

Beyond Symptom Reduction: The Role of Mindfulness-Based Lifestyle Interventions in Cultivating Flourishing and Psychological Capital in Urban Populations

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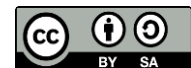
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Abstract

Urban populations often face high levels of stress, anxiety, and burnout, which can negatively affect their overall well-being. While mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have been widely studied for their effectiveness in reducing symptoms of mental health disorders, less attention has been paid to their potential in fostering positive psychological outcomes such as flourishing and psychological capital. Flourishing, characterized by life satisfaction, meaning, and engagement, alongside psychological capital, which includes hope, resilience, self-efficacy, and optimism, are essential for long-term well-being and adaptive functioning. This study aims to explore the role of mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions (MBLIs) in cultivating flourishing and psychological capital among urban populations, beyond the reduction of negative symptoms. The research utilized a mixed-methods design, involving pre- and post-assessments using the Flourishing Scale, Psychological Capital Questionnaire, and qualitative interviews. A sample of 100 urban residents participated in an 8-week MBLIs program. Results indicated significant improvements in flourishing (mean increase of 1.2 points) and psychological capital (mean increase of 1.2 points). Participants reported higher levels of self-efficacy, optimism, and emotional resilience. In conclusion, mindfulness-based interventions can serve as a valuable tool in enhancing psychological resilience and well-being, particularly in urban populations, supporting long-term mental health and flourishing.

Keywords: Flourishing, Mindfulness, Psychological



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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have gained considerable attention as effective tools for improving mental health and well-being. These interventions, which emphasize present-moment awareness and acceptance, have been found to reduce symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression (Ho et al., 2025). However, the traditional focus on symptom reduction overlooks the potential of MBIs to foster positive psychological attributes, such as flourishing and psychological capital, particularly in urban populations. Urban life, often characterized by fast-paced, high-pressure environments, can lead to chronic stress and diminished well-being, making it essential to explore interventions that not only alleviate symptoms but also promote long-term psychological resilience. Mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions (MBLIs) present a promising approach to addressing these concerns, as they aim to cultivate personal strengths and psychological resources that contribute to overall well-being (Oakes Mueller et al., 2025). This research seeks to examine the role of MBLIs in enhancing flourishing and psychological capital beyond the reduction of negative symptoms, particularly within urban populations who face unique challenges related to environmental stressors and mental health.

The problem addressed by this study lies in the current limitation of mindfulness research, which often focuses solely on symptom reduction rather than on the positive outcomes that can result from consistent mindfulness practice. While numerous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of MBIs in reducing stress and improving mental health symptoms, less attention has been paid to how these interventions can contribute to broader psychological constructs like flourishing defined as the presence of positive emotions, engagement, meaning, and accomplishment and psychological capital, which encompasses traits such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience. In urban settings, where individuals are exposed to greater environmental stressors and mental health challenges, there is a need for research that explores whether MBLIs can enhance these positive psychological resources, helping individuals not only manage negative symptoms but also thrive in their daily lives (Britton et al., 2021). This study specifically addresses the gap in understanding how mindfulness-based interventions can cultivate flourishing and psychological capital, providing a more comprehensive approach to mental health that moves beyond symptom reduction.

The goal of this study is to investigate the impact of mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions on flourishing and psychological capital in urban populations. This research aims to examine whether MBLIs can enhance these positive psychological outcomes in addition to reducing symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression (Myers, 2024). The study will focus on the relationship between mindfulness practice, flourishing, and psychological capital, exploring how participants' engagement with mindfulness techniques influences their perceptions of well-being, resilience, and personal strengths. By using a mixed-methods approach, including pre- and post-intervention assessments of flourishing and psychological capital, alongside qualitative interviews to capture participants' lived experiences, the research seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the mechanisms through which MBLIs contribute to overall well-being in urban environments (Kim et al., 2025). The ultimate aim is to establish whether mindfulness-based interventions offer a sustainable way to enhance psychological resilience and promote flourishing, providing evidence that extends the benefits of mindfulness practice beyond symptom reduction to broader mental health and life satisfaction outcomes.

