

Exploring the Role of Self-Compassion Between Mindflow and Well-Being among Adolescents

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This study aims to explore the mediating role of self-compassion in the relationship between mindflow and well-being among adolescents. Using a sample of 201 students aged 16-18 from Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) in Uttar Pradesh, this study employed the Mindflow Questionnaire, Self-Compassion Scale, and Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving to assess these constructs. The results revealed significant positive correlations between mindflow, self-compassion, and well-being. Multiple regression analysis indicated that both mindflow and self-compassion are significant predictors of well-being. Mediation analysis showed that self-compassion partially mediates the relationship between mindflow and well-being. These findings highlight the importance of fostering both mindflow and self-compassion to promote adolescent well-being. The study's implications highlight the potential benefits of integrated educational and psychological interventions that cultivate these psychological constructs.

Keywords: Mindflow Self-compassion, well-being, adolescents, intervention, KVS.

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by significant psychological, emotional, and social changes (Silk et al., 2003; Zeman et al., 2006). During this period, individuals are particularly disposed to stress and mental health challenges (McLaughlin et al., 2011), making the promotion of psychological well-being a vital area of research. Recent studies have highlighted the importance of positive psychological constructs such as mindflow and self-compassion in enhancing adolescent well-being .

Mindflow refers to a state of focused and immersive engagement in activities characterized by an extended awareness of the present moment, including the environment, people, sensations, and sounds around you (Cacioppe, 2017). The focus of mindflow states combines deep immersion in an activity with an awareness

of the surrounding environment, balancing concentration and broader sensory perception (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Broder awareness, Ego dissolution and Integral Points are the key characteristics of Mindflow.

Mindflow and Well Being

Studies on mindfulness and flow provide indirect evidence supporting the benefits of mindflow. For instance, Kee and Wang (2008) found that Elite athletes who experience broader environmental awareness demonstrate better performance and lower stress levels. Individuals in flow states report higher levels of happiness and fulfilment (Csikszentmihalyi (1990).

A study by Cacioppe (2017), integrates deep task engagement with a heightened awareness of the environment, resembling meditative states. Meditation, particularly those practices emphasizing loving-kindness,

is known to enhance positive feelings through empathy and compassion towards oneself and others (Fredrickson et al., 2008). This alignment suggests that mindflow, like meditation, fosters a state of pure delight and flow when individuals are wholly absorbed in the present moment devoid of psychic entropy (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Langer, 2005).

Kabat-Zinn (1990) posits that complete presence allows individuals to appreciate the meaningful aspects of their lives. This mindfulness facilitates positive emotional states and cultivates personal skills and capacities, contributing to overall life satisfaction (Seligman, 2011). The practice of mindfulness, therefore, supports psychological well-being by enhancing one's engagement with life's experiences.

Empirical evidence emphasizes positive affect in mindflow is facilitated through similar mechanisms as in mindfulness and meditation. When individuals are engaged in activities with a mindful awareness, they experience an intrinsic reward and a deep sense of fulfilment. This state of engagement, akin to meditation, reduces stress and promotes emotional resilience by focusing attention on the present moment and diminishing distractions (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

The integration of mindflow practices in daily routines can mirror the benefits seen in regular mindfulness meditation. By encouraging a balanced state of concentrated activity and environmental awareness, mindflow enhances overall well-being and performance in various life domains.

Mindflow and Self-Compassion

There is a shortage of literature that has focused on the link between mindflow and self-compassion.

The role of self-compassion, mindfulness, flow, and psychological well-being has

captivated researchers across various domains. Lyon and Plisco's (2020) study focusing on elite athletes predicted that higher self-compassion levels would correlate with increased flow experiences and decreased performance anxiety. The study's significance lies in revealing that self-compassion, alongside mindfulness, strongly predicts athletes' flow levels. Self-compassion and mindfulness jointly accounted for 27% of the variance in athletes' flow experiences. Positive psychology research has consistently demonstrated a positive link between self-compassion and adaptive psychological attributes like mindfulness and flow (Carraca et al., 2015, 2016; Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011; Neff et al., 2007).

Self-compassion and well-being:

Self-compassion, defined as treating oneself with kindness and understanding in times of suffering or failure. It involves three core components: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness (Neff, 2003). Studies suggest that self-compassion can buffer against the negative effects of stress and promote resilience, making it an essential construct for adolescent mental health (Yousefi & Hasani, 2022).

