

To Present a Model of Psychological Well-Being based on the Components of Psychological Capital and Cognitive Flexibility by Mediating role of Mindfulness

Article info

Article Type:

Original Research

Authors:

Asghar MirMehrabani,¹
Abotaleb Seadatee Shamir^{2*},
Elahe Mehdi³,

Article Cite:

MirMehrabani A, Seadatee Shamir A, Mehdi E. To Present a Model of Psychological Well-Being based on the Components of Psychological Capital and Cognitive Flexibility by Mediating role of Mindfulness. Curriculum Research, 2022;2(3): 42-54

Article History:

Received: 2022/01/03

Accepted: 2022/05/14

Published: 2022/06/21

Affiliations:

1. M.A of Personality Psychology, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Literature, Humanities and Social, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran (Corresponding Author) seadatee@srbiau.ac.ir.
3. M.A of Personality Psychology, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to present a model of psychological well-being based on the components of psychological capital and psychological flexibility by mediating role of mindfulness.

Methodology: This study is a descriptive research and subjects are composed of 350 masters' students of psychology from Islamic Azad University in Tehran that are selected using 'stratified random sampling proportional to size' method. In this method, from each unit of the university, a sample was selected independently and proportional to size of that unit. The participants responded to psychological well-being questionnaire (Ryff, 1989), psychological capital questionnaire (Luthans et al, 2007), Acceptance and action Inventory (Bond et al, 2011) and Mindfulness Questionnaire (Buchheld et al, 2006). Data are analyzed using path analysis through LISERL 8.8.

Finding: The results show that cognitive flexibility, hope, optimism, self-efficacy, resiliency and mindfulness directly predict psychological well-being ($P < 0.01$), and on the other hand, cognitive flexibility, hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resiliency indirectly predict psychological well-being by mediating role of mindfulness ($P < 0.01$).

Conclusion: So a program can be developed to enhance cognitive flexibility and components of psychological capital and mindfulness, through which students' level of psychological well-being would be improved.

This study was applied in terms of objective and combined.

Keywords: Psychological Well-being, Cognitive Flexibility, Psychological Capital, Mindfulness.

Introduction

At the beginning, psychology was mainly focused on negative emotions than positive ones and more scientific texts were published about suffering not pleasure (Ünüböl et al, 2018). It was until recently that positive psychology attracted the researchers (Fathi-Ashtiani & Sheikholeslami, 2019). Positive psychology focuses on abilities and what people have, and believes that psychology should seek to improve level of personal life and activate the intrinsic talents of each person (Roncaglia, 2017). Therefore, positive psychology deals with the positive aspects of human life and tries to pave the path for presence of these elements in human life with a scientific and practical view (Smith et al, 2020). In fact, in positive psychology, the emphasis is placed more on recognition and improvement of human positive aspects and strengths, not on mental deficiencies, behavioral deficit or the ways to treat them (Oravec et al, 2020; Rabenu, Yaniv & Elizur, 2016).

One of the main concepts in positive psychology, proposed by ryff et al (1996) is psychological well-being (Lomas et al, 2017). Mental health models combine three forms of emotional well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being to provide an all-inclusive concept of well-being, involving both emotional and applied dimensions of mental health (Poots & Cassidy, 2020). World health organization (WHO) defined psychological well-being as a state of complete mental, physical and social well-being and not merely absence of disease (Imani et al, 2017). Psychological well-being means ability of finding out all individual's talents and it has 6 components: Autonomy (sense of competency and having ability to manage the surrounding environment), Personal growth (having steady growth), Positive relations with others (having intimate relationships), Purpose in life (having a purpose and finding out the meaning in life), Self-acceptance (having positive attitude toward your own life) and Environmental mastery (ability to select and create an appropriate environment) (Oravec et al, 2020; Ryff et al, 1996).

A construct in positive psychology which affects sense of psychological well-being in person is cognitive flexibility (Zhang et al, 2020; Khazir, 2018). This construct, attracted the researchers for about four decades, represents a unique function, dominant trait or general cognitive ability which allows the person to accept multiple ideas, change his cognition flexibly and respond with normal patterns in the event of environmental changes (Behrouzi et al, 2018). Overall, the main part of operating definition of cognitive flexibility is the ability to change individual's cognitive complex in order to adapt with environmental changes (Fathi-Ashtiani & Sheikholeslami, 2019). Some authors has defined cognitive flexibility as degree of individual's evaluation on controllability of conditions, so that this evaluation is changed in different situations (Marshall & Brockman, 2016). Cognitive flexibility may adapt behavior and thought to changing environmental conditions (Khazir, 2018). So far a number of studies are conducted on the relationship between cognitive flexibility and psychological well-being, including work of Marshall & Brockman, (2016). They showed that there was a significant positive relationship between cognitive flexibility, self-compassion and emotional well-being and this relationship support the outcomes of 3rd- wave models of therapy. Fathi-Ashtiani & Sheikholeslami (2019) suggested there was a significant relationship between attachment style and cognitive flexibility with psychological well-being, and that attachment style mediated with cognitive flexibility was a stronger predictor of psychological well-being. In another study, Khazir (2018) found that flexibility and logical decision making had positive significant correlation with mental well-being and that dependent and avoidant decision making had negative significant correlation with mental well-being. Moreover, Asghari Ebrahim Abad & Mamizade Ojour (2018) showed that psychological flexibility and psychological hardiness could predict 51% of changes in psychological well-being. Behrouzi et al (2018) showed that there was significant positive relationship between psychological flexibility and perfectionist effort with mental well-being, and significant negative relationship between self-concealment and mental well-being, and these variables would be able to explain 77% of variance in mental well-being.

