



Vaasan yliopisto
UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

Sakshi Shah

**Mindfulness and Stress in Project Management:
Evidence from Project Teams in Nepal**

School of Technology and Innovation
Master's in strategic project management

Vaasa 2026

UNIVERSITY OF VAASA**School of Technology and Innovation**

Author:	Sakshi Shah		
Title of the thesis:	Mindfulness and Stress in Project Management: Evidence from Project Teams in Nepal		
Degree:	Master of Industrial Engineering and Management		
Degree Programme:	Strategic Project Management		
Supervisor:	Jari Ruokolainen		
Year:	2026	Pages:	77

ABSTRACT:

The relationship between mindfulness, stress, and project performance among project team members in Nepal is analysed in this thesis. The study is conducted in project-based settings, where uncertain conditions, tight deadlines, complicated tasks, and limited resources are commonly associated with work. In these environments, stress is regularly experienced by professionals working on projects and may likely affect employee well-being, team collaboration, and overall project success. Simultaneously, mindfulness has been widely recognized as a cognitive resource that contributes to present-moment awareness, emotional stability, and flexible responses in stressful environments. While these concepts have been receiving attention, only a few empirical studies have been conducted in project-related contexts in developing countries, especially in Nepal.

The purpose of this study is to examine how mindfulness influences stress and project performance among project team members in Nepal. Along with this, whether stress acts as a mediator between mindfulness and project performance was analysed. The study is supported by theoretical frameworks related to mindfulness, stress, and project management, which describe how individuals react to challenging work environment, and how psychological capabilities may influence project performance. The study focuses on key concepts of mindfulness, stress, project performance, and project team members in project-oriented organizations.

A quantitative research method is adopted in this study. Data has been gathered via a structured questionnaire with open-ended questions distributed among project professionals who works in project team in different industries such as construction, information technology, manufacturing, and development-related work in Nepal. The data has been analysed using statistical methods, which include descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis. Ethical standards have been maintained throughout the process, and the respondents have been voluntary, anonymous, and confidential.

The findings of the study suggested that no statistically significant relationships are identified between mindfulness, stress, and project performance. In addition, stress does not act as a mediator between mindfulness and project performance. These findings suggest that the relationships found in existing literature may not be applicable in the same way in Nepalese project environments. It is suggested that project performance within these contexts may be more dependent on organizational design, administrative conditions, and external factors instead of relying on individual psychological factors.

This research adds to existing project management literature by presenting empirical evidence from the context of a developing country and by emphasizing the need of considering cultural and contextual factors when evaluating psychological factors in project contexts. Practical insights are provided in this study by proposing that organizations should not only focus on employee well-being strategies, but also on improving organizational processes, leadership approaches, communication, and support mechanisms to strengthen project outcomes.

KEYWORDS: Mindfulness, Stress, Project management, Project performance, Project teams, Nepal

Contents

1. Introduction	7
1.1 Background of the Study	7
1.2 Establishing the Research Gap	8
1.3 Research Aim and Question	9
1.4 Research Objectives	10
1.5 Significance of the Study	10
1.6 Research Method Overview	11
1.7 Structure of the Thesis	12
2 Literature Review	14
2.1 Definition and Concept of Mindfulness	14
2.2 Theoretical Perspectives on Mindfulness	15
2.2.1 Mindfulness Theory	15
2.2.2 Social Cognitive Theory	15
2.2.3 High Reliability Organization (HRO) Theory	16
2.3 Definition and Concept of Stress	16
2.4 Theoretical Perspectives on Stress	17
2.4.1 Transactional Stress Theory	17
2.4.2 Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model	18
2.4.3 Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory	19
2.4.4 Integrating the Theories in Project Contexts	20
2.5 Stress in Project Management Environments	21
2.6 Project Performance in Project Management	22
2.7 Project Teams in Project Management	22
2.8 Mindfulness as a Mechanism for Stress Reduction in the Project	23
2.9 Relationship Between Mindfulness, Stress, and Project Performance	24
2.10 Mediating Role of Stress	24
2.11 Mindfulness in Developing Country Contexts	25
2.12 Project Management in Nepal Context	26
2.13 Measurement of Mindfulness in Organizational and Project Settings	26

2.14 Measurement of Stress in Organizational and Project Contexts	27
2.15 Research Gap	28
2.16 Summary	28
2.17 Hypotheses Development	28
3 Research Methodology	30
3.1 Research Design	30
3.2 Research Approach and Conceptual Framework	31
3.3 Target Population	32
3.4 Sampling Technique	32
3.5 Data Collection Method	33
3.6 Measurement of Variables	33
3.6.1 Mindfulness	34
3.6.2 Stress	34
3.6.3 Project Performance	34
3.7 Data Preparation and Analysis Techniques	35
3.7.1 Data Cleaning and Preparation	35
3.7.2 Descriptive Statistics	36
3.7.3 Reliability Analysis	37
3.7.4 Correlation Analysis	37
3.7.5 Regression Analysis	38
3.7.6 Mediation Analysis	38
3.8 Ethical Considerations	39
3.9 Chapter Summary	39
4 Data Analysis and Results	41
4.1 Data Preparation and Cleaning	41
4.2 Descriptive Statistics	42
4.2.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents	42
4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables	43
4.3 Reliability Analysis	46
4.4 Correlation Analysis	47

4.5 Regression Analysis	48
4.5.1 Effect of Mindfulness on Project Performance	48
4.5.2 Combined Effect of Mindfulness and Stress on Project Performance	49
4.6 Mediation Analysis	51
4.7 Summary of Hypothesis Testing	52
5 Discussion and Conclusion	54
5.1 Introduction	54
5.2 Discussion of Findings	54
5.2.1 Mindfulness and Project Performance	56
5.2.2 Mindfulness and Stress	57
5.2.3 Stress and Project Performance	59
5.2.4 Mediation Effect of Stress	61
5.2.5 Why the Findings Differ from Previous Studies	62
5.3 Theoretical Implications	63
5.4 Practical Implications	64
5.5 Conclusion	65
5.6 Limitations of the Study	66
5.7 Recommendations for Future Research	67
References	69
Appendix Survey questionnaire	72

Figures

Figure 1. Conceptual Model	31
Figure 2. Distribution of mindfulness (Source: SPSS output, 2026).	44
Figure 3. Distribution of Stress (Source: SPSS output, 2026).	45
Figure 4. Distribution of Project Performance (Source: SPSS output, 2026).	45
Figure 5. Relationship between Mindfulness and Project Performance	50

Tables

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.	42
Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Variables.	43
Table 3. Reliability Analysis	46
Table 4. Correlation Matrix	47
Table 5. Collinearity Diagnostics	48
Table 6. Regression Results (Mindfulness to Performance)	49
Table 7. Regression Results (Mindfulness and Stress to Performance)	49
Table 8. Summary of Hypothesis Testing	52

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Project management plays a vital role in today's dynamic environment across various sectors such as construction, engineering, marketing, information technology, public sector, and development, by assisting organizations to carry out projects and reach their desired outcomes (Atkinson, 1999; Daniel et al., 2022). However, in many of the cases, project environments are being very challenging because they are combined with a lot of complicated tasks, unpredictable conditions, and urgent time demands (Mubarak et al., 2022; Daniel et al., 2023). In project environments, team members often face high-stressful conditions because they are required to complete their task within strict deadlines while coping with fluctuating stakeholders' need, lack of resources, and unstable work environments (Mubarak et al., 2022).

The stress that is experienced in project environments does not just impact individuals, but also it can also create a major challenge for organizations. When the employees experience a high level of stress, it creates a negative impact on their well-being, which lowers their job satisfaction and hinder their capacity to think clearly and interferes with their decision making and carrying out their responsibilities (Hobfoll, 1989; Hülshager et al., 2013). The presence of these factors in project environments determines how team member work together, communicate with each other, thereby affecting the projects overall success. Research shows that psychological distress has an adverse impact on project success because individuals who experience it need sufficient coping mechanisms to handle their situation (Mubarak et al., 2022).

In the context of developing countries such as Nepal, project teams often encounter greater difficulties, which are often shaped by social, economic, and organizational challenges that influence project performance (Khanal et al., 2020; Dhakal et al., 2023). The projects, such as construction and development, face multiple obstacles, which include limited resources, uncertainty in rules and regulations, and poor infrastructure.

The existing conditions can create an environment which increases the stress for project professionals, thus making it essential to establish effective stress management methods that can be used in such type of environments.

The concept of mindfulness is receiving growing interest from researchers studying management and organizational behaviour. Mindfulness describes a state of maintaining awareness in the present, where individuals pay attention to their thoughts, feelings, and experiences without judgment (Daniel et al., 2023). In recent years, mindfulness has gained attentions for its positive effects, which includes enhancing emotional management, boosting concentration, and more effective decision-making skills.

1.2 Establishing the Research Gap

Even though many studies have focused on mindfulness in areas like healthcare, psychology, and organizational behaviour, its use in project management is still limited and not widely studied (Good et al., 2016; Daniel et al., 2022). Existing studies suggest that mindfulness plays a role in enhancing project results, stronger team performance, and improving the ability to adjust in complex and changing environments (Daniel et al., 2022; Majeed et al., 2023).

Studies demonstrate that collective mindfulness helps teams maintain flexibility and handle unexpected situations in projects, particularly in difficult and uncertain conditions (Jiang et al., 2025). The research shows that team mindfulness leads to better project results because it helps teams work together better and leaders work more effectively (Majeed et al., 2023). The research results exist in developed countries and western nations, which create limitations for applying the findings to developing countries.

Furthermore, although some of the studies exist about the relationship between mindfulness and performance, only a few have focused on the role of mindfulness in managing stress in project environments (Hülshager et al., 2013; Watanabe et al., 2019).

Evidence from other fields besides project management indicates that mindfulness practices are effective in reducing stress and supporting mental health in the workplace (Watanabe et al., 2019). Despite existing research, there are very few empirical studies that combine mindfulness, stress, and project performance into a single model, especially in a project-based setting

The existing research about project teams in developing nations, particularly in Nepal, is extremely limited according to research evidence (Khanal et al., 2020; Dhakal et al., 2023). The study needs to determine if mindfulness will produce similar beneficial results as it does in other project settings because project professionals face challenges in these environments. The research shows a clear gap which exists because of both location and contextual research deficiencies.

1.3 Research Aim and Question

The main goal of this study is to examine the relationship between mindfulness and stress among project team members in Nepal and to determine its impact on their project work. The research investigates how workplace mindfulness functions as a psychological resource which reduces stress while increasing project success through its analysis of existing studies on workplace mindfulness in project-based settings.

Main Research Question:

- How does mindfulness influence stress and project performance among project team members in Nepal?

The research which investigates this main question uses a cross-sectional survey of project professionals in the construction, IT, and NGO sectors in Nepal.

1.4 Research Objectives

The study investigates this main research question through the following specific research objectives:

1. To evaluate the mindfulness level of project professionals among project team members in Nepal.
2. To evaluate the stress level faced by project team members.
3. To investigate the link between mindfulness and stress in project teams.
4. To analyse how stress affects the overall project performance.
5. To examine whether stress acts as a mediator between mindfulness and project performance.

The research objectives derive from existing evidence which demonstrates that mindfulness decreases stress while enhancing performance in organizational environments, and the research extends this understanding to project-based settings in developing countries.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research provides essential theoretical and practical insights into the field of project management.