Research indicates that self-compassion is a critical factor in nurturing resilience, particularly in the face of negative life events. Wong and Mak (2013) and Heath et al. (2017) demonstrated that self-compassion safeguards individuals against the adverse effects of such events, thereby reducing their psychological impact. This protective mechanism emphasizes the importance of self-compassion in maintaining psychological well-being (Birnie et al., 2010; Neff & Germer, 2013).

The relationship between self-compassion and various aspects of mental health has been well-documented. Studies by Ferguson et al. (2014) found that higher levels of self-compassion are associated with lower levels

of self-criticism, depression, anxiety, and thought suppression. Conversely, these studies also highlight a positive correlation between self-compassion emotional intelligence and social connection, suggesting that self-compassion enhances overall psychological functioning

Barnard and Curry (2011) conducted a comprehensive review revealing that self-compassion significantly improves mental health outcomes, including happiness, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction. Furthermore, Nef and McGehee (2010) reported that self-compassion is positively correlated with self-reported measures of happiness, optimism, and positive affect. These findings were corroborated by Bluth et al. (2016), who found that individuals with high levels of self-compassion reported greater emotional well-being compared to those with lower levels of self-compassion.

The benefits of self-compassion extend beyond individual mental health to influence interpersonal relationships. Hitchcock et al. (2012) and Ferguson et al. (2014) observed that individuals with higher self-compassion tend to exhibit greater emotional intelligence, enabling better management of their emotions and improved social connections. These enhanced social skills contribute to a more supportive and fulfilling social environment, further promoting psychological well-being.

Mindflow, Self-Compassion, and Well-Being:

Mindfulness and self-compassion have received considerable attention in recent psychological research due to their significant impact on individual well-being. Several studies have highlighted the predictive and mediating roles these constructs play in promoting psychological health and well-being.

Hollis and Colosimo (2011) suggested that mindfulness and self-compassion are

substantial predictors of well-being. They further posited that the relationship between mindfulness and well-being is mediated by self-compassion. This mediating role of self-compassion underscores its importance in the enhancement of individual well-being.

Supporting this view, various studies have indicated that self-compassion serves as a crucial mediator in personal well-being. Akýn (2012), Barnard and Curry (2011), Bluth and Blanton (2015), Neff and McGehee (2010), have all provided evidence that self-compassion is not only predictive of psychological well-being but also plays a mediating role in its improvement. These studies collectively emphasize the significance of fostering self-compassion to enhance overall psychological health.

Research on the effects of mindflow and self-compassion on well-being is limited. Existing studies have mainly looked at these constructs separately, ignoring the potential interaction between them. However, their combined impact and the mechanisms through which they affect well-being are still underexplored, especially among adolescents. Given this gap, the current study aims to examine the mediating role of self-compassion in the relationship between mindflow and well-being in adolescents.

Method

Participants

A convenience sampling method was used to select participants for the study. Data were collected from 201 students of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) in Uttar Pradesh. Participants' age range was 16–18 years (Age mean =16.93 years; SD = 0.565 years).

Psychometric tools:

Along with the demographic data sheet (Participant's Name, Age, Gender, and School Name), the following measures were used for data collection in the present study.

Mindflow Questionnaire (Ron Cacioppe, 2019): This Self-reported questionnaire consists of 25 items that are considered little experience of flow, some experience of flow, and frequent experience of flow. Each item response ranges from not at all 0 to all the time 6. Cronbach's alpha of this scale on the present sample was found to be .753.

Self-compassion Scale (Neff, 2003): Participants' self-compassion was assessed using the Self-Compassion Scale. It consists of 26 items on a five-point scale ranging from rarely to almost always that capture self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification. This scale's internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was found to be .685 for the present study sample

Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving (CIT, Su, Tay & Diener, 2014): This inventory measures various psychological well-being constructs and represents a holistic view of positive functioning. The CIT has 54 items assessing positive functioning and psychological well-being. Each item on a scale range from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale's internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha) was found to be .778 for the present study sample.

