

## Relational Study of Mindfulness and Perceived Stress among Undergraduate Students

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### Abstract

**Background:** Mindfulness is the intentional, accepting and non-judgment focus of one's attention on the emotion, thought and sensation occurring in the present while not focusing on past. Mindfulness is an essential ability required for all, especially for students. Present life is full of stressful events; success only depends on how someone perceives that's events.

**Objectives:** The present study was designed to explore relation between mindfulness and stress among undergraduate students along with gender difference.

**Sample:** The data were conducted on 40 undergraduate students of Rajasthan. The participants were selected through purposive sampling.

**Materials and Methods:** Mindfulness attention awareness scale (MAAS) developed by Brown & Ryan, Perceived stress scale (PSS) by Cohen et al., was used. Mean, SD, Pearson correlation and t-test were used to calculate the data.

**Result & Conclusion:** Finding related to the study and implication pertaining to the study will be discussed in full paper.

**Key Words:** Mindfulness, Perceived stress, Gender

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### Introduction

Although research on mindfulness, especially with children and adolescents, is still in relatively early stage, an increasing number of studies have shown the potential benefits of mindfulness practices for students' physical health, psychological well-being, social skill, academics performance, and more. Other studies have indicated that mindfulness may be effective for reducing or lessening stress and burnout. Adolescence is an important period for emotional and psychological development and considerable change occurs to self-consciousness. The concept of mindfulness and practice or training to improve mindfulness has been a topic of interest for positive psychologists in recent years. Mindfulness is a state of present situation, with full of attention. Mindfulness is

conceptualized as a state of attentiveness on present event or condition and experience that is unmediated by discursive or discriminating cognition (Brown & Ryne, 2003; Ryne, & Creswell, 2007). Sasidharan, K. Rajesh, Judu, V. Ilavarsu & TM Srinivasan (2013), studied to find relation between dispositional mindfulness and impulsivity among college students. Finding revealed that both domains have strong relation as hypothesis was made.

Palmer, A., & Rodger, S. (2009), found in the study that mindfulness have strong positive relation with rational coping and have negative relation with emotional avoidant coping. According to Ruth A. Baer, Jems, C., & Hunsinger, M. (2012) evidence suggest that change in mindfulness precede change in perceived stress in a standard MBSR course is

consistent with previous studies indicating that improvement in ability of mindfulness skills may mediate the effects of mindfulness training on mental health outcomes. A number of study demonstrated that the benefits of mindfulness, mindfulness-based treatment is beneficial for a range of clinical disorders (Kabat-Zinn, 1982; Kristeller & Hallett, 1999 et al.,) fewer studies have been conducted with community populations, the benefits of this are, therefore, less known.

Stress is a concept that, although it is familiar for all, is understood in different ways. The use of this term in a vague and general form creates this context of different interpretations that sometimes are contradictory (Rutter, 1983). Stress is a common problem, found among every age group especially adolescence, that may lead toward psychological problems. S. Menaga, & V.Chandrasekaran (2013), stated that boys have less academic stress than girls, Students belonging to private schools have high academic stress than the govt.schools. Stress can be positive or negative, Stress can be positive when the situation offers an opportunity for a person who faces social, physical, organizational and emotional problems. Stress is positive when the person feels stimulated and able to manage the situation. Rajani, K., & Gartia, R., (2012) study indicated positive relation between stress and academic achievement. Differences were noted in the academic achievement of students having high, moderate and less stress. According Hong Ji (2011) mental stress of college students gain wide attention from the society currently, as study demonstrated mental stresses of college students and argue that there are four source of stresses, namely employment situations, study conditions, personal factors, and economic conditions.

After exploration review and researchers done earlier related to this proposed study, mindfulness recent topic for the study,

found strong predictor of success and positive aspect one should be blessed, especially in adolescence through the various studies it was assessed that mindfulness seems root of advancement. Thus researcher undertook of the study with a small effort to find out relation between mindfulness and perceived stress of undergraduate students in relation to gender in some area Rajasthan state.

### **Objectives**

- i) To examine relationship between Mindfulness and Stress amongst undergraduate students.
- ii) To examine gender difference in Mindfulness and stress amongst undergraduate students.

### **Hypotheses**

- (i) Mindfulness and Stress would show relation amongst undergraduate students.
- iii) Gender would show difference in Mindfulness and Stress amongst undergraduate students.

### **Methodology**

**Sample:** The randomly selected participants includes undergraduate college students of Tonk, Rajasthan. The study was conducted on total 40 samples. This sample shall comprise of girls and boys both. Age ranging from 16-19 years.

