

Mindfulness Practices as a Key to Happiness

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Abstract- Mindfulness, by fostering present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, serves as a powerful catalyst for enhancing overall wellbeing, encompassing mental clarity, emotional resilience, and a deeper sense of fulfillment in life. This study explores the relationship between mindfulness practice and happiness and wellbeing. Mindfulness, characterized by present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, has gained significant attention in recent years for its potential to enhance various dimensions of wellbeing, including mental, emotional, and physical health. Drawing upon a review of empirical research and theoretical frameworks, this paper examines how mindfulness interventions contribute to improved psychological functioning, stress reduction, emotional regulation, and overall life satisfaction. Mindfulness is a state of being attentive and aware of one's actions (Jon Kabat-Zinn 2020). It is crucial to incorporate mindfulness education in order to promote student happiness and well-being, academic success, attention, focus, cognitive flexibility, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, metacognitive skills, and self-care practices in adaptive learning environments. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 emphasizes holistic education, aiming to develop students cognitive, emotional, physical, and ethical dimensions. It promotes a well-rounded approach, integrating academic, extracurricular, and vocational learning to foster critical thinking, creativity, and life skills among students. This study utilizes a quasi-experimental method and a sample of 52 Government Secondary School students from Tamilnadu state, India. The results indicate a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test, suggesting that mindfulness practice sessions can enhance well-being and contribute to holistic development in education.

Key Words: Happiness, Holistic education, Mindfulness, National Education Policy, Well-being

I. INTRODUCTION

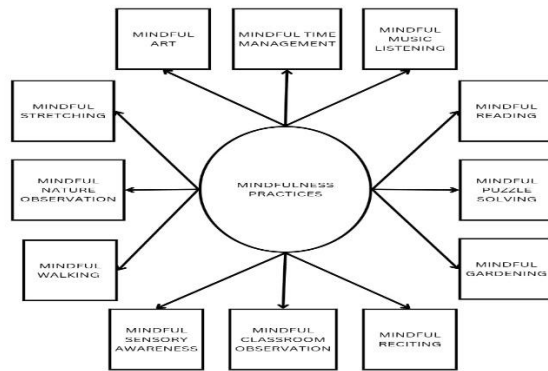
"तत्त्वमसि" (Tat Tvam Asi)

"You are That," - Advaita Vedanta

In an era marked by constant distractions and relentless pursuits, the concept of mindfulness has emerged as a beacon of hope for cultivating inner

peace and holistic wellbeing. The nonjudgmental observation of the ongoing stream of internal and external stimuli as they arise" -(Baer, 2003) Mindfulness practices, with their emphasis on present-moment awareness and non-judgmental observation, emerge as powerful tools in this endeavor. (Strittmatter,2023). Rooted in ancient contemplative practices and now validated by modern science, mindfulness offers a transformative pathway to enhanced mental, emotional, and physical health. Holistic education focuses on nurturing all aspects of an individual's potential, including social-emotional, intellectual, moral, creative, and spiritual development. (Kabat-Zinn, J. 2003) Well-being is a state characterized by positive emotions, low levels of negative emotions, engagement in activity, positive relationships, finding meaning in life, and a sense of accomplishment. Studies have indicated that mindfulness in education can contribute to students' interest, motivation, and personal growth. It has the potential to improve cognitive abilities, attention, and self-regulation, ultimately leading to academic success. (E., & e. 2023). Mindfulness initiatives and pedagogies have been implemented worldwide, yielding positive outcomes for both students and teachers. Well-being is a state characterized by positive emotions, low levels of negative emotions, engagement in activity, positive relationships, finding meaning in life, and a sense of accomplishment. - (Martin Seligman 2002)

Fig 1. Mindful Practices



1. Mindful walking

Mindful walking is about bringing your full attention to the present moment as you move, paying attention to your body sensations and surroundings without judgment. (Smith, M. 2024)

2. Mindful nature observation

It's all about intentionally focusing on our senses and experiencing the environment without judgment. (Florence, G., & Florence, G. 2024)

3. Mindful stretching

It goes beyond simply lengthening muscles; it's a practice that integrates awareness and intention into your stretches, connecting your body and mind for a deeper and more holistic experience . (Mood, A. 2024)

4. Mindful art

Mindful art is not about the final product, but rather the journey of being present in the moment, connecting with your senses, and allowing your emotions and intuition to guide your creation. (Smith, M. 2024)

5. Mindful time management

Mindful time management is about being present and focused on your tasks. (Willard, C. 2023).