Another construct in positive psychology that affects psychological well-being in a person is psychological capital (Gautam et al, 2019). This conceptual construct is a subset of positive psychology which leads to one's belief in his own abilities to attain success in performing determined tasks, to create positive attributes about current and future situations, to have perseverance in following goals and pursuit of required solutions

to reach success, tolerate the problems, come back to ordinary level of function and even go beyond it to reach successes (Okun, 2020; Howard, 2017). It seems that individuals with positive attitude toward the world and themselves can walk away easily from unpleasant events (Hashemi Nosrat Abad, Babapur Kheyroddin & Bahadori Khosroshahi, 2012). Luthans (1999) considers psychological capital a combined interrelated construct, composed of four cognitive-perceptual components: Hope, Optimism, Self-efficacy and Resiliency. In an interactive and evaluative process, these components give meaning to one's life, making him persistent in changing the stressful occasions, and make him ready to go into action and ensure his resistance in reaching goals (Karimi Mazidi, Rezazadeh Barfouei & Mortazavi, 2013). Luthans (1999) has stated that psychological well-being is in the first place affected by individual factors, in which his emphasis is placed on role of psychological capital (Chawla & Sharma, 2019; Howard, 2017). So far many studies have been conducted on the relationship between psychological capital and psychological well-being, including work of Poots & Cassidy (2020) who indicated that there was a significant reverse relationship between academic expectation and psychological well-being of students, with the variables of self-compassionate, psychological capital and social support played the mediating role in this relationship. Chawla & Sharma (2019) suggested that psychological capital would play a significant role in predicting the psychological well-being of women. Furthermore, Gautam et al (2019) showed the significant relationship between psychological capital and psychological well-being and its components. Rabenu, Yaniv & Elizur (2016) indicated that psychological capital had a significant, positive and strong relationship with psychological well-being and employees' performance. Bahadorikhosroshahi, Hashemi Nosrat abad, & Babapur Kheyroddin (2014) revealed that social capital and its components could predict changes of psychological well-being significantly. They, in another study in 2012 suggested the significant relationship between psychological capital and its components with psychological well-being. And finally, Karimi Mazidi, Rezazadeh Barfouei & Mortazavi (2013) confirmed the predictability of psychological well-being by psychological capital.

Many spiritual and philosophical traditions have stressed on importance of quality of consciousness on maintenance and promotion of well-being (Zollars, Poirier & Pailden, 2019). Meanwhile, a most-discussed consciousness-related construct which has effect on psychological well-being is mindfulness (Firth et al, 2019). In general, mindfulness is defined as a form of non-judgmental and non-reactive awareness toward experiences of present moment which includes all emotions, cognitions, physical senses and external stimuli, including what can be heard, observed and tasted (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Mikulas (2004) defines mindfulness an extensive consciousness which is pre-conceptual and pre-perceptual and involves awareness of mental and sensory processes and contents, from a moment to another (Alipoor & Zeqeibi Ghannad, 2017; Delghandi, 2017; Abedi, 2017). Baer et al (2006) have indentified five facets for mindfulness, including observing (to notice the internal and external experiences, such as thoughts, emotions and physical sensations), describing (one's ability to labels inner experiences), acting with awareness (to notice and aware from present moment, instead of absent-mindedness and occupying oneself with past and future thoughts), non-judging (adoption of nonjudgmental approach toward thoughts and feelings) and non-reactivity to inner experience (give opportunity to thoughts and emotions to come and go without struggling with or being affected by them) (Sadri Damirchi & Cheraghian, 2017; Lomas et al 2016). In past years, many authors have attempted to test this concept and its applications empirically, and it was emerged as an influential factor on health and well-being (Simo & Moraito, 2018). The results suggest that mindfulness can calm the mind through promotion of attention on one's own thoughts and feelings, and let the people to perceive the thoughts and events as they are, avoiding the critical judgment of them (Kappen, Karremans & Burk, 2019). Then, mindfulness helps the people let go of unconscious thoughts and unhealthy behaviors and improve the self-regulated behavior (Gordon, 2020). In this regard, Zollars, Poirier & Pailden (2019) indicated that an intervention based on mindfulness meditation had significant effect on being mindful, mental well-being and perceived stress. And Lomas et al (2017) predicted the positive significant relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being and the building blocks of psychological well-being. Kord and Mehdi Pour (2018) documented the positive significant relationship between mindfulness and perceived self-efficacy with mental well-being, with mindfulness and self-efficacy explain 17.2% and 27% of variance in psychological well-being, respectively. Alipoor & Zeqeibi Ghannad (2017) showed that mindfulness had

significant positive relationship with psychological well-being, strategic engagement regulation and self-esteem. Abedi & Khademi ashkzari (2017) indicated that mindfulness-based cognitive education was significantly related with all aspects of students' psychological well-being. Moreover, Dasht Gard, Meschi & Bahrami Hidji (2015) proved the significant positive link between mindfulness and mental orientation with psychological well-being. And Ahmadvand, Heidarinasab & Shoeiri (2012) showed that mindfulness would predict well-being strongly and could explain more than 42% of variance in psychological well-being.

Furthermore, mindfulness may be considered a learnable skill, which in long-term, its positive effects and applications have been confirmed in different clinical and non-clinical situations, including psychological flexibility (Kazemi et al, 2019; Goudarzi et al, 2018; Mousavienejad et al, 2018; Shojaee & Soltanizade, 2017; Mousavi Lir, 2017) and psychological capital (Roche & Haar, 2019; Shojaeyan & Abolmaali, 2016; Roche, Haar & Luthans, 2014; Naderi Pour, 2017; Ghasemi-Jobaneh et al, 2016).

