

Fostering Mental Well-being, Mindfulness and Self-Esteem amongst students of higher Education

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Abstract:

The relationship between mindfulness, self-esteem, and mental well-being has garnered significant scholarly interest in recent years, especially as individuals across the globe face rising psychological distress, stress, and identity challenges. Mindfulness, often defined as the non-judgmental awareness of the present moment (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), has shown promising associations with psychological constructs like self-esteem and overall well-being. This review synthesizes recent empirical research (post-2020) to explore how mindfulness relates to self-esteem and mental well-being, and how these elements interact to promote psychological resilience and life satisfaction. Mindfulness has long been appreciated as a cognitive and emotional skill that cultivates present-moment awareness. More recently, its impact on self-perception—specifically self-esteem—has become a focus of psychological research. This research set out to examine how mindfulness, self-esteem, and mental well-being are interrelated in the context of higher education students. The findings highlighted meaningful connections among these variables, emphasizing their collective role in promoting robust mental health and emotional resilience among students.

Keywords: Mental well-being, Mindfulness, Self-esteem, Higher education

Introduction:

In an increasingly fast-paced and demanding world, the importance of mental health has never been more expressed, especially among higher education students. A lot of young adults juggle with the pressures of academic deadlines, social expectations, and personal aspirations. In the middle of this chaos their mental well-being becomes a crucial anchor, influencing not only their academic performance but also their relationships and overall quality of life. Addressing these challenges of today's educational landscape, the relationship between self-esteem, mindfulness, and mental well-being stands out as a crucial area to explore. Understanding how these variables work together can offer valuable insights into building resilience and fostering a healthier, more fulfilling learning experience. This research seeks to understand these connections, emphasizing the essential role mental health plays in shaping students' lives. "Mental health is perceived as a positive source contributing to asset development individually, socially, and economically" (WHO, 2004). The World Health Organization distinguished between mental illness and mental

health, defining mental health as a state of well-being in which a person recognizes their own abilities, is able to manage everyday stressors and is able to contribute to their own community. Additionally, improved quality of life and more adaptability in the home, community, and educational setting are indicative of better mental health outcomes in teenagers (Hoagwood et al., 1996). A positive psychological and emotional state is referred to as mental wellbeing, which can be understood as the capacity of an individual to engage in meaningful and constructive cognitive and emotional functioning. According to Ryan and Deci (2000), a "meaningful" life, healthy development, and the fulfillment of one's basic requirements for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are all prerequisites for wellbeing in addition to happy feelings. It is acknowledged that having good mental health is essential to one's overall welfare, which is ingrained in one's work, housing, education, family, and community respect, as well as one's beliefs, faith, culture, environment, and spirituality. However, absence of mental disorder does not ensure the existence of positive mental well-being, and vice-versa, however that to

effectively promote mental well-being requires both the treatment of any mental disorder (pathogenic focus) and the presence of mental wellbeing (salutogenic focus). Good mental health significantly enhances an individual's ability to engage in meaningful relationships and support loved ones. When free from emotional turmoil, a person can be more present and affectionate, thereby strengthening interpersonal connections. Moreover, managing mental health conditions like depression positively impacts productivity and work quality. Individuals who feel mentally strong are likely to work more effectively and contribute more actively to their communities. Overall, good mental health not only improves personal well-being but also fosters greater involvement in social and community development.

Recently, prioritizing mental well-being among Higher Education Students has become crucial for their academic success, personal growth, and overall quality of life. For Higher Education Students undergoing the rigors of postgraduate management education, maintaining optimal mental well-being is crucial for academic success, personal growth, and overall quality of life, this awareness has surged amongst the generation like never before. William James (1890) coined the term "self-esteem" to refer to the positive feeling of self-worth that arises when people consistently achieve or surpass their major life objectives. James provided a definition of self-esteem that is still relevant today, over a century later. To assess one's self-esteem, one must compare one's actual self to their ideal self. By examining the difference between an individual's self-perception and their ideal self, we can determine their level of self-esteem (Pişkin, 20014). It is defined by Rosenberg (1965) as both a person's positive and negative attitude toward themselves. As to his assertion, an individual's self-evaluation is the primary source of self-esteem. The conclusion drawn from one's own assessment serves as a gauge for one's degree of self-worth. The assessment of one's own worth in relation to one's self is known as self-esteem. Since basic psychological requirements have existed since an individual's birth, meeting the prerequisite needs is a crucial factor in determining the foundation of and growth of self-esteem.

