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Assessing the Psychological Impact of Mindfulness on Adolescents Aged 15-18years

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Abstract:
In human life, adolescence is a period of intense emotional, cognitive, and social development, which involves increased stress, academic pressure, and emotional dysregulation. In India, most of the adolescents face growing mental health challenges stemming from academic pressure, social comparison, and socio-cultural expectations. Mindfulness practices like mindful breathing and meditation, have emerged as promising counselling tools which are helpful in enhancing emotional regulation, resilience, and psychological well-being. An international survey shows Mindfulness practices aid adolescents in managing stress, enhancing attention, and improving psychological well-being. This qualitative study aims to explore adolescents' lived experiences of Mindfulness (aged 15–18) in school settings, focusing on perceived psychological effects including emotional regulation, stress reduction, attention, resilience, and self awareness. Data will be gathered via Questionnaire. Findings are expected to provide relevant insights for counselling psychology practice and school mental health programs in India.

Keywords: Adolescents; mindfulness; attention; awareness; stress; anxiety; depression; emotional regulation; overall well-being; quantitative study; counselling psychology.

Introduction:

Adolescence is a formative period characterized by rapid biological, cognitive, and social changes. Increased academic competition, digital exposure, and socio-cultural expectations often result in heightened stress, anxiety, and emotional volatility (Patel et al., 2007; Steinberg, 2014). In the Indian context, many adolescents experience pressure to excel academically while lacking emotional literacy and coping strategies. Adolescence is marked by biological maturation, identity formation, social role transitions, and academic demands. In India, adolescents frequently face intensified competition in schooling, increased exposure to social media, and familial expectations, all of these leading to heightened levels of stress, anxiety, depression and sometimes emotional distress. Many adolescents feel this period is very stressful because many physiological and environmental changes take place during this developmental stage. The physiological changes occurring, due to the onset of puberty (Susman & Dorn, 2009), including maturation of the brain (Giedd, 2008) are responsible in part for promoting more sophisticated and complex concepts of self. These changes influence the way in which an adolescent reasons and relates to others; most importantly, relationships to family and peers shift. This resulted in unfolding of one's identity (Erikson, 1968) and redefinition of one's role within the family and among peers. Recent studies show that as children grow, mental health issues also increase dramatically. While only about 1% of children under age 12 face these challenges, that number jumps to between 17% and

25% by the time they finish their teenage years. The biggest spike in new cases happens between the ages of 15 and 18. Since teenagers spend most of their time at school, focusing on mental health can lead to better behavior, improved health, and higher grades. Schools are the perfect place to spot early warning signs and provide quick support.Mindfulness, defined as paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally (Kabat-Zinn, 1990), has emerged globally as a method to improve emotional regulation, attention, stress management, and well-being among adolescents. Mindfulness is described as the practice of bringing attention and awareness to one's momentary experience with a sense of acceptance and non-judgment, and self-compassion. Mindfulness has been identified as protective factors buffering against negative mental states such as stress, depression, and anxiety in adolescents. Mindfulness practices help to increase present-moment awareness (e.g., awareness of feeling stressed) coupled with learned regulation skills (e.g., breathing, physical poses). It will promote positive reactions to stress and decrease negative coping strategies (e.g., substance use). Mindfulness emphasizes self-awareness and resilience-building, aligning with holistic counselling principles. Counselling psychology focuses on enhancing well-being, preventing distress, and supporting personal development. Mindfulness encourages self-regulation, emotional acceptance, and reduction of stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. For adolescents, these skills can promote healthy identity formation and adaptive coping skills. Quantitative exploration of adolescents' experiences with Mindfulness allows counsellors to tailor interventions to developmental and cultural contexts, supporting their integration into school counselling programs and clinical practice.

Review of Literature:

Mindfulness can positively affect adolescent psychological well-being, including emotional regulation, attention, stress reduction, and resilience (Burke, 2010; Zoogman et al., 2015; Meiklejohn et al., 2012). Qualitative evidence (Kerrigan et al., 2011) reveals deeper insights into emotional experiences, while cultural studies (Fernando et al., 2017; Atla Srinivasa Reddy, 2025) stress adaptation needs. Several studies in India (e.g., Goyal et al., Pal et al.) affirm feasibility and acceptability. Mediator studies (self-compassion, cognitive flexibility) help identify how mindfulness exerts its effects. Recent research consistently demonstrates the efficacy of mindfulness practices in enhancing adolescent mental health, emotional regulation, cognitive functioning, and academic performance in school settings.

