

## Mindfulness and Self-actualization among Artists and Non-artists in India

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### ABSTRACT

Every one of us throughout the life has experienced a higher level of consciousness which in a way has helped us to face challenges, difficulties and misfortunes or has been a reason to overcome psychological or emotional problems with a high level of self-confidence and self-esteem. Although it might be temporary and not a permanent experience but that itself can be a reason to search and find out what are the exact reasons to be conscious and mindful and how can we achieve these characteristics through certain physical or spiritual practices. Ultimately this curiosity leads us to find out why some people are more charismatic, more mindful and self-actualized than others or why some people have higher level of vibration and certainly higher level of concentration. The purpose of this study is to explore the level of mindfulness and self-actualization among Indian artists and non-artists. The sample consists of 240 participants, out of which, 120 participants are artists and 120 participants are non-artists. The sample includes 131 male and 109 female participants whose age ranged between 20 to 50 years old. A simple random sampling technique is used to select the sample for this study. The tools used in this study were a measure of actualization of potential which is a 27 item self-report that measures the level of self-actualization on two scales-openness to experience and self-reference. This scale was developed by R. Lefrançois, G. Leclerc, M. Dubé, R. Hébert & P. Gaulin, Sherbrooke Geriatric University Institute, Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada. Another tool is Kentucky Inventory of mindfulness skills (KIMS) which is a 39-item self-report measuring Mindfulness on four scales: Observing, Describing, Act with awareness, and accept without Judgment. It was developed at Kentucky University by Baer, Smith, & Allen in 2004. Results depicted that artists have a higher level of mindfulness and higher level of self-actualization than non-artists. For mindfulness the difference was not significant but for self-actualization this difference was significant at 0.01 level. The correlations are indicating that all the dimensions of self-actualizations have positive and moderate correlations with mindfulness. All the correlations are significant at 0.01 level.

**Keywords:** *Mindfulness, Self-actualization, Artists, Non-artists*

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According to Oxford English dictionaries art is literally defined as the expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, typically in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power like music, literature and dance.

Simultaneously art is the subject of study primarily concerned with human creativity and social life, such as languages, literature, and history (as contrasted with scientific or technical subjects) that is why through the history many believed that *'The arts and sciences were incompatible.'*

**Artist:** An artist is a person engaged in an activity related to creating art, practicing the arts, or demonstrating an art. Martial arts are also called as "arts" as art is a function that requires aesthetics, discipline, study, talent, dedication. Martial concepts require such elements and therefore, are called an "art".

**Mindfulness:** Mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us.

While mindfulness is something we all naturally possess, it's more readily available to us when we practice on a daily basis. Mindfulness is the practice of bringing one's attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment, which can be developed through the practice of meditation. The term "mindfulness" is a translation of the Pali-term *sati*, which is a significant element of some Buddhist traditions. The popular mindfulness movement was initiated by Jon Kabat-Zinn in the book "wherever you go, there you are" (1994).

**Art and Mindfulness:** According to many researches it is proved that art is deeply related to tuning out the left hemisphere, the logical, rational side and to allow the right hemisphere, to shine through. The right side of the brain is associated with creativity, intuition, visualizing, emotions and daydreaming, among other things. Most of people don't use it enough because they are socialized to be logical and rational, thinking in terms of rules, goals, planning and structure. But, everyone can tap into that creative right brain—art is just one of the many ways of doing so.

