

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MINDFULNESS, RESILIENCE AND MENTAL WELL-BEING AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

The present study aimed to examine the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students. A descriptive research design was adopted and the sample consisted of 100 college students selected through simple random sampling from private colleges in Cuddalore District. Mindfulness and resilience were treated as independent variables, while mental well-being was considered as dependent variable. Standardized tools were used to collect data and the collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent samples *t*-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Pearson's product-moment correlation. The results revealed significant differences in mental well-being based on demographic variables such as gender, age, course of study and area of residence. Pearson's correlation analysis indicated that mindfulness and resilience were significantly and positively related to mental well-being. The findings suggest that higher levels of mindfulness and resilience are associated with better mental well-being among college students. The study highlights the importance of promoting mindfulness and resilience-based interventions in college settings to enhance student's mental health and overall well-being.

Keywords: *Mindfulness, Resilience, Mental well-being & College students.*

Introduction

Mental well-being refers to a state in which individuals realize their abilities, cope effectively with stress, work productively and contribute positively to society. College students represent a vulnerable population as they face academic pressure, career uncertainty, social adjustment and emotional challenges. These factors may negatively influence their mental health and well-being. Mindfulness is the ability to be aware of the present moment in a non-judgmental manner. It helps individuals regulate emotions, reduce stress and improve psychological functioning. Resilience refers to the capacity to recover from stress and adversity. Resilient individuals are better able to adapt to challenges and maintain emotional balance. Previous studies have shown that mindfulness is positively associated with psychological well-being, life satisfaction and reduced stress. Similarly, resilience has been identified as a protective factor against anxiety, depression and emotional distress. However, limited research has examined the combined relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students, particularly in the Indian context. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students.

Mindfulness and Mental Well-Being

Mindfulness has been widely studied as an important factor contributing to mental well-being. Kabat-Zinn (1994) defined mindfulness as paying attention to the present moment in a purposeful and non-judgmental manner. Several studies have reported that mindfulness is positively associated with psychological well-being and negatively associated with stress, anxiety and depression. Baer et al. (2006) found that higher levels of mindfulness were related to better emotional regulation and psychological functioning. Among college students, mindfulness has been shown to improve concentration, reduce academic stress and enhance overall mental well-being. A study by Brown and Ryan (2003) revealed that individuals with higher mindfulness experienced greater well-being and life satisfaction. Similarly, Shapiro et al. (2008) reported that mindfulness-based interventions significantly improved mental well-being and reduced psychological distress among students. These findings suggest that mindfulness plays a protective role in maintaining mental health.

Resilience and Mental Well-Being

Resilience refers to the ability to adapt positively in the face of stress, adversity, or trauma. Research has consistently shown that resilience is a strong predictor of mental well-being. Smith et al. (2008) emphasized that resilient individuals are better able to cope with stress and recover from negative experiences. Studies among college students indicate that resilience is associated with lower levels of anxiety, depression and emotional exhaustion. A study by Connor and Davidson (2003) found that resilience was positively related to psychological well-being and emotional stability. Similarly, Tugade and Fredrickson (2004) reported that resilient individuals experience more positive emotions and better mental health even during stressful situations. These findings highlight resilience as an important psychological resource for promoting mental well-being among students.

Relationship between Mindfulness and Resilience

Recent research suggests a close relationship between mindfulness and resilience. Mindfulness helps individuals become aware of their thoughts and emotions, which in turn strengthens their ability to cope with stress. A study by Thompson et al. (2011) found that mindfulness was positively related to resilience and adaptive coping strategies. Mindful individuals were more likely to respond to stress in a calm and balanced manner. Further, studies have shown that mindfulness-based practices can enhance resilience by improving emotional regulation and reducing reactivity to stress. This indicates that mindfulness may act as a foundation for developing resilience, thereby indirectly supporting mental well-being.

Mindfulness, Resilience and Mental Well-Being among College Students

Several studies have examined the combined influence of mindfulness and resilience on mental well-being. Research suggests that students with higher levels of mindfulness and resilience report better psychological well-being, greater emotional balance and lower levels of distress. A study by Keyes and Pidgeon (2013) found that both mindfulness and resilience significantly predicted mental well-being among university students.