According to what mentioned above, mental well-being has been one of the essential concerns in human society and now it is, as well (Ünüböl et al, 2018), such that huge costs spent for provision of it each year (Smith et al, 2018). Due to its individual and collective importance, this phenomenon has attracted theoreticians and policymakers in the field of psychology, in particular, health psychology and it led to numerous explanations for the factors involved in it (Lomas et al, 2017), and in explanation of this psychological concept, the focus is more placed on the role of individual and social factors (Poots & Cassidy, 2020). As mental health has recognized one of the basic needs of citizens in 21st century, and in light of WHO's appeal on countries to support mental health services (Fathi-Ashtiani & Sheikholeslami, 2019), and according to the fact being healthy mentally entails identification of the factors involved in it, the present study aims to present a model for measuring psychological well-being based on the components of psychological capital and cognitive flexibility by the mediating role of mindfulness.

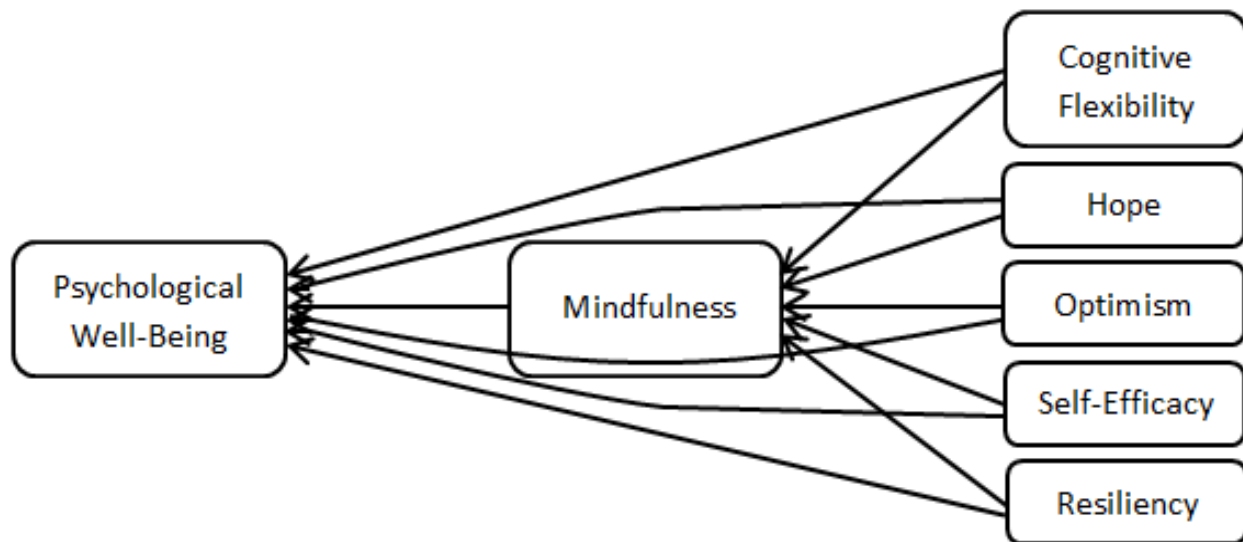


Figure 1. Proposed model of current study

Methodology

The present study is an applied research and the research method is a descriptive correlation based on structural equation modeling.

Participants

The statistical population of this study composed of masters' students of psychology who were studying in Islamic Azad University of Tehran in academic year of 2019-2020. The subjects were selected using 'stratified random sampling proportional to size' method. In this method, from each unit of university a sample was selected independently and proportional to size of that unit. Overall, 350 masters' students of psychology

were selected, who were studying in Islamic Azad University of Tehran in the academic year of 2019-2020 (53% female; 41% Married; 64% 30 years or older (M=34.83, SD=8.32)).

Measures

Ryff's Scale of Psychological Well-being- Short Form (RSPWB): The present questionnaire provides six factors of psychological well-being, including self-acceptance, positive relation with others, autonomy, purpose in life, personal growths and environment mastery. Developed by Ryff (1989), this questionnaire is composed of 18 questions with 5-point Likert scales (strongly disagree, disagree, so-so, agree and strongly agree). Ryff (1989) measured the reliability of the scale based on 0.78% Cronbach's alpha coefficient and as for validity of the scale, confirmatory analysis was used which fitness indices were GFI=0.91, AGFI=0.87, CFI=0.85, RMSEA=0.073.

Acceptance and action questionnaire (AAQ2): The present questionnaire aimed to consider cognitive flexibility without subscale. That developed by Bond, Hayes, Baer, Carpenter, Guenole, Orcutt and Zettle (2011). It is also composed of 7 questions with 5 point Likert scales (never, sometime, usually, often and always). Bond and et al (2011) measured the reliability of the scale based on 0.84% Cronbach's alpha coefficient and as for validity of the scale, confirmatory analysis was used which fitness indices were (GFI=0.90, AGFI=0.88, CFI=0.93, RMSEA=0.072).

Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ): The present questionnaire considers four psychological capital features, including hope, optimism, self-efficacy and resiliency. Developed by Luthans et al (2006), it is also composed of 24 questions with 5-point Likert scales (strongly disagree, disagree, so-so, agree and strongly agree). Luthans et al (2006) measured the reliability of the scale based on 0.88% Cronbach's alpha coefficient and as for validity of the scale, confirmatory analysis was used which fitness indices were GFI=0.92, AGFI=0.89, CFI=0.98, RMSEA=0.080.

Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory - Short Form (FMI-SF): The present questionnaire considers mindfulness without subscale. Developed by Walach, Buchheld, Buettenmuller, Kleinknecht and Schmidt (2006), it is also composed of 14 questions with 5-point Likert scales (never, sometime, usually, often and always). Walach and Others (2006) measured the reliability of the scale based on 0.92% Cronbach's alpha coefficient and as for validity of the scale, confirmatory analysis was used which fitness indices were GFI=0.91, AGFI=0.90, CFI=0.92, RMSEA=0.051.

Path analysis using LISREL software Version 8.8 was used to address the research questions.