Numerous *factors that affect self-esteem* of an individual such as disability, age, hereditary, physical abilities, socioeconomic status and mentalities. Some of them which can be highlighted as significant are, attitudes of adults towards the growing infants and child, emotionally disastrous experience of the individual considered as threat to self which affects one's stability, self-attitudes are also affected by the status of the group to which a person belongs and an individual's role and status in the group.

Our *experiences* frequently serve as the foundation for our general sense of self-worth. For example, excessive criticism or unfavourable evaluations from family and friends may contribute to poor self-esteem. People with healthy self-esteem are more likely to have received what Carl Rogers called the unconditional positive attention.

One's relationships, emotional health, decision-making process, and general well-being are all impacted by one's sense of self-worth. It also affects motivation because individuals who have a healthy, positive self-image are aware of their potential and may be motivated to take on new tasks.

The essential elements of a strong sense of self-worth *in higher education students* are a thorough comprehension of one's abilities, the capacity to preserve positive interpersonal interactions as a result of having a positive relationship with oneself, an appropriate and reasonable personal expectations and being aware of one's needs and having the competence to communicate them. One should have healthy self-esteem, which refers to thinking well of yourself most of the time. This does not imply that one is flawless or that you enjoy every aspect of who you are. Conversely, it's normal to be critical of oneself and to feel less proud or content with some aspects of oneself than other aspects, even for people who have high self-esteem. If an individual has a high sense of their own value, though, and they tend to think more positively about themselves than negatively, and they don't minimize their own value. A high sense of self-worth can also change with the situation. Being highly self-assured also makes it easier for one to see that nothing is about one, which allows one to stop taking things personally and stop

reacting too strongly. Mindfulness refers to being totally present and involved in the here and now, free from judgment or attachment to thoughts of the past or future, is the practice of mindfulness. It entails developing an awareness of one's thoughts, feelings, and environment to promote focus and clarity. Deep breathing exercises, body scans, and mindful movement activities are common mindfulness practices that assist people in developing non-reactive responses and present-moment awareness.

Eastern meditation traditions are the source of the mindfulness attention-directing technique (Baer & Krietemeyer, 2006; Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Understanding its foundation and treating mindfulness with respect are crucial when applying it in secular settings, like schooling.

According to Brown and Ryan (2003), consciousness—which includes awareness and attention—is a fundamental aspect of mindfulness. The three main components of mindfulness, according to Napoli, Krech, and Holley (2005), are bearing witness to one's own experience, paying attention to one's body and mind activities, and focusing on one's breathing. People grow when they can perceive outside of their own frame of reference and extend their perspective. The present material essentially implies that mindfulness training teaches people about various alternate perspectives Shapiro et al. (2006). When practicing mindfulness, people pay open-minded and heartfelt attention to their thoughts and experiences as they arise. Being mindful entails being aware of one's thoughts as well as one's response to them. People can see their reactions simply and without biases, like ships passing on a river, by using a mindfulness-based approach like body-scan meditation, as opposed to viewing them as realities that must be acknowledged and dealt with (Williams, 2010).

Mindfulness directly Impacts an Individual's Attention, Emotions, Cognition, Physiology, Interpersonal Relations and Work Performance.

In people's daily lives, mindfulness is also very important. For instance, it has a big impact on *interpersonal relations*. According to preliminary research, moral, prosocial, and deviant conduct are

the specific performance components that mindfulness has been connected to. According to research by Reb, Narayanan, and Ho, trait mindfulness is linked to morally superior and prosocial behavior as well as less prejudice.

The extensive effects of mindfulness in functional domains like cognitive, emotional, and physiological seem to further impact a broad range of outcomes in the workplace. The effects of mindfulness on *several performance categories* like job, task, citizenship, deviance, and safety performance are becoming more and more well-established. The importance of mindfulness can be understood as increasing self-awareness; reducing stress and anxiety; feeling more in control of how one reacts to their thoughts and emotions; managing challenging or counterproductive thoughts; and being kinder to oneself. By shifting one's attention from past ideas to the present, mindfulness helps in enhancing focus.