*Art allows for freedom of expression.*

**Self-actualization:** The term was originally introduced by the organismic theorist Kurt Goldstein for the motive to realize one's full potential. Expressing one's creativity, quest for spiritual enlightenment, pursuit of knowledge, and the desire to give to society are examples of self-actualization. In Goldstein's view, it is the organism's master motive, the only real motive: *"the tendency to actualize itself as fully as possible is the basic drive."* Carl Rogers similarly wrote of *"the curative force in psychotherapy – man's tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities... to express and activate all the capacities of the organism"*. The concept was brought most fully to prominence in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory as the final level of psychological development that can be achieved when all basic and mental needs are essentially fulfilled and the "actualization" of the full personal potential takes place, although he adapted this viewpoint later on in life, and saw it more flexibly. Self-actualization can be seen as similar to words and concepts such as: *Self-discovery, self-reflection, self-realisation and self-exploration.*

**Art and Self – actualization:** Art is something subtle, abstract and subjective. Therefore in order to tap into that, get merged and create something tangible and sensible to be sensed by an ordinary man, there should be a lot of rationalization as well as connection to the higher self and intuition. This is the first step to realization which an ordinary man cannot find the opportunity to experience. The similarity between art and religion arises here as both work on something which is not objective but highly subjective.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Stillness and motion:** An empirical investigation of mindfulness and self-actualization was done by Mark Beitel, Samantha Bogus, AidaHutz, Dovid Green, John J. Cecero and Declan T. Barry (2013). The primary aim of this study was to promote an empirically-based dialogue between Western psychology and Buddhism. One type of Western psychology (Humanistic Psychology, based on Rogers and Maslow) and one type of Buddhist tradition (a Westernized interpretation of Theravada) were explored. A cross-sectional design was employed to assess correlations among study variables. Participants were 204 students attending midsize Eastern (Fordham) or Western (Boise State) US universities. Participants completed general measures of mindfulness (Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)) and SA (Short Index of Self-Actualization (SISA)). They also filled out multifaceted measures of each construct: the Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS) and the Brief Index of Self-Actualization – Revised (BISA-R). A demographic form was also administered. While mindfulness and SA were not associated with the demographic variables of age, gender, or ethnicity/race, they were associated with one another in various ways. The findings indicate similarities and differences between the two constructs. This study provides evidence for empirical links between mindfulness and SA, suggesting points of contact between Buddhist and humanistic psychologies more generally.

**Mindfulness for Youth:** A Review of the Literature was done by Kim D. Rempel in 2012 in Athabasca University. Interest in the use of mindfulness-based activities with children and youth is growing. The article evaluates empirical evidence related to the use of mindfulness-based activities to facilitate enhanced student learning and to support students' psychological, physiological, and social development. It also provides an overview of interventions that include mindfulness. There is a need to provide children with a way to combat the stress and pressure of living in today's highly charged world: mindfulness may be one helpful alternative. The implications of a universal school-based mindfulness intervention are discussed, and directions for future research are offered. In this article, researcher has investigated the use of mindfulness techniques in managing a variety of challenges faced by youth populations. An argument for integrating these techniques into a universal school-based prevention program is provided, as well as directions for future research. The review begins by providing a brief overview of the historical and theoretical underpinnings of mindfulness and some definitions of mindfulness. Research suggests that there are a variety of mindfulness-based interventions that are effective with youth. These approaches include yoga, body scan, meditation, breathing exercises, and Tai Chi, all of which may increase an individual's capacity for attention and awareness. Yoga and Tai Chi may be more appealing to youth because they combine focused attention on the breath with movement, thus providing an outlet for youthful energy. Yoga, breathing exercises, and guided mindfulness practices in this study of the impact of mindfulness interventions on stress was applied on fourth- and fifth-grade students. The goal of using these interventions was to improve the people's capacity for sustained attention as well as increase their awareness and ability to regulate their cognitive, physiologic, and bodily states. Participants reported that they enjoyed the intervention and noticed a decrease in their symptoms of stress. Research also shows yoga

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has physiological benefits that increase resilience to stressful events in practitioners. The potential benefits of integrating mindfulness-based training into colleges and schools settings are significant in regards to effects on cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and spiritual domains. Research reviewed here suggests that mindfulness-based practices can have a positive impact on academic performance, psychological wellbeing, self-esteem, and social skills in adolescents.

