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Impact of Mindfulness to Relieve Stress, Anxiety, and Depression among the University Students of Odisha

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Abstract

Background of the study: Stress, anxiety, and depression are rather common during higher education time and have a bad effect on academic performance. There is evidence that mindfulness practices can enhance the mental health and exist over how stress, anxiety, and depression are affected. In this study, the post-graduate students of Odisha were assessed to see how well mindfulness treated their stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms. Objective: To assess the impact of mindfulness on stress, anxiety, and depression among the post-graduate students of Odisha. Methods: Several articles were searched from different online platforms like PubMed, PsycINFO, Google scholar etc. After searching many articles, the data were collected from online survey among the post-graduate students of Odisha by using two questionnaires; those are "FFMQ-15" and DASS-21. The data collected from the post-graduate students inviting them to take part in the online and offline survey during the academic year 2021-2022. This study was selected only as a sample here for the post-graduate students of Odisha. The present study was conducted on the sample of 220. The data were calculated through statistical package for social sciences (SPSS-20 version). Findings: The result shows that the mindfulness reduced stress, anxiety, and depression of post-graduate students of Odisha. The participants reported considerably bigger gains in mindfulness as well as greater decrease in stress, anxiety, and depression. Implication of the Study: The study's findings will raise awareness among the post-graduate students or people from all lifestyles. The mindfulness practice can reduce all type of physical and psychological stress. Moreover, it reduces the academic anxiety and depression.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Stress, Anxiety, depression, and Post-Graduate students

Introduction

Mindfulness is a 2500-year-old concept that comes from ancient eastern and Buddhist philosophy. 'Jon Kabat-Zinn' was the first to introduce the notion of mindfulness to the

Western world. The heart of Buddhism has been described as mindfulness. Mindful awareness is fundamentally a way of inhibiting the bodies, minds, and moment to moment human experience. It is a way of relating to all experience- positive, negative, and neutral in an open, receptive way...it simply knows and accepts what is here now." Mindfulness comprises of two components, the first is self-regulation of attention in order to keep it focused on the present experience, permitting recognition of mental events in the present moment; the second is adopting an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance toward one's experiences in the present moment (Shapiro et.ela 2017).

Mindfulness sparked a worldwide movement to promote compassion, peace, and nonviolence. Gradually, the scope of its influence has extended to include a wide range of topics, including medical practise, psychology, and research, personal well-being, and awareness, developing and enriching relationships at home and at work. Mindfulness is primarily intended to cultivate a feeling of self and the ability to produce optimism. In the discipline of psychology, mindfulness is increasingly being utilised to treat the mental health disorders. Psychologists and therapists (Segal, Teasdale, Williams & Gemar, 2002) have developed contemporary treatments, merging mindfulness and psychology.

Psychological stress is unavoidable when someone feels that the demands of work, school, and society pressure or exceed their capacity for adaptation (Cohen et. al., 2007). The sense of stress is more than only adverse from a subjective perspective for a human being. In general, the stress response is crucial for improving the adaptability and handling dangerous situations (Leipold, & Greve, 2009). However, excessive stress has negative effects that can include reduced happiness in life, job burnout, an unhealthy lifestyle, as well as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, digestive system diseases, and the majority of neuropsychiatric disorders (Zhang et. al., 2019). Many researches showed that stress is a leading cause of suicide (Weyerer &Wiedenmann, 1995; Feskanich et. al., 2002; Boxer et.al., 1995). Students who experience high levels of stress, anxiety, and sadness are also more likely to experience depression, loneliness, and difficulty in forming the social acquaintances (Maharana et. al 2022; Sawir et.al 2008). Those with mental health issues report less positive interactions with classmates and professors, fewer participation in campus organisations and activities, lower grade averages, and lower graduation rates than students without such issues (Regehr et.al, 2013).

There is now enough evidence to prove that being under a lot of stress affects a student's ability to focus and pay attention, as well as their ability to remember information and solve problems. This results in decreased productivity and poor academic achievement (McGinnis & Goldstein, 1997). That is the prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression among undergraduate students of a public research university during the academic year 2021–2022 is described in this study.

Literature Review

Research conducted by Gallego and his colleagues (Gallego et.al. 2014) discovered that physical education-based relaxation techniques and mindfulness activities can both assist to

lessen the signs of stress and anxiety. Depression and anxiety are frequently experienced at the same time. Anxiety is a strong predictor of post-graduate students' success and affects 67% of college students with depression (Mohmoud et.al, 2012). It is likely that an adaptive coping programme like the mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) programme will reduce depression, anxiety, and stress because it has been shown that emotion-oriented coping styles such as; emotional responses, self-preoccupation, and fantasising reactions have an impact on anxiety (Shikai et.al, 2009). In the educational process, stress is a significant psychosocial component that may have an impact on students' academic performance and well-being (Jimenez et al., 2010). It is believed that mindfulness is an inherent resource that already exists and is just waiting to be reawakened, rather than something to get or acquire (Jareko, & Meichenbaum, 2013).

