

Received : 15 March 2024, Accepted: 09 June 2024  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33282/rr.vx9i2.210>

## **RELATIONSHIP OF DISPOSITIONAL MINDFULNESS WITH LIFE SATISFACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

**Palwasha Nasir Abbasi<sup>1</sup>, Zoonish Aziz<sup>2</sup>, Asma Gillani<sup>3</sup>, Rukhsar Nazir<sup>4</sup>**

1. Student ,Department of Psychology, Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffarabad
2. Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffarabad
3. Visiting Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffarabad
4. Visiting Lecturer, Department of Psychology, Azad Jammu and Kashmir Muzaffarabad

### **ABSTRACT**

The current study was aimed to assess the relationship between dispositional mindfulness, life satisfaction and psychological well-being among the students of AJK University and to find out the difference of life satisfaction, dispositional mindfulness and psychological well-being in relation to the demographic variables (gender, family system, marital status). Sample of 300 students from different departments of UAJK was taken. Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS), Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) and Psychological Well-being Scale(PWBS) were used. Total 37 items questionnaires were given to the participants from different departments of AJK University. Data was analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software. Correlation yielded that there is a positive significant correlation between the dispositional mindfulness and life satisfaction and dispositional mindfulness and psychological well-being. Statistical analysis has shown that female students and students belonging to joint families and married students have high dispositional mindfulness, life satisfaction and psychological well-being.

Keywords: Dispositional Mindfulness, Life Satisfaction, Psychological well-being. University students.

## **Introduction**

Mindfulness is an art that involves accurate awareness regarding one's thoughts, feelings and experiences in the current moment in a non-judgmental manner. According to Brown and Ryan (2003), the capacity to pay attention to what is happening in the present moment with an open and nonjudgmental attitude is known as dispositional mindfulness. State mindfulness and trait or dispositional mindfulness are the two different forms of mindfulness. The experience of being awake, focused, and consciously aware is known as state mindfulness. The ability to be attentive without making a conscious effort to be mindful is known as trait mindfulness (Shapiro et al., 2011). While trait mindfulness develops over time through the accumulation of diverse abilities, state mindfulness is cultivated by therapies like MBSR and MBCT, meditation, and other mindfulness-based exercises (Mesmer-Magnus, 2017).

Although the term "dispositional mindfulness" refers to a state of awareness, it actually refers to the presence of mind. The awareness that results from giving purposeful attention to the unfolding of experience moment by moment in the present moment without passing judgment is known as mindfulness. (Kabat- Zinn, 2003). Bishop et al. (2002) define mindfulness as a range of mental processes whose goal is to recognize and strengthen healthy thoughts, feelings, and behaviors while diminishing unhealthy ones. He proposed that self-regulation of attention and orienting to experience are the two main components of mindfulness.

Mindfulness has also been conceptualized as a dispositional characteristic that varies in the general population, and several self-report measures of mindfulness have been developed. A

growing body of literature suggests that such measures are psychometrically sound, and that higher levels of self-reported dispositional mindfulness are associated with adaptive functioning (Baer, 2011).

Life satisfaction, one important measure of subjective well-being, is one's personal evaluation of one's general quality of life (Diener & Diener, 1995). Researchers have been paying paramount attention to life satisfaction as key concept in positive psychology in recent years due to the growth of this field (Gilman & Heubner, 2003).

Positive life assessments are typically linked to contentment and the realization of the "good life," whereas negative life assessments are linked to sadness and misery. Furthermore, success and having access to social and financial advantages are both correlated with a sound psychological state of happiness and contentment with life (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). It is evident from this that a person's ability to live a happy and fulfilling life is largely dependent on their level of life satisfaction. The connection between various factors and mindfulness has been extensively studied. Examples of studies that have demonstrated the mediating role of emotional intelligence between mindfulness and life satisfaction are those conducted by Kong et al. (2014) and Wang et al. (2014); studies conducted by Stolarski et al. (2016) provide evidence that the Balanced Time Perspective (BTP) may be one of the possible connections between mindfulness and life satisfaction. However, numerous other research have demonstrated that mindfulness can be a strong predictor of life satisfaction (Howell et al., 2008., Schutte & Malouff, 2011; Falkenstorm, 2010).