**A study on mindfulness and self-acceptance in psychotherapy** was done by Windy Dryden, Arthur Still in March (2006). This research describes some of the historical conditions that made possible Kabat-Zinn's full catastrophe living (1990) which are based on seven principles of mindfulness practices as non-judging, patience, present moment, trust, non-striving, acceptance, and letting go. : *Using the wisdom of the body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. The ground had been prepared by the non-judgmental acceptance of people and symptoms by Humanistic psychotherapists, and by the increasing assimilation of Buddhist ideas into Western psychology and psychotherapy. In addition the word "mindfulness," as the translation of the Pali *sati*, came to refer to both the manualized practice that provides the evidence for its efficacy in the hands of Kabat-Zinn and others, and the more complex process of clear comprehension and recollection that is described in his more discursive writings, and is similar to Ellen Langer's use of "mindfulness" in her book of that name. In conclusion the study reveals that self-acceptance and mindfulness are strongly connected. Therefore increasing one will definitely affects another positively.

### METHODOLOGY

**Problem:** To study the relation between mindfulness and self-actualization among artists and non-artists in India.

**Objectives:** The major objectives of the study are:

1. To find out whether there are differences in the level of mindfulness among artists and non-artists.
2. To explore whether there are differences in the level of self-actualization among artists and non-artists.
3. To determine whether there is any relationship among mindfulness, and self-actualization among artists and non-artists.

### Hypotheses

1. There may be high level of mindfulness among artists compared to non-artists.
2. There may be high level of self-actualization among artists compared to non-artists.
3. There may be positive relation among mindfulness and self-actualization among artists and non-artists.

### Tools

The following scales have been used:

1. **Kentucky Inventory of Mindfulness Skills (KIMS):** It is a 39-item self-report measuring mindfulness on four scales: Observing, Describing, Act with awareness, and accept without Judgment. It was developed at Kentucky University by Baer, Smith, & Allen (2004).
2. **Measure of Actualization of Potential (MAP):** It is a 27 item self-report which measures the level of self-actualization on two scales- openness to experience and self-reference. It was developed by R. Lefrançois, G. Leclerc, M. Dubé, R. Hébert & P. Gaulin, Sherbrooke Geriatric University Institute, Sherbrooke, Québec, Canada.

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### Sample

The present study consists of a sample of 240 participants, out of which 120 are artists and 120 are non-artists. The sample includes both men and women who are in the age group of 20 to 50 years. Sample of artists include painters, musicians and martial artists. Each sub group of artists include 40 participants who were having 5 to 35 years of experience. Simple random sampling technique is used to select the sample of artists. Similarly, the group of non-artists includes 120 participants from any profession other than the art.

### Procedure

The researcher established the rapport with the participants and the purpose of the research was explained. Two questionnaires were given one after another with a short interval. Appropriate instructions were given to complete the questionnaires.

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Distribution of Sample based on Art (Artists)**

Categories		Frequency	Percentage
Artists	Painters	40	16.7%
	Musician	40	16.7%
	Martial arts	40	16.7%
Non-artists		120	50%
Total		240	100.0%

**Table 2: Mean, SD, and t- ratio for Mindfulness among Artists and Non-Artists in India**

Dimensions of Mindfulness	Artists		Non-Artists		t-ratio	df	Significant level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Observing	44.31	12.55	41.85	12.13	1.54	238	0.12
Describing	30.61	7.03	29.28	7.53	1.35	238	0.18
Acting with awareness	37.18	9.28	35.26	9.30	1.61	238	0.11
Accepting or allowing without judgment	33.19	7.92	31.83	8.49	1.29	238	0.19
Total Mindfulness	145.29	36.00	138.27	37.00	1.49	238	0.14