**Tools:** Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) (2003), developed by Brown and Ryne, created to specifically capture attention and awareness in daily life. The MAAS is a 15-item scale, reliability of the test found to be (Cronbach's  $\alpha = .89-.93$ ; test-retest  $r = .35-.52$ ), rated on 6 point scale. Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, 1983) developed by Cohen et. al. having a good reliability and validity. The questions in the PSS ask about feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, respondents are asked how often they felt a certain way. PSS scores are obtained by reversing responses (e.g.,

0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1 & 4 = 0) to the four positively stated items (items 4, 5, 7, & 8) and then summing across all scale items.

**Procedure-**The sample was purposive in nature as data was to be collected. Participants were given test questionnaires to fill up and also requested to complete the entries of name, age, sex and education. Then the instructions were given properly to all the subjects. After the completion, the questionnaires were taken back from the subjects and they were thanked for their cooperation.

**Statistical Analysis:** In order to obtain empirical verification of the proposed hypothesis, raw data was analyzed with help of Mean, SD, Pearson's correlation and t'test.

### Result and Discussion

Pearson correlation was used to examine relation between mindfulness and perceived stress of undergraduate students and t-test was used to assess gender difference among all the variables.

**Table No.1 showing relation between mindfulness and perceived stress among undergraduate students.**

Variables	Pearson correlation		P-Value
Mindfulness	1	-.768	0.01*
Perceived Stress	-.768	1	

Present the correlation of the key study. The present study reveals that there is negative relation between Mindfulness and perceived stress among undergraduate students. This indicates that person who is attentive and has mindfulness during working had low stress level (perceive stress low). The correlation is-.768, that is significant at 0.01 levels. Students, who are good at mindfulness also poor at perception of stress.

The main reason behind such finding may be that person who are more attentive and conscious in day to day life seems perfect in every task, they doesn't feel upset because

doesn't sufferer for unexpected, easily handle personal problem. Palmer,A.,& Rodger,S., (2009) Study conducted on 135 college students, that revealed positive relation between mindfulness and rational coping, and negative relation with emotional and avoidant coping and perceived stress. Wei, Xu, Xiaoming Wang et al., (2015) explore that self acceptance was found to partially mediate the relation between mindfulness and stress. Other studies have indicated that mindfulness may be effective for reducing stress and burnout among students, seems good indication.

**Table 2. - Indicating Gender differences in mindfulness and perceived stress among undergraduate students by showing mean S.D & t-value.**

Variables	Mean		S.D		t-value	P-Value
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Mindfulness	51.85	45.05	10.22	8.41	2.21	0.05
Perceived Stress	15.75	17.10	3.86	5.26	-0.92	NS

Result showing gender difference in mindfulness and perceived stress. The mean of the male and female undergraduate students on the part of mindfulness were (51.85; 45.05) and S.D. value was (10.22; 8.41) that showed significant differences. Result also showing mean and S.D. value of male and female on the part of perceived stress (15.75;17.10) and (3.86;5.26 ) that does not indicate significant difference between the two.

According to the result of the study male undergraduate students are good at mindfulness that indicates better attention and consciousness than their female counterpart. Finding indicates they are more aware of what they are in present situation, doesn't considered them automatic machine but do according as a pilot who drive themselves in better direction. They don't run automatic but are attentive about whatever they are doing. Mindfulness is commonly defined by purposely paying attention to present moment experiences, devoid of judgment, creating within the individual a sense of stability and nonreactive awareness (Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2004, Miller, Fletcher, & Kabat-Zinn, 1995).

On the other hand on the level of perceived stress no significant differences were found between the two. But according to mean, male undergraduate students high on perceived stress than female students. Verma,G.,Tomar,S., & CNV Sai Bharath (2014), found high level of stress among high school students through cross sectional study gender differences were also noted among them.

### Conclusion

The above finding shows that there are negative correlation between mindfulness and perceived stress. Students with high score on mindfulness showed low perceived stress and highly stressed students were found low at

mindfulness. Gender showed difference on the part of mindfulness. Male adolescents were found higher on perceived stress in comparison to female adolescents, but don't show significant difference.

### IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY:

Mindfulness is an important quality one should possess, especially for adolescents. Mindfulness has the potential to be a very useful component in prevention and treatment efforts because of its effectiveness in reducing emotional distress and promote emotional balance, improving attention, and contributing to motivated learning. Mindfulness is a positive aspect if students are attentive and always focus on present or current event will grow in better direction. Stress is an important aspect, this depend on how someone treat the event or condition around them, person's perception of event determine the situation if he or she perceive positive lead toward positivity and if he or she perceive negative lead toward distress. The present study is useful in present scenario to understand the actual condition of undergraduate student, regarding mindfulness and perceived stress. Whether both have relation or not and is influenced by gender.

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