In the context of students, who are often juggling multiple responsibilities, deadlines, and academic pressures, incorporating mindfulness practices into their daily routines can offer a range of benefits. These may include improved concentration and focus during study sessions, reduced levels of stress and anxiety, enhanced emotional regulation skills, increased self-awareness, and a greater sense of overall well-being. By developing mindfulness as a core skill set, Higher Education Students can navigate their academic challenges more effectively, make informed decisions, and cultivate a sense of balance amidst the demands of their program. Mindfulness not only enhances academic performance but also equips students with essential skills for personal growth, stress management, and effective leadership in their future careers.

Mental wellbeing is positively correlated with self-esteem. Individuals with higher self-esteem tend to have better mental wellbeing, as they are more resilient to stress and have a more positive outlook on life. Self-esteem is also positively correlated with mindfulness. Practicing mindfulness can increase self-esteem by promoting self-awareness, self-acceptance, and self-compassion. This, in turn, can

lead to improved mental wellbeing. Mindfulness is associated with mental wellbeing, which is partially mediated by self-esteem. Mindfulness practices such as meditation and deep breathing can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, leading to improved mental wellbeing. Additionally, mindfulness can increase self-esteem by helping individuals develop a more positive and accepting attitude towards themselves. By examining the relationships between self-esteem, mindfulness practices, and Mental well-being among Higher Education Students, the aim is to contribute to the existing body of literature on mental health in higher education settings while offering practical recommendations for promoting students' well-being and enhancing their competence towards academic achievement.

Literature Review

Recent studies have probed deeper into the interconnected relationship between mindfulness, self-esteem, and mental well-being, emphasizing how mindfulness practices contribute to self-perception, emotional resilience, and psychological health. The reviewed literature underlines the positive impact of mindfulness on self-esteem and mental well-being. Mindfulness not only enhances self-perception and confidence but also serves as a buffer against psychological distress. Future research could explore longitudinal effects and intervention-based studies to further validate these findings. Rehman (2023) et al explored on Self-esteem, Social connectivity play a mediation role in the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being in college students. The relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being among college students was found to be mediated by social connectivity and self-esteem. The results of the bootstrapping process and route analysis showed that there are substantial indirect benefits of mindfulness on psychological well-being due to social connectivity and self-esteem. The study has insightful implications for adopting psychological interventions that emphasize raising self-esteem and social connectedness in conjunction with mindfulness techniques to improve students' psychological well-being. Asad (2023) et al

explored on a viewpoint and correlational study of Higher Education Management on the impact of technostress on post-graduate students' psychological health. This study, which looked at postgraduate students, looked at the relationship between technological pressures and psychological health. Using a survey questionnaire, data from 564 postgraduate students in various programs were gathered. Techno-stressors and learners' psychological well-being were found to have a weak correlation, with techno-insecurity having a moderate effect. Respondents, both male and female, showed awareness of the features and functions of technology. By concentrating on educational contexts outside of tertiary education, the study seeks to fill research gaps, especially in Sindh, Pakistan. Tran (2022) explored on Self-esteem, stress, mindfulness, and self-compassion in Vietnamese university students: the role of positive emotion and psychological well-being as mediators. This study looked at the links between self-compassion, mindfulness, stress, and self-esteem among Vietnamese students, as well as the mediating role that psychological well-being and positive emotions have in these relationships. Data from 19 in-depth interviews were utilized to explain the quantitative findings and examine students' experiences practicing self-compassion and mindfulness through a mixed-method design comprising surveys and in-depth interviews with 654 Vietnamese students. The results showed that these associations were totally mediated by psychological well-being and good emotions. The study provides insightful information for mental health intervention tactics in academic settings by highlighting the significance of elements like self-compassion and mindfulness in raising university students' self-esteem. Yang, Tang & Lin (2022) explored on The Associations Between Subjective Well-Being, Self-Compassion, and Mindfulness: The Situation of Workers in an International Company. The purpose of the study was to investigate the connections between subjective well-being, self-compassion, and mindfulness among Taiwanese Carrefour employees. 629 valid responses to the questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS 21.0 to evaluate the structure and mediating