**Table 3a: Level of Self-actualization among Artists and Non-artists in India**

Dimensions of Self-actualization	Artists			Non- Artists		
	Low	Moderate	High	Low	Moderate	High
Openness to experience	17 (14.2%)	30 (25%)	73 (60.8%)	28 (23.3%)	46 (38.3%)	46 (38.3%)
Self-reference	20 (16.7%)	22 (18.3%)	78 (65.0%)	42 (35.0%)	35 (29.2%)	43 (35.8%)
Total	13 (10.8%)	28 (23.3%)	79 (65.8%)	48 (40.0%)	27 (22.5%)	45 (37.5%)

**Table 3b: Mean, SD, and t- ratio for Self-actualization among Artists and Non-artists**

Dimensions of self-actualization	Artists		Non- Artists		t- ratio	df	Significant level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Openness to experience	3.93	0.32	3.73	0.52	3.59	238	0.00**
Self-reference	3.91	0.49	3.75	0.57	2.32	238	0.02*
Total	3.93	0.31	3.68	0.55	4.34	238	0.00**

\*\*significant at 0.01 level | \*significant at 0.05 level

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**Table 4a: Correlation between Self-actualization and Mindfulness among Artists**

Variables		Openness to experience	Self-reference	Self- actualization total	KIMS Observing	KIMS Describing	KIMS Acting with awareness	KIMS Accepting Without judgment	KIMS total
Openness to experience	Pearson Correlation	1	.440**	.622**	.520**	.555**	.573**	.520**	.552**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Self reference	Pearson Correlation	.440**	1	.461**	.564**	.601**	.587**	.582**	.593**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Self- actualization total	Pearson Correlation	.622**	.461**	1	.512**	.469**	.518**	.477**	.509**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Observing	Pearson Correlation	.520**	.564**	.512**	1	.915**	.952**	.947**	.981**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Describing	Pearson Correlation	.555**	.601**	.469**	.915**	1	.928**	.946**	.961**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Acting with awareness	Pearson Correlation	.573**	.587**	.518**	.952**	.928**	1	.969**	.984**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Accepting Without judgment	Pearson Correlation	.520**	.582**	.477**	.947**	.946**	.969**	1	.985**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS- Total	Pearson Correlation	.552**	.593**	.509**	.981**	.961**	.984**	.985**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

\*\**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

\**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

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Table 4b: Correlation between Self-actualization and Mindfulness among Non-Artists

Variables		Openness to experience	Self-reference	Self-actualization total	KIMS Observing	KIMS Describing	KIMS Acting with awareness	KIMS Accepting Without judgment	KIMS total
Openness to experience	Pearson Correlation	1	.649**	.695**	.567**	.569**	.566**	.573**	.577**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Self reference	Pearson Correlation	.649**	1	.685**	.603**	.583**	.596**	.586**	.602**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Self-actualization total	Pearson Correlation	.695**	.685**	1	.579**	.582**	.599**	.582**	.593**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Observing	Pearson Correlation	.567**	.603**	.579**	1	.953**	.966**	.959**	.987**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Describing	Pearson Correlation	.569**	.583**	.582**	.953**	1	.961**	.962**	.981**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Acting with awareness	Pearson Correlation	.566**	.596**	.599**	.966**	.961**	1	.973**	.989**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS Accepting Without judgment	Pearson Correlation	.573**	.586**	.582**	.959**	.962**	.973**	1	.986**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
KIMS-Total	Pearson Correlation	.577**	.602**	.593**	.987**	.981**	.989**	.986**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**DISCUSSION**

Table 1 shows the distribution of sample based on art. The sample is divided into two groups of artists and non-artists. Each group has 120 participants and a total sample includes 240 participants. There are three types of artists- painters, musicians and martial artists with 40 participants in each category.

