness leads to insight suffering, non-self (i.e., no permanent ego or self that underlies experience) and impermanence. (Radhakrishnan and Moore, 1957). Accordingly, knowing one's true nature helps one make choices conducive to lasting happiness, not just ephemeral pleasures. Buddhist philosophy further emphasizes the additional role of compassion and loving-kindness (Rahula, 1959, Salzberg 1997).

METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE:

To find the relationship between the mindfulness and happiness.

HYPOTHESIS:

H1: There will be a positive significant relationship between mindfulness and happiness.

H2: There will be a positive significant relationship between dimensions of mindfulness and happiness

H3: There will be a gender difference in mindfulness.

H4: There will be a gender difference in happiness.

H5: There will be a gender differences in dimensions of mindfulness.

POPULATION:

The present study consists of college students located in and around Coimbatore.

SAMPLE SIZE:

The present study comprising of 250 college students out of which 125 males and 125 females.

SAMPLE DESIGN:

Purposive sampling design was used in this study.

TOOLS USED:

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) developed by Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietmeyer, Toney (2000). It is a five point rating scale. It consists of five dimensions are observing items, describe items, act with awareness, non-judge items and non-react items. Reliability co-efficient is $r = 0.86$ and it has good validity.

The oxford happiness questionnaire developed by Michael Argyle and Peter Hills at Oxford and it is highly valid.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: Description statistics such as mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics such as correlation and independent t-test was computed using **SPSS-20**.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

TABLE 1 shows the mean (M), standard deviation (SD) for the mindfulness along with its dimensions and happiness.

Variables	Mean (M)	Standard deviant (SD)	No.of samples
Mindfulness	121.79	11.33	250
Observe items	24.94	5.05	250
Describe items	25.12	4.74	250
Act with awareness	26.36	4.83	250
Non-judge items	24.95	4.57	250
Non-react items	20.43	3.94	250
Happiness	111.89	16.60	250

TABLE 2 shows the correlation between happiness and mindfulness.

Variables	Correlation
Happiness	.345**
Mindfulness	

**correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

TABLE 3 Shows the correlation between happiness and mindfulness along with its dimension.

Variables	Mindfulness				
	Observe items	Describe items	Act with awareness	Non-judge items	Non-react items
Happiness	.376**	.248**	.115	-.080	.163**

**correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

TABLE 4 shows the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), Mean difference and t-test values for gender and mindfulness and happiness.

Variables	Gender	Mean (M)	Standard deviation(SD)	Mean difference	t-value	Significance
Mindfulness	Male	119.99	10.685	3.60	-2.539	Significant

	Female	123.59	11.730			
Happiness	Male	110.65	16.357	2.48	-1.186	Non-significant
	Female	113.14	16.813			

TABLE 5 shows the mean (M), standard deviation (SD), mean difference, t-test value for gender and dimensions of mindfulness.

Mindfulness dimensions	Gender	Mean (M)	Standard deviation (SD)	Mean difference	t-value	significance
Observe items	Male	24.65	5.189	.576	-.900	Non-significance
	Female	25.22	4.922			
Describe items	Male	24.41	4.654	1.416	-2.384	Significance
	Female	25.82	4.738			
Act with awareness items	Male	25.56	4.850	1.608	-2.663	Significance
	Female	27.17	4.695			
Non-judge items	Male	24.53	4.640	0.840	-1.454	Non-significance
	Female	25.37	4.495			
Non-react items	Male	20.85	4.162	1.690	1.690	Non-significance
	Female	20.01	3.684			

P < 0.05 level of significance.