Procedure

All the necessary permission for data collection was obtained from KVS administration. After choosing the sample and obtaining their written consent, the data collection for the study began by establishing rapport with the participants. The questionnaire was distributed to the target students. They were asked to read the instructions provided in the questionnaire carefully. Participants were allowed to take their own time to complete the questionnaire. Participation in this study was voluntary, and

participants were not paid. Scoring for all the tools mentioned above was done according to the manual. This study used a Correlation design, and the obtained data were analysed using correlation, regression and mediational analysis.

Results

To examine the relationship between mindflow, self-compassion, and well-being, the correlation was performed, and the obtained results are reported in Table 1

Table 1 Result of Correlational analysis (N=201)

Variable	Mean	SD	Mind flow	Self-compassion	Well-being
Mindflow	86.41	12.26	1	.269**	.399**
Self-compassion	86.27	10.14		1	.408**
Well-being	198.37	18.30			1

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

The analysis of the data, as presented in Table 1, indicates that mindflow is significantly positively correlated with self-compassion ($r = 0.269$, $p < 0.01$) and well-being ($r = 0.399$, $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, a significant positive correlation was observed between self-compassion and well-being ($r = 0.408$, $p < 0.01$). These results suggest that higher levels of mindflow are associated with self-compassion and enhanced well-being. Similarly, individuals with higher self-compassion tend to report higher levels of well-being.

Multiple regression analysis was performed to examine the causal relationships between mindflow, self-compassion, and psychological well-being. In this analysis, mindflow and self-compassion served as predictor variables, while well-being was used as a criterion variable. The results of the regression analysis are detailed in Table 2.

The analysis revealed that mindflow ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.466$, $p < 0.01$) and self-compassion ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.584$, $p < 0.01$) are significantly positively associated with well-being. These findings indicate that higher levels of mindflow and self-compassion are predictive of well-being among adolescents. Notably, self-compassion emerged as a more powerful predictor of well-being compared to mindflow, suggesting that self-compassion plays a crucial role in enhancing psychological well-being in this population.

Table 2 Result of multiple regression analysis

Predictor variable	Criterion variable Well-being
Mindflow	.466**
Self-compassion	.584**
R	.507
R Square	.257
F	34.86**

** $P < 0.01$

Results also explore that mindflow and self-compassion explain 25.3% of the total variance ($F=34.86$; $P < 0.01$) in predicting well-being among adolescents.

Mediational analysis to find the mediating role of self-compassion in association between mindflow and well-being

The results presented in Figure 1 indicate a significant total positive effect of mindflow on well-being ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.59$, $p < 0.001$). Further analysis revealed that mindflow has a significant positive effect on self-compassion ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.22$, $p < 0.001$), designated as 'path-a' in the mediation model. Additionally, self-compassion has a significant positive effect on well-being ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.73$, $p < 0.001$), referred to as 'path-b'. Both paths were found to be statistically significant (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