The analyses were conducted using maximum-likelihood estimation. In order to assess the goodness of fit of the model, three indexes were used in addition to the chi-square test: the IFI (Incremental Fit Index), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), the NFI (Normed Fit Index), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) and AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index) for which values below 0.90 mean a poor fit and values equal to 1 indicate a perfect fit and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) which must present values close to 0.0. Browne and Cudeck (1993) have suggested that this value must be lower than 0.08. However, other authors argue that acceptable values of RMSEA must be lower than 0.05, with a narrow confidence interval. The acceptable ratio of Chi square on degree of freedom (χ^2/df) have to be less than 3 (Kline, 2011).

Findings

Means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha and correlation matrix of all variables of the proposed model are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach's alpha and Correlations of the variables

S. N.	Variable	M	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Psychological Wellbeing	3.24	0.54	0.86	-						
2	Cognitive Flexibility	3.56	0.81	0.96	0.86**	-					

3	Hope	3.78	0.96	0.94	0.54**	0.38**	-			
4	Optimism	3.65	0.86	0.89	0.47**	0.54**	0.84**	-		
5	Self-Efficacy	3.21	0.51	0.75	0.67**	0.69**	0.70**	0.57**	-	
6	Resiliency	3.83	0.93	0.91	0.81**	0.83**	0.86**	0.85**	0.69**	-
7	Mindfulness	3.19	0.75	0.97	0.79**	0.78**	0.67**	0.81**	0.57**	0.89**

Notes. n=350; * P<0.05; ** P<0.01

Results show that cognitive flexibility, components of psychological capital and mindfulness have a significant positive relationship with psychological well-being and the strongest correlation is found between Resiliency and Mindfulness (P<0.01).

Figure 2 presents the fitted model of psychological well-being prediction. The values are standardized on routes and parameters.

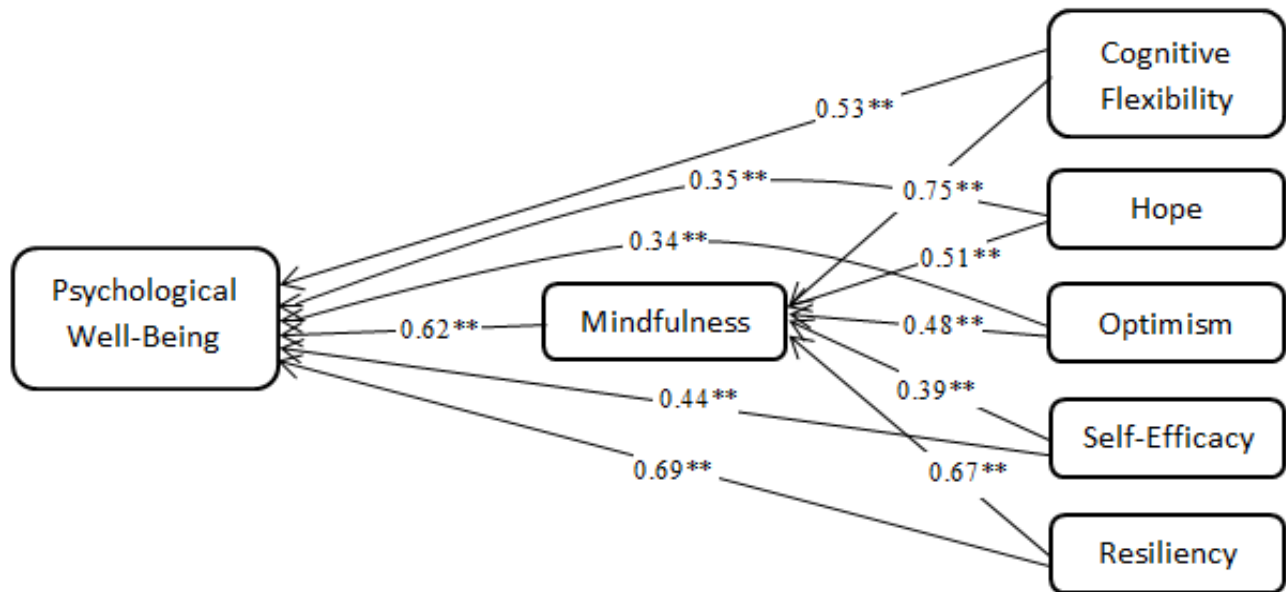


Figure 2. Fitted Model of psychological well-being prediction

According to Figure 2, the direct effect of cognitive flexibility, components of psychological capital and mindfulness on psychological well-being are confirmed in significance level of 0.01; moreover, the direct effect of cognitive flexibility and components of psychological capital on mindfulness are meaningful at the significance level of 0.01. Therefore, mindfulness can be a mediator both on the relationship between cognitive flexibility and psychological well-being, and on the relationship between components of psychological capital and psychological well-being (P<0.01).

Table 2 presents Unstandardized and standardized coefficients, test statistics and Significance level in fitted model of psychological well-being prediction by details.

Table 2. Unstandardized and standardized coefficients, test statistics and Significance level of psychological well-being prediction

Variables			Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	C.R.	P-Value
S.N.	Predictor	Outcome	B	S.E.			
1	Flexibility	Well-being	0.25	0.07	0.53	3.34	**
2	Hope	Well-being	0.12	0.03	0.35	3.89	**
3	Optimism	Well-being	0.24	0.04	0.34	5.91	**
4	Self-Efficacy	Well-being	0.27	0.08	0.44	3.38	**
5	Resiliency	Well-being	0.36	0.07	0.69	4.98	**
6	Mindfulness	Well-being	0.16	0.05	0.62	3.17	**
7	Flexibility	Mindfulness	0.39	0.09	0.75	4.20	**
8	Hope	Mindfulness	0.40	0.11	0.51	3.54	**
9	Optimism	Mindfulness	0.33	0.09	0.48	3.65	**
10	Self-Efficacy	Mindfulness	0.19	0.04	0.39	4.41	**
11	Resiliency	Mindfulness	0.32	0.06	0.67	5.18	**

Notes. n=350; * P<0.05; ** P<0.01

With regard to Table 2, the direct effect of two exogenous variables and endogenous variable on outcome variable is significant at 0.01 level, and the indirect effect of two exogenous variables on outcome variable mediated with mindfulness is significant at 0.01 level.