effects. The findings suggested that self-compassion and subjective well-being, as well as mindfulness and self-compassion, were positively correlated. Moreover, the association between mindfulness and subjective well-being was found to be partially mediated by self-compassion, indicating the potential advantages of self-compassion and mindfulness interventions in raising workers' well-being at work. Prasad (2022) explored on students' psychological health and performance are related to their level of stress. To gather information on stress, performance, and psychological well-being, a standardized questionnaire with Likert-type ratings was used. Stress significantly affects both psychological health and academic achievement, according to a study that used statistical analysis and 848 responses. In particular, characteristics of psychological well-being related to autonomy, environment mastery, and purpose of life have been found to be severely impacted by stress. But in terms of gender or age groupings, the study found no statistically significant differences.

Chandana , Sharma & Moosath (2022) explored on Examining the relationship between mindfulness and self-efficacy and self-esteem in the Indian population is the goal of The Mindful Self. The purpose of the study was to evaluate and compare how mindfulness and self-efficacy and self-esteem are related. The study investigated the differences in mindfulness levels across five dimensions between males and females in the Indian population, as well as between young and middle-aged persons. 146 participants in all, of which 80 were female and 66 were male. The results showed that Association: According to the study, there is a somewhat favorable and statistically significant association between self-esteem and all five aspects of mindfulness. Qualities of Mindfulness: Five aspects of mindfulness were investigated in the study: non-judgment of inner experiences, behaving mindfully, reporting and observing inner experiences, and not reacting to inner experiences. Marais (2020) explored on Educational Programs with a Mindfulness Focus Enhance Academic Time Management, Mental Health, and Psychological Flexibility. Researchers in France looked at how a mindfulness-based program affected academics'

time management, mental health, psychological flexibility, and overall well-being. Along with self-reported measures taken both before and after the eight-week program, participants were given the option to enter the program or remain in a wait-list control group. Comparing the intervention group's outcomes to the control condition, it was found that there were notable improvements in psychological flexibility, mental health, wellbeing, and effective time management. According to the results, mindfulness-based programs can effectively improve academics' adaptive functioning, well-being, and efficient time management. These findings provide important new insights into how to help academics manage their time more effectively and emotionally.

Chatterjee & Jethwani (2020) aimed to Examine the connection between college students' and working professionals' subjective well-being and mindful self-care. The Mindful Self-Care Scale (MSCS) and Subjective Well-Being Inventory were used to collect data from 200 participants in the study, 100 of whom were professionals and 100 of whom were students. The findings revealed no discernible difference between the professional and student groups in terms of the number of days that people practiced mindful self-care, which averaged three to four per week. A preferred self-care activity was found to be seeking out social support, with relationships and supporting structures having a substantial correlation with subjective well-being. The study found a favorable relationship between subjective well-being and mindful self-care practices, highlighting the need of incorporating self-care practices into daily routines to improve community well-being.

Harshvardhan (2019) et al explored the importance of mindfulness in medical college students' psychological health. The purpose of the study was to find out how mindfulness was experienced by undergraduate medical college students and how it related to stress, anxiety, and depression. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS) and the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) were completed by a sample of 150 students who

took part. The findings indicated a connection between mindfulness and reduced stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. In particular, less psychopathology was linked to mindful and nonjudgmental behavior. Enhancing mindfulness may help lessen the negative effects of stressors in medical education, according to the study's conclusion that mindfulness is an innate quality with individual variations. It is advised to conduct more research on the incorporation of mindfulness training into medical education in India.