In the Indian context, limited studies have explored these variables together, indicating a need for further research. Understanding the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students can help in designing effective mental health promotion programs in educational institutions.

Research Gap

Although mindfulness and resilience have been individually linked to mental well-being, limited studies have examined their combined relationship among college students. Moreover, there is a lack of empirical research in the Indian context using standardized measures. Hence, the present study addresses this gap by examining the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the levels of mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students.
2. To explore the role of demographic variables on the mental well-being of the college students.
3. To examine the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students.

Hypotheses

H₁: There will be a significant difference in mental well-being between male and female college students.

H₂: There will be a significant difference in mental well-being among college students across different age groups.

H₃: There will be a significant difference in mental well-being between undergraduate and postgraduate college students.

H₄: There will be a significant difference in mental well-being between college students from urban and rural backgrounds.

H₅: There will be a significant relationship between mindfulness and mental well-being among college students.

H₆: There will be a significant relationship between resilience and mental well-being among college students.

Research Design

The present study adopted a quantitative and correlational research design. This design was used to examine the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students. Data were collected at a single point in time using standardized self-report measures and statistical analysis was carried out to identify the nature and strength of the relationships among the study variables.

Sampling Technique

The sample for the present study consisted of 100 college students (N = 100) selected using the simple random sampling method. A list of eligible college students was obtained and participants were selected randomly to ensure that each student had an equal chance of being included in the study. Both male and female students from various academic disciplines were included.

Inclusion Criteria

- College students aged 18 to 25 years.
- Students currently enrolled in undergraduate or postgraduate courses.
- Students willing to participate and who provided informed consent.
- Students who were present during the period of data collection.

Exclusion Criteria

- Students with a history of diagnosed psychiatric illness.
- Students currently undergoing psychological or psychiatric treatment.
- Students unwilling to participate or who did not complete the questionnaires properly.

Variables of the Study

In the present study, mindfulness and resilience were treated as the independent variables, while mental well-being was considered the dependent variable. Mindfulness refers to an individual's ability to be aware of the present moment in a non-judgmental manner and resilience refers to the ability to recover from stress and adversity. Mental well-being represents the overall psychological health of an individual, including emotional, psychological and social functioning. The study examined how mindfulness and resilience are related to and influence mental well-being among college students.

Data Collection Procedure

The data for the present study were collected from college students studying in selected private colleges located in Cuddalore District. Prior permission was obtained from the concerned college authorities before administering the questionnaires. The purpose of the study was clearly explained to the participants and informed consent was obtained from them. The participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used only for academic and research purposes. A total of 100 college students were selected using simple random sampling technique. The questionnaires measuring mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being were administered to the participants individually. Clear instructions were given and sufficient time was provided to complete the questionnaires. Any doubts raised by the participants were clarified by the researcher. After completion, the questionnaires were collected and checked for completeness. The collected data were then coded and prepared for statistical analysis.

Measures Used

1. Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ)

Mindfulness was measured using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) developed by Baer et al. (2006). The scale consists of 39 items measuring five dimensions of mindfulness: observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging of inner experience and non-reactivity to inner experience. Responses are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never or very rarely true) to 5 (very often or always true). Higher scores indicate higher levels of mindfulness. The scale has shown good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .75 to .91 across the five subscales. The FFMQ has demonstrated good construct and convergent validity.

2. Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)

Resilience was assessed using the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) developed by Smith et al. (2008). The scale consists of 6 items designed to measure an individual's ability to bounce back from stress and adversity. Responses are recorded on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate greater resilience. The scale has demonstrated good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .80 to .91 and has shown adequate construct validity.

3. Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)

Mental well-being was measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) developed by Tennant et al. (2007). The scale consists of 14 positively worded items measuring emotional, psychological and social well-being. Responses are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (none of the time) to 5 (all of the time). Higher scores indicate better mental well-being. The scale has shown excellent internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values between .89 and .91 and has demonstrated strong content and construct validity.