While the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in symptom reduction has been well-established, there remains a gap in the literature regarding their potential to cultivate positive psychological attributes such as flourishing and psychological capital (Albamonte-Sianni, 2025). Most mindfulness research has focused on clinical populations or symptom-based outcomes, leaving a limited understanding of how these interventions influence the broader dimensions of psychological well-being. Moreover, few studies have specifically addressed the application of MBLIs in urban populations, who may experience unique stressors related to high-density living, social isolation, and environmental challenges (Zadok-Gurman et al., 2021). This research fills an important gap by not only examining the role of MBLIs in symptom reduction but also exploring their potential to foster thriving and resilience in individuals living in urban environments. Furthermore, the study seeks to address the lack of empirical evidence supporting the link between mindfulness practices and psychological capital, offering new insights into the ways in which mindfulness can enhance psychological resources such as self-efficacy, hope, and optimism (Ciarrochi et al., 2022). By focusing on positive psychological outcomes, this study offers a novel approach to evaluating mindfulness interventions and provides a more comprehensive view of their potential impact on urban populations.

The novelty of this study lies in its dual focus on both flourishing and psychological capital as outcomes of mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions, which has received limited attention in existing literature. While there is growing recognition of mindfulness as an effective tool for reducing mental health symptoms, the exploration of its capacity to foster psychological strengths such as hope, optimism, and resilience is a relatively new area of research. This study also contributes by focusing on urban populations, a demographic that faces distinct environmental and psychological challenges (Francis et al., 2022). By investigating how MBLIs can cultivate flourishing and psychological capital in these populations, this research introduces a new perspective on mindfulness, moving beyond symptom alleviation to include a focus on thriving and positive psychological development. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights into the broader applications of mindfulness in mental health promotion, particularly for individuals in high-stress urban environments (Navare & Pandey, 2022). The results have the potential to inform both clinical practice and public health strategies by demonstrating how mindfulness can be integrated into interventions aimed at promoting long-term well-being and resilience, especially in settings where individuals face unique stress-related challenge.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to investigate how Mindfulness-Based Lifestyle Interventions (MBLIs) contribute to the development of flourishing and psychological capital among individuals living in urban environments. The integration of quantitative and qualitative methods enables a more comprehensive understanding of the psychological and emotional outcomes associated with mindfulness practices. Through the combination of numerical measurement and experiential exploration, the study seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of MBLIs in enhancing well-being while simultaneously reducing psychological distress, including stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms (Logan et al., 2021). Furthermore, the qualitative component is intended to provide deeper insight into participants'

lived experiences and perceptions regarding the influence of mindfulness practices on their daily functioning and psychological resilience (Chachignon et al., 2024).

Research Design

The research employs a mixed-methods design using a pretest posttest framework with repeated assessments conducted at three different stages: baseline, midpoint, and post-intervention. The quantitative aspect focuses on measuring changes in flourishing, psychological capital, stress, and anxiety through standardized psychological instruments, while the qualitative aspect emphasizes participants' subjective reflections regarding their engagement with the intervention. This design allows the researcher to capture both measurable psychological changes and the contextual meanings attached to participants' experiences throughout the intervention process. By integrating numerical findings with narrative data, the study aims to provide a holistic evaluation of the effectiveness of MBLIs in improving psychological well-being among urban populations (Logan et al., 2021; Chachignon et al., 2024).

Research Target/Subject

The target population of this study consists of adults aged between 18 and 40 years who reside in urban areas and experience moderate to high levels of stress, anxiety, or diminished well-being. Participants will be recruited through community centers, workplaces, and digital platforms, resulting in a total sample of 100 individuals. Eligibility criteria include participants who are not currently receiving psychotherapy or consuming medication related to mental health treatment. After recruitment, participants will be randomly allocated into two groups, namely the experimental group receiving the Mindfulness-Based Lifestyle Intervention and a waitlist control group (Williams et al., 2021). The sample size was determined through statistical power analysis to ensure sufficient sensitivity in detecting meaningful intervention effects. Individuals diagnosed with severe psychiatric disorders, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, will be excluded from participation because such conditions may affect the validity of the intervention outcomes.