Zubair (2018) et al explored on a cross-cultural perspective, mindfulness and resilience are examined as indicators of subjective well-being among university students. The research examined the significance of resilience and mindfulness as indicators of subjective well-being in Russian and Pakistani university students. Among the 496 university students in the sample, 306 were from Pakistan and 190 were from Russia. Their ages ranged from 20 to 35. The findings showed that in both samples, mindfulness, resilience, and subjective well-being were positively correlated. In the Pakistani and Russian samples, men showed greater levels of resilience and subjective well-being than women. There were no discernible cultural variations in the degree of resilience and subjective well-being exhibited by Russian students relative to their Pakistani counterparts. Xiang (2017) et al explored on Exam stress's long-term effects on psychological health and the potential mediating role of self-esteem in Chinese high school students. The study investigated the longitudinal associations between examination stress, self-esteem, and psychological well-being among Chinese high school students using a latent growth curve model (LGCM). The starting level of psychological well-being was adversely correlated with test stress, and changes in stress over time had a negative impact on changes in well-being, according to the findings of a three-wave longitudinal study involving 248 students over the course of a semester. It was discovered that the effects of exam stress on psychological well-being were mediated by self-esteem, underscoring the role that self-esteem plays in reducing the negative impacts of stress on wellbeing. These results offer theoretical

understandings of the detrimental impacts of stress on psychological health as well as useful suggestions for enhancing students' wellbeing through lowering exam-related stress. Parray & Kumar (2017) explored on Impact of assertiveness training on the level of assertiveness, self-esteem, stress, psychological well-being, and academic accomplishment of teenagers. A study on the effects of assertiveness training (in) on teenagers' self-esteem, assertiveness, stress levels, psychological well-being, and academic accomplishment was carried out in the psychology department of Dr. Hari Singh Gour Central University in Sagar, Madhya Pradesh. Thirteen students, ages sixteen to nineteen, participated in a pre- and post-test quasi-experimental design. The findings showed that after one month of AT, there was a significant improvement in the students' assertiveness, self-esteem, psychological well-being, and academic accomplishment. The study emphasized the usefulness of AT in improving a number of facets of teenagers' academic achievement and well-being, underscoring the significance of such programs in adolescent education. Lee, Kim & Park (2017) explored on The impact of psychological well-being, emotional intelligence, and self-esteem on nursing students' resilience. This study surveyed 200 participants from a college and university in P city and K city to find out what elements influence nursing students' resilience. The findings showed that self-esteem, psychological health, and emotional intelligence all strongly influenced resilience, with emotional intelligence having the largest impact. Regression analysis accounted for 65% of the resilience variance. The findings emphasize the significance of these variables in building student resilience and indicate that improving psychological well-being and emotional intelligence may be an effective way to increase resilience among nursing students.

Singh (2016) et al explored on Does Mindfulness Help Students' Psychological Well-Being? The study examined the connections between stress, well-being, and mindfulness in 144 students from CBSC schools, ages 14 to 18. Students evaluated their levels of stress and mindfulness using the Perceived Stress Scale and the Cognitive and

Affective Mindfulness Scale-R, and their psychological well-being was measured using the Psychological Well-Being Scale. The findings showed that there is a negative correlation with perceived stress and a strong positive correlation between mindfulness and psychological well-being. The association between mindfulness and psychological well-being was found to be somewhat mediated by perceived stress, according to the results of the mediated regression analysis. Thus, putting up programs for mindfulness-based stress reduction may improve students' psychological health and have implications for mental health interventions in educational settings. The paper also covered its shortcomings, practical advice, and potential future research areas. Beri & Manisha (2016) explored on The impact of emotional self-efficacy and overall well-being on undergraduate students' personal growth initiatives. PGI, emotional self-efficacy, and overall well-being were examined in a study including 480 undergraduate students from Punjab. The results showed that females outperformed males in these domains. Furthermore, in these domains, science stream students did better than arts and commerce stream students. PGI, emotional self-efficacy, and overall well-being were found to be significantly positively correlated by the study.

Blank (2016), explored on Alcohol use, mental health, self-worth, and overall self-efficacy in university seniors. The purpose of the study was to measure the relationships between drinking and general self-efficacy, self-esteem, and mental health in New Zealand university students who were about to graduate. In 2011, a web-based survey was carried out by the research with final-year undergraduate or graduate students who were under 25 years old. The findings demonstrated that, in comparison to those who abstained, men's moderate or hazardous drinking habits and women's hazardous patterns were associated with worse mental well-being. Men who drank heavily were more likely to have high self-esteem, but women who drank the most heavily were less likely to have high self-esteem. Furthermore, there was a general tendency showing that alcohol-consuming men and women had greater levels of overall self-efficacy.

