

Stress is Negatively Correlated with Mindfulness in Adults

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ABSTRACT

Stress can be defined as any type of change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological strain. Stress is your body's response to anything that requires attention or action. 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. Main objectives of this study are, to determine the relationship between mindfulness and stress in adults, to understand how we can change our life (stressful life) and make it better, to assess the relationship between mindfulness and Stress. Here we have used correlation method. The sample I have taken for the research is adults, the period of human development in which full physical growth and maturity have been achieved. In this study we are going to measure stress according to Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) - Sheldon Cohen, and mindfulness according to Mindfulness Attention Awareness scale (MASS). There is a Negative correlation seen in this study but in the first attempt of Analysis as I didn't clear the outliers it made it more difficult for the analysis to be valid.

Keywords: *Stress, Mindfulness, Adults, Correlation, Scales, Analysis*

Two variables are considered in this, stress, and mindfulness.

Everyone experiences stress to some degree. The way you respond to stress, however, makes a big difference to your overall well-being. Stress is our body's response to pressure. Many different situations or life events can cause stress. It is often triggered when we experience something new, unexpected or that threatens our sense of self, or when we feel we have little control over a situation. Mindfulness is the psychological process 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 and other training.

- **Stress** can be defined as any type of change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological strain. Stress is your body's response to anything that requires attention or action.
- **Mindfulness** is the psychological process 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 and other training.

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Here as we are considering adults it is going to be a bit difficult to predict how a person will cope with a situation. As adulthood is not that stable phase of life it makes us more vulnerable to look at a particular situation in a certain way, so our reactions may differ from person to person.

~Lao Tzu quotes -

“When you realize nothing is lacking, the whole world belongs to you.” It means when you start feeling happy and fresh (without feeling any stress) then you are liberated in your world (your mind is liberated)

As we have taken adulthood into consideration, it will help us to understand how our youth is coping with different stressors and that will make us understand whether our country is going on the right track or not. Adulthood, the period in the human lifespan in which full physical and intellectual maturity have been attained. Adulthood is commonly thought of as beginning at age 20 or 21 years. It is the period of human development in which full physical growth and maturity have been achieved and certain biological, cognitive, social, personality, and other changes associated with the aging process occur.

RESEARCH REVIEW

Stress

Reddy et al. (2018) in their study concludes that stream wise difference in stress does exist in students. It is important to deal with stress at personal, social, and institutional level. Remedies such as feedback, yoga, life skills training, mindfulness, meditation, and psychotherapy have been found useful to deal with stress. Identifying the main reason for stress is the key to deal with it.

Dimitrov (2017) in his study claimed that stress can be addressed by ensuring that the students give utmost importance to their welfare. Food, exercise, work, recreation is some of the areas to focus on. He also concluded that the education system is more to do with the academic qualifications and does not contribute enough to the holistic development of students.

Mindfulness

Hunsinger (2012), MBSR is an empirically supported mindfulness- based intervention. “In its standard form, it includes eight weekly sessions of 2.5 hours, with an all-day session during week 6” (Baer, Carmody, & Hunsinger 2012, 755). Sessions for MBSR include meditation exercises and yoga, all of which are non- judgement based and teach participants to observe and accept the different sensations they experience throughout each session (Baer et al. 2012).

According to Margalit & Rosenstreich, (2015), practicing mindfulness can be very beneficial for students with exceptional academic loads, especially college students who are transitioning to college life. “The transition to college enhances feelings of loneliness, and lonely students typically underperform academically due to the depletion of cognitive resources. Mindfulness practice has been demonstrated to improve certain cognitive abilities”

Statement of the problem

To study how stress and Mindfulness affect each other.

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Objective of study

- To determine the relationship between mindfulness and stress in adults.
- To study how one variable affects the other.
- To understand if we practice mindfulness. Will it be helpful? Or is there any other way that can keep us away from being distressed?
- The main objective of exploring this correlation is to understand how we can change our life (stressful life) and make it better.
- To assess the relationship between mindfulness and Stress.

Hypothesis

- Stress is negatively correlated with Mindfulness in adults.
- In adulthood practicing mindfulness helps reducing stress.

Sample

The sample I have taken for the research project is Adults, the period of human development in which full physical growth and maturity have been achieved and certain biological, cognitive, social, personality, and other changes associated with the aging process occur. It was easier to handle the sample as the students were from this age group and it helped me to assess their stress levels and mindfulness levels.

