



Relationship Of Flow State Of Mind With Mindfulness Among College Students

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Abstract: Flow is a state in which people are so engrossed in an activity that they lose track of time or the importance of anything else; they will continue to do it, even at great expenditure, just to enjoy it. Mindfulness is the practice of being fully present and aware of one's thoughts, feelings, sensations, and surroundings without judgment or attachment. The study focuses on examining the relationship between flow state and mindfulness among young adults. A sample of 200 college students was administered with the Flow short scale by Rheinberg, Vollmeyer & Engeser, 2003 and the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire by Baer et al. (2012). The relationships between flow state and mindfulness were examined using correlational analysis. The analyses of the result reveal a significant positive correlation between flow state and mindfulness. The significant positive correlation between flow state and mindfulness unveiled in this study suggests potential interconnectedness between these psychological states. Understanding this relationship can shed light on the mechanisms underlying optimal human experience and inform interventions aimed at enhancing well-being among young adults.

Keywords - Flow, Mindfulness, Psychological Well-Being, Young Adults, Correlation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Students strive to navigate many demands and distractions, often grappling with the elusive quest for balance, fulfilment, and well-being. In this scenario, the concepts of flow and mindfulness emerge as invaluable guides, offering pathways to deeper engagement, clarity, and resilience amidst the chaos of modern life. Flow beckons individuals to harness their innate potential and achieve states of optimal experience in various domains, whether in the realm of sports, arts, or professional endeavours. Concurrently, mindfulness invites individuals to cultivate a profound sense of presence and inner peace, fostering resilience and adaptive coping strategies in the face of life's challenges. As society grapples with mounting stressors and the relentless pursuit of productivity, understanding the interplay between flow and mindfulness becomes not only academically intriguing but also practically indispensable.

Flow, as conceptualized by Csikszentmihályi et al. (2014) refers to a state of complete immersion and absorption in an activity, where individuals experience deep focus, heightened enjoyment, and a distorted sense of time. On the other hand, mindfulness, rooted in Buddhist traditions and extensively studied within contemporary psychology, involves non-judgmental awareness of the present moment, encompassing thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and the surrounding environment (Kabat-Zinn, 1997).

At first glance, flow and mindfulness might appear to be divergent constructs. Flow emphasizes intense engagement with a specific task or activity, often resulting in a loss of self-consciousness and a merging of action and awareness. Mindfulness, conversely, encourages a detached, non-reactive observation of one's internal and external experiences, without becoming overly absorbed in any particular activity or thought. However, upon closer examination, parallels between these states begin to emerge. Both flow and mindfulness entail a heightened sense of presence and absorption in the present moment. Flow involves a deep, effortless involvement in an activity, characterized by clear goals, immediate feedback, and a balance between skill level and challenge. Similarly, mindfulness cultivates an attentive, open awareness of the unfolding moment, fostering acceptance and equanimity towards whatever arises, whether pleasant or unpleasant.

The relationship between flow state and mindfulness is a complex and intriguing subject. Understanding this interplay can offer valuable insights into the ways individuals can optimize their experiences, whether in academic, professional, or personal realms. Research in the field of positive psychology has begun to explore the potential synergies between flow and mindfulness, recognizing that both concepts emphasize the importance of present-moment awareness and deep engagement. For instance, individuals who regularly practice mindfulness may cultivate the necessary skills to enter into a flow state more readily, as heightened present-moment awareness can enhance their ability to fully immerse themselves in an activity. Likewise, individuals who frequently experience flow states may develop an increased capacity for mindfulness, as the intense focus and absorption characteristic of flow can naturally lead to a heightened awareness of the present moment. (Ning et al., 2022)

