

The Link Between Happiness and Mindfulness: Exploring the relationship in Research

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INTRODUCTION:

Positive psychology is a branch of psychology that focuses on the study of positive experiences, positive emotions, and positive personality traits, with the goal of understanding what makes life worth living. Unlike traditional psychology, which has primarily focused on understanding and treating mental illness, positive psychology seeks to understand and enhance human strengths, virtues, and well-being. Positive psychology emphasizes the study of topics such as happiness, resilience, optimism, and gratitude, and seeks to promote a more balanced and holistic understanding of human behaviour and experience.

In this research article we will be focusing on two topics that are studied under the arena of positive psychology that is 1) Happiness & 2) Mindfulness.

➤ HAPPINESS:

Positive psychology is a field of study that focuses on the positive aspects of human life, such as well-being, happiness, and fulfillment. In this context, happiness is often defined as a state of subjective well-being that is characterized by positive emotions, life satisfaction, and a sense of purpose or meaning in life..

There are several different theories of happiness in psychology, including the hedonic and eudaimonic perspectives. The hedonic perspective views happiness as being primarily related to pleasure and the pursuit of positive experiences and material goods. The eudaimonic perspective, on the other hand, views happiness as being more closely tied to personal growth, self-actualization, and the pursuit of meaningful goals and values.

In summary, in the context of positive psychology, happiness is seen as a state of subjective well-being that is closely tied to other positive outcomes, and can be cultivated and sustained through intentional efforts to promote well-being.

➤ MINDFULNESS:

Mindful attention is a concept in positive psychology that refers to the practice of paying attention to the present moment with intention, curiosity, and openness. It is a form of mindfulness that emphasizes being fully engaged in the current experience, rather than allowing the mind to wander or be distracted.

In the context of positive psychology, mindful attention is seen as a way to increase well-being and happiness by fostering greater awareness of one's thoughts, feelings, and sensations. It is believed that by practicing mindful attention, individuals can develop a deeper appreciation for life, reduce stress and anxiety, improve relationships, and increase their overall life satisfaction. Examples of mindful attention practices include meditation, yoga, tai chi, and other forms of mindfulness-based exercise. These activities can help individuals cultivate a sense of calm and mental clarity, and can serve as a powerful tool for promoting positive emotions and reducing negative ones.

In summary, mindful attention is a powerful tool in the practice of positive psychology that can help individuals live more fulfilling and meaningful lives by fostering greater awareness, reducing stress and anxiety, and improving their overall well-being.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

As we are seeing correlation between happiness and mindfulness, some studies have been done in the past on these 2 variables.

1. Crego, Yela et al(2021) have conducted a study on understanding Relationships between Mindfulness, Purpose in Life, Happiness, Anxiety, and Depression. Focusing on mindfulness and happiness, one of the hypotheses of the study was that Mindfulness is expected to be positively correlated with happiness. Data were obtained from 1267 women. Mindfulness is the participant's capacity for paying attention to experiences and being fully aware of internal and external stimuli while being focused in the present moment was measured by means of the Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS), developed by Brown and Ryan. The Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) was used to measure mindfulness and it is a 4-item scale used to measure the global level of perceived happiness. A structural equation modeling (SEM)-based approach was used to test the hypothesized effects. It was found that Mindfulness was strongly and positively connected to higher happiness

2. Erlina, Suryadi et al (2020) Researched and this study aims to determine the correlation between mindfulness and happiness in university students in West Jakarta. The study was conducted on 393 students in West Jakarta aged 18-21 years chosen through simple random sampling technique. This research is quantitative non-experiment with correlation method.

Measuring instruments used are Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) and Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ). The analysis using Spearman Correlation shows $r(393) = -0.362$ and $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ which means that there is a negative and significant correlation between mindfulness and happiness.

3. Singh, Akhilendra et al (2018) conducted a study on Mindfulness and Happiness in students in order to find out the relation between these two variables. Mindfulness is a state of mind characterized by awareness and attention in the present. It Aims to explore the relationship of mindfulness, perceived stress and happiness. Mediating role of stress in the relationship between mindfulness and happiness was. A sample of 144 students from senior secondary schools was tested. The results indicated that mindfulness was significantly and positively associated with Happiness and Happiness is negatively associated with perceived stress. Perceived stress significantly mediates the relationship of mindfulness and happiness.

4. Tingaz et al. (2021) conducted a study to observe how self-compassion affects student athletes' levels of mindfulness and happiness. The Mindfulness Inventory for Sport, the Self-Compassion Measure, and the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire were given to 363 individual and team-sport athletes (63.9% male, 35.8% female, 0.3% non-binary, Mage = 21.51, SD = 3.33). According to structural equation modelling, mindfulness played a fully mediating function in the connection rather than acting as a moderator. It has been discovered that internal elements like self-esteem, locus of control, and self-discipline have a weaker link with athletes' enjoyment than mindfulness, which is defined as a conscious, nonjudgmental awareness of the present experience. Evidence has revealed that mindfulness and well-being are positively correlated with self compassion and happiness ($r=0.135$, $p<0.05$) that means both the variables have a positive relationship with each other.