The research addresses theoretical needs by increasing understanding of mindfulness studies which need to be conducted in project management settings outside of Western countries and in temporary project environments. The research investigates how mindfulness affects stress levels and project results in Nepalese project teams who work in uncertain conditions with limited resources. The research connects psychological concepts with organizational behaviour and project management principles to create new academic content that connects these fields.

From a practical perspective, the research enables project managers and organizational leaders, together with HR professionals, to understand how psychological factors, particularly mindfulness, impact stress and team performance. The study results demonstrate that organizations need to implement strategies which boost individual well-being, together with project success, because their work environments create intense stress. Organizations will implement mindfulness programs for their leadership development training, and team training, and employee support programs if research shows that mindfulness leads to stress reduction and enhanced performance.

Furthermore, the research generates important knowledge that benefits project-based organizations operating in Nepal and similar developing nations. The research shows that psychological resources serve as essential elements for project success because they help teams to achieve their goals yet protect individuals from the harmful effects of stress. The findings will help professional organizations together with donors and policymakers to identify how employee well-being impacts project performance outcomes.

Overall, the study leads to sustainable project management solutions that meet performance needs while maintaining the project teams' health.

1.6 Research Method Overview

The research uses a quantitative research method to analyse data from an open-ended online survey, which was conducted with project team members from Nepal. A structured questionnaire will be used to assess mindfulness and stress levels, and project performance together with demographic information and project-specific details. The study will modify existing mindfulness and stress assessment tools from existing literature to fit the project environment, which will measure project performance through perceived project goal achievement and schedule and budget compliance and quality, and stakeholder contentment according to established project management standards.

Data will be gathered through professional networks, social media platforms, alumni networks, and their personal connections. The study will obtain voluntary and anonymous participation from all respondents who will provide informed consent according to established ethical research requirements. It will use reliability analysis, correlation, and regression techniques to examine the relationships between mindfulness and stress and project performance while testing for potential mediation effects. The analytical method used in this study follows the same pattern as earlier quantitative studies, which investigated the relationship between mindfulness and project results within the organizational environment.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of five chapters which each serve to investigate different parts of the research study.

Chapter 1 introduces the study, outlining the research background, problem statement, research gap, and the overall aim and objective of the study. The chapter presents research questions while establishing the research's theoretical and practical importance to the fields of study.

Chapter 2 presents a comprehensive review of the existing literature related to mindfulness, stress, project management, and project teams. The chapter evaluates past research work plus fundamental theories and essential concepts, to create a theoretical basis that supports the study. The study identifies existing literature deficiencies while establishing a research framework that directs the investigation.

The research methodology that the study employs in Chapter 3 serves as the research methodology for this study. The study describes its research design through data collection methods, sampling approach, and variable measurement. The research process involved various statistical methods which included reliability analysis,

correlation analysis, and regression analysis to conduct data evaluation, together with ethical procedures that the study maintained throughout its duration.

The study presents its data analysis results in Chapter 4. The study includes descriptive statistics together with reliability testing and correlation and regression analyses results. The research results are used to interpret the findings which show how mindfulness and stress impact project performance.

The study's main discoveries receive their first explanation through Chapter 5, which shows how those discoveries apply to the study's results. The research findings lead to study conclusions which show new theoretical and practical knowledge while providing project management recommendations. The chapter presents study limitations together with recommendations for upcoming research studies to investigate.

2 Literature Review

The chapter presents a thorough assessment of existing research on mindfulness, stress, and project management, specifically examining project teams in developing countries such as Nepal. The chapter establishes the theoretical and empirical foundation for study by reviewing essential concepts, associated theories, and previously conducted research. The chapter starts with a definition of mindfulness and stress which explains their theoretical background. The research investigates how stress impacts project environments and subsequently assesses its effects on project performance and team dynamics. The chapter investigates how mindfulness and stress interact with project performance outcomes and shows how stress acts as a mediator in this relationship. The study examines both research gaps and the existing knowledge of the concepts before establishing the conceptual framework for investigation in Nepal and developing countries.

2.1 Definition and Concept of Mindfulness

Various disciplines have developed multiple definitions of mindfulness, which psychologists and organizational researchers use to study the concepts. The most accepted definition of mindfulness comes from Kabat-Zinn (2003), who defines it as the present moment awareness that arises through intentional non-judgmental present moment observation. Similarly, Brown and Ryan (2003) define mindfulness as a conscious awareness state that enables people to experience present moment situations.

Mindfulness functions as an organizational capability which shapes individual behaviour, perception, and decision-making because it exists beyond its psychological boundaries. Project mindfulness exists, according to Daniel et al. (2023), as an increased ability to observe and concentrate on all aspects of project activities and associated hazards and

stakeholder relationships. The definition demonstrated how mindfulness functions as a valuable resource across complex project management systems.

Mindfulness exists in two types: individual mindfulness and collective mindfulness, which represent different aspects of the practice. Individual mindfulness refers to the personal capacity to manage emotional states, while collective mindfulness describes team members who maintain shared team awareness to improve coordination while minimizing mistakes (Aanestad & Jensen, 2016). The project environment requires both individual and collective forms because individual knowledge leads to superior choices and collective mindfulness enables teams to reach their maximum potential.

2.2 Theoretical Perspectives on Mindfulness

The practice of mindfulness receives validation through various theoretical frameworks that demonstrate its impact on human behaviour and organizational effectiveness. The Mindfulness Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and High reliability Organization (HRO) Theory serve as primary theoretical frameworks.

2.2.1 Mindfulness Theory

It emphasizes awareness, attention, and acceptance as central components of effective functioning (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). The theory proposes that people who practice mindfulness develop better skills to manage their feelings and deal with difficult times.

2.2.2 Social Cognitive Theory

It highlights the role of self-regulation, observational learning, and cognitive processes in shaping behaviour (Bandura, 1986). Mindfulness enhances these processes by

increasing awareness and reducing automatic reactions, thereby improving behavioural outcomes.

2.2.3 High Reliability Organization (HRO) Theory

HRO Theory (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007) outlines how organizations working under risky environments maintain performance and prevent errors. HRO organizations function through collective mindfulness, which requires operational sensitivity and constant failure monitoring, and dedication to building resilience. Mindfulness practices enable project managers to detect errors, and prepare for potential challenges, and respond to changing project requirements in their work.

2.3 Definition and Concept of Stress

The study of stress represents an important topic in psychological research and its application within organizational behaviour studies. Stress emerges as a process when people believe their capacity to handle environmental demands falls short of their existing abilities, according to Lazarus and Folkman (1984). Hobfoll (1989) defines stress as a response that occurs when people experience danger or lose important things. The definition demonstrates that stress exists as a personal experience which depends on the available resources.

The researchers found that project management stress originates from various sources, which include time constraints, and high workload, and unpredictable situations, and the demands of project stakeholders (Mubarak et al., 2022). The situation creates constant pressure because people need to adapt to different situations and fulfil new expectations.

Stress can occur in different forms. People experience acute stress, which comes from facing urgent problems, and they face chronic stress, as a significant issue because it

results in burnout, and decreased productivity, and negative effects on both individual workers, and project teams (Hobfoll, 1989; Hülshager et al., 2013).

2.4 Theoretical Perspectives on Stress

Stress has received extensive study through three academic fields, which include psychological science, and organizational behaviour research, and management studies. The existing theoretical frameworks explain the process of stress development and the ways people handle stress and the impact of stress on their performance (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The existing theories demonstrate how project environments with their uncertainty, time constraints, and resource restriction create conditions which produce stress (Hobfoll, 1989; Demerouti et al., 2001). The following subsections present three fundamental theoretical frameworks which form the current understanding of stress: Transactional Stress Theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti et al., 2001), and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989).

2.4.1 Transactional Stress Theory

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) has discovered Transactional Stress Theory, which has become a fundamental framework for examining stress. The model defines stress as ongoing interaction between people and their surrounding environment, instead of an automatic response to outside events. The theory states that stress occurs when people believe that environmental demands surpass their ability to handle those demands.

The theory uses cognitive appraisal as its main element, which happens through two distinct stages of evaluation.

- Primary appraisal: Individuals consider whether a situation is irrelevant, neutral, or stressful. The threat of future danger, and difficulty, and loss of valuable assets becomes the source of all perceived stress.
- Secondary appraisal: Individuals assess their ability to cope with the situation, considering available resources such as skills, support, and time.

People experience stress when they perceive their coping abilities do not meet the requirements of the situation.

The theory fits project environments because project professionals face constant challenges from ambiguous requirements, and changing priorities, and unforeseen barriers. The situation requires ongoing evaluation and assessment of its status. The project team sees that they do not have enough time and resources to adjust to the changes, so they view the sudden scope change as a risk. Individuals with strong coping skills can see the difficulty as an achievable goal, whereas others may see the same difficult as a challenge.

The theory of Transactional stress explains how people develop coping mechanism which they use to address problems through problem-focused techniques and emotional-focused techniques. Mindfulness helps people develop adaptive coping skills because it increases their ability to notice things while preventing their mind from developing standard emotional responses which helps them deal with challenges.

2.4.2 Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model

The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) offers a complete structure which demonstrates how different job features affect worker stress levels and their overall mental health.

The model states that every job contains two primary types of job characteristics which define its work requirements.

Job Demands

These job components demand workers to perform continuous physical, and mental, and emotional exertion throughout their assigned duties. Project environments face common demands which includes high workload, tight deadlines, role ambiguity, stakeholder pressure, coordination complexity, and frequent changes in requirements. The risk of developing workplace strain, and employee exhaustion, and burnout increases when job requirements reach high levels.

Job Resources

These job elements enable workers to complete their work responsibilities while minimizing their work requirements and encouraging their professional development. Examples include autonomy, supervisor and team support, access to information, adequate tools and resources, and opportunities for learning. The presence of job resources protects workers from the adverse impacts of job demands while simultaneously fostering their work engagement.

The JD-R model applies to project environments because project work requires high demands together with limited resources, which exists in developing countries like Nepal. The stress level increases when demands of the situation surpass the available resources, which leads to reduced performance levels. Mindfulness helps people handle their emotions and stay focused while managing stressful situations, which allows them to better handle their high-stress environments.

2.4.3 Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, established by Hobfoll (1989), functions as an important framework for understanding stress. According to this theory, people make efforts to gain and sustain and defend their precious assets. The following types of resources exists for people to protect that are personal resources (self-esteem,

resilience, mindfulness), social resources (support from colleagues), material resources (tools, budget), and energy resources (time, mental energy).

Stress emerges when people face three different situations: when resources experience danger, when resources suffered a loss, and when people dedicated their resources but failed to receive proper outcomes. Project settings experience a resource shortage because workers must deal with multiple deadlines and financial limits while facing unanticipated issues. COR theory shows that continuous work under high-demand project situations results in burnout because people use their resources without proper time to recover.

The key concept in COR theory is the resource loss spiral. When people begin to lose their resources, they increase their chances of experiencing more losses, which creates a pattern that leads to increased stress and decreased productivity. People create resource gain spirals through their resource acquisitions, which lead to better resilience and greater performance. Mindfulness functions as a psychological resource in COR theory because it enables people to save their mental resources while keep their emotional stability and prevent their resources from getting used up. Mindfulness training helps people become more conscious, which leads them to stop their body from responding to stress and experience resource loss while they begin to gain resources.

