

## **THE ROLE OF MINDFULNESS IN REDUCING THE SYMPTOMS OF STRESS AMONG ADULTS**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

This study investigates how mindfulness can help reduce stress, utilizing two well-known tools: the Five -Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire- 15 and the Perceived Stress Scale Questionnaire. The FFMQ-15 is a detailed instrument that measures 5 different dimensions of mindfulness: observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judgemental, and non-reactivity. In contrast, the PSS assesses how much stress individuals perceive in their lives, focusing on feelings of unpredictability, lack of control, and being overwhelmed.

A total of 120 participants took part in this study, and their data was analysed to examine the connection between mindfulness levels and perceived stress. To explore how mindfulness affects stress, various statistical methods were used, including t-test and Pearson correlation. These techniques helped to determine the significant differences in stress levels among individuals with different mindfulness levels and whether certain mindfulness dimensions were associated with lower stress.

The study's results showed a clear trend: participants who reported higher mindfulness levels, especially in nonjudging (accepting thoughts and emotions without criticism) and nonreactivity (not reacting impulsively to experiences), also experienced lower perceived stress. This indicates that practicing mindfulness—through methods like meditation, body awareness, or focused breathing—can be an effective way to cope with stress.

**Keywords:** Mindfulness, Stress, Five-Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire, Perceived Stress Scale, Meditation, Pearson correlation, t-test

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Stress is a common and complex issue that affects people in many areas of their lives, including personal, academic, and work-related situations. While stress can serve as a helpful response to external challenges, ongoing or excessive stress can lead to serious negative impacts on both physical and mental health. Long-term exposure to high stress levels has been associated with various health issues, such as heart problems, a weakened immune system, and mental health conditions like anxiety and depression. The widespread nature of stress and its diverse effects highlight the need for effective strategies to manage and alleviate it.

Mindfulness, which is the practice of being non-judgmentally aware and accepting of one's current experiences, has gained recognition as a valuable method for reducing stress. Originating from practices like meditation, mindfulness encourages individuals to concentrate on the present instead of dwelling on past grievances or worrying about the future. By fostering mindfulness, people can enhance their emotional regulation, increase self-awareness, and build resilience when facing stressors. The FFMQ- 15 is a popular tool for evaluating mindfulness. It covers different elements of mindfulness practice, such as the ability to notice sensations and thoughts without judgment, articulate experiences clearly and without evaluation, and respond to situations mindfully instead of reacting impulsively. Each facet represents a unique skill or quality that contributes to a person's overall mindfulness ability. On the other hand, the PSS is a recognized tool designed to assess how individuals perceive their stress levels. It measures the extent to which an individual considers any situation stressful in their life.

Mindfulness has gained attention for its supposed ability to lower stress and boost mental well-being. Kabat-Zinn (1990) highlighted the need to develop mindfulness to reduce stress when he created the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program. Studies show that people who use mindfulness techniques experience less stress handle their emotions better, and enjoy improved mental health

overall (Zeidan et al. 2010). What's more, mindfulness has a link to a heightened sense of self-awareness, which helps people respond to stressful situations more (Creswell, 2017).

A number of research projects have utilized the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire to measure different aspects of mindfulness. These aspects include observing, describing, acting with awareness non-judgment, and non-reactivity (Baer et al. 2006). The Perceived Stress Scale serves as a common tool to evaluate how stressful people find situations in their lives (Cohen et al. 1983). Researchers consider both these tools reliable and valid for measuring mindfulness and stress. This makes them suitable choices for this study.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVE:

- To explore the impact of mindfulness on stress level among young adults.
- To explore the impact of aspects- non-judging and exhibiting awareness on reduced stress levels.

### RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

- The mindfulness practices significantly reduce stress among adults.
- The two aspects of mindfulness like non-judging and exhibiting awareness reduce the level of stress.

### METHODOLOGY

**Sample area:** The study was conducted in two distinct geographical areas of India: Assam and Rajasthan and the selected age group was 18-35 for both areas.

**Sample size:** The sample size comprises of 120 adults with 60 males and 60 females of 18-35 age group.

#### Tools:

1. **FFMQ-15:** It consists of 15 items which related to the five dimensions of mindfulness. Higher scores indicating greater mindfulness of the individual.
2. **PSS:** A 10-item questionnaire designed to measure the degree to which participants perceive their life situations as stressful. Higher scores on the PSS indicate higher levels of perceived stress among young adults.