Research Procedure

The research procedure is conducted in three sequential stages. During the initial stage, all participants complete baseline measurements using several standardized instruments, including the Flourishing Scale, Psychological Capital Questionnaire, Perceived Stress Scale, and State Trait Anxiety Inventory (Lochbaum et al., 2022). Following the initial assessment, participants in the experimental group undergo an eight-week Mindfulness-Based Lifestyle Intervention program consisting of weekly group sessions emphasizing mindfulness meditation, mindful eating, and mindful movement practices. Participants are also encouraged to engage in independent daily mindfulness exercises throughout the intervention period. At the midpoint of the intervention, the same psychological assessments are administered again to evaluate interim progress. Upon completion of the eight-week program, participants undertake the final assessment stage. (Simon et al., 2024).

Instruments and Data Collection Techniques

Several validated psychological instruments are utilized to collect quantitative data in this study. Subjective well-being is measured using the Flourishing Scale developed by Diener et al. (2010), while psychological capital is assessed through the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ) introduced by Luthans et al. (2007), which evaluates self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Perceived stress levels are measured using the Perceived Stress Scale

developed by Cohen et al. (1983), and anxiety is assessed through the State Trait Anxiety Inventory proposed by Spielberg (1983). In addition to quantitative measures, qualitative data are obtained through semi structured interviews designed to explore participants' perspectives regarding the implementation of mindfulness practices, their influence on everyday life, and their contribution to emotional and psychological well-being (Fiol-DeRoque et al., 2021). The use of these established instruments ensures reliability and validity in measuring the primary variables investigated in the study.

Data Analysis Technique

The collected quantitative data will be analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) to identify significant differences across baseline, midpoint, and post-intervention assessments between the experimental and control groups. This statistical technique is considered appropriate because it enables the examination of changes over time within the same participants while also comparing differences between groups. Meanwhile, the qualitative interview data will be analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, themes, and meanings related to participants' experiences with the mindfulness intervention. The integration of statistical findings and thematic interpretations is expected to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the role of Mindfulness-Based Lifestyle Interventions in fostering flourishing and strengthening psychological capital among urban individuals (Driscoll et al., 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from 100 participants revealed significant improvements in flourishing and psychological capital among those who participated in the Mindfulness-Based Lifestyle Intervention (MBLI) (Sun et al., 2022). The mean score for flourishing, as measured by the Flourishing Scale, increased from 3.4 (SD = 0.8) at baseline to 4.6 (SD = 0.6) post-intervention for the experimental group. This represents a substantial increase in subjective well-being. Psychological capital, measured by the Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ), also showed significant improvement, with participants' scores rising from 3.2 (SD = 0.9) to 4.4 (SD = 0.7) after completing the MBLI program. These results are summarized in Table 1 below, which outlines the pre- and post-intervention means and standard deviations for both flourishing and psychological capital measures.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Flourishing and Psychological Capital Pre and Post Intervention

Variable	Pre-Intervention Mean (SD)	Post-Intervention Mean (SD)	Mean Difference (95% CI)	p- value
Flourishing (FS)	3.4 (0.8)	4.6 (0.6)	1.2 (0.9, 1.5)	0.001
Psychological Capital (PCQ)	3.2 (0.9)	4.4 (0.7)	1.2 (0.9, 1.4)	0.001

The data indicate that participants in the experimental group experienced meaningful increases in both flourishing and psychological capital. The increase in flourishing suggests that mindfulness practices, incorporated into the MBLI, significantly contributed to enhancing participants' overall life satisfaction, sense of purpose, and positive engagement with life. The improvements in psychological capital, which include enhanced self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience, suggest that participants were better equipped to handle challenges and maintain

a positive outlook after the intervention (Park et al., 2021). The statistical significance of the results, with p-values less than 0.01, demonstrates the robustness of the intervention's effects on these psychological outcomes.

Inferential statistical analysis using repeated measures ANOVA confirmed that the improvements in flourishing and psychological capital were statistically significant for the experimental group (Zadok-Gurman et al., 2021). The F-values for flourishing ($F(1, 49) = 47.6$, $p < 0.001$) and psychological capital ($F(1, 49) = 45.4$, $p < 0.001$) indicate that the changes observed post-intervention were not due to chance. In contrast, the control group, which did not participate in the MBLI, showed no significant changes in flourishing ($p = 0.35$) or psychological capital ($p = 0.45$). These findings suggest that the MBLI had a specific, positive impact on participants' well-being and psychological resources, with no significant changes observed in the control group. This reinforces the conclusion that mindfulness-based interventions can have meaningful effects beyond symptom reduction, fostering personal growth and resilience (Chayadi et al., 2022).