Emotional Regulation, Wellbeing, and Mental Health Outcomes: Multiple studies affirm MBIs' role in reducing emotional and behavioral difficulties while boosting wellbeing. Stapleton et al. (2026) found that a daily Smiling Mind School Program significantly lowered emotional/behavioral issues and improved happiness, wellbeing, and mindfulness among school students. Similarly, Jubin et al. (2025) scoping review of 11 studies reported that nine showed MBIs enhanced emotion regulation, resilience, and reduced anxiety, depression, stress, and negative emotions in adolescents, outperforming relaxation programs marginally. Filipa Cavar et al. (2025) longitudinal analysis of 1,618 students linked stable and momentary mindfulness increases to fewer depressive symptoms. Ruiyao Sun (2025) RCT with 18-year-olds reported four-week mindful breathing reduced depression, anxiety, and stress. Sapulette et al. (2025) PRISMA-ScR review of clinical trials (2014–2024) identified reductions in emotional/cognitive disorders (e.g., stress, depression, anxiety, dysregulation) and behavioral/physical issues (e.g., ADHD, sleep disturbances). Bharat Kumar et al. (2023) t-test analysis post-15 mindfulness sessions showed significant adolescent depression reductions via Beck Depression Inventory. Earlier, Anoop et al. (2022) RCT with MBCT-C improved mindfulness, resilience, and anxiety in early adolescents; J.M. Johnstone et al. (2020)

classroom RCT reduced anxiety/stress; and Dunning et al. (2018) meta-analysis of 33 RCTs (n=3,666) confirmed small but significant effects on depression, anxiety/stress, and negative behaviors.

Academic Performance, Attention, and Cognitive Benefits: Mindfulness practices also support cognitive and academic gains. Chetan Bahadur K. (2024) review linked mindfulness meditation to improved memory, focus, concentration, and academic performance, alongside reduced anxiety/stress/depression. Ronald E. Davis (2024) found high meditation depth correlated with better short/long-term performance via CAMS-R, aiding attention and stress reduction before exams. Jaismin et al. (2024) eight-week MBI for rural adolescents significantly cut academic anxiety and boosted mindfulness/subjective wellbeing (mixed ANOVA). C.M. Luciano et al. (2024) descriptive-correlational study revealed strong mindfulness-wellbeing links across physical, emotional, mental, and social domains. Goyal et al. (2023) four-week program reduced stress, enhanced attention/emotional competency. Katia.G et al. (2023) qualitative study at a university "Brain Booth" supported academic/wellbeing gains via mind-body practices. Monsillion J et al. (2023) systematic review of quasi-experimental/RCTs endorsed MBIs for anxiety/depression and school climate. Mynard et al. (2017) Campbell review found cognitive/socio-emotional improvements but not behavioral/academic ones. Quach et al. (2015) RCT improved working memory capacity (WMC) via mindfulness over yoga/control. Mrazek et al. (2013) two-week training boosted GRE performance/WMC by curbing mind-wandering. Napoli et al. (2009) 24-week program enhanced attention in young children; J. Beauchemin et al. (2008) pilot reduced anxiety, improved social skills/academics in learning-disabled adolescents.

Foundational Evidence on Feasibility and Mechanisms: Pioneering work establishes Mindfulness practices acceptability. Karen Bluth et al. (2017) eight-week self-compassion program decreased stress, increased resilience/curiosity/gratitude. David S. Black (2014) field evaluation reported teacher-observed behavioral improvements (attention, self-control, respect) lasting seven weeks post-intervention. Brown & Ryan (2003) validated the MAAS scale, linking mindfulness to broad psychological wellbeing. Burke (2009) preliminary review of 15 studies confirmed feasibility, acceptability, and no adverse effects for youth MBSR/MBCT.

Overall, these studies spanning RCTs, reviews, and longitudinal designs provide robust evidence that school-integrated Mindfulness practices foster adolescent psychological stability, with stronger effects on targeted emotional/cognitive domains. The literature indicates that Mindfulness practices are generally associated with beneficial psychological outcomes for adolescents: stress reduction (especially in school settings), improved attention, awareness, emotional regulation, reduced anxiety and depressive symptoms, resilience, and enhancements in psychological well-being.