Increased mindfulness has been associated with enhanced psychological processes and decreased suffering; it has also been demonstrated to be a significant predictor of depression among postgraduate students (Baer, 2009). Mindfulness practices have been shown to be efficient in many studies (Marlatt et.al, 1999; Carmody et.al, 2008; Wernicke et. al, 2011) however, the potential benefits of mindfulness to decrease stress, anxiety, and depression. Therefore, the primary purpose of this paper was to assess the impact of mindfulness on stress, anxiety, and depression among the post-graduate students of Odisha.

Research Method

Design and Sample

An online and offline multimode survey was used in this study. This study was selected only as a sample here for the post-graduate students of Odisha. Total 267 participants were selected for this study, but 47 participants denied to fill up the questionnaires. A total of 220 post-graduation students in different universities of Odisha. There are 100 male and 120 female participants with ages ranging from 19 to 25 years (M=22.28; SD=2.70). The following figure or flowchart represents the sample of data collection.

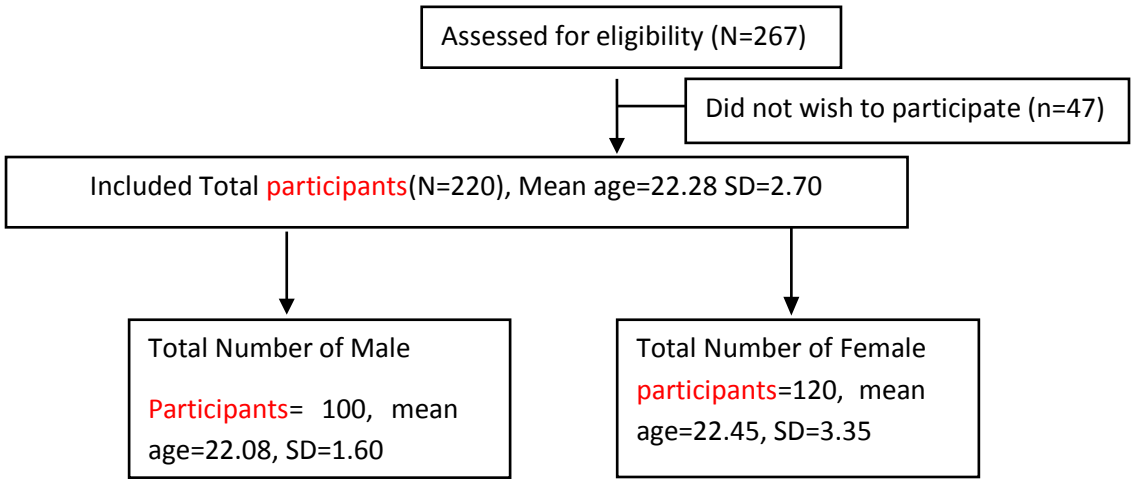

Fig. 1. Flowchart of the participants who were selected for this study.

Instruments

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaires (FFMQ-15): The 15-questions five-facet mindfulness questionnaire gauges one's level of awareness in relation to their daily thoughts, experiences, and actions (Baer et.al, 2012). The FFMQ-15 measures 5 subscales of mindfulness are observing (items 1, 6, 11), describing (items 2, 7, 12), acting with awareness (items 3, 8, 13), non-judgment (items 4, 9, 14), and non-reactivity (items 5, 9, 15). Five subscales and an overall average score make up the outcome. By adding together, the answers and dividing, average scores are determined and indicates the average level of agreement with each subscale (1= rarely true, 5= always true). Percentiles are calculated in relation to a sample of young adults (Kim et al., 2021). Percentile interpretation can be useful for putting a respondent's pattern of response into context in relation to a non-clinical ethnically diverse community. A 50th percentile score, for instance, represents the typical degree of mindfulness for a non-clinical person.

Depression, anxiety, and stress scale-21 (DASS-21): The Depression, Anxiety and Stress scale-21 (DASS-21) was used to measure depression, anxiety, and stress. It consists of a trio self-reported measures for measuring stress, anxiety, and depression. The DASS-21 was divided in to three subscales. It contains twenty-one questions with the four-point likert scale (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995). The following table 01 shows depression, anxiety, and stress that anyone may experience.