2.4.4 Integrating the Theories in Project Contexts

The combination of these theories creates a thorough framework which researchers use to study stress in project environments. The project Demand Assessment Model shows how people assess their work obligations through the project demand evaluation method. The JD-R Model explains how demands and resources are balanced and how it influences stress and performance. The COR Theory demonstrates how resource loss results in extended periods of stress and fatigue.

The project environment in developing countries shows how their people become stressed because of uncertain conditions combined with limited resources which makes their work performance depend on psychological tool like mindfulness.

2.5 Stress in Project Management Environments

The nature of project management environments creates constant stress because these environments operate through changing conditions and short-term projects. The combination of multiple project stakeholders, and ongoing requirement changes, and fixed project deadlines creates conditions which produce extreme uncertainty and project pressure.

Project professionals encounter stress because they face three symptoms which include unclear role expectations, excessive work demands, and difficulties in team coordination (Mubarak et al., 2022). The stress factors gain greater importance in complex projects because errors can lead to major negative impacts. The nature of project work focuses people to juggle various responsibilities which results in cognitive overload that creates more stress while performance decreases.

Stress leads to emotional exhaustion, which decreases concentration and brings about burnout, and this affects decision-making abilities and productivity (Hobfoll, 1989). The team experiences of stress create barriers for people and drive them to conflict while they lose their ability to work together which endangers the success of the project (Hülshager et al., 2013).

The project experience of stress creates delays and budget overruns which result in lower project quality (Mubarak et al., 2022). The Yerkes-Dodson Law explains how moderate stress levels boost performance but excessive stress causes performance decline (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908). The project environments which exist today experience stress levels that surpass optimal limits thus organizations must implement efficient stress management procedures to achieve project success.

Impact of Stress on Project Teams

The project environments experience multiple levels of stress, which create important impacts throughout the entire project system. The individual experience of stress creates emotional exhaustion, which reduces concentration and decision-making ability, and this results in decreased productivity (Hobfoll, 1989). Stress creates communication problems, which lead to more conflicts, while teams lose their ability to work together, which is vital for their successful project implementation.

2.6 Project Performance in Project Management

Project performance represents a complex measurement that shows how well a project achieves its established goals. Project performance analysis has used the three-time entry method, which measures project performance and those three parameters are project duration, expenses, and measuring project success (Atkinson, 1999). Recent studies have shown that project assessment requires evaluation of broader criteria, which include stakeholder contentment, and team productivity, and long-term effects (Shenhar et al., 2001).

Project performance depends on both technical aspects and human behavioural elements, which include team dynamics, and leadership, and psychological health. The examination of stress and mindfulness demonstrates their vital role in project performance evaluation.

2.7 Project Teams in Project Management

Project teams are essential for project success because they execute tasks while solving problems and working toward project goals. Project teams are built with members who

bring different skills and experiences to the team which will improve their ability to develop new ideas through creative work.

The presence of diverse team members complicates project operations because it creates difficulties in three critical areas of work which include communication processes, conflict resolution methods and coordination. These members need to built trust between each other through their collaborative work while developing the common understanding which enables effective teamwork.

Mindfulness helps teams' function better because it improves their ability to communicate with each other while decreasing the chance of misunderstandings and helping them work together more effectively.

2.8 Mindfulness as a Mechanism for Stress Reduction in the Project

Mindfulness has been established as a successful method for decreasing stress while enhancing people's overall health. People who practice mindfulness develop better emotional control together with improved attention skills and stronger psychological resistance which helps them cope with difficult situations (Hülshager et al., 2013).

Mindfulness practice helps people learn new ways to control their success it interrupts their negative automatic thinking patterns which leads them to develop better ways of dealing with stress (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). The practice improves people ability to focus on important work because it helps them control their attention which protects them from stress-related distractions (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

Mindfulness exercises an essential function in project management environments because these workplaces experience constant high-pressure situations that combine multiple work demands with unpredictable conditions. The practice helps people handle challenges and decision-making through its ability to maintain their body equilibrium while they stay attentive and alert during high-stress situations. The practice of

mindfulness helps build effective coping abilities while it decreases their negative emotional experiences which resulted in reduced stress effects.

Mindfulness-based interventions demonstrate their effectiveness through empirical research which shows they decrease stress levels together with anxiety symptoms and burnout rates among employees (Watanabe et al., 2019). The findings prove that mindfulness functions as a useful method to relieve stress while it also boosts productivity in project management situations.

2.9 Relationship Between Mindfulness, Stress, and Project Performance

Mindfulness and stress show an interconnected relationship which influences project performance through various ways. Mindfulness affects work performance through its two types of effects which include direct and indirect pathways. People who practice mindfulness directly enhance their focus ability which leads to better decision-making and problem-solving performance. The practice leads to better performance outcomes because it helps people deal with stress.

The relationship can be explained through Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory because people develop their resource acquisition and protection behaviour to obtain and safeguard their valuable assets (Hobfoll, 1989). Stress causes people to lose their resources while mindfulness practice enables people to protect their resources and help their body system restore itself. People with strong mindfulness abilities can better control stress while they work in challenging project environments.

2.10 Mediating Role of Stress

Organizational research uses mediation to show how, independent variable creates a dependent variable effect through a third variable, which functions as a mediator. The

study examines stress as a mediating factor which connects mindfulness with project performance outcomes of research.

Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory provides theoretical evidence which demonstrates that people make efforts to maintain their current resources while increasing their resource capacity (Hobfoll, 1989). People lose their resources through stress, whereas mindfulness enables them to save resources and recover their lost resources.

Mindfulness training decreases stress levels which produce better results for project work. The link between these two variables develops through stress which occurs when people face challenging situations while dealing with their limited available resources.

2.11 Mindfulness in Developing Country Contexts

Researchers have studied mindfulness in Western workplaces extensively, yet developing nations still lack research on its application. Different cultural backgrounds and economic conditions together with institutional frameworks, create differences between societies which shape their ways of experiencing and practicing mindfulness activities.

The project environments of Nepal require organizations to work conditions which restrict their resources and enforce a hierarchical operational control system while facing different socio-economic obstacles. The various conditions in Nepal create a situation which leads to project professionals developing different stress levels together with distinct coping methods throughout their work.

Researchers have not conducted enough studies about how project work environments in developing countries do not have sufficient research about mindfulness practice. The research needs to identify specific environments which study how mindfulness functions as a stress management tool while enhancing project results through its application.

2.12 Project Management in Nepal Context

The project management field in Nepal faces obstacles which arise from its economic environment and institutional system and cultural traditions. The construction projects in Nepal face three major problems which include project delays, project costs exceeding budgets and project teams working at lower efficiency levels because of resource shortages and project teams facing coordination problems and regulatory obstacles (Khanal et al., 2020).

The structural challenges face two types of obstacles which include the social and cultural factors which create extra challenges. Nepalese organizations conduct their business activities through a hierarchical organizational system which creates a situation where employees must follow indirect communication methods and centralized authority processes to share information with superiors. The work environment requires employees to manage multiple responsibilities which creates a situation where they must meet high performance expectations which leads to increased stress levels among project team members.

The situation becomes more complex because individuals lack necessary resources and support systems which hampers their capability to deal with stress in an effective manner. Researchers have not studied how psychological elements including mindfulness exist within Nepalese project environments. The research needs to identify specific environments which study how mindfulness functions as a stress management tool while enhancing project results through its application.

2.13 Measurement of Mindfulness in Organizational and Project Settings

Mindfulness measurement requires validated instruments which include three authenticated assessments and two established tools.

- Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) assesses how often people experience mindful states (Brown and Ryan, 2003).
- Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) measures five mindfulness skills which include observing, describing, acting with awareness, non-judging, and non-reactivity (Baer et al., 2006).
- Workplace Mindfulness Scale measures how people practice mindfulness when doing their work (Dane & Brummel, 2014).
- Collective mindfulness Scales originate from HRO theory (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007).

The research project needs these tools because they help researchers define how to study mindfulness in their research projects.

2.14 Measurement of Stress in Organizational and Project Contexts

The most common method for measuring stress uses three established methods (Cohen et al., 1983; DeVellis, 2017).

- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) measures how people perceive unpredictable situations and their experience of excessive demands (Cohen et al., 1983).
- Occupational Stress Inventory assesses the various stress factors which occur in professional environments (DeVellis, 2017).
- Work Stress Questionnaire evaluates three work stress factors which include workload, role conflict and interpersonal stress (DeVellis, 2017).

The scarcity of project-specific stress measurement tools creates a methodological gap which demonstrates the urgent need for instruments that function in project settings.

2.15 Research Gap

The existing literature provides essential insights about mindfulness and stress and project management, yet several research gaps appear throughout the field (Daniel et al., 2022; Good et al., 2016). Project management research currently lacks studies which connect mindfulness with stress while most existing studies are conducted in Western settings (Hülshager et al., 2013; Watanabe et al., 2019; Daniel et al., 2022). Researchers need to investigate countries which are developing like Nepal, as the research area lacks empirical evidence. The research field requires more studies which examine how stress mediates the connection between mindfulness and project performance. The research project aims to fulfil these existing research voids through its investigation of substantiated research specific to project management.

2.16 Summary

The chapter summarized essential theoretical concepts and empirical research which investigates mindfulness and stress and project management. Mindfulness functions as an essential psychological resource which enables project managers to control their stress while boosting their work performance. The chapter presented the specific challenges which project management in Nepal faces while showing existing research holes which enable future research to develop in this area.

2.17 Hypotheses Development

Based on the literature review and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Mindfulness is negatively related to stress among project team members.

- H2: Mindfulness is positively related to project performance.
- H3: Stress is negatively related to project performance.
- H4: Stress mediates the relationship between mindfulness and project performance.

3 Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research approaches that have been used to examine how mindfulness and stress relate to project performance in project teams in Nepal. The section presents the stages of the research process, which includes research design, implementation, and its analysis, to ensure the research question and objective set in Chapter 1.

It begins with research design and research approach which further defines the target population and sampling method. The section then continues to the process of data collection method, variable measurements, and questionnaire creation. The chapter presents the procedures used to prepare data for analysis together with statistical analysis methods and ethical practices followed during the entire study.

The study applies quantitative research methods to study how mindfulness operates as a psychological resource which decreases stress levels while enhancing project results in project-based work settings. The chapters methodological decisions match the theoretical framework and research objectives, which were introduced in earlier chapters.

3.1 Research Design

The study applies a quantitative methodology to assess the links between mindfulness, stress, and project performance. These methods are relevant because it allows variables to be measured and hypotheses can be tested through statistical analysis (Creswell, 2014).

The research is based on three main variables, which are mindfulness (independent variable), stress (mediating variable), and project performance (Dependent variable).

A cross-sectional research design is used, where data collection is done at a single point of time (Bryman, 2016). In social science, this method is commonly used as it helps to explore the relationship between variables and understand the current views of participants (Bryman, 2016).

The study collects data using a survey-based approach, which ensures consistent collection from a large group of respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The use of a structured questionnaire helps to ensure consistency and allows comparison using statistical methods among participants (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.2 Research Approach and Conceptual Framework

The study adopts a deductive approach, where existing theories are used as a basis to develop the hypotheses and are tested through empirical data (Mark Saunders et al., 2019). This approach begins with theories, then developing the hypothesis, data collection and then testing it. The study relies on three main fundamental theories, which are mindfulness theory, stress theory, and project management literature.

A conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1 to demonstrate the relationship between mindfulness, stress, and their impact on project performance.

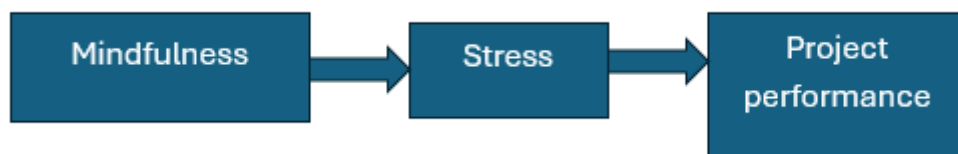


Figure 1. Conceptual Model

According to this model, mindfulness has direct and indirect effect on project performance. Specially, mindfulness lowers the stress by increasing emotional regulation and attentiveness. As the stress is reduced it increases focus, decision-making, and teamwork. Here, stress plays mediating role explaining how mindfulness impacts project performance.

This framework serves as a solid foundation for evaluating relationships among variables and reflects the research goals of the study.

3.3 Target Population

The target population for this study includes project professionals in project-based organizations in Nepal. Such an environment is defined by short-term work, well-defined objectives, time limitations, and restricted resources. Such settings often involve a high level of pressure and uncertainty, making them suitable for studying stress and mindfulness.

The participant in this study includes individuals who are involved in project work such as: project manager, engineers, site supervisor, IT project professional, NGO and development project staff, and team members. These are selected because they are directly involved in project and they have faced workload pressure, deadlines and teamwork. As a result, the help in understanding of how mindfulness, stress, and performance are related.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The study adopts a purposive sampling technique which means it is a non-probability method where participant is chosen based on criteria important to the study, rather than random selection (John W. Creswell, 2014).

The criteria are working in Nepal, having experience in project environments, and especially involvement in project-based work. The questionnaire was not shared publicly, rather it was directly sent to the various organization that has specific project teams which works on projects, and these includes construction companies, NGO, IT firms and other project-oriented organizations.

This method was used to improve the reliability of data, as the responses are collected from those individuals who matches the target population. To further ensure the data, the participants can only proceed if they meet the criteria that are included at the beginning of questionnaire.

3.5 Data Collection Method

The study gathers the data through a structured Google forms questionnaire, which is shared through direct contact with the organization and professional networks. Using an online questionnaire offers various advantage such as being simple to distribute, saves time, and automatic data recording (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

A simple, clear, and easy questionnaire is developed which requires approximately 5-8 minutes to complete. Short survey helps us to increase response rates and reduce fatigue (Uma Sekaran & Roger Bougie, 2016). A short definition of mindfulness is given at the beginning so that the participants can understand it as mindfulness can be interpreted in different ways by individuals. The study ensures voluntary participation and are informed about the research purpose before completing survey.

3.6 Measurement of Variables

The survey consists of four main part which includes demographic, mindfulness, stress, and project performance.

These variables are measured using five-point Likert scale, where

1= Strongly disagree

2= Disagree

3= Neutral

4= Agree

5= Strongly agree

In social science, Likert scales are widely used to assess attitudes and perceptions (Rensis Likert, 1932).

3.6.1 Mindfulness

The study measures mindfulness through items derived from Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

To fit the work and project environment, the questionnaire items are modified and simplified for clarity. The scale evaluates mindfulness through attention to task, awareness of thoughts, focus, reduced distraction, and conscious distraction.

3.6.2 Stress

The study measures stress through items derived from Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) (Cohen et al., 1983). The scale evaluates stress through pressure, time limitation and deadlines, emotional strain, difficulty in handling demands, stress arising from uncertainty and sudden changes.

3.6.3 Project Performance

The study measures project performance by using self-reported items based on project management literature. This scale includes efficiency in task, communication, teamwork, capacity to handle unexpected changes, and achievement of project objectives.

The variable highlights both functional and behavioural dimensions of project performance (Robert Atkinson, 1999).

3.7 Data Preparation and Analysis Techniques

After data collection is completed, the responses are organized and analysed to investigate the relationships between mindfulness, stress, and project performance.

This preparation and analysis are done in various multiple stage to ensure accuracy, reliability, and validity of results. The initial data cleaning is done and organized, and then statistical analysis is done using software called SPSS.

3.7.1 Data Cleaning and Preparation

The collected data was carefully checked and cleaned before doing statistical analysis to ensure that the data are accurate, consistent, and reliable for data analysis.

Data cleaning is an essential step in quantitative research because errors or inconsistencies in the dataset can affect the validity of the results (Andy Field, 2018).

The following steps are carried out during data cleaning:

- **Removal of incomplete responses:** The responses that have largely incomplete or missing data are removed to ensure only valid and usable responses are included in analysis.
- **Screening for eligibility:** The responses are filtered using screening question which were in the survey, and only does who meet the required could proceed further.
- **Checking for duplicate entries:** If the entries were multiple from the same participant, those data are removed and only one data was valid in that case.

- **Coding of responses:** The responses were converted to numerical values for statistical analysis. Also, the demographic variables are also converted into numerical values to do analysis.
- **Consistency check:** All the data values are checked to confirm whether they lie within the expected range (1-5 for Likert-scale items).

After completing all these steps, a cleaned dataset is prepared for statistical analysis.

3.7.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are helps us to summarize and outline the fundamental properties of data, and this data helps us to understand the sample and examine distribution of the main variable.

The analysis is conducted in two parts:

Demographic analysis: The profile of respondents is analysed using frequencies and percentages which covers the different variables such as age, gender, job role, sector, and work experience. This helps to find out that the individuals represent project professionals from different backgrounds.

Descriptive analysis of main variables: For our main variables, mindfulness, stress, and project performance descriptive analysis is conducted is conducted using measures such as mean, standard deviation and minimum and maximum values.

Mean scores indicate level of each variable, such as: higher mindfulness means high awareness, or if stress is high, the pressure is also high, or Higher performance level indicates better team performance. These statistics support further analysis and interpretation.

3.7.3 Reliability Analysis

The study conducts a reliability analysis to determine the internal consistency of measurement scales. The reliability of each item is tested using Cronbach's alpha, which evaluates how closely the items are connected within each measurement scale (Lee Cronbach, 1951). Reliability tests are done separately for each variable.

The interpretation of Cronbach's alpha values is based on following criteria:

- ≥ 0.90 : Excellent reliability
- ≥ 0.80 : Good reliability
- ≥ 0.70 : Acceptable reliability
- < 0.70 : May indicate low reliability

If the reliability is low, individual items are evaluated to identify issues and the items that do not fit the construct may be reconsidered. Reliability evaluation ensures that the scales are consistent and are suitable for further statistical analysis.

3.7.4 Correlation Analysis

The study uses correlation analysis to understand the relationships between variables, as it measures their strength and direction. The analysis examines three relationships i.e. mindfulness and stress, mindfulness and project performance, and stress and project performance.

The value of correlation coefficients ranges from -1 to +1 where positive value indicates positive relationship, negative represent negative relationship and zero or near to zero represents no relationship. For example: negative correlation between mindfulness and stress indicate higher mindfulness is associated with lower stress.

The analysis helps to identify whether the variables are related but it does not confirm causality, so further analysis such as regression is necessary.

3.7.5 Regression Analysis

To test the research hypotheses, regression analysis is conducted to examine how variables influence each other. It helps to determine how changes in one variable affects other (Douglas C. Montgomery et al., 2012). The studies applies both simple and multiple regression to examine the direct as well as combined effects of independent and mediating variables on the dependent variable.

The analysis uses simple regression to evaluate the direct effect of mindfulness on project performance, whereas multiple regression is used to assess the combined impact of mindfulness and stress on project performance.

To determine the strength and significance of the relationships, regression coefficients, significance values (p-values), and R-squared value are used to interpret the results.

In additions, essential assumptions before starting regression analysis to confirm model validity were checked. The study evaluated multicollinearity between independent variables through collinearity diagnostics which included Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) testing and tolerance value measurement and condition index assessment. The independent variable measures help ensure that variables maintain low correlation with one another while guaranteeing reliable regression outcomes.

3.7.6 Mediation Analysis

The study conducts mediation analysis to analyse whether stress acts as mediating variable between mindfulness and project performance.

Mediation occurs when third variable explains the relation between independent and dependent variable (Reuben M. Baron & David A. Kenny, 1986).

This analysis is done to examine whether mindfulness influence stress, stress influences project performance, and mindfulness indirectly affects project performance through stress (Baron & Kenny, 1986). To assess mediation, the direct effect of mindfulness on performance and indirect effect through stress are compared.

Through mediation analysis, the study gains deeper understanding of how mindfulness influences project performance.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

To ensure the safety of participants and integrity of the research process, ethical standard is maintained throughout the study. The participations were entirely voluntary. The detailed information about the research purpose were given to the participants to get their consent before completing the survey. Personal identifying information was not collected to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, and all the responses were presented in aggregated form to prevent the identification of individuals or organizations. Additionally, these data that were collected are only used for academic purpose and stored securely. These actions ensured the complete protection of participations rights, privacy and well-being.

3.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology in detail, using quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to analyse the relationship between mindfulness, stress, and project performance.

Data were collected from the project professional who were involved in project- based in Nepal using purposive sampling and those data were analysed using statistical techniques, including descriptive analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and mediation analysis.

Finally, ethical standards were maintained throughout the research process.

4 Data Analysis and Results

The chapter outline the findings of the data analysis which was carried out to examine the relationships between mindfulness, stress, and project performance among team members in Nepal. SPSS was used to analyse the data, and the results are organized systematically which aligns with research objective and hypotheses. To fully understand and interpret the data, both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques are used.

4.1 Data Preparation and Cleaning

The collected data was first carefully examined and prepared to maintain accuracy, consistency, and suitability for analysis before starting the statistical analysis. It is an important step to ensure the reliability and validity of the results.

Initially, the collected questionnaire responses were examined to verify that the data were complete. The responses that were incomplete or contained large number of missing data were removed to ensure that only valid and useable responses were included in analysis.

The data was screened to confirm that the participants met the criteria, focusing on their involvement in project-based work in Nepal and, the responses that didn't met the criteria were excluded from dataset. If the data set has duplicate responses, one of them was excluded from the data set to avoid bias in analysis.

Then all the responses were coded into numerical values to further do statistical analysis. The study used Likert-scale items from 1 to 5, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree. Similarly, demographic variable was also coded into numerical values.

Finally, to ensure all the data fell between the expected range, consistency check was done. After all this step, we had a cleaned dataset which consist of 79 responses, and this were used to do the further analysis.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

4.2.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

This section provides an overview of participants demographics which includes age, gender, current role, industry, and work experience, based on a total of 79 valid responses.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Group	25–35	41	51.9
	36–45	28	35.4
	46–55	8	10.1
	Above 55	2	2.5
Gender	Male	61	77.2
	Female	18	22.8
Current Role	Project Manager/Lead	8	10.1
	Project Coordinator	4	5.1
	Engineer/Technical Staff	3	3.8
	Site Supervisor	2	2.5
	IT/Software Staff	2	2.5
	Team Member	4	5.1
	Other	56	70.9
Industry	Construction/Engineering	11	13.9
	IT/Software	30	38.0
	Manufacturing	9	11.4
	NGO/Development	8	10.1
	Public Sector	21	26.6
Work Experience	1–3 years	14	17.7
	4–6 years	38	48.1
	7–10 years	13	16.5
	More than 10 years	14	17.7

Interpretation

The data shown in table 1 says that 51.9% of respondents fall within the range of 25-35 years, while 35.4% are between 36–45 years, which indicates that most participants are young professional who are engaged in project-based roles.