As this age group is the youth of our country it helps us to understand the reliability of the project.

Variables

There are two main variables in this study, and they are as follows –

- IV - Mindfulness
- DV - Stress
- CV – Age

Tools used in present study

The tools I used in this study are observation and survey. This study helps us to understand a correlation between stress and Mindfulness.

The main reason behind using the survey method is to understand everyone's point of views regarding their own coping skills and to know how well they know themselves. In this research I have used two different scales to measure stress and Mindfulness. To study stress PSS (Perceived stress Scale) is used while for mindfulness MASS (Mindfulness attention awareness scale) is used.

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a classic stress assessment instrument, originally developed in 1983, by Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein. The questions in this scale ask about our feelings and thoughts during the last month. Although some of the questions are similar, there are differences between them, and we should treat each one as a separate question. The best approach is to answer quickly. PSS 0-4 options are given, so here 0 is for low stress while 4 is the score for high stress. And the scoring will be done by reversing the response (for e.g. - 0=4 ,1=3 ,2=2 ,3=1 ,4=0).

The trait MAAS is a 15-item scale is designed to assess a core characteristic of mindfulness, namely, a receptive state of mind in which attention, informed by a sensitive awareness of

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what is occurring in the present, simply observes what is taking place. For MAAS option from 1 = Almost Always, 2 = Very Frequently, 3 = Somewhat Frequently, 4 = Somewhat Infrequently, 5 = Very Infrequently, 6 = Almost Never.

Procedure

In this study I first tried to understand what stress and mindfulness are, as well as what kind of effect they can have on each other, then I searched for tests that I can use for assessment of these variables, then I decided that I will be doing these tests on adults, for assessment I used online survey method which involved using google forms and after getting 100 samples I used spss software and then I drew my conclusions based on statistics that I got. A correlation analysis using Pearson product correlation was used to explore the relationships between the variables of levels of mindfulness as measured by the MAAS levels and of Perceived stress as measured by the PSS.

Statistical Analysis

In this study I have used spss software to understand the statistics and draw conclusions regarding my hypothesis. As my study is based on correlational research design, I have used a Pearson product moment correlation which will help me to understand if stress and mindfulness have a negative correlation and will practicing mindfulness help in reducing stress.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics

Mean and Standard deviation

	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis
S Total	100	22.31	3.064	9.388	.036	-.771
M Total	100	20.45	2.721	7.402	-.003	-.571

The above tables describe the sample in terms of mean and standard deviation regarding perceived Stress Scale Scores, and Mindfulness Attention Awareness scale scores. The above table illustrates the number of respondents (N=100), The mean is (Mean = 22.31) for stress and (Mean = 20.45) for Mindfulness. As well have mentioned standard deviation. Here we have not considered Gender as a variable so Females and males both are included in these samples (the count may not be equal for both the genders.)

Data Analysis

Correlation of stress and Mindfulness

		S Total	M Total
S Total	Pearson Correlation	1	-.144
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.152
	N	100	100
M Total	Pearson Correlation	-.144	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.152	
	N	100	100

A Pearson Product Moment Correlation was conducted to explore the relationships, Perceived stress scale (PSS) scores and Mindfulness Attention Awareness scale (MAAS). There was a negative correlation between the groups. (For stress it was -.144 and for Mindfulness it was -.144)

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Confidence Intervals for present study

				95% Confidence Intervals (2- tailed)
	Pearson correlation	Sig.(2-tailed)	Lower	Upper
S Total- M Total	-.144	.152	-.331	.054

In addition to large and medium correlation there were several small Correlations as well. Here as the following data suggest, the significance of the study is 0.152 which shows that this study is not that generalizable.

There is a Negative correlation seen in this study but in the first attempt of Analysis as I didn't clear the outliers it made it more difficult for the analysis to be valid. But after I cleared the outliers.

CONCLUSION

- Research done by Segal et al. (2002) is also like my research, as in both the research there is a negative correlation seen in Stress and Mindfulness.
- So here we can conclude that if we are high on mindfulness, we can easily cope with stressors around us, and it will help us manage our problems easily.
- According to me, even if a lot of study has already been done on this topic, there is a need to go into more details and have qualitative research too regarding this topic so that we can understand in more details about it.

Limitations

- As a lot of study has already done on this topic there was already a huge amount of content available for it, but it made it a bit confusing whom to rely on.
- In this study one thing that I found was mindfulness was not the only reason that could reduce the stress.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

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