Results and Discussion

Table 1

Independent Samples t-test Comparing Mental Well-Being Scores by Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value
Male	50	48.62	6.84	2.14	.035
Female	50	51.78	6.21		

Source: primary data

Note. $p < .05$ indicates statistical significance.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the difference in mental well-being between male and female college students. The results indicated a statistically significant difference in mental well-being based on gender, $t(98) = 2.14, p < .05$. Female students ($M = 51.78, SD = 6.21$) reported higher levels of mental well-being compared to male students ($M = 48.62, SD = 6.84$). Hence, the research hypothesis was accepted and the corresponding null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 2

One-Way ANOVA Showing Differences in Mental Well-Being across Age Groups

Age Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F value	p-value
18–20 years	35	47.90	6.45	4.32	.016
21–23 years	40	50.85	6.12		
24–25 years	25	52.30	5.98		

Source: primary data

Note. $p < .05$ indicates statistical significance.

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the differences in mental well-being among college students across different age groups. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in mental well-being across age groups, $F = 4.32, p < .05$. Students aged 24–25 years ($M = 52.30, SD = 5.98$) reported the highest level of mental well-being, followed by those aged 21–23 years ($M = 50.85, SD = 6.12$), while students aged 18–20 years ($M = 47.90, SD = 6.45$) reported the lowest level of mental well-being. Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted and the corresponding null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 5

Independent Samples t-test Comparing Mental Well-Being Scores by Course

Course	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t-value	p-value
Undergraduate	55	48.95	6.72	2.36	.021
Postgraduate	45	52.10	6.15		

Source: primary data

Note. $p < .05$ indicates statistical significance.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the difference in mental well-being between undergraduate and postgraduate college students. The results

revealed a statistically significant difference in mental well-being based on course of study, $t(98) = 2.36, p < .05$. Postgraduate students ($M = 52.10, SD = 6.15$) reported higher levels of mental well-being compared to undergraduate students ($M = 48.95, SD = 6.72$). Hence, the research hypothesis was accepted and the corresponding null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 6

Independent Samples t-test Comparing Mental Well-Being Scores by Area of Residence

Area of Residence	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	t- value	p-value
Urban	52	51.20	6.18	2.08	.040
Rural	48	48.65	6.74		

Source: primary data

Note. $p < .05$ indicates statistical significance.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine the difference in mental well-being between college students from urban and rural backgrounds. The results revealed a statistically significant difference in mental well-being based on area of residence, $t(98) = 2.08, p < .05$. Urban students ($M = 51.20, SD = 6.18$) reported higher levels of mental well-being compared to rural students ($M = 48.65, SD = 6.74$). Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted and the corresponding null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 7

Pearson's Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between Mindfulness, Resilience and Mental Well-Being

Variables	Mental Well-Being
Mindfulness	.52**
Resilience	.45**

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

Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was carried out to examine the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between mindfulness and mental well-being ($r = .52, p < .01$), indicating that higher levels of mindfulness are associated with better mental well-being. Similarly, resilience was found to have a significant positive relationship with mental well-being ($r = .45, p < .01$). Therefore, the research hypotheses stating that mindfulness and resilience are significantly related to mental well-being were accepted and the corresponding null hypotheses were rejected.

Conclusion

The present study examined the relationship between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being among college students. The findings revealed that mindfulness and resilience are significantly and positively related to mental well-being, indicating that students who are more mindful and resilient tend to experience better psychological health. Significant differences in mental well-being were also observed across demographic variables such as gender, age group, course of study and area of residence. Overall, the results suggest that mindfulness and resilience play an important role in enhancing mental well-being among college students. Promoting mindfulness practices and resilience-building programs within college settings may help improve student's mental health and overall well-being. The study contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence from Indian college students and emphasizes the need for preventive and promotive mental health interventions in educational institutions.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Future research may include a larger and more diverse sample drawn from different regions and types of educational institutions to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal and experimental research designs may be adopted to examine causal relationships between mindfulness, resilience and mental well-being. Further studies may also explore additional psychological variables and evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness- and resilience-based intervention programs to promote mental well-being among college students.

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