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Impact Of Mindfulness Practices On Stress, Emotional Regulation, And Life Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of mindfulness practices on stress reduction, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction. Mindfulness, defined as present-moment non-judgmental awareness, has been shown to foster adaptive coping, reduce psychological distress, and enhance well-being. Using a cross-sectional design, a sample of 250 young adults was assessed with validated scales measuring mindfulness, perceived stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction. Correlational and regression analyses revealed that mindfulness is negatively associated with stress and positively associated with both emotional regulation and life satisfaction. Moreover, emotional regulation partially mediated the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction. These findings highlight the role of mindfulness-based practices in promoting resilience and overall life satisfaction.

Keyword: mindfulness, perceived stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction, cross-sectional design, Correlational and regression analyses and foster

Introduction

While prior research has established links between mindfulness, emotional regulation, stress, and life satisfaction, limited studies have explored the **mediating role of emotional regulation** in the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction. Additionally, most studies have focused on Western populations, highlighting a need to examine these relationships in the Indian context. **Mindfulness** refers to awareness cultivated by paying attention intentionally, in the present moment, and without judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). Prior studies show mindfulness reduces stress (Grossman et al., 2004), It improves emotional regulation (Chambers et al., 2009), and enhances subjective well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003). However, empirical exploration of how mindfulness influences stress, emotion regulation, and life satisfaction together remains limited. Stress reduction means using strategies and practices to lower mental and physical tension. It helps calm the mind, relax the body, and improve overall well-being. **Cognitive-Behavioral Approach (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) explains that** stress arises from how we appraise situations. Practices: cognitive restructuring (changing thoughts), problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping. **Mindfulness & Relaxation (Kabat-Zinn, 1990)** Mindfulness meditation lowers stress hormones and improves awareness. **Emotional regulation** means managing and responding to emotions in healthy ways instead of letting them control human beings. **Life satisfaction** means how content and fulfilled a person feels with their overall life. **(Denier's Model of Subjective Well-Being (1985) reveals that** Life satisfaction = global assessment of one's life according to personal standards. Different from momentary happiness (affect). **Ryff's Psychological Well-Being (1989)** Life satisfaction relates to autonomy, personal growth, purpose, and positive relations. **Emotional regulation Gross's Process Model (1998)** – emphasizes two main strategies: Antecedent-focused (before emotion fully arises, e.g., reappraisal). Response-focused (after emotion occurs, e.g., suppression, expression control).

Rationale of the study

Understanding these mechanisms can inform interventions in education, counseling, and workplace wellness programs as per need.

Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between mindfulness and stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction.
2. To test whether emotional regulation mediates the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction.
3. To assess the predictive role of mindfulness in stress reduction and well-being enhancement.

Hypotheses

H1: Mindfulness will negatively correlate with stress.

H2: Mindfulness will positively correlate with emotional regulation and life satisfaction.

H3: Emotional regulation will mediate the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction.

Literature Review

Early studies primarily focused on mindfulness as a clinical tool for stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), whereas later research expanded its application to emotional regulation and subjective well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Keng et al., 2011). Kabat-Zinn (1990): Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) is effective in reducing stress. In his research he found that MBSR is a well-supported, evidence-based intervention for stress management, applicable in clinical and non-clinical populations. It highlights the role of **mindfulness as a tool for emotional and psychological resilience**. Brown & Ryan (2003): found that dispositional mindfulness strongly predicts life satisfaction and psychological well-being. Brown & Ryan (2003) found that **dispositional mindfulness**—a person's natural tendency to be attentive and aware in the present—**positively predicts life satisfaction and psychological well-being**, indicating that more mindful individuals tend to experience greater overall happiness and mental health. Chambers et al. (2009): Mindfulness enhances cognitive reappraisal and reduces emotional suppression. Chambers et al. (2009) found that mindfulness practice **enhances cognitive reappraisal**, which is the ability to reinterpret a situation to alter its emotional impact, and **reduces emotional suppression**, the tendency to inhibit or hide emotional responses. By cultivating present-moment awareness and non-judgmental attention, mindfulness allows individuals to recognize their emotions without immediately reacting, giving them greater flexibility to respond adaptively. This leads to improved emotional regulation, lower stress levels, and better psychological functioning, as individuals rely less on suppressing feelings and more on constructive reinterpretation of experiences. Overall, mindfulness strengthens adaptive coping strategies and promotes emotional resilience. Keng, Smoski, & Robins (2011): Mindfulness interventions improve regulation skills and reduce stress in both clinical and non-clinical populations. Keng, Smoski, & Robins (2011) found that **mindfulness interventions enhance emotion regulation skills and reduce stress** across both clinical and non-clinical populations. By fostering present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, mindfulness helps individuals manage emotions more effectively, cope with stressors, and improve overall psychological well-being.

Methodology

Design: The methodology section outlines the research design, sample characteristics, instruments used, and procedures followed to examine the relationship between mindfulness, stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction among participants. The present study employed a **quantitative, correlational research design** to explore the associations among mindfulness, emotional regulation, stress, and life satisfaction.

Sample: The study sample consisted of **250 participants** selected through convenient sampling. The participants included both males and females from various educational and occupational backgrounds, aged between **18 and 35 of Sitamarhi district in Bihar**

Variables: This section describes the main variables examined in the study—mindfulness, stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction—along with the instruments used to measure them. Mindfulness Practices used as independent variable while Stress, Emotional Regulation and Life Satisfaction were used as dependent variable

Tools: The following standardized psychological instruments were used to assess the key variables of the study—mindfulness, stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction. All tools are well-validated and widely used in psychological research.