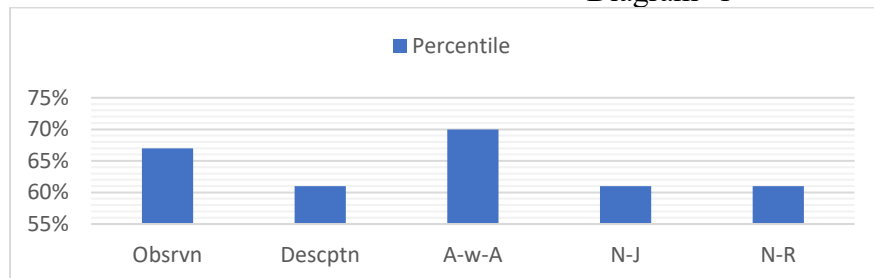
### RESULTS

#### PERCENTILE OF OVERALL SAMPLE ACROSS FIVE DIMENSIONS

Table-1

	Percentile
Observation	66.50%
Description	60.78%
Acting with awareness	69.78%
Non-judgmental	61.33%
Non-reactivity	61.11%

Diagram- 1



Mean & Standard deviation of five dimensions of mindfulness

Table-2

Dimensions	Average score (1-5)	SD
Observation	3.33	0.81
Description	3.04	0.88
Acting with awareness	3.49	0.88
Non - judgemental	3.07	0.92
Non- reactivity	3.06	0.80

Diagram -2

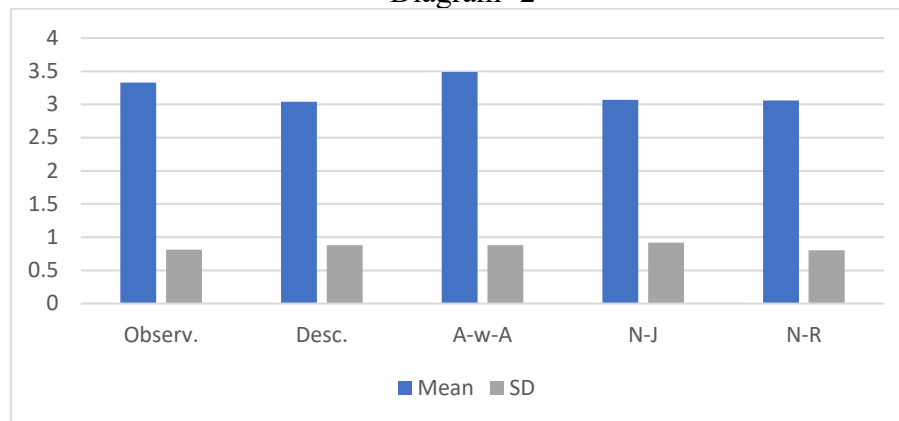


Table-3

	Mean	SD	t
Mindfulness	3.20	0.47	-26.87
Stress	20.43	7.01	

A t-test analysing the mean scores of mindfulness and perceived stress revealed a significant difference between the two variables. Participants who scored higher in mindfulness demonstrated notably lower levels of perceived stress ( $t = -26.87$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). This score ascertains the hypothesis that mindfulness might successfully reduce stress perception in individuals.

Table-4

	Mean	SD	r
Mindfulness	3.20	0.47	-0.54
Stress	20.43	7.01	

The data analysis showed a notable negative correlation between mindfulness and stress perceived ( $r = -0.54$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), implying that individuals with higher mindfulness levels tended to experience lower perceived stress. In particular, aspects of mindfulness like non-judging and non-reactivity were closely linked to reduced stress levels. Participants who had higher scores on the FFMQ-15 reported feeling less stressed, suggesting that mindfulness could help mitigate the effects of stressors on individuals.

## DISCUSSION:

The results of this study strongly hold up the idea that mindfulness plays a significant role in lowering perceived stress levels. The observed negative correlation between mindfulness and stress is consistent with earlier research indicating that mindfulness aids individuals in managing stress by fostering awareness and a non-reactive approach to stressors (Baer et al., 2006). The aspects of mindfulness that

showed the strongest links to stress reduction—acting with awareness and non-reactivity are crucial for helping individuals handle stress in a more balanced and less emotionally charged way.

These results carry important implications for stress management strategies. Mindfulness-based approaches, such as meditation or mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, may serve as effective tools for those seeking to alleviate stress. Considering the favourable outcomes linked to mindfulness, future studies could investigate the long-term impacts of mindfulness practice on stress and mental health, as well as its potential uses in both clinical and non-clinical environments.

#### **LIMITATIONS:**

The small sample size restricts the ability to generalize findings

#### **FUTURE DIRECTIONS:**

Conducting studies with larger and more diverse samples.

Implementing longitudinal studies to evaluate long-term effects.

Investigating the impact of mindfulness on specific groups, such as students and healthcare professionals.

#### **CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, this study highlights the important impact of mindfulness on lowering perceived stress levels. The findings indicate that mindfulness can be a valuable tool for stress management and enhancing psychological well-being. Given that stress remains a significant issue for mental health, integrating mindfulness practices into everyday life or therapeutic settings could provide an effective method for reducing stress.

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