Table 3 also depicts goodness of fit indices of model in an optimum level.

Table 3. Indices of fitted Model

Goodness of Fit Index	Value	Acceptable Threshold Value
CMIN	4359.81	-
DF (Degrees of Freedom)	1621	-
P-Value	***	-
CMIN/DF	2.69	Good if < 3
IFI (Incremental Fit Index)	0.92	Good if ≥ 0.9
TLI (Tucker-Lewis Index)	0.91	Good if ≥ 0.9
NFI (Normed Fit Index)	0.92	Good if ≥ 0.9
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	0.90	Good if ≥ 0.9
GFI (Goodness of Fit Index)	0.91	Good if ≥ 0.9
AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index)	0.89	Good if ≥ 0.9
RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)	0.076	Good if < 0.08

Notes. n=350; * P<0.05; ** P<0.01; *** P<0.001

Table 3 shows fitted model of psychological well-being prediction along with goodness of fit indices. Table 4 presents direct, indirect and total effect efficiencies, defined variance and level of significance between variables.

Table 4. Direct, indirect and whole model standard coefficients

S.N.	Path			Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
	Predictor	Mediator	Outcome			
1	Flexibility	Mindfulness	Well-being	0.53**	0.45**	0.98**
2	Hope	Mindfulness	Well-being	0.35**	0.32**	0.67**
3	Optimism	Mindfulness	Well-being	0.34**	0.30**	0.64**
4	Self-Efficacy	Mindfulness	Well-being	0.44**	0.24**	0.68**
5	Resiliency	Mindfulness	Well-being	0.69**	0.42**	1.11**

Notes. n=350; * P<0.05; ** P<0.01

As Table 4 shows, the exogenous variable of cognitive flexibility ($\beta=0.53$) plays a direct significant role on psychological well-being. Also, there are a meaningful and indirect effect of cognitive flexibility on psychological well-being by mediating role of mindfulness ($\beta=0.45$). So total effect of cognitive flexibility on psychological well-being is meaningful at 0.01 level ($\beta=0.98$). The exogenous variable of hope ($\beta=0.35$) plays a direct significant role on psychological well-being. Also for this variable, there is a meaningful and indirect effect on psychological well-being mediated by mindfulness ($\beta=0.32$). Therefore, total effect of cognitive flexibility on psychological well-being is meaningful at 0.01 level ($\beta=0.67$). The exogenous variable of optimism ($\beta=0.34$) has a direct significant effect on psychological well-being. Also there is a meaningful and indirect effect of optimism on psychological well-being by mediating role of mindfulness ($\beta=0.30$). Therefore, total effect of cognitive flexibility on psychological well-being is meaningful at 0.01 level ($\beta=0.64$). The exogenous variable of self-efficacy ($\beta=0.44$) plays a direct significant role on psychological well-being. Also, there is a meaningful and indirect effect of self-efficacy on psychological well-being mediated by mindfulness ($\beta=0.24$). Then, total effect of cognitive flexibility on psychological well-being is meaningful at 0.01 level ($\beta=0.68$). And finally, exogenous variable of resiliency ($\beta=0.69$) has a direct significant effect on psychological well-being. Also there is a meaningful and indirect effect of resiliency on psychological well-being by mediating role of mindfulness ($\beta=0.42$). Therefore, total effect of cognitive flexibility on psychological well-being is meaningful at 0.01 level ($\beta=1.11$).

Discussion

Students constitute the dynamic part of every society and the mental health of this group will largely lead to mental health of other social groups (Babakhani, 2019). It seems that individual differences play important role in tendency of people to experience different levels of mental health and psychological well-being (Oravec et al, 2020; Naderi pour, 2017). One psychological feature with great importance in this regard, is psychological flexibility, referred to as the ability to engage in effective action, according to one's personal values that makes the person to act effectively in presence of intervening thoughts, feelings and physical expressions (Goudarzi et al, 2018).

The results of present study suggest that cognitive flexibility predicts the psychological well-being significantly. It means that higher cognitive flexibility corresponds to higher psychological well-being of students. To explain this interaction, it is worthwhile to say that psychologically flexible persons never avoid the stress in their lives, but consider the stressors as an opportunity for their growth and maturity. The more flexible the person, he or she can manage the hard situations as if they are under control and in the face of harsh events or behaviors, he or she can take some alternatives into consideration (Zmigrod et al, 2019). Such person can think to alternative solutions in difficult moments and as result, his/her capacity in confrontation, adaptation and recovery from stress is higher than other people. The people with ability of flexible thinking use the alternative justification, rebuild their own mental framework positively, and accept challenging situations or stressful events. They enjoy more well-being psychologically compared to the inflexible persons. The profile of flexible persons is such that they accept reality; deeply believe that life is meaningful; and have ability for improvement and meaningful adaptation to the changing life; they can realize their self-actualization, and these traits can help their well-being. People with psychological well-being,

compared to the people with lack of this trait, experience the negative events flexibly and realistically; in their view, the problems are provisional and limited.