A more recent study presented that greater life satisfaction was associated with higher levels of mindfulness and more positive core self-evaluations (Jianfang et al., 2016). Similarly,

according to (Bajaj & Pande's 2016) study results, mindfulness predicted life satisfaction and affected as indices of subjective well-being.

According to Ryff and Keyes (1995), PWB (eudemonia well-being) is viewed as multidimensional, encompassing self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environment mastery, personal growth, and a sense of purpose in life. According to a Tanzanian study, kids' high PWB levels may have something to do with their spirituality (Rugira, et al., 2015). Medical and dentistry students in Saudi Arabia had typical levels of life satisfaction, a measure of psychological well-being, but extremely high levels of stress, anxiety, and depression (Aboalshamat, et al., 2015). PWB appeared to be associated with gender study programs, stress, resilience, self-efficacy, and creativity among university students in Iran, Korea, and China (Shi et al., 2015; Priesack & Alcock, 2015; Tamannaefar & Motaghedifard, 2014). A small body of research assessed the strengths of several variables in the same study and looked at how mindfulness affected PWB in university students. There are some gaps in the literature's knowledge.

The current study aimed to determine relationship of dispositional mindfulness with satisfaction with life and psychological well-being among university students. According to Keng et al., (2011), mindfulness as highly correlated to QOL and psychological well-being, in both general and clinical populations. Another study by Don & Algoe (2020), trait mindfulness acts as a buffer for negative personal consequences and improves the relationship and life satisfaction. Studies were present in literature separately on dispositional mindfulness, satisfaction with life and psychological well-being separately, but there were no combined studies on these variables. Similarly, there were studies which focused on state mindfulness and psychological well-being but the literature on trait mindfulness is scarce. This field was slightly

unnoticed in Pakistan and Azad Kashmir, so it was quite interesting to explore how dispositional mindfulness is related to satisfaction with life and psychological well-being among university students.

**Objectives:**

1. To investigate the correlation between dispositional mindfulness, psychological well-being and life satisfaction among university students.
2. To investigate the role of gender, family system and marital status on dispositional mindfulness, life satisfaction, and psychological wellbeing among university students.

**Hypotheses:**

**H1:**There is positive correlation between dispositional mindfulness and psychological well being among university students.

**H2:**There is positive correlation between dispositional mindfulness and life satisfaction among university students.

**H3:**Women have high level of dispositional mindfulness than males.

**H4:**Women have high level of life satisfaction than males.

**H5:**Women have high level of psychological wellbeing than males.

**H6:**Students belonging to joint families have higher level of dispositional mindfulness than those of nuclear families.

**H7:**Students belonging to joint families have higher level of psychological wellbeing than those of nuclear families.

**H8:**Students belonging to joint families have higher level of life satisfaction than those of nuclear families.

**H9:**Married students have higher level of dispositional mindfulness than unmarried students.

**H10:**Married students have higher level of psychological wellbeing than unmarried students.

**H11:**Married students have higher level of life satisfaction than unmarried students.

### **Research Methodology:**

#### **Instruments:**

##### **Satisfaction with Life Scale**

Diener (1984) proposed satisfaction with life scale. Satisfaction with life scale is a 5-item scale designed to measure global cognitive judgments of one's life satisfaction (not a measure of either positive or negative effect). Participants indicate how much they agree or disagree with each of the items using a 7-point scale that ranges from 7 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree. Each response using the following scoring using a 7-point scale (7=Strongly agree, 6=Agree, 5=Slightly agree, 4=Neither agree nor disagree, 3=Slightly disagree, 2=disagree, 1=Strongly disagree). Reliability of Satisfaction with life scale showed an internal consistency of 0.74 Cronbach's alpha value. It has significant inter-item correlation and all the items had moderate to high correlations with the item test or scale, with values ranging from 0.64 to 0.74.

##### **Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale**

Ryan and Brown (2003) proposed Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS).The MAAS scale is used to assess the core characteristic of dispositional mindfulness. Each item using the following score (1=almost always, 2=very frequently, 3=somewhat frequently,

4=somewhat infrequently, 5=very frequently, 6=almost never). MAAS is a reliable measure of mindfulness. MAAS showed excellent internal consistency that is Cronbach's alpha value of 0.92 and all items showed significant corrected total item correlations.