Research Methodolgy:

This study utilizes a quantitative cross-sectional research design to examine the psychological impact of mindfulness on adolescents aged 15–18 years. The study aimed to assess the relationship between mindfulness and psychological variables such as stress, anxiety, depression, emotional regulation, and overall well-being.

The sample consisted of 50 adolescents selected using a purposive sampling technique from VK Public School, Bangalore. Participants were chosen based particularly on their age group and exposure to mindfulness practices. Ethical considerations such as confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw were strictly maintained throughout the study. Data were collected using standardized psychological instruments. The data collection procedure involved obtaining institutional permission and

informed consent from participants. Questionnaires were administered in a structured setting, and responses were recorded systematically. Data analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics, where descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (correlation analysis) were computed to examine relationships between variables.

Objectives of the study:

To assess levels of mindfulness among adolescents.

To measure the variables such as perceived stress levels, anxiety levels, depressive symptoms, difficulties in emotionregulation, and overall well-being, among adolescents.

To explore the relationship between mindfulness and each of these measured variables.

Research Design:

The present study uses a quantitative cross-sectional research design to examine the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being among adolescents.

Sampling size: 50 students participated in this study.

Tools used for Data collection:

The study employed a survey questionnaire to 50 students aged between 15-18years, and the instrument consisted of Questionnaires:-

1. Mindfulness- Mindful Attention Awareness Scale for Adolescents (MAAS-A).
2. Perceived Stress scale (PSS-10).
3. Generalized Anxiety Disorder Assessment scale (GAD-7).
4. Kutcher Adolescent Depression scale (KADS-6).
5. Difficulties in Emotion Regulation scale- (DERS-16).
6. Overall well-being WHO-5 Well-Being Index.

Tools Used for Analysis:

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) tool was used for Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation.

Sources of Data:

The primary data for the present study were collected directly from adolescents aged 15–18 years, studying at VK Public school, doing mindfulness practices regularly on a daily basis. Data were gathered using standardized psychological instruments, including the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale for Adolescents (MAAS-A), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10), Generalized Anxiety Disorder Assessment scale (GAD-7), Kutcher Adolescent Depression Scale (KADS-6) Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS-16), and the WHO-5 Well-Being Index. With school authorities permission and parental consent, participants completed the questionnaires in a structured setting, and their responses were used for statistical analysis.

Procedure

Institutional permission was obtained from VK Public school administration. Participants and their parents were informed about the purpose of the study. Consent was obtained prior to participation. Questionnaires

were administered in a classroom setting. Participants completed all questionnaires anonymously.

Analysis and Data Interpretation

The data collected from 50 adolescents aged 15-18years, via questionnaires in school settings, were analyzed using statistical techniques to examine the relationship between Mindfulness and the psychological variables such as Percieved stress, Anxiety, Depression, Emotion regulation and overall well-being. The data collected from 50 participants were entered and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis were performed to examine relationships between mindfulness, stress, anxiety, depression, emotion regulation, and well-being.

Analysis includes: Descriptive statistics - Mean and Standard Deviation, and Corelational analysis.

Descriptive statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation of Study Variables of 50 participants are as follows:

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Mindfulness(MAAS A)	4.05	0.36	Moderate to High level
Percieved stress(PSS)	15.20	4.80	Moderate stress
Anxiety (GAD-7)	12.20	2.00	Moderate anxiety
Depression(KADS)	2.70	1.50	Low to Moderate
Emotion Regulation(DERS)	23.50	6.00	Moderate difficulty
Well-Being(WHO-5)	21.50	2.50	High well-being

Interpretation of Descriptive Statistics Results:

The Mean Mindfulness score (Mean = 4.05) indicates moderate to high mindfulness levels among participants.

Percieved Stress score (Mean = 15.20) reflects moderate perceived stress among participants..

Anxiety level score (Mean = 12.20) indicate amxietly is within the moderate range among paricipants.

Depression score (Mean = 2.70) suggests low depressive symptoms overall among participantsl.

Difficulties in Emotion regulation score (Mean = 23.50) indicates effective emotion regulation skills with few difficulties among participants.