The sample consists of majority of male (77.2%), with female respondents representing 22.8%. suggesting gender imbalance within project-based sectors in Nepal.

Regarding the current role, 70.9% falls under “other” categories suggesting diverse project related positions beyond standard job titles, which strengthens the general applicability of the findings.

Looking from industry wise, the most participations was from IT sector with 38% followed by public sector of 26.6% and then construction sector of 13.9%, which indicates that the study captures data from various multiple industries.

Almost 48.1% of respondents have 4-6 years of work experience, which means that sample consists of professional with moderate experience in project environments and likely to experience work-related stress.

4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables

This section provides an overview of descriptive statistics for the main variables which includes mindfulness, stress, and project performance.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Variables.

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mindfulness	79	2.50	5.00	3.8465	0.76637
Stress	79	2.00	4.75	3.1028	0.73346
Performance	79	2.63	5.00	3.9399	0.70565

Interpretation

Firstly, for mindfulness the mean score is 3.85, which means that participants tend to have high level of mindfulness in their work environment. This indicates that participants are somewhat conscious of their thoughts and action while performing project-related tasks. The standard deviation is 0.77 which shows moderate level of variation among the responses.

Now, for stress the mean score is 3.10, which indicates that the participants generally experience a moderate level of perceived pressure. It shows that in project environment; the stress occurs but remains at moderate level across the sample. The standard deviation of 0.73 shows that there is reasonable distribution of responses across the sample.

And, for project performance the mean score is 3.94, which shows that the participants consider their performance to be relatively high. The result may be influenced by self-assessment bias or confidence in one's ability to perform task successfully. The standard deviation of 0.71 shows moderate level of variation in responses.

Overall, the descriptive results suggest that participants experience high mindfulness and performance, while the stress level is moderate. This pattern may explain the lack of strong relationships in the following analyses.

Histograms are presented below, to understand the distribution of variables.

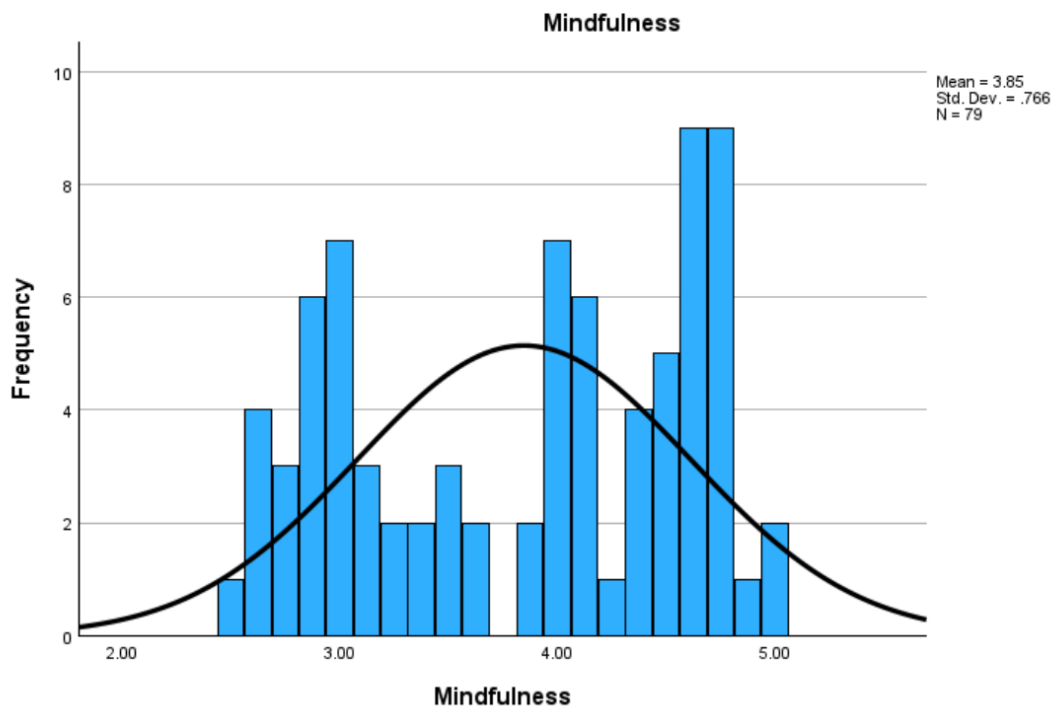


Figure 2. Distribution of mindfulness (Source: SPSS output, 2026).

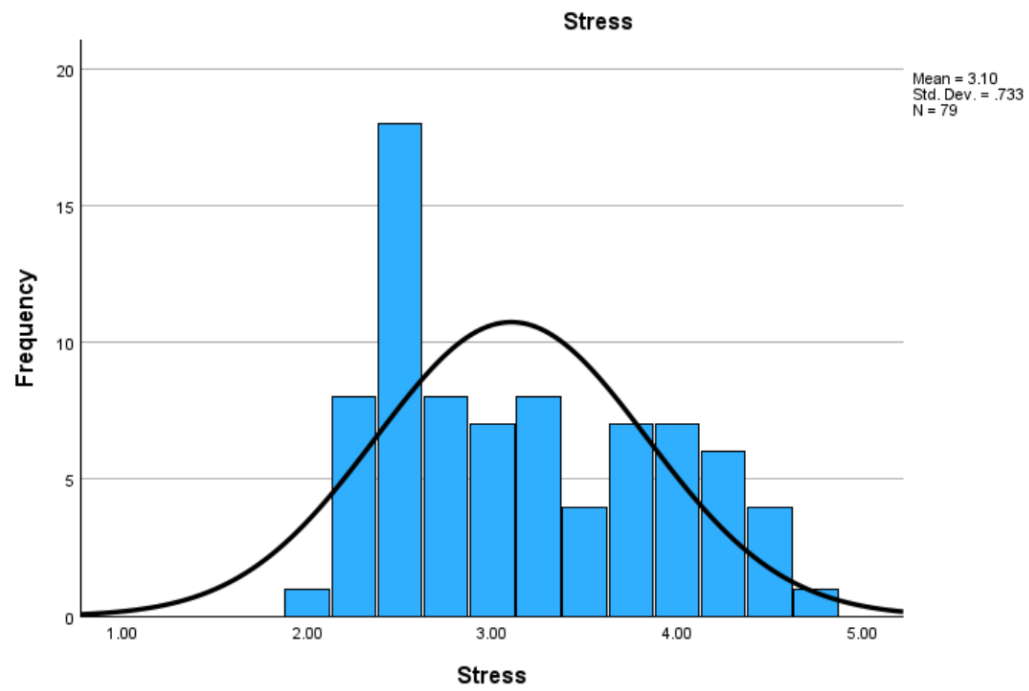


Figure 3. Distribution of Stress (Source: SPSS output, 2026).

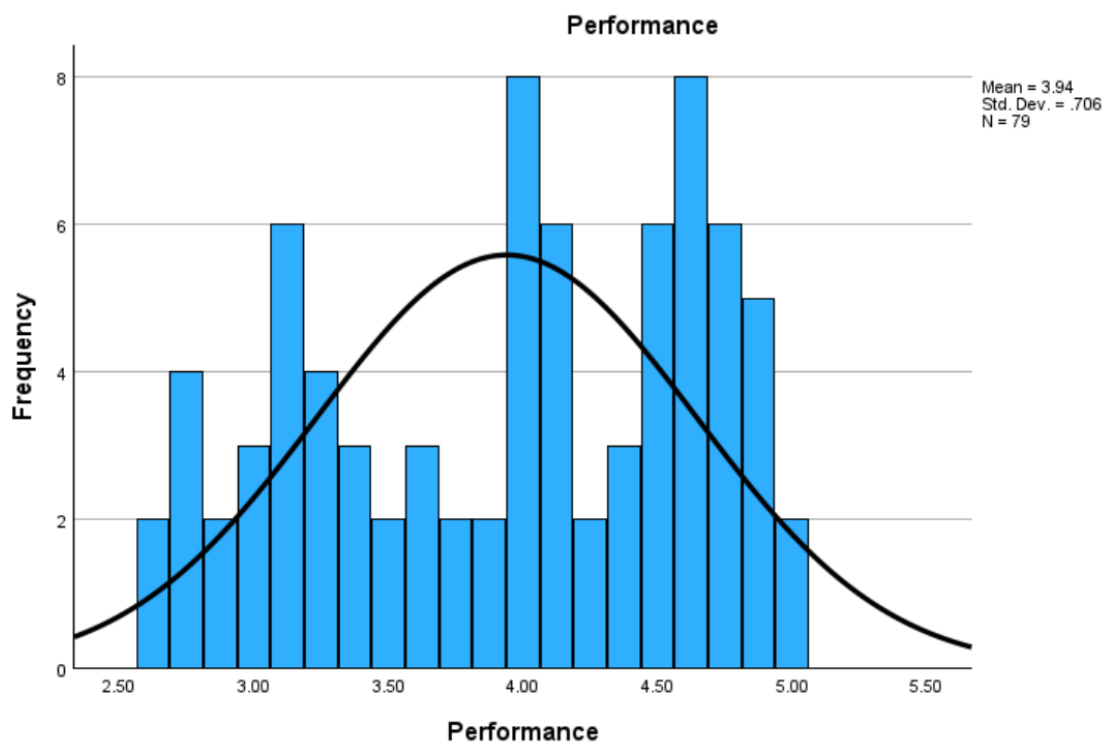


Figure 4. Distribution of Project Performance (Source: SPSS output, 2026).

For mindfulness, stress, and project performance, the above histograms indicates that the data are normally distributed with no major deviations observed. The finding supports the use of statistical analysis such as correlation and regression analysis.

4.3 Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis was conducted in this study to examine the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in study. To evaluate the reliability of the constructs which includes mindfulness, stress, and project performance, Cronbach's alpha was used.

The analysis includes the total of 79 valid responses with no missing data, and the results are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items	Interpretation
Mindfulness	0.890	8	Good
Stress	0.881	8	Good
Performance	0.867	8	Good

Interpretation

The results shows that all the three variables have good internal consistency i.e. the Cronbach's alpha value for mindfulness is 0.890, stress is 0.881 and for project performance is 0.867 which are all above the recommended threshold of 0.70.

The finding indicates that the measurement scales used in the study are consistent and appropriate for continuing the statistical analysis. Strong reliability indicates that the items within each construct consistently measure the intended variables, which thereby supports the credibility of the study's findings.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

The study conducted correlation analysis to evaluate the strength and direction of relationships between mindfulness, stress, and project performance. To assess this relationship Pearson correlation coefficient was use. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix

Variables	Mindfulness	Stress	Performance
Mindfulness	1	0.202	0.014
Stress	0.202	1	0.089
Performance	0.014	0.089	1

(Note: N = 79; p-values > 0.05 for all relationships)

Interpretation

The result demonstrate that mindfulness has weak and positive correlation with stress ($r= 0.202$), although the relationship is not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). It indicates that there is no meaningful linear relationship between mindfulness and stress in sample.