Susan Thomas et al. (2010) studied the relationships between Flow, Self-Concept, Psychological Skills, and Performance and found a positive relationship between flow and aspects of self-concept, and the relationships between flow and psychological skills use were also in the expected directions. Maïke E Debus et al. (2010) emphasize the importance of recovery during nonwork time for flow experiences within the entire working day, thereby extending research on task characteristics with personal resources when examining predictors of flow. Evangelia Demerouti et al. (2011) studied flow and energy at work and found that flow was significantly associated with energy after work. Recovery at work and detachment from work moderated the relationship between flow and after-work energy. Laurence J. Kirmayer (2015) says that the popularity of mindfulness meditation and other Buddhist principles and practices in clinical psychology and psychiatry reflects their fit with cognitive views of suffering and healing as well as their adaptability to core features of contemporary globalizing cultures. Ellen Choi et al. (2021) suggested that a balanced understanding of mindfulness at work encourages more effective practices that may better support employees and organizations.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

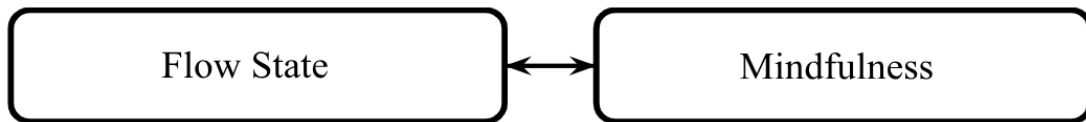


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework of the relationship between flow state and mindfulness.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Problem

To study the interrelation between mindfulness and flow state.

3.2 Objectives

To study the relationship of mindfulness with flow state among young adults.

3.3 Hypotheses

H1: There would be a positive association between mindfulness and flow state.

3.4 Design

A correlational design was used to study the relationship between mindfulness and flow state.

3.5 Sample

The sample consists of 200 adults (100 males and 100 females) belonging to the age group 18- 25 years from Delhi-NCR.

3.6 Variables

Independent Variable:

Mindfulness

Dependent Variable:

Flow state

3.7 Description of tools used

3.7.1 Flow short scale by Rheinberg, Vollmeyer & Engeser, 2003

It is a 13-item Likert scale (7 points). It has an internal consistency for the Total Score of .90. & for the flow subscales of .92. Factorial validity was examined, and further research shows that FSS is valid in predicting learning performance. The Flow total score is the sum of the flow items 1 - 10, and the worry score is the sum of Items 11-13 (each item scored from 1 to 7).

3.7.2 The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ-15) by Baer, Carmody, & Hunsinger, 2012

It is a 15-item, 5-point Likert scale. It demonstrated adequate to good internal consistency, with alpha coefficients ranging from .75 to .91. Results consist of a total average score and five subscales. Average scores are calculated by summing the responses and dividing by the number of items and indicate the average level of agreement with each subscale (1 = rarely true, 5 = always true). Higher scores are indicative of someone who is more mindful in their everyday life.

3.8 Statistical Techniques

The Relationship between the variables (flow state and mindfulness) was tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and Linear regression analysis.

IV. RESULTS

Table 1 shows the relationship between flow state, time budgeting and learning motivation among college students (N=200)

Table 4.1 Correlational Matrix

	Mean	SD	Flow State	Mindfulness
Flow State	41.95	8.44	1	
Mindfulness	48.49	6.65	.385**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation matrix reveals a significant positive correlation between flow state and mindfulness ($r=0.385$), at a significance level of 0.01. This suggests that an increase in the scores of flow state would induce a change in the scores of mindfulness in the same direction. The hypothesis stating that there will be a significant positive relationship between flow state and mindfulness was accepted.

Table 4.2: Multiple Regression Analysis for Flow State

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	.358
R Square	.128
Adjusted R Square	.124
Standard Error	7.904
Observation	200

Table 4.2 shows the obtained value of R Square=0.128. This shows that the predictor variables (mindfulness) jointly contribute about 13% to the variation caused by the criterion variable (Flow State). The remaining 87% of variation is due to other factors.

Table 4.3: F Table

	dF	SS	MS	F
Regression	1	1818.633	1818.633	29.108**
Residual	198	12370.867	62.479	
Total	199	14189.5		

**p < 0.01

Table 4.3 shows that the F-value for academic resilience was significant at 0.01 levels. This means the contribution of mindfulness is significant in the determination of flow state.