Bajaj & Pande (2016) explored on resilience moderating function in the relationship between mindfulness and affect and life satisfaction as measures of subjective well-being. The Connor–Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), and the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) were used in a study including 327 undergraduate university students in India. The association between affect components and life satisfaction and mindfulness was found to be partially mediated by resilience, according to structural equation modeling (SEM). By highlighting resilience's role in promoting mindfulness' beneficial effects on subjective well-being, this study advances our knowledge of how mindfulness affects affect and life satisfaction.

Prasad (2016) explored on the stress levels and overall feeling of well-being of medical students following six weeks of yoga and meditation. Prior to their exams, medical students' perceived stress levels and sense of wellbeing were to be evaluated in relation to the effects of a six-week yoga and meditation program. Using tools like the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and self-assessment surveys (SAS) to gauge stress and wellbeing, the study included first- through third-year medical students. With a median age of 28, the study's results showed a significant drop in participants' perceived stress levels following the intervention, consisting of thirteen women and fourteen men. After the yoga intervention, participants' sentiments of serenity, attention, endurance, contentment, positivity, personal satisfaction, and self-confidence significantly improved. Aeamla-Or (2015) explored on explores how mindfulness-based stress reduction affects Thai nursing students' levels of mindfulness, self-esteem, depression, and stress. An investigation on the effects of a standardized mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program on self-esteem, depression, perceived stress, and mindfulness was carried out among Thai nursing students. Significant increases in stress, self-esteem, and mindfulness were seen in the group that completed the MBSR program as compared to the control group, according to the results of a randomized controlled

experiment with 127 individuals. Qualitative information from focus group interviews suggested that participants found the MBSR program to be acceptable and beneficial, despite the fact that there was no statistically significant change in depression levels across the groups. These results demonstrate how MBSR can improve nursing students' self-esteem, mindfulness, and stress management techniques. These findings have consequences for both academic success and general well-being. Jang & Jeon (2015) explored on the Association between Mental Health and Self-Esteem Based on University Students' Mindfulness. This study aims to investigate the relationship between self-esteem, mental health, and mindfulness using a survey administered to 458 university students. The study analyzed the data using SPSS 21.0, using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient and ANOVA. The findings showed that while students' self-esteem and mental health were above average, their mindfulness was below average. According to the study, self-esteem and mental health were significantly positively correlated depending on mindfulness levels. Improved mental health maintenance was linked to higher mindfulness, although there was less of an association between mindfulness and self-esteem. Better management of mental health was also associated with higher levels of self-esteem. Programs to improve university students' mental health and self-esteem are recommended by the study.

Research Methodology

A total of 182 higher education students participated in the study, recruited via an online Google Form. The sample included diverse demographics to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the target population. The research objectives of the study are to find out if Higher levels of self-esteem are associated with higher levels of mental well-being and to find out if Higher levels of self-esteem are associated with higher levels of mental well-being. The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), developed by Ruth A. Baer, consists of 39 items designed to assess mindfulness across five dimensions: **Observing, Describing, Acting with Awareness, Nonjudging,** and **Nonreactivity.**

Some items are scored reversely, meaning that the scoring system is inverted: a score of 1 corresponds to 5, 2 to 4, 3 remains 3, 4 to 2, and 5 to 1.

Mental well-being is evaluated through the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS), which includes 14 items that assess various aspects of mental health, such as "I've been feeling optimistic about the future" and "I've been feeling useful." The scoring is done on a 1-5 scale, where 1 means "None of the time" and 5 means "All of the time." Self-esteem is measured using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, which consists of 10 items, such as "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself" and "At times I think I am no good at all." This scale is scored from 1 to 4, where "Strongly Agree" receives 1 point and "Strongly Disagree" receives 4 points. Additionally, some questions are reverse scored, assigning "Strongly Disagree" 1 point, "Disagree" 2 points, "Agree" 3 points, and "Strongly Agree" 4 points. Participants were instructed to complete the questionnaires online, emphasizing confidentiality and honest responses. Completing the questionnaire was estimated to take between 10-15 minutes. After data collection, responses were analyzed using SPSS to interpret results accurately. Ethical considerations were meticulously followed to ensure participant confidentiality and integrity throughout the research process.