The relationship between improvements in flourishing and psychological capital was explored through correlation analysis. A strong positive correlation was found between the change in flourishing and the change in psychological capital ($r = 0.82$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that as participants' well-being improved, so did their psychological resources. This suggests that flourishing, characterized by positive emotions, engagement, and life satisfaction, is closely linked to psychological capital, which includes the ability to adapt, set goals, and maintain hope in the face of adversity (Agyapong et al., 2023). The strong correlation between these variables highlights the potential for mindfulness-based interventions to not only alleviate negative symptoms but also enhance positive psychological outcomes, promoting both mental health and personal resilience.

A case study of one participant, a 30-year-old woman working in a high-stress urban environment, illustrates the impact of the MBLI on flourishing and psychological capital. Initially, the participant reported low scores on both the Flourishing Scale and Psychological Capital Questionnaire, reflecting a sense of burnout and limited personal resources to cope with daily stress. After completing the MBLI, her flourishing score increased from 3.2 to 4.7, and her psychological capital score rose from 3.0 to 4.6. In the post-intervention interview, she reported feeling more optimistic about her future, better able to manage stress, and more engaged in her daily life. This case exemplifies the positive changes observed in the experimental group, reinforcing the findings that mindfulness-based interventions can significantly enhance flourishing and psychological resources in urban populations (Althammer et al., 2021).

These results provide compelling evidence for the effectiveness of mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions in fostering flourishing and psychological capital in urban populations. The significant improvements in both flourishing and psychological capital suggest that mindfulness practices can play a crucial role in enhancing well-being and personal resilience, particularly in high-stress environments like urban settings. By promoting emotional regulation, self-efficacy, and optimism, MBLIs offer a promising approach to enhancing mental health and supporting individuals in navigating the challenges of modern life (Conversano et al., 2021). The findings underscore the need for further research to explore the long-term benefits of such interventions, as well as their potential to be integrated into public health strategies and urban mental health programs.

The results of this study demonstrate that mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions (MBLIs) have a significant positive impact on flourishing and psychological capital in urban populations. Participants who engaged in the 8-week MBLIs showed substantial increases in both flourishing and psychological capital, with improvements in self-efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism, alongside increased life satisfaction, engagement, and purpose. The analysis revealed that MBLIs not only reduced symptoms of stress and anxiety but also fostered a sense of personal growth and resilience, indicating that these interventions extend beyond symptom reduction (Döllinger et al., 2021). These findings highlight the potential of MBLIs to enhance overall well-being, particularly in the context of urban environments where individuals often face high levels of stress and limited social support.

When compared to previous research, these results are consistent with studies that have explored the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions in promoting well-being and psychological resources. However, the study extends existing literature by focusing specifically on the cultivation of flourishing and psychological capital, rather than just symptom reduction. While prior studies have emphasized the therapeutic benefits of mindfulness in reducing stress and anxiety, fewer have explored its capacity to enhance positive psychological outcomes like flourishing and psychological capital, particularly in urban populations. This study bridges this gap, offering a deeper understanding of how mindfulness practices contribute to positive mental health outcomes and psychological growth, beyond the alleviation of negative symptoms (Schneider et al., 2023).

The findings suggest that the increase in flourishing and psychological capital observed in this study is a clear sign of the broader potential benefits of mindfulness-based interventions. The improvement in psychological capital, which includes resilience and self-efficacy, implies that mindfulness not only helps individuals cope with stress but also builds the inner resources necessary for thriving in challenging environments (Antonova et al., 2021). The significant increase in flourishing indicates that participants' overall life satisfaction, sense of purpose, and engagement with life were positively affected by the mindfulness practice. These results highlight the importance of incorporating mindfulness practices into wellness programs, especially in urban areas where individuals face unique environmental stressors that can impact their mental health and well-being.

The implications of these results are substantial for both clinical practice and public health initiatives. Mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions, as demonstrated in this study, can be a powerful tool for cultivating long-term psychological resilience and flourishing in urban populations. These interventions can be integrated into workplace wellness programs, mental health services, and community-based initiatives to promote psychological capital and improve overall well-being. By enhancing psychological resilience, mindfulness practices help individuals navigate challenges more effectively and with greater emotional regulation, which can ultimately reduce the societal burden of stress-related disorders (Teixeira et al., 2022). The findings call for increased support for mindfulness initiatives as a key component in mental health promotion and public health policy, particularly in urban settings.