Table 4.4: Regression Coefficient of Predictor Variables for Mindfulness

Variables	b	Standard Error	Beta	t	r	Coefficient of Determination
Mindfulness	.455	.084	.358	5.395	.358**	.128
Constant	19.907	4.124		4.827		

Linear Regression Equation for Criterion Variable (Flow State) and the Predictor Variables (Mindfulness).

Regression Equation between Flow State and Predictor Variables:

$$Y = b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + C$$

$$= (.690 \times 5.78) + (.487 \times 7.82) + 48.49$$

$$= 3.9882 + 3.80834 + 40.698$$

$$Y = 48.496$$

The value of Adjusted R Square was found to be .124 (Table 4.2). This explains that about 12% variance in flow state is contributed by the combined predictor variables. The regression coefficient (b value) of Mindfulness was .455. This means an increase of one unit in mindfulness results in an increase of .455 units in the flow state. Thus, mindfulness positively contributes to determining flow state and accounts for about 12% variation.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The title of the present research is The Interplay of Time Budgeting and Learning Motivation: Impact on Mindfulness and Flow State in College Students, for this sample 200 college-going students were chosen; out of which 100 were males and 100 were females. The tools used for the study were the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ), a multifactorial scale developed by Baer, Carmody & Hunsinger (2012). The statistical tools employed were Pearson's product-moment correlation and multiple regression analysis.

The analyses and interpretation of the results of the present study lead to the following findings there was a significant positive relationship between flow state and mindfulness. The relationship between flow state and mindfulness underscores the interconnectedness of these states of consciousness and suggests that they may share common underlying processes and benefits. Engaging in activities that promote flow and cultivating mindfulness practices can enhance individuals' ability to experience moments of deep immersion, presence, and well-being in their daily lives.

The findings of the study indicate that flow state is positively correlated with mindfulness. This is supported by past research.

- A study done by Nicola S. Schutte & John M. Malouff (2022) conducted a meta-analysis of the connection between mindfulness and flow. They analysed 17 studies comprising 10,102 individuals. It was found that greater mindfulness was significantly associated with a higher level of flow.
- A study done by Hao Yao and colleagues (2024) explored the effect of mindfulness on creativity with a mediating role of flow and creative self-efficacy. The results revealed the important mediating role of flow experience in the relationship between mindfulness and scientific research creativity. We found that the flow experience was influenced by mindfulness while mindfulness positively influenced the flow experience.
- A study done by Hao Chen and colleagues(2022) on the Effect of Animation-Guided Mindfulness Meditation on the Promotion of Creativity, Flow and Affect. The analysis showed that mindfulness promotes the flow because both mindfulness and flow are focused on awareness of the present moment.
- A study done by Richard M.H. Briegel-Jones, and colleagues(2013) Investigated the Effect of Yoga Practice on Mindfulness and Flow in Elite Youth Swimmers. They found that even though there were no significant changes in mindfulness and dispositional flow were identified in the intervention group but individuals did report perceived improvements in mindfulness and flow.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between mindfulness and flow state among young adults. Through rigorous analysis, a significant positive correlation was observed between mindfulness, as the independent variable, and flow state, as the dependent variable, at a significance level of .01.

The results underscore the importance of mindfulness practices in facilitating experiences of flow, wherein individuals become fully immersed in activities to the point of losing track of time and external concerns. Individuals may enhance their capacity to engage in activities with heightened focus, enjoyment, and fulfilment by cultivating present-moment awareness and nonjudgmental acceptance. However, it's crucial to acknowledge the limitations of this study, including the reliance on a relatively small sample size. The findings may not be generalizable to broader populations, and caution should be exercised in interpreting the results. Future research with larger and more diverse samples is warranted to validate and extend the findings of this study.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on mindfulness and flow state, highlighting their intertwined nature and potential implications for human flourishing. By fostering mindfulness, individuals may unlock the transformative power of flow, leading to enhanced engagement, creativity, and well-being in various aspects of life.

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