This structured methodology provides a clear framework for investigating the interplay between mindfulness, self-esteem, and mental well-being among higher education students, ensuring that findings are both reliable and valid.

Data Analysis

In this study, data analysis was performed using SPSS to investigate the relationships between mindfulness, self-esteem, and mental well-being among higher education students. Cronbach's alpha was employed to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the scales measuring these constructs. This method evaluates how closely related a set of items is, indicating whether they consistently measure the same underlying concept.

Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each scale, with values ranging from 0 to 1. A higher alpha value suggests greater reliability among the items. Typically, an alpha value above 0.7 is considered acceptable, indicating that the items are sufficiently correlated and measure the same construct (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) yielded a coefficient of 0.716, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale resulted in a coefficient of 0.904, indicating greater reliability, and lastly, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale coefficient came out to be 0.861.

Additionally, Pearson correlation analysis revealed significantly positive correlations between mindfulness and self-esteem, as well as between mindfulness and mental well-being, suggesting that higher levels of mindfulness are associated with increased self-esteem and improved mental well-being among students. The study aimed to comprehensively understand the relationships between mental well-being, mindfulness, and self-esteem among higher education students through a structured questionnaire divided into three segments. The findings revealed significant insights into the mental health status of these students, emphasizing the critical role of mindfulness in influencing both self-esteem and overall mental well-being.

The results indicated that **Observing** positively correlates with **Describing** ($r = 0.338, p < 0.01$), **Nonreactivity** (r

$= 0.432, p < 0.01$), **Mental Well-Being** ($r = 0.343, p < 0.01$), and **Self-Esteem** ($r = 0.182, p < 0.05$). This suggests that being aware of one's thoughts and feelings can enhance emotional regulation and contribute positively to mental health and self-esteem. Research supports this notion, for instance, studies have shown that mindfulness practices improve emotional regulation and lead to higher self-esteem levels (Pepping et al., 2013; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Similarly, **Describing** is positively associated with **Nonreactivity** ($r = 0.287, p < 0.01$), **Mental Well-Being** ($r = 0.276, p < 0.01$), and **Self-Esteem** ($r = 0.153, p < 0.05$). The ability to describe one's thoughts and feelings without

judgment may foster a greater sense of control and understanding over one's mental state.

Conversely, **Awareness** negatively correlates with both **Mental Well-Being** ($r = -0.300, p < 0.01$) and **Self-Esteem** ($r = -0.384, p < 0.01$), which may indicate that heightened awareness can lead to self-critical tendencies or rumination on negative thoughts. The dimension of **Nonjudging**, while positively correlated with Awareness ($r = 0.482, p < 0.01$), shows negative relationships with both **Mental Well-Being** ($r = -0.268, p < 0.01$) and **Self-Esteem** ($r = -0.276, p < 0.01$). This may reflect the complexity of nonjudgmental awareness; while it can help reduce emotional reactivity, it might also highlight discrepancies between one's current state and ideal self-perceptions.

Importantly, **Nonreactivity** positively impacts both **Mental Well-Being** ($r = 0.419, p < 0.01$) and **Self-Esteem** ($r = 0.241, p < 0.01$). This dimension emphasizes the ability to observe thoughts and feelings without immediate reaction or judgment, which has been linked to enhanced psychological resilience and lower levels of anxiety (Keng et al., 2011).

Interdependence of Mental Well-Being and Self-Esteem

The strongest correlation observed was between **Mental Well-Being** and **Self-Esteem** ($r = 0.660, p < 0.01$), highlighting their interdependence. This finding resonates with existing literature that suggests a robust relationship between mental well-being and self-esteem; individuals with higher self-esteem often report better mental health outcomes due to enhanced coping strategies and resilience against stressors (Bajaj et al., 2016). Overall, the study underscores the importance of mindfulness practices in enhancing self-esteem and mental well-being among students in higher education. The positive influences of Observing, Describing, and Nonreactivity on mental health outcomes suggest that incorporating mindfulness-based interventions could be beneficial in fostering a supportive educational environment that promotes holistic student development.