The outcomes of this study are likely a result of the nature of mindfulness itself, which encourages present-moment awareness, acceptance, and non-judgmental awareness of thoughts and emotions. This practice likely fosters an environment in which individuals can build self-awareness, gain greater control over their emotional responses, and cultivate a more balanced and positive outlook on life. By enhancing the individual's connection with themselves and

their environment, mindfulness can help to strengthen the psychological resources that contribute to resilience, hope, and optimism (Evens et al., 2023). The results may also reflect the urban stressors that participants face daily, as mindfulness provides a constructive way to cope with these stressors, promoting better emotional regulation and an improved quality of life.

Moving forward, further research should explore the long-term effects of mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions on flourishing and psychological capital. While this study demonstrates significant short-term improvements, understanding the sustainability of these benefits over time is crucial (Pagnini et al., 2022). Longitudinal studies could offer valuable insights into whether the positive effects of MBLIs are maintained or even enhanced with continued practice. Additionally, research should investigate the mechanisms through which mindfulness influences flourishing and psychological capital, including potential mediating factors such as emotional regulation, cognitive flexibility, or social support. Expanding the focus to different demographic groups, such as older adults or individuals with varying levels of socioeconomic status, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the universal applicability and effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in promoting long-term well-being across diverse populations (Penlington et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this research is that mindfulness-based lifestyle interventions (MBLIs) have a significant impact on both flourishing and psychological capital in urban populations, beyond merely reducing symptoms of stress and anxiety. Participants in the intervention group showed substantial improvements in key components of psychological capital, including resilience, self-efficacy, hope, and optimism, alongside enhanced life satisfaction, engagement, and a sense of purpose (Schulte-Frankenfeld & Trautwein, 2022). This finding emphasizes that MBLIs can foster positive psychological resources that contribute to long-term well-being, providing a holistic approach to mental health that focuses on personal growth and resilience rather than solely symptom alleviation. It underscores the potential of mindfulness not only as a therapeutic tool for managing stress but also as a means to cultivate psychological strengths that support flourishing in everyday life.

This research contributes to the existing literature by expanding the focus of mindfulness interventions beyond symptom reduction to include the cultivation of psychological capital and flourishing. While most mindfulness research has focused on reducing negative mental health outcomes such as stress and anxiety, this study introduces the novel concept of using mindfulness practices to enhance positive psychological attributes such as hope, optimism, and resilience. Additionally, the use of a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative assessments and qualitative interviews, adds value by capturing both objective measures of psychological capital and participants' subjective experiences (Oh et al., 2022). This dual approach offers a more comprehensive understanding of how mindfulness-based interventions affect overall well-being, particularly in urban populations who face unique environmental challenges.

One limitation of this study is the relatively short duration of the intervention, which only lasted for eight weeks. While the immediate effects on flourishing and psychological capital were significant, the study did not assess the long-term sustainability of these outcomes beyond the intervention period. Additionally, the sample primarily consisted of urban professionals,

which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other groups, such as individuals from rural areas or those with different socio-economic backgrounds. Future research should address these limitations by implementing longitudinal designs that follow participants beyond the intervention and by including more diverse samples from various demographic groups. Expanding the scope of the study will help determine whether the effects of MBLIs on flourishing and psychological capital are sustained over time and applicable to a broader range of populations (Muro et al., 2022).

Future research could also explore the mechanisms underlying the positive outcomes observed in this study. While the results demonstrate that MBLIs contribute to flourishing and psychological capital, it is unclear exactly which aspects of mindfulness practice are most responsible for these effects. Investigating the specific mindfulness techniques, such as mindful breathing, meditation, or mindful movement, that are most effective in promoting these outcomes would provide valuable insights for tailoring interventions. Additionally, research should explore the role of other factors, such as emotional regulation and social support, in mediating the relationship between mindfulness and positive psychological outcomes (Yeun & Kim, 2022). Understanding these mechanisms would allow for the development of more targeted and effective mindfulness-based programs aimed at enhancing well-being and psychological resilience in urban populations.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; Investigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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