6. Mindful music listening

Mindful music listening involves fully immersing yourself in the auditory experience, paying close attention to the sounds, rhythms, and emotions without distractions. (Guyaux, F. 2024)

7. Mindful reading

Mindful reading is the practice of approaching text with focus and intention, actively engaging with the material rather than passively skimming it. (Mindfulness exercises. 2022,)

8. Mindful puzzle solving

Mindful puzzle solving is the practice of approaching puzzles with a present-moment awareness and an emphasis on the journey rather than just the destination. (Smith, M. 2024)

9. Mindful gardening

Mindful gardening is a beautiful blend of traditional gardening practices and the principles of mindfulness, allowing you to cultivate not only a flourishing garden but also inner peace and a deeper connection with nature. (Daily Practices Archives. n.d.).

10. Mindful reciting

Mindful reciting refers to the practice of repeating words, phrases, or affirmations with full attention and intention. (Smith, M. 2024)

11. Mindful classroom observation

Mindful classroom observation is a powerful approach that goes beyond simple data collection. It emphasizes actively attending to the learning environment with an open mind, present moment awareness, and a focus on both the seen and unseen aspects of the classroom dynamic. (Mindful Observation. 2019)

12. Mindful sensory awareness

Mindful sensory awareness is a practice that focuses on heightening an individual's awareness of their senses and the present moment. (Willard, C. 2023).

13. Mindful visualization

It is also known as visualization meditation, is a type of meditation that involves creating a mental image or scenario to promote relaxation and mindfulness. (Smith, M. 2024)

14. Mindful reflection

Mindful reflection is a practice that involves a two-way conversation with your thoughts and emotions, focusing on being fully present in the moment and analyzing your experiences to better understand yourself. (Guyaux, F. 2024,).

15. Mindful doodling

It is a form of drawing or doodling that is free-flowing, spontaneous, and open, serving as a powerful tool for relaxation and mindfulness. (Florence, G., & Florence, G. 2024).

16. Guided imagery

Guided imagery involves using your imagination to visualize a calming or pleasant scene, experience, or sensation. (Mood, A. 2024,)

17. Mindful rangoli drawing

A mindful rangoli drawing is an artistic practice that goes beyond simply creating a beautiful design. It's about integrating the act of drawing with your present moment awareness, turning it into a meditative and calming experience. (Willard, C. 2023)

18. Mindful breathing

Mindful breathing is the practice of intentionally focusing your attention on your breath, without judgment or trying to control it. (Smith, M. 2024)

19. Gratitude journaling

Gratitude journaling involves regularly recording things you're thankful for, fostering a positive mindset. It typically includes daily or periodic reflections on positive experiences, people, or aspects of your life. (Florence, G., & Florence, G. 2024,).

20. Aquarium

An aquarium as a mindfulness practice refers to using the observation and engagement with an aquarium as a way to cultivate present-moment awareness, non-judgmental acceptance, and inner peace. (Guyaux, F. 2024).

21. Self-compassion breaks

The self-compassion break is a technique that assists people in putting the three fundamental tenets of self-compassion kindness, shared humanity, and mindfulness to use when dealing with life's challenges. It entails admitting stress or pain, realizing that suffering is a common human experience, and saying encouraging things to oneself. (American Psychological Association (APA)).

Fig 2 Practicing Mindfulness



II. LITERATURE REVIEW

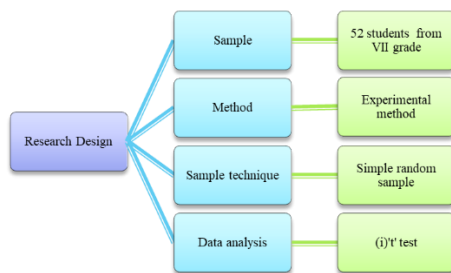
Recent research highlights the transformative role of mindfulness and hope in fostering personal excellence across educational and psychological domains. Snyder et al. (2002) emphasized that hope, defined as goal-directed thinking, significantly enhances motivation and resilience, particularly among students and professionals. Kabat-Zinn (2003) established mindfulness as a core practice for stress reduction and emotional regulation, promoting overall well-being. Feldman and Dreher (2012) explored the intersection of mindfulness and hope, finding that mindfulness training positively influences hopeful thinking by increasing self-awareness and clarity of goals. A study by Cheavens et al. (2005) demonstrated that hope therapy interventions improved academic and emotional outcomes among adolescents. Complementing this, Shapiro et al. (2008) found that integrating mindfulness into education cultivates empathy, attention, and purpose—all essential for personal excellence. Together, these studies support the integration of mindful hope as a holistic strategy to empower individuals toward thriving and flourishing. When values shape our choices and mindfulness guides our awareness, happiness becomes not a pursuit but a natural way of living

Objective

To find out if there any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of well-being.