### **Psychological Well-being Scale**

Psychological Well-being is assessed with an 18 item modified version of Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well Being (Ryff& Keyes, 1995). The scale includes 3 items for all the aspects of well-being: self-acceptance, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relations with others, and personal growth. Each item using following score (1=strongly agree 2=somewhat agree, 3= a little agree, 4=neither agree nor disagree, 5=a little disagree, 6=somewhat disagree 7= strongly disagree). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the Psychological Well-being Scale (18-item) revised was 0.88.

### **Sample**

The sample consisted of 300 students enrolled in BS and MSC program in various departments. The student of age 18-27 were included in this study.

### **Sampling Technique**

Convenient sampling was used.

### **Procedure**

The questionnaires were applied to sample of three hundred students from University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. All the participants were informed about purpose of study and we're asked to complete questionnaire. The participants were requested to give honest responses. After

the collection of data from participants, it was transferred to Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

## Results:

**Table 1** Frequency and percentage across demographic variables (n=300)

Demographic information		Frequency	Percent
Age			
	18-22	278	92.7
	23-27	22	7.3
Gender	Male	150	50
	Female	150	50
Degree			
	BS	289	96.3
	M.Sc.	11	3.7
Marital Status			
	Unmarried	150	50
	Married	150	50
Family System			
	Joint	150	50
	Nuclear	150	50
Family Income			
	Above 60,000	10	3.3
	41,000-60,000	290	96.7
	20,000-40,000	0.0	0.0
Physical Illness			
	Yes	0	0
	No	300	100

Statistical analysis was done on the basis of information gathered from the sample of 300 (150 Males and 150 Females) students of University of Muzaffarabad AJK. Table shows that students are aged between 18-23 and 23-27. Gender male or female, degree BS or MSC, marital



status married or unmarried, family system joint or nuclear, family income (20,000 to above 60,000) and physical illness yes or no.

**Table 2**

Descriptive statistics and alpha reliability of **MAAS, PWBS AND SWLS** (N=300).

Scales	M	SD	Range	Cronbach's $\alpha$
MAAS	51.42	12.04	88-23	.761
SWLS	54.1	11.47	88-28	.72
PWB	51.39	9.56	86-23	.75

Table 2 shows psychometric properties for scales. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  (reliability) value indicate high satisfactory consistency.

**Table 3**

Correlation matrix between Dispositional Mindfulness and Life Satisfaction and Psychological Well-being

Variable	1	2	3
Dispositional Mindfulness	-		
Life Satisfaction	.95**		
Psychological Well-being	.207**		

Table 3 demonstrates correlation among study variables. It depicts the positive correlation between dispositional mindfulness and psychological well-being (  $r= .207^{**}$  ;  $p< .05$ ). Also, a positive correlation between dispositional mindfulness and life satisfaction is witnessed ( $r= .95^{**}$  ;  $p<0.05$ ).

**Table 4**

Mean Comparison for measuring MAAS, SWL and PWB in Students based Gender Wise (N=300)

Gender							
Men				Women			
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	T(298)	p	Cohen's d
MAAS	48.51	14.40	52.38	11.03	-2.041	0.02	0.30
SWL	55.24	12.35	58.61	10.18	-1.05	0.01	0.29
PWB	48.5	14.40	52.34	11.25	-2.36	0.02	0.29

Table 04 illustrates the significant difference of dispositional mindfulness with respect to gender with women (52.38, 11.03) scoring high on dispositional mindfulness than men (48.51, 14.40). Women score high on satisfaction with life (58.61, 10.18) as compared to men (55.24, 12.35). Women (52.34, 11.25) score high on psychological well-being than men (48.5, 14.40).

**Table 5**

Mean Comparison for measuring MAAS, SWL and PWB in Students based on Family System (N=300)

Family System	
Joint	Nuclear

Variable	M	SD	M	SD	T(298)	p	Cohen's d
MAAS	59.23	13.36	52.32	13.09	2.35	0.02	0.52
SWL	24.97	4.58	22.03	5.99	1.98	0.05	0.51
PWB	50.81	7.76	45.93	10.37	2.07	0.04	0.53

Table 05 demonstrates the significant difference of dispositional mindfulness with respect to family system with children of joint families (59.23, 13.36) scoring high on dispositional mindfulness, satisfaction with life (24.97, 4.58), psychological well-being (50.81, 7.76) than nuclear families.