DISCUSSION :

Table 1 shows the mean values (M) and standard deviation (SD) of mindfulness as 121.79 and 11.33, observe items as 24.94 and 5.05, describe item as 25.12 and 4.74, act with awareness as 26.36 and 4.83, non-judge items as 24.95 and 4.57, non-react items as 20.43 and 3.94, happiness as 111.89 and 16.60 respectively. Table 2 shows the correlation value as .345 and there exists a significant positive correlation between mindfulness and happiness at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, H1 is accepted. Table 3 shows that there exists a significant positive correlation between the happiness and dimension of mindfulness such as observe items (0.376, at 0.01 significance), describe items (0.248, at 0.01 significance), non-react items (0.163, at 0.01 significance). There exist no significance for act with awareness (.115, at 0.01 significance) and exist negative insignificant correlation for non judgment (-.080 , at 0.01 significance). Therefore, H2 is rejected. Table 4 shows that the mean value (M) for male and female in mindfulness is 119.99 and 123.59. Standard deviation (SD) for male and female in mindfulness is 10.685 and 11.730. Mean difference exist between male and female in mindfulness is 3.60. Also, There exist significant gender difference in mindfulness (t=-2.539, at 0.05 level of significance). The female population is found to be having higher values in mindfulness this may be because of female generally have a higher tendency to enjoy the present moment when compared to males. Therefore, H3 is accepted. The mean value (M) for male and female in happiness is 110.65 and 113.14. The standard deviation (SD) for male and female in happiness is 16.357 and

16.813. Mean difference exist between male and female in happiness is -2.448. Also, this shows that there exists no significant gender difference in happiness ($t = -1.188$, at 0.05 level of significance). This may be because people are happy when they successful, safe and when they feel lucky this doesn't concern with any gender. Therefore, H_4 is rejected. Table 5 shows the mean value (M) for male and female in dimensions of mindfulness such as observe items, describe items, act with awareness, non-judge items, non-react items is 24.65 and 25.22, 24.41 and 25.82, 25.56 and 27.17, 24.53 and 25.37, 20.85 and 20.01 respectively. Standard deviation (SD) value for male and female in dimensions of mindfulness such as observe items (5.189 and 4.922), describe items (4.654 and 4.738), act with awareness (4.850 and 4.695), non-judge items (4.640 and 4.495), non-react items (4.162 and 3.684) respectively. Mean difference between male and female in observe items (.576), describe items (1.416), act with awareness (1.608), non-judge items (.840), non-react items (1.690) respectively. There exists no significant gender difference in observe items ($t = -.900$, at 0.05 level of significance), non-judge items ($t = -1.454$, at 0.05 level of significance) and non-react items ($t = 1.690$, at 0.05 level of significance). Also, there exists significant gender difference in describe items ($t = -2.384$, at 0.05 level of significance) and act with awareness ($t = -2.663$, at 0.05 level of significance) respectively. Therefore, H_5 is rejected.

Table 2 is consistent with the finding of Laurie Hollis Walker Colosimo (2011) on "mindfulness, self-compassion and happiness in non-mediators; a theoretical and empirical examination", showed that mindfulness is related to psychological adaptive variable (happiness) and that self-compassion is a crucial altitudinal factor in mindfulness and happiness research. Table 4 is consistent with the finding of Sabina Ahipahic, Enedina Hasanbegovic (2017) on "Mindfulness: Age and Gender differences on a Bosnian sample" showed that there was found significant age and gender differences for some aspects of mindfulness in the sample of Bosnian general population. Table 5 study is consistent with the finding of Sabina Alispahic, Enedina Hasanbegovic-Anic (2017) conducted study on "Mindfulness: age and gender differences on a Bosnian sample". It shows that there was statistically significant gender difference between the subscales observing ($t(432) = 2.259, p < 0.05$) and act with awareness ($t(432) = 2.197, p < 0.05$).

CONCLUSION:

- There is a significant positive relationship between mindfulness and happiness.
- There is a significant positive relationship between happiness and dimensions of mindfulness (observe, describe and non-react items).
- There is a significant gender difference in mindfulness.
- There is no significant gender difference in happiness.

LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

- This study contains only limited variables (like gender, happiness) as determinants of mindfulness. Future researchers can consider and add the variables like self-esteem, age and other related concepts
- Population chosen for this study belongs to only one geographical area (in and around Coimbatore). Future research can concentrate on more number of samples and different geographical area.
- The finding of the study will add on to the pool of existing literature on mindfulness and happiness
- This study can be used to assess the relation between mindfulness and happiness among people in various areas like hospitals, industries, and in other settings.

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