Moreover, the results confirm that psychological capital and its components explain the psychological well-being significantly. It means that the increased level of psychological capital and its components is accompanied with increased level of psychological well-being of students. In fact, psychological capital may be used to treat the people with mental disorders, to increase rate of life expectancy and endeavor to improve level of life in healthy people, to increase level of psychological well-being in individuals, to increase mental resistance and strengthen the immune system against stress and to prevent against diseases in order to promote the mental well-being. To explain this finding, it should be noted that lack of social bonds and social networks through negative mental states lead to development of mental disorders, coming up with the reduced psychological well-being in the person. Lack of relationship with friends and relatives, lack of participation in voluntary associations, lack of social relations with other people, which are consequences of psychological capital in a person negatively impact mental health (Howard, 2017). Resiliency is a promising concept which can be used in the process of developing strategies for stressful factors prevention. When resiliency is improved, the person could resist against stressful factors and those events which would be resulted in numerous psychological problems, then such person experiences higher level of psychological well-being (Zhang et al, 2020). One essential factor in persons' resiliency is their attitudes toward future. It seems that resiliency would bring about protective factors, resulting optimism toward events mentally and socially and at the end, the state of environment mastery is increased. It will lead to improved function and positive mental health in the future. Optimism as an accompanying factor with resiliency, identified as the main cognitive factor in adults, and moderates effect of stressful factors in the life. Optimistic persons predict the best likelihood in each event and it likely improves the power of immune system to defense in hard situations, making the person perceives more psychologically positive capacities. On the other hand, people with high level of self-efficacy and those who trust their abilities, are more likely to see the problems as the challenges to be dealt with. They attribute the positive events to their own abilities and believe that they are in control of their own life. Such persons can gain control over potential threats and manage the situations. As result, they can benefit the sense of psychological well-being (Jain & Desai, 2020). Another emotional factor which affects the psychological well-being is hope. Corresponding with self-confidence, hope is mental and confidence is behavioral. Hope energizes the person and call on his hidden talents. Hopeful people tend to use their own creative forces in improving how they can live the life and think that everything has a solution. Despite the conditions, they can choose to think hopefully and this makes the person adopt trustworthy behaviors, feeling well-being and life satisfaction.

Moreover, this study confirms the mediating role of mindfulness in the relationship between cognitive flexibility and components of psychological capital with psychological well-being. To explain this finding, it is worthwhile to note that mindfulness is a way of communicating with life, a way which can reduce physical pains, enrich the life and give meaning to it, and all is achieved by harmonization with experience of moment by moment and providing the direct attitude toward role of mind in creating the unnecessary concerns (Seagull, 2010). Application of mindfulness skills clarifies one's experiences and teaches him how to experience his life moment by moment. At the end, the negative psychological symptoms are reduced and positive psychological capacities are increased, in particular, psychological well-being (Zollars, Poirier & Pailden, 2019). Furthermore, the improvement of mindfulness skills will increase non-judgmental consciousness, that awareness in the realm of attention which cannot be described and is focused on present moment about an experience of a particular moment. In addition, it makes the person meet the experience and accept it (Simo & Moraito, 2018). Thus it allows the person to respond to situations reflectively rather than impulsively, enabling him in identification, management and resolving day to day conflicts (Gordon et al, 2020; Kappen Karremans & Burk, 2019). Moreover, as some problems resulted from inflexibility, such as lack of conscious presence lies in place and time (Goudarzi et al, 2018), then improvement of mindfulness skills using techniques such as focusing the attention on breathing and body and redirecting the awareness to here and now affects the cognitive system and data processing, taking a great step on increased attention

and awareness to thoughts, emotions and desires, and as a result, harmonizes adaptation behaviors and positive psychology states by improving the persons' abilities in managing social interactions.

5. Conclusion

The results of current study provides evidence that the proposed model of psychological capital' components and cognitive flexibility by mediating role of mindfulness can be predictor of students' psychological well-being and could be usefully applied to inform interventions, and in turn improves the well-being of the student populations.

6. Limitation and Future Avenues of Research

Before explicating the contributions of the current work to existing psychological theory and practices, some limitations must be considered. First, we employed a cross-sectional design which may raise possible issues concerning the validity of the empirical results. It is highly recommended for further research works to use longitudinal designs to reinforce the claim regarding the relationship between psychological capital' components and cognitive flexibility and academic students' psychological well-being mediated by mindfulness. Second, since this empirical research work relied on self-report data by the respondents to investigate the psychological benefits of psychological capital' components and cognitive flexibility, components of psychological capital and mindfulness, further studies can make use of other data collection methods like peer-reports and ratings given by instructors.

7. Implications of the Study

With limitations in the background, this study had contributed theoretically. The results confirmed the positive role of cognitive flexibility, psychological capital' components and mindfulness in the academic context with reference to students' well-being. These results are consistent with the psychological capital theory and similar findings were recorded in other countries (Demirtaş, 2020; Poots and Cassidy, 2020; Chawla and Sharma, 2019; Gautam, Ningthoujam and Singh, 2019; Malkoç and KesenMutlu, 2019; Roche and Haar, 2019; AsghariEbrahim Abad and MamizadeOjour, 2018; Lomas et al, 2017; Marshall and Brockman, 2016; Rabenu, Yaniv and Elizur, 2016; Roche, Haar, and Luthans, 2014; Moore and Malinowski, 2009). Also these results are consistent with the theory' s Pekrun, Goets, Titz and Perry (2002) and theory' s Malkoc (2011), according to this theory personality traits plays a significant role on psychological well-being, especially cognitive flexibility.

Our study outcomes had some practical contributions; we strongly recommend that instructors, counselors, management and administration must work collectively on conceptualizing, planning, and execution of educational and counseling activities/programs that aim cultivate students' sustainable psychological resources like cognitive flexibility, components of psychological capital and mindfulness to facilitate constructive psychological functioning in academics.

8. Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest.