Similarly, mindfulness demonstrates a weak positive correlation with project performance as well ($r = 0.014$, $p > 0.05$), which implies that there is almost no relationship between variables.

Also, stress showed a weak positive correlation with project performance ($r = 0.089$, $p > 0.05$), which is not statistically significant.

Overall, the correlation analysis indicates that mindfulness, stress, and project performance has lack of significant linear association between them. The result suggest that variables might function independently in this context, or that other factor that are not included in this study may affect their relationships.

4.5 Regression Analysis

The study conducted regression analysis to further examine the predictive relationships between the three variables. This analysis includes both simple and multiple regression models to test the proposed hypotheses.

Multicollinearity was assessed between independent variables which enabled to validate regression model. Collinearity diagnostics was executed and the results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Collinearity Diagnostics

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	Tolerance	VIF
1	1	1.981	1.000	–	–
1	2	0.019	10.200	1.000	1.000

Interpretation

The results show that the maximum condition index value reached 10.20 which remains below the critical value of 30, thus indicating that serious multicollinearity problems do not exist. The independent variables maintain their independent status because VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) value of 1.00 and tolerance value of 1.00 stay within their established boundaries which demonstrate that they do not share substantial variance with one another.

The research results demonstrate that multicollinearity does not exist while all necessary assumptions for conducting regression results showed high level of dependability.

4.5.1 Effect of Mindfulness on Project Performance

A simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of mindfulness on project performance.

Table 6. Regression Results (Mindfulness to Performance)

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Mindfulness	0.013	0.014	0.125	0.901
Model Summary	Value			
R	0.014			
R ²	0.000			
Adjusted R ²	-0.013			
F	0.016			
Sig.	0.901			

Interpretation

The result indicates that mindfulness does not have a significant effect on project performance ($\beta = 0.014$, $p > 0.05$). With an R² value of 0.000, the models show almost no variance in project performance, indicating that mindfulness alone is insufficient to influence project performance differences.

The result indicates that project management is not solely determined by mindfulness, but it can be affected by additional factors such as leadership, organizational structure, and team interactions.

4.5.2 Combined Effect of Mindfulness and Stress on Project Performance

The study conducted multiple regression analysis to examine the combined effect of mindfulness and stress on project performance.

Table 7. Regression Results (Mindfulness and Stress to Performance)

Variable	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Mindfulness	-0.004	-0.004	-0.034	0.973
Stress	0.086	0.090	0.767	0.445
Model Summary	Value			
R	0.089			
R ²	0.008			
Adjusted R ²	-0.018			

F	0.302	
Sig.	0.740	

Interpretation

The result shows that the regression model lacks statistical significance ($F = 0.302$, $p > 0.05$), which indicates that mindfulness and stress together do not significantly influence project performance.

The model demonstrates very weak explanatory capability, explaining only 0-8% of the variance in project performance. It indicates that these variables have a limited effect on performance outcomes in this context.

Individually, neither mindfulness ($\beta = -0.004$, $p > 0.05$) nor stress ($\beta = 0.090$, $p > 0.05$) shows a significant effect on project performance.

These outcomes align with correlation findings, which indicates that the project performance can be influenced by more other factors that are not included in this study.

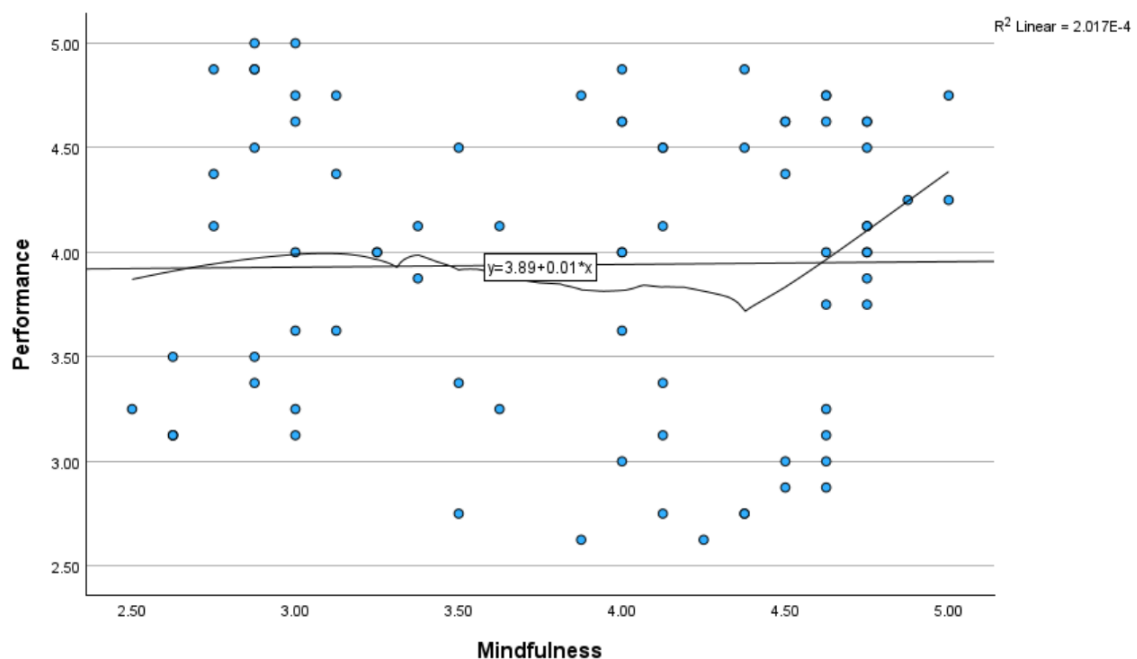


Figure 5. Relationship between Mindfulness and Project Performance

The scatter plot also shows that there is no linear relationship between these three variables, which supports the regression analysis.

Overall, the regression result supports that neither mindfulness nor stress significantly contributes to predicting project performance. Therefore, it does not support the proposed hypotheses.

4.6 Mediation Analysis

The study conducted mediation analysis to examine whether stress acts as mediating variable in the relationship between mindfulness and project performance. Mediation analysis follows the framework where several conditions must be fulfilled (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

Firstly, mindfulness which is an independent variable should significantly influence stress which is a mediating variable. Secondly stress (mediating variable) should significantly influence project performance which is dependent variable. Thirdly, mindfulness should significantly influence project performance. Finally, when the mediator is added in the middle of model, the effect of independent variable on the dependent variable should decrease.

However, the findings reveal that the required conditions are not fulfilled in the current research.

The result of regression analysis showed that mindfulness has no significant effect on stress ($p > 0.05$), and stress has no significant effect on project performance ($p > 0.05$), and mindfulness has no significant effect on project performance ($p > 0.05$).

The results further indicate that when both mindfulness and stress were analysed together, neither of the variables significantly influenced project performance, nor was any reduction in effects observed.

Interpretation

The study concludes that stress does not act as a mediator between mindfulness and project performance. The necessary conditions for mediation were not satisfied, as the variables did not demonstrate any significant relationships.

This implies that stress does not act as psychological link through which mindfulness impacts performance outcomes.

These results indicate that, in the absence of mediation, other factors such as leadership, teamwork, or organizational support, may play a critical role in determining project outcomes.

Conclusion

Therefore, this concludes that mediation hypotheses are not supported in this study.

4.7 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Based on all the results, the hypotheses proposed were tested and the summary of the testing is presented in Table 7.

Table 8. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Mindfulness is negatively related to stress among project team members	Not Supported
H2	Mindfulness is positively related to project performance	Not Supported
H3	Stress is negatively related to project performance	Not Supported
H4	Stress mediates the relationship between mindfulness and project performance	Not Supported

Interpretation

The study result demonstrate that all proposed hypotheses lack support because mindfulness training fails to show any impact on stress levels and project outcomes. Stress at moderate levels together with structural, and organizational conditions, and

cultural influences in Nepalese project environments because they restrict the visible effect which psychological factors like mindfulness have on individuals. The study results show that project performance depends more on external and organizational factors than on the study's proposed relationships.

5 Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The chapter analyses the study's results in connection with the research aims, research questions, theoretical framework, and previous literature. The aim of this chapter is not only to present the statistical findings, but also to examine and explain their implication in relation to project-based work in Nepal. The chapter explores the reasons behind the absence of predicated relationships between mindfulness, stress, and project performance, and highlighting what the result implies in both theoretical and practical contexts.

The primary objective of this study was to investigate whether mindfulness impacts stress and project performance among project professionals in Nepal, and to examine whether stress serves as a mediator between these variables. However, the analysis demonstrated that mindfulness did not significantly relate to stress or project performance, and stress itself did not significantly affect the project performance. In addition, mediating role of stress was also not supported.

Even though the findings do not support the hypotheses that was developed from previous literature, the finding is still meaningful. Non-significant results do not imply that the concept is unimportant. Rather than, they may suggest that the relationships function differently within a specific context. In this case, the project environment in Nepal may differ from those explored in earlier studies. In Nepal, the workplaces are often influenced by hierarchical authority, collectivist values, and a strong sense of endurance and responsibility, affecting how employees experience stress, their coping mechanisms, and how they assess their own performance (Magar et al., 2023).

5.2 Discussion of Findings

The study main research question was to understand how mindfulness influence stress and project performance among team members in Nepal.

Based on the analysis of this study, it is found that mindfulness did not significantly relate to stress or project performance, and stress itself did not significantly affect the project performance. As a result, the proposed relationships in the conceptual framework were not confirmed by empirical findings in the context of Nepalese project environment.

The study also fulfilled all the research objectives. First, mindfulness level was evaluated among the project professionals and reported that the average mindfulness score was comparatively high. Second, the stress level was measured, which showed the average stress level was moderate. Third, the relationship between mindfulness and stress was analysed, but no statistically significant relationship was found. Fourth, the relationship between stress and project performance was examined, which again showed no significant relationship. Fifth, whether stress mediates the relationship between mindfulness and project performance was tested, but the condition for mediation were not met.

It suggests that the research objectives were fulfilled at the analysis stage, although the results did not follow the anticipated directions. Hence, the discussion focuses on explaining why these relationships were not observed in this setting.

Additionally, the four hypotheses were not supported because three different factors from the study context, cultural background, and its research methods created obstacles for the prediction. In Nepalese project environments, performance is often shaped by external conditions such as resource constraints, leadership practices, and organizational systems instead of individual-level psychological factors. The workplace stress will become less visible because people consider it normal to experience stress during their work responsibilities. Self-reported assessments method is used which create problems because participants did not have access to standardized mindfulness programs. The study results showed that the relationship between mindfulness, stress, and project performance did not reach the expected statistical significance because multiple factors operated together.

5.2.1 Mindfulness and Project Performance

The finding did not provide evidence to support H2, which stated that there is positive relationship between mindfulness and project performance. The study showed no significant influence of mindfulness on project performance. The results differ from previous studies, which shows that mindfulness enhances concentration, emotional management, communication, decision-making, and efficiency in task (Daniel et al., 2022; Majeed et al., 2023). However, this study did not find any statistical evidence in the context of Nepalese project.