Data Analysis

The data were analysed using the SPSS software. The descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean and SD were used for analysing the demographic variables like age, sex, stream etc. However, the Regression and ANOVA were used to find out the relationship among variables such as mindfulness, stress, anxiety, and depression.

Result

Table No-1: Shows the different ratings of Stress, Anxiety and Depression

	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	0-9	0-7	0-14
Mild	10-13	8-9	15-18
Moderate	14-20	10-14	19-25
Severe	21-27	15-19	26-33
Extremely Sever	28+	20+	34+

Table 2: Demographic analysis of post-graduate students

Demographic Variables		Number(%age)
Age		220
Sex	Male	100 (45.5)
	Female	120 (54.5)
Stream	Arts	80 (36.4)
	Science	62 (28.2)
	Commerce	78 (35.5)

The table 02 shows the demographic variables of post-graduate students. The mean age was 22.28 with SD ± 2.70. Here the total sample number was 220. The sex consisted of male (100 or 45.5%) and female (120 or 54.5 %) and stream consisted of arts (80 or 36.4%), science (62 or 28.2%) and commerce (78 or 35.5%).

Table No. 03: Regression Result

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.386a	.149	.137	7.92019

Predictors: (Constant), Depression, Anxiety, Stress

Dependent Variable: Mindfulness

As indicated in table no 03, we can see that R-square value is 0.149, which means that our independent variables that are depression, anxiety, and stress cause 14.9 % changes in the dependent variable i.e., mindfulness.

Table No. 04: ANOVA result

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2366.421	3	788.807	12.575	.000b
Residual		13549.556	216	62.729		
Total		15915.977	219			

a. Dependent Variable: Mindfulness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Depression, Anxiety, Stress

The table no. 4, ANOVA results show that the p-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05, hence it can be said that there is a significant relationship between our independent variables (i.e., depression, anxiety, and stress) and the dependent variable i.e., mindfulness.

Discussion

Compared with the variables, there was significantly greater decrease in stress, anxiety, and depression, and increased in mindfulness in the present study. In this study, mindfulness is the dependent variable and predictors are stress, anxiety, and depression. Here it has been found, that the regression result was the depression, anxiety, and stress only caused 14.9 percent to mindfulness. The ANOVA result shows that the F-value is 12.575 with the p-value was 0.000 which was less than 0.05. Here it will be said that there is a significant relationship between our independent variables that are, stress, anxiety and depression and the dependent variable i.e., mindfulness. Our research demonstrates the beneficial effects of mindfulness on both the mind and the body. Therefore, all should practice mindfulness everywhere to reduce stress, anxiety, and depression. Through practicing mindfulness, according to this study, the post-graduate students may influence and enhance their general well-being, optimism, happiness, etc. In so doing, they can direct their energy and attention to their educational career and enhance their knowledge.

In this study, the effect of mindfulness on stress, anxiety, and depression significantly influences. When mindfulness increases; the stress, anxiety, and depression decrease. This result is in line with the research done by Nyklek et al. (2014) who looked at the effects of mindfulness on 107 patients undergoing percutaneous coronary intervention. According to Nyklek et al., a short mindfulness programme that consisted of instructions lasting 90 to 120 minutes for just three sessions per week was successful in lowering the levels of stress, anxiety, and sadness. Implementation of mindfulness programme may have positive effect when there is concern about students' stress, anxiety, and depression. However, the present study should be replicating, and evaluating in future research with samples representing the population of students' interest.

Limitations

The result of this study cannot be generalized to other setting such as organizations or industries. Most participants were from the stream of arts, science, and commerce in this study; thus, the finding should not be generalized to other professional students such as engineering or professional skill. Extraneous variables that may affect stress, anxiety, and depression, such as year, time, and any disease etc.

Conclusion

According to this study, practising conventional mindfulness can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression of post-graduate students of Odisha. The mindfulness can be cultivated at any time and at anywhere. We propose that the use of mindfulness programs can

be expanded to teachers or other education providers including demonstrators, professional students and so on, to improve their psychological importance and mindful attention to their studies.

As post-graduate students are exposed to many stressful life events and daily hassles in their life such as examination, financial problems, social problems, family problems, love relation and so on. They can thus, acquire coping mechanisms. Exercise, yoga, meditation, and other activities can all assist to improve both physical and mental health. To further understand how to optimise the benefits of mindfulness practice programmes, more study is required. Present awareness is the same as mindfulness, and it appears to refer to positive psychology or spirit. This idea is comparable to resilience, which is the ability to turn adversity into opportunity in physiology and psychology (Jackson et al., 2007). Future research needs to be conducted to examine the potential of teacher mindfulness training to benefit the students and themselves.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this work.

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