Well-being score (Mean = 21.50) reflects moderate to good psychological well-being. It indicates that participants generally experience positive emotional functioning, suggesting that despite moderate stress and anxiety, adolescents maintain a reasonable level of psychological well-being.

Correlation Analysis: Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between Mindfulness and psychological variables such as Percieved stress, Anxiety levels, Depression, Difficulties in Emotion Regulation, and Overall well-being of the participants.

Correlation analysis of the data collected:

Variables	Percieived stress	Anxiety	Depression	Emotion regulation	Overall well-being
Mindfulness	-0.52	-0.48	-0.41	-0.55	+0.60

Interpretation of Correlation Results:

Mindfulness and Stress: The obtained result shows a moderate negative correlation, r = -0.52, between mindfulness and perceived stress. This indicates that the adolescents with higher levels of mindfulness tend to experience lower stress. This finding suggests that Mindfulness practices help students manage stressful situations more effectively by promoting present-moment awareness and reducing overthinking.

Mindfulness and Anxiety: The obtained result shows a lower negative correlation, r = -0.48, between mindfulness and anxiety levels. This indicates that the adolescents with higher levels of mindfulness tend to experience lower levels of anxiety. This finding suggests that Mindfulness practices help students manage to become more aware of anxious thoughts without reacting impulsively.

Mindfulness and Depression: The obtained result shows a low negative correlation, r = -0.41, between mindfulness and depression. This indicates that the adolescents with higher levels of mindfulness tend to report fewer depressive symptoms. This finding suggests that Mindfulness practices help students reduce negative thinking patterns and improve emotional balance, thereby lowering depressive symptoms.

Mindfulness and Difficulties in Emotion Regulation: The obtained result shows moderate negative correlation, r = -0.55, between mindfulness and emotion regulation. This indicates that the adolescents with higher mindfulness have better emotion regualtion. This finding suggests that Mindfulness practices help students enhance their ability to understand and manage their emotions effectively.

Mindfulness and Overall Well-Being: The obtained result shows positive correlation, r = +0.60, between mindfulness and overall well-being. This indicates that the adolescents with higher mindfulness tend to experience better psychological well-being. This finding highlights the role of Mindfulness practices in promoting positive emotions, life satisfaction, and overall mental health.

Conclusion:

The present study examined the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being among adolescents aged 15–18 years. The findings suggest that higher mindfulness is associated with lower levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and emotional regulation difficulties. Mindfulness-based programs may serve as effective tools for enhancing emotional resilience, improving attention, enhancing academic performance and supporting overall well-being among students. These findings support previous research highlighting the benefits of mindfulness practices for improving adolescent-students overall mental health. This study intended to explore the feasibility of Mindfulness practices in a school context and assessing the effects of such programs on mental health, emotional problems and conduct problems, self-regulation, social–emotional competencies, quality of life, especially teacher–student relationship and peer relationships, and most importantly engagement in learning for better academic performance among adolescent-students.

Limitations:

This quantitative cross sectional research was conducted on a relatively small sample of 50 adolescents, which may limit the generalizability of the results to a larger population. A larger sample size could provide more reliable and representative findings. As the participants were selected from a single educational institution(VK Public School), the findings may not be applicable to adolescents from different schools, socio-economic backgrounds, or cultural settings. The study relied on self-report questionnaires, which may be subject to response biases such as social desirability and inaccurate self-perception. Participants may have responded in a manner they perceived as socially acceptable rather than reflecting their true experiences. Variations in participants' exposure to mindfulness practices were not controlled, which may have influenced the results.Finally, external factors such as academic pressure, family environment, and peer relationships were not directly measured, although they may influence psychological well-being.

Future Research:

Future studies should consider using larger and more diverse samples from multiple schools and regions to improve the generalizability of findings. Longitudinal research designs are recommended to examine the long-term effects of mindfulness on adolescent psychological well-being and to better understand causal relationships. Qualitative methods, such as interviews or open-ended responses, will help to gain deeper insights into adolescents' subjective experiences of mindfulness. Exploring other variables such as academic performance, self-esteem, peer relationships, and family support will help to better understand the broader impact of mindfulness. Examining the effectiveness of different types of mindfulness practices (e.g., meditation, breathing exercises, yoga) will help to identify which approaches are most beneficial for adolescents and will significantly help to support academic success and holistic development of the students.

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