One possible explanation is that, in Nepal project performance may be more influenced by structural and organizational factors compared to individual psychological factors (Dhakal et al., 2023). In developing countries context, particularly in project environments, project performance is commonly impacted by range of factors which includes limited resources, poor planning, regulatory obstacles, delays, leadership factors, coordination problems, and institutional barriers. Studies from Nepal's construction shows that delays, execution problems, and schedule overrun are common occurrence, with one study indicating that delays have become "the norm rather than the exception" (Dhakal et al., 2023). In these environments, the success of performance is likely determined less by personal mindfulness and more on whether teams are equipped with proper support, resources, coordination, and decision-making authorities to complete the work successfully.

Another second explanation is that the mindfulness measured in this study may refer to general self-perceived awareness or attentiveness, rather than structured or practiced mindfulness. The positive results reported in the previous literature often focus on structured programs, continuous practice, or the environment where mindfulness is intentionally incorporated into the workplaces. The respondents in this study may have indicated that they are attentive and aware at work, but this does not confirm that they are engaged in structured or trained mindfulness practices. If mindfulness is not well developed as a skill, the ability to generate the performance outcomes will be lacked. Recent evidence from Nepal suggests stress-management strategies, which includes

mindfulness-related practices, works better when organization create structured support systems and a positive work culture, rather than expecting from employees that they can implement those practises on their own (Gurung et al., 2024).

Third explanation highlights the project performance in the study. In this study, the project performance was relied on self-reported perceptions. In a cultural setting where responsibility, fulfilment of duty, professional reputation are emphasized, employees may still give positive self-assessments for their own work even in demanding work environments. Studies in Nepalese workplaces highlights the significance of collective achievements, group acceptance, and placing group interests above individual preference, which affect how employees evaluate and portray their behaviour at work (Magar et al., 2023). Under such conditions, employees may continue to evaluate their performance positively, even in stressful environments. Consequently, mindfulness may exhibit a weak statistical relationship with self-reported performance, because respondents may assess their performance based on responsibility, adaptation, and endurance rather than internal psychological states.

Therefore, the non-significant finding does not mean, that mindfulness has no values. Instead, in Nepalese project context, it indicates that the influence of mindfulness may have limited or indirect effect on project performance, as it can be overshadowed by larger contextual influences such as leaderships, culture of organization, project systems, and the availability of resources.

5.2.2 Mindfulness and Stress

The finding did not provide evidence to support H1, which stated that there is negative relationship between mindfulness and stress. The study showed that mindfulness did not significantly reduce stress. The result differs from a wide range of the existing literature, that highlights mindfulness as important tool for reduction of stress, enhancing emotional regulation, and strengthen coping skills (Hülshager et al., 2013;

Watanabe et al., 2019; Kabat-Zinn, 2003). However, the lack of significant relationship between these variables can be understood in several ways.

To begin with, it is important to recognize that stress may be common and accepted in context of Nepalese project environments. In Nepalese workplaces, the employees frequently experience limited resources, demanding expectations, multitasking, overlapping roles, and deadline pressure. According to Nepal's Labour Act, employees are expected to work eight hours per day and forty-eight hours per week, with the option of up to four hours of overtime per day and twenty-four hours per week, to be compensated at 1.5 times the basic rate. It also specifies that these remuneration and benefits should be clearly outlined in the employee contract and the workers have right to receive remuneration from their first day of work (Government of Nepal, 2017). Therefore, there are rules set for working time and overtime. However, studies on Nepalese workplaces indicates that working long hours, excessive workloads, unclear role definitions are related to higher job stress (Ojha, 2025). This indicates that pressure is common experience in Nepalese workplaces. Once this pressure becomes their routine, employees may no longer view it as unusual or something that should be eliminated, rather they accept it as part of their daily responsibilities.

Secondly, even in challenging environments, Nepalese employees may build practical adjustment skills and coping behaviours that helps them to sustain their work (Adhikari, 2018; Gurung et al., 2024). According to Nepal Labour Force Survey data, research shows that informal employment is widely spread in Nepal, highlighting that 84.6% of workers are employed informally in different sectors (Adhikari, 2018). In a labour market, it is common to have expectations of uncertainty, inadequate labour protection, and flexible work, workers often learn to adjust to hardships. It does not mean that stress is absent. Rather, it suggests that this has strengthen their resilience and ability to cope with workplace challenges and continue functioning despite the pressure. Under these conditions, moderate stress might not be significantly related to mindfulness in statistical terms, as coping is influenced by diverse social and practical elements, which includes family responsibilities, team interdependence, income pressure, and cultural expectations to endure hardships (Gurung et al., 2024).

Third, the way stress is also experienced and reported may be affected by Nepalese social and organizational culture. In cultures that emphasize collectivism, individuals may suppress their visible signs of stress to maintain the group harmony and maintain a professional image. According to Magar et al. (2023), employees in the Nepalese banking-sector revealed that they highly value collective success, group well-being, and being socially accepted in the workplaces. In such environments, employees may choose to cope with stress privately rather than expressing it as a factor influencing their performance. Such cultural patterns may have reduce the strength of the observed connection between mindfulness and stress in survey-based responses.

Fourth, the study indicates that the participants experienced moderate level of stress rather than intense or severe stress. This point is important as mindfulness tends to become more effective when stress is intense, long-term, or highly disruptive. If the sample reported only moderate level of stress, there may not be enough differences in responses to observe a clear statistical effect. Additionally, when the stress is moderate and manageable, individuals may rely on other coping methods rather than mindfulness to maintain performance.

Hence, the absence of strong association between mindfulness and stress does not necessarily indicate that mindfulness is ineffective in general. Instead, this suggests that stress is more influenced by working environment, cultural adjustment, and environmental pressures rather than individual awareness.

5.2.3 Stress and Project Performance

The results did not support H3, which proposed that stress is negatively related to project performance. The study found no significant relationship between stress and project performance. The finding differs from much of the existing literature, which suggest that high stress reduces focus, increase errors, weaker teamwork, and lower the performance (Hobfoll, 1989). Still, the results can be interpreted in a meaningful context.

One possible explanation is that employees keep performing under the stress because their work is tied to responsibility, survival, and professional duty. In many organizations in Nepal, which are project-based and resource-limited environments, employees may experience pressure to maintain performance despite facing discomfort. The structure of financial rewards also contributes to this outcome. According to Nepalese labour law, compensation and benefits can be defined in employment contract, while ensuring that employees are paid accordingly. In jobs, the pay is provided monthly rather than solely on hours worked, employees may be expected to meet their responsibilities regardless of their stress levels (Government of Nepal, 2017). Under such situation, employees must perform under pressure, as work must be completed and the role must be fulfilled.

A second reason could be that performance may not decline when the stress is at moderate level. Some employee, even in the demanding environment they can keep functioning as they have developed routines, emotional resilience, and coping techniques. A recent study in Nepal revealed that heavy workload, long hours, and unclear responsibilities increased the stress level in the workplace of Nepalese commercial banks (Ojha, 2025). However, experiencing stress does not necessarily lead to reduced performance. In work system that value perseverance, discipline and compliance, the employees may continue to meet their deadlines and fulfil their responsibilities.

A third explanation concerns the way project performance was measured. Since the performance measure relied on self-reports, participants may have focused on aspects such as dedication, collaboration, effort, or willingness to fulfil their duties instead of purely objective results. In environments where there are often delays and systematic challenges, employees may evaluate themselves as high-performing if they are making maximum effort in the challenging situation. In project environments in Nepal, there is common problem of resources shortage, coordination challenges, and delays, due to which people evaluate performance based on situational conditions rather than perfect standard (Dhakal et al., 2023). This can be the reason why there is no strong negative link between stress and performance.

This finding suggests that stress may not play direct role in shaping project performance in Nepalese projects. Rather than stress alone, factors such as structural limitations, team dynamics, leadership decisions, and organizational support may have strong impact on project results.

5.2.4 Mediation Effect of Stress

The results did not support H4, which proposed that stress mediates between mindfulness and project performance. The study hypothesized that stress would act as a mediator between mindfulness and project performance, which means that mindfulness was expected to reduce stress, which would further improve the project performance. However, the required relationship was not statistically significant, so mediation analysis did not support any of the assumptions.

This finding is important as it shows that stress did not play a mediating psychological role between mindfulness and project performance in this sample. In simpler terms, although the mindfulness was present among the employees, it did not result in lower stress level that could positively influence performance.

One possible reason is that Nepalese project professionals that has been experiencing stress arises more from situational project demands rather than internal psychological conditions. These factors may consist of unclear responsibilities, changing expectations, staff shortage, resource constraints, administrative procedure, project delays, and coordination difficulties. Research in Nepal on implementation of project and workplace stress suggests that structural factors such as project delays, heavy workload, extended working hours, and unclear role are major source of pressure and work difficulty (Dhakal et al., 2023; Ojha, 2025). If stress is largely caused by organizational or systemic conditions, mindfulness alone may not be sufficient to break the chain. Therefore, stress may not serve as the assumed mediator.

Another reason could be that the relationship between mindfulness and project performance are connected through other factors that are not mentioned in this study. For example, the factors that may have influenced can be leadership style, organizational support, communication pattern, resilience, trust in team, and psychological safety. Gurung et al. (2024) highlights that effective stress management in Nepalese workplaces requires both personal coping strategies and supportive organizational structures and culture. When such factors play more central role in influencing project outcomes, then the mindfulness-stress-performance model may not demonstrate strong relationships.

Therefore, the lack of mediation should not be seen as weakness of the study, but as a significant finding which shows literature-based pathway may not directly fit into this model without considering cultural and organizational factors.

5.2.5 Why the Findings Differ from Previous Studies

A key role of the discussion chapter is for interpreting why there is difference between current finding and earlier findings. In this study, multiple contextual explanations can be considered.

First, mostly previous studies on mindfulness and performance have focused on Western or systematically structured organizational environments. Compared to Nepal, these environments vary with respect to organizational structures, employee independence, and the use of psychological practices such as mindfulness. As a result, their findings may not be directly relevant to Nepal.

Second, in Nepalese project context stress is seen as normal part of work rather than viewing as something unusual. Even though labour law has set standard working hours and overtime, but studies show that working long hours, workload and unclear role are very common practice (Government of Nepal, 2017; Ojha, 2025). Therefore, employees are treating stress as part of their work rather than something that can influence their performance.

Third, working in uncertain and resource-limited environments, employees may also develop adapting coping strategies. In Nepal, the high level of informal employment and job security has led to individuals to adapt and continue performing under pressure (Adhikari, 2018). This may have reduce the strength of stress-performance relationship.

Fourth, cultural factors which includes collectivism, authority respect, and maintaining group harmony may also play a role in how stress and performance are reported by employee. Employee may be less willing to openly express stress and or recognize its impact on their work, especially in self-reports (Magar et al., 2023).

Fifth, in this study mindfulness was assessed as general awareness rather than formal practice. As a result, without proper training or organizational support, it may not have ability to affect stress and performance (Gurung et al., 2024).

Lastly, in Nepal project performance may be driven more by external and structural factors such as limited resources, coordination issues, and project delays, rather than by individual psychological factors (Dhakal et al., 2023).

In summary, the findings do not completely conflicts with existing literature but highlights that mindfulness-stress-performance relationships may behave differently in Nepalese project context.