Reference

- Abedi, F. & Khademi ashkzari, M. (2017). Mindfulness-based cognitive training on students' psychological well-being dimensions. *Journal of Psychological Studies*, 13(3): 111-128.
- Ahmadvand, Z., Heidarinasab, L. & Shoeiri, M. (2013). Prediction of Psychological Well –Being Based on the Comonents of Mindfulness. *QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY*, 1(2): 60-69.
- Alipoor, S. & Zeqeibi Ghannad, S. (2017). Investigation of the Relationship of Mindfulness with Psychological Well-being: The Role of Strategic Engagement Regulation and Self-Esteem. *Positive Psychology*, 3(2): 1-18.
- Asghari Ebrahim Abad, M. J. & Mamizade Ojour, M. (2018). An investigation in to the role of psychological flexibility and hardiness in explaining soldiers' psychological well-being. *Research in Clinical Psychology and Counseling*, 8(1): 37-51.
- Babakhani, V. (2019). The effectiveness of mindfulness skills training on adjustment and mental health of students. *Rooyesh-e-Ravanshenasi*, 8(5): 171-178.
- Baer, R. A., Smith, G. T., Hopkins, J., Krietemeyer, J. & Toney, L. (2006). Using self-report Assessmnt methods to Explore Facets of mindfulness. *Assessment*, 13 (1): 27-45.
- Bahadorikhosroshahi, J., Hashemi Nosrat abad, T. & Babapur Kheyroddin, J. (2015). The Relationship between Social Capital and Psychological Well-being among the Students of Tabriz University. *Social Cognition*, 3(2): 44-54.
- Behrouzi, N., Mansouri Neghad, R., Farzadi, F. & Yazdan Bakhsh, H. (2018). The relationship between Self-confident, psychological flexibility and perfectionist effort with mental well-being in students of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz. *Fourth International Conference on Community Empowerment in the Humanities and Cultural Studies*.
- Chawla, S. & Sharma, R. R. (2019). Enhancing Women's Well-Being: The Role of Psychological Capital and Perceived Gender Equity, With Social Support as a Moderator and Commitment as a Mediator. *Front. Psychol*, 10: 1377.
- Dasht Gard, M., Meschi, F. & Bahrami Hidji, M. (2015). The relationship between mindfulness, life orientation, religious orientation and psychological well-being in people with type 2 diabetes. *The first scientific-research conference on the psychology of educational sciences and the pathology of society*.
- Delghandi, A. (2018). The Relationship between Mindfulness and Psychological Well-being and Academic Burnout in High School Students. *The First National Conference of Modern Iranian and World Research in Psychology and Educational Sciences, Law and Social Sciences*.
- Demirtaş, A. S. (2020). Cognitive Flexibility and Mental Well-Being in Turkish Adolescents: The Mediating Role of Academic, Social and Emotional Self-Efficacy. *annals of psychology*. 36(1): 111-121.
- Fathi-Ashtiani, M. & Sheikholeslami, R. (2019). Relationship between Attachment Style and Psychological Well-Being: The Mediating Role of Cognitive Flexibility. *Journal of Psychology*, 23(2): 134-147.
- Firth, A. M., Cavallini, I., Sütterlin, S. & Lugo, R. G. (2019). Mindfulness and self-efficacy in pain perception, stress and academic performance, The influence of mindfulness on cognitive processes. *Psychology Research and Behavior Management*, 12: 565–574.
- Gautam, V., Ningthoujam, S. & Singh, T. (2019). Impact of Psychological Capital on Well-Being of Management Students. *Theoretical Economics Letters*, 9: 1246-1258.
- Ghasemi-Jobaneh, R., Zahrakar, K., Hamdami, M. & Karimi, K. (2016). Role of Spiritual Health and Mindfulness in Psychological Capital of Students of university of Guilan. *Rme*, 8(2): 27-36.
- Gordon, A., Young-Jones, A., Hayden, S., Fursa, S. & Hart, B. (2020). Dispositional mindfulness, perceived social support, and academic motivation: Exploring differences between Dutch and American students, *New Ideas in Psychology*, 56: 100744.
- Goudarzi, M., Ghasemi, N., Mirderikvand, F. & GholamreZaei, S. (2018). The Effectiveness of cognitive therapy based on mindfulness on positive affect, psychological flexibility and mind-awareness components of people With depression symptoms. *Shenakht Journal of Psychology and Psychiatry*, 5(5): 53-68.