III. METHODS

Experimental method was adopted for the study. The sample consisted of 52 students from VII grade students. 21 mindful practices given to students for 21 days. Well – being inventory is a tool used to assess the well-being. It consists of 25 items, spread across 5 dimensions with each dimension encompassing 5 items. The five dimensions include Physical well-being, Emotional well-being, Social well-being, Mental well-being and Psychological well-being. For each item, participants indicate on a yes or no to show their response. The response obtained are then scored and analyzed to assess the well-being of the students. The following statistical techniques were used for the study. (a) Mean (b). Standard deviation (c). ‘t’ test



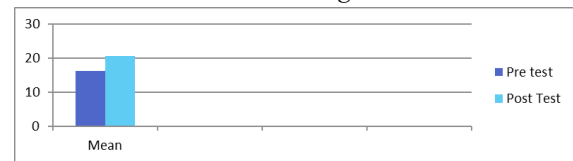
IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1 Comparison of well-being of pre-test and post-test score of wellbeing

Sam ple	Number of Student s(N)	Me an	Stand ard deviat ion	t	Signific ance
Pre test	52	16. 19	2.513	14.1 22	0.05
Post test	52	20. 67	2.799		

The table 1 represents comparative statistics for mean scores of well-being between pre-test and post-test. In Pre test(n=52), the mean score 16.19 is with a standard deviation of 2.513. Conversely, the Post test (n=52) has a higher mean score of 20.67 with a slightly higher SD of 2.799. The resulting t-value from the statistical test comparing these means is 14.122. Hence there is a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores.

Fig 3 Pre – Test and Post- Test Means Scores of well-being



V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The comparison of well-being scores between the pre-test and post-test assessments reveals a significant improvement following the implementation of mindful practices. Prior to the intervention, participants had a mean well-being score of 16.19 with a standard deviation of 2.513. After engaging in mindfulness practices, the post-test mean score increased substantially to 20.67, accompanied by a slightly higher standard deviation of 2.799. The notable increase in mean well-being scores from pre-test to post-test suggests that the mindfulness intervention had a positive impact on participants' overall sense of well-being. This improvement aligns with existing research demonstrating the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in enhancing psychological well-being, reducing stress, and promoting emotional resilience. The statistically significant t-value of 14.122 indicates a substantial difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, further supporting the efficacy of the mindfulness practices. This finding underscores the importance of incorporating mindfulness techniques into interventions aimed at improving well-being, particularly in educational or clinical settings. The observed increase in well-being scores after the mindfulness intervention may be attributed to various factors, including increased self-awareness, enhanced emotional regulation, and a greater sense of inner peace and contentment. Mindfulness practices such as meditation, mindful breathing, and body scanning may have helped participants cultivate present-moment awareness and develop coping strategies for managing stress and negative emotions. Hofmann et al. (2010) found that mindfulness-based interventions were associated with moderate to large reductions in anxiety and stress. Keng et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis that showed mindfulness-based interventions were effective in reducing symptoms of depression. Overall, the findings suggest that mindfulness

interventions can serve as valuable tools for enhancing well-being and fostering resilience in individuals. Future research could explore the long-term effects of mindfulness practices on well-being outcomes and investigate potential moderators or mediators of the intervention's effectiveness. Additionally, implementing mindfulness programs in diverse populations and contexts may further elucidate the broader impact of these practices on overall health and quality of life.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that mindfulness practice significantly enhances students' happiness and overall well-being, as evidenced by the marked improvement between pre-test and post-test scores. Mindfulness interventions promote present-moment awareness, emotional regulation, stress reduction, and psychological resilience, thereby supporting students' holistic development. These findings corroborate established research highlighting mindfulness as a vital contributor to life satisfaction and mental health (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 2020). The results also align with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes holistic education. Integrating mindfulness-based practices into school curricula can thus serve as an effective strategy for fostering well-being, academic engagement, and balanced personal growth.

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