Discussion & Conclusion

The study aimed to explore the interconnectedness of mindfulness, self-esteem, and mental well-being among higher education students, revealing significant relationships that underscore the importance of these constructs in fostering positive mental health outcomes. The results supported the hypotheses that higher levels of mindfulness are associated with higher levels of self-esteem, and that higher self-esteem correlates with improved mental well-being. The study was conducted on 182 students in higher education.

The first objective was *“Higher levels of mindfulness (as measured by the FFMQ) are associated with higher levels of self-esteem (as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale).”*, The findings indicated a positive correlation between mindfulness and self-esteem, suggesting that students who engage in mindfulness practices tend to have a more favorable self-image. This aligns with previous research indicating that mindfulness fosters self-acceptance and emotional regulation, which are critical components of healthy self-esteem (Keng et al., 2011; Brown & Ryan, 2003). The dimension of **Observing** was particularly influential, as it encourages individuals to notice their thoughts and feelings without judgment, thereby reducing self-criticism and enhancing self-worth.

To improve mindfulness among students, educational institutions should consider integrating structured mindfulness programs into their curricula. These programs could include, **‘Mindfulness Workshops’** in which Regular workshops can teach students various mindfulness techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, and mindful movement can help them develop these skills. These practices have been shown to reduce stress and anxiety while enhancing focus and emotional regulation (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). They can also **‘Integrate mindfulness into Daily Routines’**, Regular workshops that teach students various mindfulness techniques such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, and mindful movement can help them develop these skills, **‘Mindful Breaks’**, Encourage students to take mindful breaks

during study sessions or between classes. These breaks can involve simple activities like stretching, walking mindfully around campus, or practicing gratitude by reflecting on positive aspects of their day. Lastly **‘Faculty Training Programs’**, providing training for faculty and staff on the benefits of mindfulness so they can model these practices in their interactions with students. Educators equipped with mindfulness techniques can create a more supportive learning environment.

By implementing these strategies, higher education institutions can cultivate a culture of mindfulness that not only enhances students' academic performance but also promotes their overall well-being and personal growth. These initiatives encourage students to develop lifelong skills for managing stress and maintaining mental health amongst the challenges of academic life. The second objective was *“Higher levels of self-esteem are associated with higher levels of mental well-being”*, The results confirmed this research objective, as a strong positive correlation was found between self-esteem and mental well-being. Students with higher self-esteem reported better mental health outcomes, indicating that a positive self-perception contributes significantly to overall psychological resilience (Bajaj et al., 2016). This relationship is crucial in understanding how fostering self-esteem through mindfulness can lead to greater emotional stability and life satisfaction among students.

Improving self-esteem is crucial for enhancing overall mental well-being. Institutions can implement **‘Positive Reinforcement’** in which faculty and staff should provide consistent positive feedback to students regarding their efforts and achievements. Recognizing accomplishments—no matter how small—can significantly boost self-esteem. **‘Skill Development Opportunities’** providing opportunities for skill development through extracurricular activities, internships, or leadership roles can help students build confidence in their abilities. Engaging in such activities allows students to experience success outside the classroom, reinforcing their self-worth. **‘Workshops on Self-Acceptance’** conducting

workshops focused on self-acceptance and self-compassion can help students develop a healthier relationship with themselves. These workshops can teach techniques for overcoming negative self-talk and fostering a more positive self-image.

By implementing these strategies, higher education institutions can create an environment that nurtures self-esteem among students. This focus on building self-worth that not only enhances individual well-being but also contributes to a more positive campus culture where all students feel valued and capable of achieving their goals. Ultimately, fostering self-esteem is essential for motivating students to grow academically and personally throughout their educational journey.

Such initiatives not only support individual student health but also contribute to a more engaged and productive academic community. As research indicates the profound impact of these constructs on overall student success (Bajaj et al., 2016), prioritizing their development should be a fundamental aspect of educational policy and practice. Ultimately, equipping students with the tools to cultivate mindfulness, improve mental well-being, and enhance self-esteem will empower them to navigate the complexities of academic life more effectively while promoting holistic personal growth.

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