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Table 2 reflects the mean, standard deviation and t-ratio for mindfulness among Indian artists and non-artists. The mean for total mindfulness for artists is 145.29 which is high compared to the mean of non-artists which is 138.27. However, the t-ratio 1.49 indicates that the difference in the mindfulness of both artists and non-artists is not statistically significant. Table 2 also indicates that artists have higher mean on all dimensions of mindfulness namely, observing (M= 44.31), describing (M= 30.61) acting with awareness (37.18) and accepting or allowing without judgment. (M= 33.19) while non-artists have the means on these dimensions as 41.85, 29.28, 35.26 and 31.83 respectively. Results indicate that these differences in the means of all the dimensions of mindfulness between artists and non-artists do not differ statistically. Hence, the hypothesis that there may be high level of mindfulness among artists compared to non-artists is rejected.

Table 3a shows the level of self-actualization among artists and non-artists. The results show that 65.8% of artists have high level of self-actualization while only 37.5% of non-artists have high self-actualization. Most of the non-artists (40%) have low level of self-actualization while only 10.8% of artists have low self-actualization. 60.8% of artists are high on the dimension of self-actualization, openness to experience, while only 38.3% of non-artists are high on this dimension. Similarly, 65% artists have high level of self-reference compared to 37.5% of non-artists.

Table 3b reflects the mean, standard deviation and t-ratio for self-actualization among Indian artists and non-artists. The mean for total self-actualization for artists is 3.93 which is high compared to the mean of non-artists which is 3.68. However, the t-ratio 4.34 indicates that the difference in the level of self-actualization of both artists and non-artists is statistically significant at 0.01 level. Table 3 also indicates that artists have higher mean on all dimensions of self-actualization namely, openness to experience (M= 3.93), and self-reference (M=3.91) while non-artists have the means on these dimensions as 3.73, and 3.75 respectively. Results indicate that these differences in the means of all the dimensions of self-actualization between artists and non-artists are significant statistically. Hence, the hypothesis that there may be high level of self-actualization among artists compared to non-artists is proved.

Table 4a depicts the correlation between mindfulness and self-actualization among artists. It shows that correlation between self-actualization and mindfulness is positive and moderate (0.5). Results also indicate that the correlation between self-actualization and the dimensions of mindfulness namely observing (0.5), describing (0.5), Acting with awareness (0.5) and accepting or allowing without judgment (0.5) is also moderate and positive. All these correlations are significant at 0.01 level.

The correlation between openness to experience and total mindfulness is positive and moderate (0.6). Similarly correlation between openness to experience and dimensions of mindfulness, namely, observing (0.6), describing (0.6), acting with awareness (0.6) and accepting or allowing without judgment (0.6) is also positive and moderate but they are not statistically significant.

On the other hand, the correlation between self-reference and total mindfulness (0.6), correlation between self-reference and dimensions of mindfulness, namely, observing (0.6), describing (0.6), acting with awareness (0.6) and accepting or allowing without judgment (0.6) is also positive and moderate and they are statistically significant.

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Table 4b depicts the correlation between mindfulness and self-actualization among Non-artists. It shows that correlation between self-actualization and mindfulness is positive and moderate (0.6). Results also indicate that the correlation between self-actualization and the dimensions of mindfulness namely observing (0.6), describing (0.6), Acting with awareness (0.6) and accepting or allowing without judgment (0.6) is also moderate and positive. All these correlations are significant at 0.01 level.

The correlation between openness to experience and total mindfulness is positive and moderate (0.6). Similarly correlation between openness to experience and dimensions of mindfulness, namely, observing (0.6), describing (0.6), acting with awareness (0.6) and accepting or allowing without judgment (0.6) is also positive and moderate but they are not statistically significant.

On the other hand, the correlation between self-reference and total mindfulness (0.6), correlation between self-reference and dimensions of mindfulness, namely, observing (0.6), describing (0.6), acting with awareness (0.6) and accepting or allowing without judgment (0.6) is also positive and moderate and they are statistically significant.

### CONCLUSION

There is no significant difference in the level of mindfulness among artists and non-artists.  
There is high level of self-actualization among artists compared to non-artists.  
There is moderate and positive relation among mindfulness and self-actualization among artists and non-artists.

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### ***Conflict of Interest***

The authors carefully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

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