**Table 06**

Results of t-test and descriptive statistics for MAAS, SWLS, PWBS by Marital Status (N=300)

Marital Status							
Married				Unmarried			
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	T(298)	p	Cohen's d
MAAS	59.27	14.06	50.87	13.7	-2.33	0.02	0.60
SWL	75.07	13.36	52.31	13.09	2.35	0.02	0.52
PWB	78.07	13.39	71.10	9.25	2.41	0.04	0.34

Table 06 depicts the significant difference of dispositional mindfulness with respect to marital status with married individuals scoring high on dispositional mindfulness (59.27, 14.06), satisfaction with life (75.07, 13.36) and psychological well-being (78.07, 13.39) as compared to unmarried individuals.

**Discussion:**

The first hypothesis indicate that the highest positive correlation is found between dispositional mindfulness and life satisfaction among university students ( $r=.95^{**}$  ;  $p<0.05$ ). People with high mindfulness tend to have higher levels of life satisfaction (Weinstein et al.,

2009). The second hypothesis states that there is a positive relationship between dispositional mindfulness and Psychological Well-being. The results indicated that there is a significant positive relationship of Dispositional Mindfulness Psychological Well-being. Dispositional Mindfulness appear to be independently associated with Psychological Well-being (Hanley et al. 2018).

The third hypothesis indicated that there was significant influence of gender on dispositional mindfulness and accepting the proposed hypothesis. The result of our findings that is, women score high on dispositional mindfulness than males is consistent with the previous literature (Crystal, 2017). The fourth proposed hypothesis that women are more satisfied with life than men is accepted. The findings of our research is consistent with the previous researches that is women reported higher levels of life satisfaction than men (Jovanovic Joshanloo &, 2019). The fifth hypothesis indicated that women score high on psychological well-being scale than men. Findings of our studies differ from existing literature, it may be due to post pandemic situation or difference in demographics variability. As per literature there were not any gender differences concerning statistical parameters and predictors of psychological well-being among Thai secondary school students (Klanin- Yobas et al., 2021).

The sixth hypothesis indicated that students belonging to joint families score high on mindfulness attention awareness scale than those belonging to nuclear families. Life satisfaction was found to be higher among people living in the joint family system compared to nuclear family system (Lodhi et al., 2019). The eighth hypothesis indicated that students belonging to joint families score high on psychological well-being scale than that of nuclear families accepting the proposed hypothesis. Children from joint family system and female children had a

better psychological well-being than children from single family system and male children on same scale with approximately same features and characteristics (Gul et al., 2017).

The ninth hypothesis indicated that married students score high on dispositional mindfulness than non-married ones. The tenth hypothesis indicated that married students score more on satisfaction with life scale than non-married ones. Married people in South Africa have higher levels of satisfaction than divorced people (Bootha & Booyesen, 2013). The eleventh hypothesis indicated that married students score more on psychological well-being than non-married ones. As per literature compared to marriage, being single or being divorced were quite consistently associated with poorer mental well being during life course (Kiviruusu et al., 2021).

### **Conclusion**

The study comes to the conclusion that dispositional mindfulness, with higher levels shown in students with greater mindfulness, considerably improves psychological well-being and life satisfaction. When it comes to mindfulness, life satisfaction, and psychological well-being, female students outperform their male counterparts. Married students and those from joint households show greater levels of wellbeing, life satisfaction, and mindfulness. There is no relationship between degree type and these variables. Generally, better life satisfaction and psychological well-being are positively correlated with enhanced dispositional mindfulness.

### **Limitations**

Although the study was completed with authenticity, still it has few limitations which should be taken into consideration. Sample was small and only university students were included. The study looked at limited level of the effect of dispositional mindfulness on psychological wellbeing and life satisfaction, whereas there are many other factors as well that

influence dispositional mindfulness, psychological wellbeing, and life satisfaction such as interventions for mindfulness, curriculum, and educational institutes' environment etc that need to be explored.

### **Suggestion**

In future, for the research purpose data can be carried out province wide and nationwide with large sample among colleges and schools for exploring the effects of dispositional mindfulness on psychological wellbeing and life satisfaction. Intervention studies can also be carried out to better explain causal relationship between variables.

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