METHOD:

POPULATION: The target population to find the relationship between happiness and mindful attention awareness was a sample of 30 people from age group of 18-30 years. The population was based in Mumbai.

TOOLS:

In the current study 2 tools were used to find the relationship between happiness and mindfulness.

1. Oxford Happiness Questionnaire:

The Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) was developed by psychologists Michael Argyle and Peter Hills at Oxford University and published in 2002. It is a widely-used scale for assessment of personal happiness. This questionnaire has 29 self-report statements for responses on a 6-point Likert scale. The age range is from 13- 68 years. On the scale, each item has six options ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Some items are phrased positively and others are phrased negatively. The highest possible score is 6; most people score slightly above 4. The scoring instructions for positive and negative items are different. The items are not conceptually right or wrong but reflect a person's present mental state. The questionnaire helps individuals to determine their present level of happiness.. While its psychometric properties are acknowledged to be acceptable, it presents scores on an ordinal scale and may thus not discriminate precisely between individual happiness levels.

2. Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale:

Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) was given by Brown & Ryan in 2003. The MAAS assesses individual differences in the frequency of mindful states over time. The scale is a 15-item (1-6 Likert scale) questionnaire to assess dispositional (or trait) mindfulness. Response options ranged from 1 (almost never) to 6 (almost always). It measures the frequency of open and receptive attention to and awareness of ongoing events and experience. As it is designed to assess a core characteristic of dispositional mindfulness, namely, open or receptive awareness of and attention to what is taking place in the present. The MAAS measures one's tendency toward mindfulness or mindlessness. Scores of the MAAS strongly correlate with self-consciousness, rumination, and self-reflection. To score the MAAS, a mean of the 15 items (collected in a Likert scale) is calculated. Higher scores reflect higher levels of dispositional mindfulness. With these higher scores also come lower reported negative emotional states. Those scoring higher in mindfulness tend to report higher levels of pleasant affect, higher self-esteem, optimism, and self-actualization. Also, lower levels of neuroticism, anxiety, depression, and unpleasant affect are reported in those scoring higher in mindfulness.

RESULT & ANALYSIS

Table.1.1- Statistical correlation between two positive psychology variables (Happiness & Mindfulness)

	<i>Happiness</i>	<i>Mindfulness</i>
Happiness	1	
Mindfulness	0.290994	1

Fig.1.1- Representation in the form of Scatterplot of two variables (Happiness & Mindfulness)

Table.1.1 is a representation of the statistical correlation between the two variables of positive psychology i.e. Happiness & Mindfulness. The correlation value obtained is 0.29. The value obtained is a positive value.

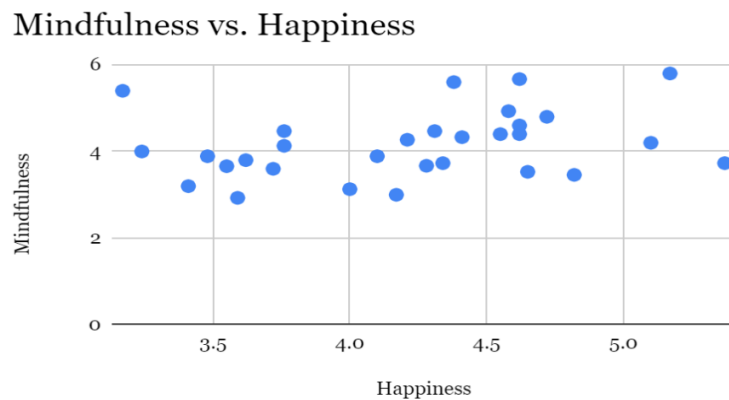


Fig.1.1 is a Graphical representation of two variables, Happiness and Mindfulness in the form of a Scatter Plot. The data that was collected by 30 individuals resulted in scores that were obtained from their performance in the test of happiness and mindfulness scales separately. A single blue dot on the Scatter plot represents the individual scores that were obtained in both the scales. The X-axis represents the Happiness scale scores whereas the Y- axis denotes Mindfulness Attention awareness scale scores.

After collecting the data, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was found using the tool of Data Analysis in Excel. The correlation value obtained was 0.29 and hence it indicates that there is a low positive relationship between Happiness and Mindfulness Attention Awareness.

Therefore there is a direct relationship between these two variables, i.e., an increase in one variable would lead to an increase in the other, and a decrease in one of the variables would lead to a decrease in the other.

CONCLUSION:

The study was conducted on a sample of 30 people by using two standardized positive psychology tools. Two tools used in the study are Oxford Happiness Questionnaire (OHQ) & Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). A correlation was carried out for the data obtained. As the value of correlation obtained is 0.29, we can state that there is a Low Positive relationship between Happiness and Mindfulness Attention Awareness.

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