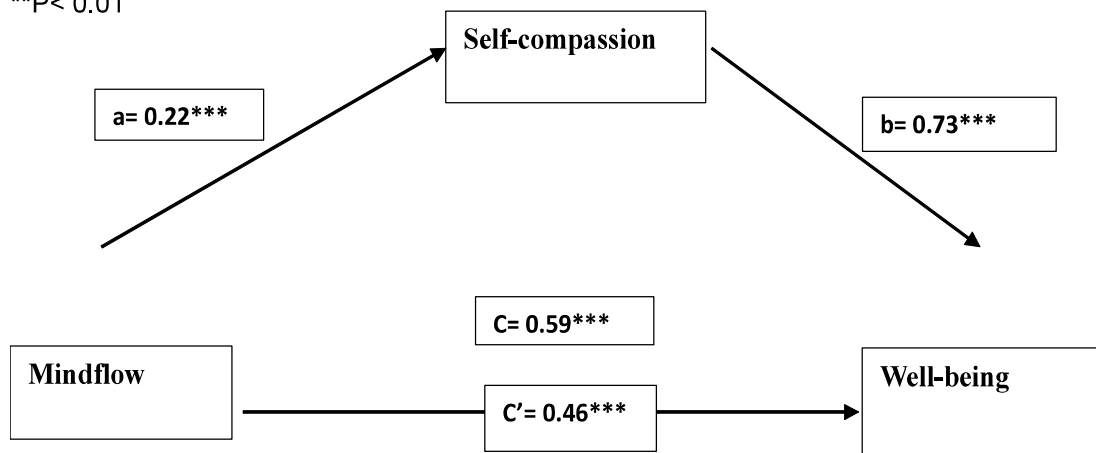


Figure 1: Indirect effect of mindflow on well-being through self-compassion

Note *** $p < .001$

When both mindflow and self-compassion were included in the regression model, the regression weight of mindflow on well-being was reduced ($\hat{\alpha} = 0.46$, $p < 0.001$), satisfying the criteria for partial mediation. The Sobel test (Sobel, 1982) confirmed that the indirect effect was statistically significant ($z = 3.3$,

standard error = 0.04, $p < 0.001$), indicating that self-compassion significantly mediates the relationship between mindflow and well-being.

These findings demonstrate that self-compassion partially mediates the effect of mindflow on well-being, highlighting its crucial

role in this relationship. Thus, while mindflow directly contributes to well-being, its impact is significantly enhanced through the mechanism of self-compassion.

Discussion

The present study aimed to examine the mediating role of self-compassion in the relationship between mindflow and well-being among adolescents. The findings from the multiple regression and mediation analyses offer valuable insights into these relationships, providing important implications for interventions focused on adolescent well-being.

Firstly, our findings suggest that both mindflow and self-compassion are positively linked to well-being. This supports existing research indicating that engaging in enjoyable activities (mindflow) and having a compassionate attitude toward oneself (self-compassion) are key factors in enhancing psychological well-being (Baer, Lykins, & Peters, 2012; Bishop et al., 2004; Breines & Chen, 2012). These links imply that adolescents who often experience flow states and practice self-compassion are more likely to report higher levels of well-being.

The regression analysis further confirmed that mindflow and self-compassion are important predictors of well-being, with self-compassion emerging as a stronger predictor (Kumar & Singh, 2023). This suggests that while both constructs matter, fostering self-compassion might provide more significant benefits for adolescent well-being. The strong positive correlation between self-compassion and well-being highlights the importance of self-compassion as a key component of mental health and resilience during adolescence (Wong & Mak, 2013; Heath et al., 2017). This finding emphasizes the potential of self-compassion as an important focus for interventions aimed at improving adolescent well-being.

The mediation analysis provided deeper insights into the mechanisms underlying these relationships. The results showed that self-compassion partially mediates the relationship between mindflow and well-being. Specifically, mindflow was found to positively influence self-compassion, which in turn, positively impacted well-being (Campos et al., 2016; Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011). The reduction in the direct effect of mindflow on well-being when self-compassion was included in the model indicates that self-compassion serves as an important pathway through which mindflow enhances well-being (Baer, Lykins, & Peters, 2012; Keng, Smoski, Robins, Ekblad, & Brantley, 2011; Kuyken et al., 2010). The Sobel test confirmed the significance of this indirect effect, reinforcing the mediating role of self-compassion.

In conclusion, this study provides evidence that self-compassion partially mediates the relationship between mindflow and well-being among adolescents. Both mindflow and self-compassion are significant predictors of well-being, with self-compassion being the more powerful predictor. These findings highlight the synergistic effects of mindflow and self-compassion, suggesting that interventions aimed at enhancing both could lead to significant improvements in adolescent well-being.

Implications and Limitations

These findings have important implications for interventions aimed at improving adolescent well-being. Programs that promote activities fostering mindflow, along with strategies to enhance self-compassion, could be particularly effective. School administration and mental health professionals might consider integrating practices such as mindfulness, self-compassion exercises, and activities that encourage deep engagement and enjoyment. Such interventions could help

adolescents develop the skills and attitudes necessary to enhance their well-being.

This study is limited by its narrow age range (16-18), socio-economic status, and school type, and reliance on self-reported measures that are prone to bias. Therefore, the findings of this paper cannot be generalized to the broader adolescent population. Future research should use diverse samples and longitudinal designs to understand developmental and contextual differences better.

Future directions

Future research should further explore these relationships in diverse populations and investigate additional mediators and moderators to develop a more complete understanding of the factors that influence adolescent well-being. Grasping these dynamics is essential for creating effective strategies to support adolescents' mental health and resilience across different cultural contexts.

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