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer et al., 2006). The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer et al., 2006) **measures mindfulness across five domains:** observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience, and non-reactivity to inner experience.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen et al., 1983). The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen et al., 1983) is a widely used psychological instrument designed to assess the degree to which individuals perceive their lives as stressful. It measures **subjective stress** by evaluating feelings of unpredictability, uncontrollability, and overload over the past month. The scale includes items that capture how often respondents feel upset, nervous, or unable to cope with daily demands. Scores indicate the **overall perceived stress level**, with higher scores reflecting greater perceived stress. The PSS is valued for its **reliability and validity** across diverse populations and is commonly used in research and clinical settings to study stress-related outcomes, coping strategies, and interventions. **Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross & John, 2003).** The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ; Gross & John, 2003) is a 10-item self-report scale measuring habitual use of **two emotion regulation strategies: cognitive reappraisal** (changing thoughts to alter emotions) and **expressive suppression** (inhibiting emotional

expression). Higher reappraisal scores are linked to better well-being, while higher suppression scores are associated with negative outcomes. It is widely used in research and clinical settings to understand and assess emotion regulation.

The **Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener et al., 1985)** is a 5-item self-report questionnaire that measures an individual's **global cognitive judgment of life satisfaction**. Respondents rate statements on a 7-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater life satisfaction. It is widely used in research on well-being and psychological health.

Analysis:

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the mean and standard deviation of the main variables—mindfulness, stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction. **Pearson's correlations** were computed to determine inter-variable relationships, followed by **regression and mediation analyses** to assess direct and indirect effects. The findings are presented in the subsequent sections.

Results

It presents both descriptive and inferential statistics to examine the relationships among mindfulness, stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction. Descriptive analyses showed that participants had relatively high mindfulness and moderate levels of stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction. Correlation and regression analyses revealed that mindfulness significantly reduced stress and positively predicted both emotional regulation and life satisfaction, while emotional regulation also positively predicted life satisfaction. Mediation analysis further indicated that emotional regulation partially mediated the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	N
Mindfulness	121.4	14.5	250
Stress	20.8	6.1	250
Emotional Regulation	41.6	7.4	250
Life Satisfaction	24.3	5.7	250

The study included **250 participants**. The mean score for **mindfulness** was **121.4** (SD = 14.5), indicating relatively high levels of present-moment awareness. **Stress** had a mean of **20.8** (SD = 6.1), suggesting moderate perceived stress. **Emotional regulation** showed a mean of **41.6** (SD = 7.4), reflecting a moderate ability to manage emotions, while **life satisfaction** had a mean of **24.3** (SD = 5.7), indicating moderate overall life satisfaction among participants.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Mindfulness	1	-.54**	.49**	.52**
2. Stress	-.54**	1	-.46**	-.41**
3. Emotional Regulation	.49**	-.46**	1	.47**
4. Life Satisfaction	.52**	-.41**	.47**	1

($p < .001$)

The sample of 250 participants showed relatively high mindfulness ($M = 121.4$, $SD = 14.5$) and moderate levels of stress ($M = 20.8$, $SD = 6.1$), emotional regulation ($M = 41.6$, $SD = 7.4$), and life satisfaction ($M = 24.3$, $SD = 5.7$), providing a basis for examining relationships among these variables.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

- Mindfulness → Stress: $\beta = -0.54$, $p < .001$ (strong negative predictor).
- Mindfulness → Emotional Regulation: $\beta = 0.49$, $p < .001$.
- Mindfulness → Life Satisfaction: $\beta = 0.37$, $p < .001$.
- Emotional Regulation → Life Satisfaction: $\beta = 0.29$, $p < .001$.

Mindfulness strongly **reduces stress** ($\beta = -0.54$, $p < .001$) and positively predicts **emotional regulation** ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < .001$) and **life satisfaction** ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < .001$). Additionally, **emotional regulation** positively influences life satisfaction ($\beta = 0.29$, $p < .001$), highlighting its mediating role.

Mediation Analysis (Mindfulness → Emotional Regulation → Life Satisfaction)

- Direct effect of Mindfulness on LS: $\beta = 0.37$, $p < .001$.
- Indirect effect via Emotional Regulation: $\beta = 0.14$, 95% CI [0.07, 0.23].

Mediation analysis shows that mindfulness has a **direct positive effect on life satisfaction** ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < .001$) and an **indirect effect through emotional regulation** ($\beta = 0.14$, 95% CI [0.07, 0.23]), indicating **partial mediation**. **Partial mediation** confirmed.

Discussion

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between mindfulness, stress, emotional regulation, and life satisfaction. Findings revealed that mindfulness significantly reduced stress while positively influencing emotional regulation and life satisfaction. Furthermore, emotional regulation partially mediated the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction. The present findings provide that Mindfulness significantly reduces stress, consistent with MBSR literature. Higher mindfulness improves emotional regulation (especially reappraisal), supporting the role of attention control. Mindfulness enhances life satisfaction directly and indirectly via improved emotional regulation. These findings align with positive psychology, highlighting mindfulness as both a coping mechanism and a pathway to greater subjective well-being.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the significant role of mindfulness in enhancing emotional regulation and life satisfaction while reducing stress. The findings confirm that emotional regulation partially mediates the relationship between mindfulness and life satisfaction, emphasizing mindfulness as a key factor in psychological well-being. Mindfulness practices reduce stress, enhance emotional regulation, and increase life satisfaction. Emotional regulation partially mediates the mindfulness–life satisfaction link, suggesting mindfulness fosters satisfaction by improving regulation capacities. Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) should be promoted in schools, workplaces, and clinical practice.

Implications

The findings of the present study have important implications for enhancing psychological well-being through mindfulness-based approaches. **Educational:** Incorporating mindfulness training can improve academic resilience and reduce exam stress. **Clinical:** MBIs can complement therapy for stress-related disorders. **Workplace:** Mindfulness programs improve employee satisfaction and productivity.

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