- Hashemi Nosrat Abad, T., Babapur Kheyroddin, J. & Bahadori Khosroshahi, J. (2013). Role of Psychological Capital in Psychological wellbeing by considering the moderating effects of social capital. *Social Psychology Research*, 1(4): 123-144.
- Howard, M. C. (2017). The empirical distinction of core self-evaluations and psychological capital and the identification of negative core self-evaluations and negative psychological capital. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 114: 108–118.
- Imani, M., Karimi, J., Behbahani, M. & Omid, A. (2017). Role of mindfulness, psychological flexibility and integrative self-knowledge on psychological well-being among the university students. *Feyz*, 21(2): 170-177.
- Jain, S. A. & Desai, T. R. (2020). A study of adolescent's self-efficacy and general wellbeing. *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 8(1): 713-717.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2005). *Full Catastrophe Living: Using The Wisdom of Your Body and Mind To Face Stress, Pain, and Illness*. New York: Delta Trade Paperback.
- Kappen, G., Karremans, J. C. & Burk, W. J. (2019). Effects of a Short Online Mindfulness Intervention on Relationship Satisfaction and Partner Acceptance: the Moderating Role of Trait Mindfulness, Mindfulness.
- Karimi Mazidi, A., Rezazadeh Barfouei, H. & Mortazavi, S. (2013). The Effect of Employees' Psychological Capital on Their Emotional and Psychological Well-Being; Mediating Role of Positive Emotions, Stress, and Anxiety. *ORMR*, 3(3): 90-110.
- Kazemi, H. Ahmadi Dastjerdi, H. & Karimi, F. (1394). Investigating the contribution of mindfulness skills to reducing perceived stress and emotional intelligence. *Second International Conference on Psychology, Educational Sciences and Lifestyle*.
- Kazemi, H., shojaei, F., soltanizadeh, M. (2018). The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Intervention on Psychological Flexibility, Distress Tolerance, and Re-Experiencing the Trauma in Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. *MCS*, 4(4): 236-248.
- Kazemi, N., Dadashloo, F. & Seyf, F. S. (2019). Prediction of Psychological Well-Being and Resilience in Mothers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder Based on Cognitive Flexibility. *mejds*. 9(13): 1-7.
- Khazir, Z. (2018). The relationship between flexibility and decision-making styles with mental well-being in students. *Fourth National Conference on Knowledge and Technology of Educational Sciences. Social Studies and Psychology of Iran*.
- Kline, R. (2011). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling (3rd Ed.)*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Kord, B. & Mehdi pour, H. (2018). The relationship between mindfulness and perceived self-efficacy with subjective well-being among cancer patients in Tabriz hospitals. *IJNR*, 13(1): 11-17.
- Lomas, T., Medina, J. C., Ivztan, I., Rupperecht, S. & Eiroa-Orosa, F. J. (2017). The impact of mindfulness on the wellbeing and performance of educators: A systematic review of the empirical literature. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 61: 132–141.
- Luthans, F. (1999). The need for and meaning of positive organizational behavior. *Journal of organizational behavior*, 23: 695-706.
- Malkoç, A. & Kesen Mutlu, A. (2019). Mediating the Effect of Cognitive Flexibility in the Relationship between Psychological Well-Being and Self-Confidence: A Study on Turkish University Students. *International Journal of Higher Education*, 8(6): 278.
- Malkoc, A. (2011). Big five personality traits and coping style predict subjective wellbeing. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 12: 577-581.
- Marshall, E. J. & Brockman, R. (2016). The Relationships Between Psychological Flexibility, Self-Compassion, and Emotional Well-Being. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 30(1): 60-72.
- Moore, A. & Malinowski, P. (2009). Meditation, Mindfulness and Cognitive Flexibility. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 18(1): 176-86.

- Mousavi Lir, S. (2017). Investigating the relationship between psychological flexibility and mindfulness with the quality of life of mothers with mentally retarded children in Ahvaz. [Msc thesis]. Shahid Chamran University: Ahvaz.
- Mousavinejad, S. M., Sanagouye Moharer, G. & Zarban, A. (2018). The Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy on Cognitive Flexibility and Perceived Stress of Type II Diabetic patients. *Mejds*, 8(14): 10-19.
- Naderi pour, H. (2017). Explaining psychological well-being based on mindfulness, the need for cognition and psychological capital in the students of Bu Ali Sina University of Hamadan. [Msc thesis]. Bu Ali Sina University: Hamadan.
- Okun, O. (2020). The Positive Face of Human Capital, Psychological Capital, and Well-Being. *Journal of personality and social psychology*. 56(3): 407-427.
- Oravec, Z., Dirsmith, J., Heshmati, S., Vandekerckhove, J., & Brick, T. R. (2020). Psychological well-being and personality traits are associated with experiencing love in everyday life. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 153: 109620.
- Pekrun, R., Goets, T., Titz, W. & Perry, R. P. (2002). Academic emotions in students' selfregulated Learning and achievement: A program of qualitative and quantitative research. *Education Psychologist*, 37(2): 91-105.
- Poots, A. & Cassidy, T. (2020). Academic expectation, self-compassion, psychological capital, social support and student wellbeing. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 99: 101506.
- Rabenu, E., Yaniv, E. & Elizur, D. (2016). The Relationship between Psychological Capital, Coping with Stress, Well-Being, and Performance. *Current Psychology*, 36(4): 875-887.
- Roche, M. & Haar, J. (2019). Adding Mindfulness to Psychological Capital: A Two Study Investigation into why Mindfulness Matters. *Academy of Management*. 1.
- Roche, M., Haar, J. M. & Luthans, F. (2014). The role of mindfulness and psychological capital on the well-being of leaders. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 19(4): 476-489.
- Roncaglia, I. (2017). The Role of Wellbeing and Wellness: A Positive Psychological Model in Supporting Young People With ASCs. *Psychological Thought*, 10 (1): 217-226.
- Sadri Damirchi, E. & Cheraghian, H. (2017). Modeling of mindfulness and quality of sleep by the mediation of psychological well-being in high school students. *Journal of school psychology*, 6 (2): 100-123.
- Samouei, R. & Ghasemi, F. (2018). Role of mindfulness training on psychological capital of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences students. *Int J Educ Psychol Res*, 1: 293-297.
- Shojaeyan, M. & Abolmaali, Kh. (2016). Effectiveness of Cognitive Therapy-Based Mindfulness on Increasing the Psychological Capital of Veterans. *Iranian Journal of War & Public Health*, 8 (4): 195-201.
- Smith, B. W., Graham Ford, C., Erickson, K. & Guzman, A. (2020). The Effects of a Character Strength Focused Positive Psychology Course on Undergraduate Happiness and Well-Being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 7 (4): 351-365.
- Ünüböl, H., Sayar, G. H., Dolu, F. N. & Yıldız, E. (2018). Positive Psychology Course and Its effect on Well-Being, Social, and Emotional intelligence. *THE JOURNAL OF NEUROBEHAVIORAL SCIENCES*, 5(3): 156-164.
- Zhang, Z., Yan, G., Sun, C., & Saklofske, D. H. (2020). Who will adapt best in Antarctica? Resilience as mediator between past experiences in Antarctica and present well-being. *Personality and Individual Differences*: 109963.
- Zmigrod, L., Zmigrod, S., Rentfrow, P. J. & Robbins, T. W. (2019). The psychological roots of intellectual humility: The role of intelligence and cognitive flexibility. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 141, 200-208.
- Zollars, I., Poirier, T. I. & Palden, J. (2019). Effects of mindfulness meditation on mindfulness, mental well-being, and perceived stress. *Currents in Pharmacy Teaching and Learning*.