5.3 Theoretical Implications

This study offers an important theoretical insight that the link between mindfulness, stress and project performance may not be universal but influenced by contextual factors. Although theories such as Conservation of Resources Theory, the Job Demands–Resources Model, and mindfulness-based frameworks remain valuable, yet their effectiveness may vary depending upon cultural, organizational, and economic conditions.

First, the study suggest that mindfulness alone cannot be strong enough for psychological resources. In environments, when job demands arise from structural

challenges and resources shortage, workplace conditions may overshadow the individual-level coping strategies.

Another point is that the study indicates that the models that were designed in Western or highly structured workplaces may not be directly transferred to project environments in Nepal or other developing countries before adaptation. The finding highlights the importance of considering context in application of organizational and psychological theories.

Lastly, the finding suggest that project performance is influenced more than just outcome of individual mental states. Where project delays, heavy workload, and organizational obstacles are very common, factors like team interactions, organizational practices, leadership quality, and project framework may play a significant role (Dhakal et al., 2023; Gurung et al., 2024).

Therefore, the study contributes to existing literature by emphasizing the need for research that considering context- sensitive perspectives in project management and organizational behaviour.

5.4 Practical Implications

This study's results also offer significant practical insights.

First, organization should recognize that to improve project performance, mindfulness alone is not sufficient. If organizations aim to enhance the performance, they must go beyond mindfulness and deal with structural issues like clear responsibilities, balanced workload, staffing levels, effective communication, strong leadership, and sufficient resources.

Second, the organizations that want to effectively use mindfulness as a stress-management tool, they should introduce organized and practical approaches, rather than relying on employees existing awareness. According to Nepalese literature, it highlights that the stress-management strategies, including mindfulness-based

approaches, are more effective when organizations provide cultural support, structured systems, and proper resources (Gurung et al., 2024).

Third, manager should recognize that although the employees may keep performing under stress, but that does not mean the stress is without negative effects. Being able to handle the pressure does not necessarily mean there is absence of psychological burden. Over time, when the stress is normalized, it can gradually affect well-being, reduce motivation, retention, and organizational health.

Fourth, organizations need to create better working conditions by addressing issues like multitasking, overtime, excessive responsibilities, and deadline pressure. Nepalese evidence shows that the workplace stress is related to long working hours, workload demands, and unclear responsibilities (Ojha, 2025). As a result, reducing high work demands may be more effective than focusing only on how individuals cope.

In conclusion, project leaders should also prioritize team support system, develop practical plans, clear communication, and enhance coordination processes. In project environments where project is already delayed and implementation obstacle are common, strengthening leadership and well-developed systems may produce quicker performance improvements rather than focusing solely on individual-level strategies (Dhakal et al., 2023).

5.5 Conclusion

The study explored the links between mindfulness, stress, and project performance among project professionals in Nepal. The study found that mindfulness was not significantly related to stress or project performance, stress did not significantly influence project performance, and stress does not act as mediator between mindfulness and project performance.

All the research questions were answer but not in the expected direction. The finding indicates that in the context of Nepalese project, mindfulness may have reduced or

indirect influence compared to what earlier literature has proposed. The finding further indicates that project performance may depend more on environmental and organizational factors rather than individual mindfulness.

This study does not suggest that mindfulness is irrelevant. Instead, the study highlights that in challenging environments which includes stress, resource limitation and adapting under pressure requires additional resources beyond mindfulness training (Dhakal et al., 2023; Gurung et al., 2024; Ojha, 2025).

To summarize, the study provides project management evidence from Nepal which indicates that existing theories do not apply directly to different environments (Dhakal et al., 2023; Gurung et al., 2024).

In summary, this study contributes to project management literature by presenting evidence from Nepal and indicating that established theories may not always translate directly into different environments.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

Several limitations are there in the study which should be recognized.

Firstly, no significant relationships were found as the study used small sample of 79 valid responses.

Second, purposive sampling was used, which prevented in capturing all the project professional in Nepal.

Third, the use of self-reported data in the study may have introduced bias. The respondents may have reported their less stress and their work at higher performance in collectivist workplace environment, as maintaining their social and professional image (Magar et al., 2023).

Fourth, the data was only gathered once through a cross-sectional approach, which restricts to track how the variables change over time.

Fifth, mindfulness was measured using self-reported items, rather than structured practice which may focus on general awareness rather than ongoing behaviour.

Sixth, no external variables like leadership, trust, resource availability were included, which may be important in Nepalese project contexts.

Finally, no attention checker or control question was added in the survey to assess whether participants had read all survey questions and answered them fully. The data set might contain response bias because some participants probably answered questions without paying complete attention to the survey.

5.7 Recommendations for Future Research

Further research can build on this study in several ways.

Firstly, future researchers should use broader and more varied sample to increase the generalizability of the findings.

Second, future studies should also examine the additional variables such as leadership approach, organizational culture, teamwork, clear role definition, work pressure, and organizational support.

Third, future researchers should also focus on longitudinal methods to examine how mindfulness and stress influence project performance over time instead of relying on one-time observations.

Fourth, future studies should clearly differentiate between general mindfulness and structured mindfulness training or interventions.

Fifth, future studies could focus on qualitative or mixed methods in Nepal as they allow researchers to examine how employees understand stress, responsibility, adaption, silence. And coping in their own terms. This could clarify why statistical findings appear weaker even when pressure exist in workplace.

Sixth, future studies should evaluate whether formal mindfulness approaches can generate stronger impacts than self-reported mindfulness in Nepalese projects. This is especially important because, Nepal literature indicates that stress-management strategies are more successful when they are backed up by structured systems and organizational supports (Gurung et al., 2024).

Finally, further studies should use attention check items in their survey design to enhance data quality because this method forces respondents to read all questions while testing their ability to comprehend the survey materials.

References

- Aanestad, M., & Jensen, T. B. (2016). Collective mindfulness in post-implementation IS adaptation processes. *Information and Organization*, 26(1–2), 13–27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2016.02.001>
- Adhikari, D. B. (2018). Informal economy and poverty in urban Nepal. *The Economic Journal of Nepal*, 41(3–4).
- Atkinson, R. (1999). Project management: Cost, time, and quality, two best guesses and a phenomenon. *International Journal of Project Management*, 17(6), 337–342. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0263-7863\(98\)00069-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0263-7863(98)00069-6)
- Baer, R. A., Smith, G. T., Hopkins, J., Krietemeyer, J., & Toney, L. (2006). Using self-report assessment methods to explore facets of mindfulness. *Assessment*, 13(1), 27–45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191105283504>
- Bakker, A. B., & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands–resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22(3), 309–328. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940710733115>
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice-Hall.
- Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(4), 822–848. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.822>
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24(4), 385–396. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2136404>
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297–334.

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
- Daniel, C., Daniel, P. A., & Smyth, H. (2022). The role of mindfulness in the management of projects: Potential opportunities in research and practice. *International Journal of Project Management*, 40(8), 849–864. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2022.07.003>
- Daniel, C., Hülshager, U. R., Kudesia, R. S., Sankaran, S., & Wang, L. (2023). Mindfulness in projects. *Project Leadership and Society*, 4, 100086. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.plas.2023.100086>
- Dhakal, S., Dhital, M. R., & Amatya, N. B. (2023). Analysis of factors resulting in schedule overruns in building construction projects in Bagmati Province. *Proceedings of the 14th IOE Graduate Conference*.
- Field, A. (2018). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (5th ed.). Sage.
- Government of Nepal. (2017). *Labour Act, 2017 (2074)*.
- Goyal, M., et al. (2014). Meditation programs for psychological stress and well-being: A systematic review. *JAMA Internal Medicine*, 174(3), 357–368. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamainternmed.2013.13018>
- Gurung, A. K., Karki, T. B., & Khadka, K. (2024). Stress management practices among employees in Nepal. *NPRC Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 1(7), 20–28.
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524.
- Hülshager, U. R., Alberts, H. J., Feinholdt, A., & Lang, J. W. (2013). Benefits of mindfulness at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 98(2), 310–325. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031313>
- Jiang, K., Le, Y., Zheng, X., Cui, J., & Skitmore, M. (2025). Collective mindfulness in megaprojects. *International Journal of Project Management*, 43, 102767. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2024.102767>

- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). Mindfulness-based interventions in context. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 10(2), 144–156.
- Khanal, K., Mishra, A. K., & Karki, R. (2020). Causes of delay in construction projects in Nepal.
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping*. Springer.
- Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of Psychology*, 140, 1–55.
- Majeed, M., Irshad, M., Khan, I., & Saeed, I. (2023). The impact of team mindfulness on project team performance. *Project Management Journal*, 54(2), 163–178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87569728221140807>
- Montgomery, D. C., Peck, E. A., & Vining, G. G. (2012). *Introduction to linear regression analysis* (5th ed.). Wiley.
- Mubarak, N., Khan, J., & Khan, A. K. (2022). Psychological distress and project success. *International Journal of Project Management*, 40(6), 566–576. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijproman.2022.05.004>
- Ojha, G. (2025). Workplace stress in Nepalese banking sector. *MVIC Journal of Management and Information Technology*, 1(1), 42–62.
- Sekaran, U., & Bougie, R. (2016). *Research methods for business* (7th ed.). Wiley.
- Weick, K. E., & Sutcliffe, K. M. (2007). *Managing the unexpected* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Watanabe, N., et al. (2019). Mindfulness-based stress management program. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 251, 186–194. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2019.03.077>
- Yerkes, R. M., & Dodson, J. D. (1908). Relation of stimulus to habit formation. *Journal of Comparative Neurology and Psychology*.

Appendix Survey questionnaire

Survey on Mindfulness, Stress, and Project Performance among Project Team Members

Dear Participants,

I am Sakshi Shah, a Master's student in Industrial Engineering and Management, major in Strategic Project Management at the University of Vaasa. This survey is part of my thesis on mindfulness, stress, and project performance among project team members in Nepal.

This survey is intended for individuals who are currently working, or have recently worked, in project-based roles (such as project managers, engineers, IT professionals, NGO staff, or similar roles).

What is mindfulness in this study?

In this survey, mindfulness means being mentally present and attentive while working. It refers to paying attention to your tasks, being aware of your thoughts and feelings, and responding carefully instead of reacting automatically. It does not refer to religion or meditation.

Your participation is voluntary, and your responses will remain confidential. Organization names will not be disclosed, and results will only be reported in summary form.

The survey takes about 5–8 minutes.

I appreciate your time and consideration, and I would be happy to provide any additional information if needed. Please feel free to contact me at:

Email: x3422641@student.uvasa.fi

Phone no: +358449253686

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC & WORK PROFILE**Age group ***

- Under 25
- 25-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- Above 55

Gender *

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to say
- Other: _____

Current role/position *

- Project Manager / Project Lead
- Project Coordinator
- Engineer / Technical Staff
- Site Supervisor
- IT / Software Project Staff
- NGO / Development Project Staff
- Consultant / Specialist
- Team Member
- Other: _____

Industry / sector *

- Construction / Engineering / Infrastructure
- Information Technology (IT) / Software
- Manufacturing / Industrial Projects
- NGO / Development / Non-profit
- Consulting / Professional Services
- Public Sector / Government Projects
- Finance / Banking / Corporate Projects
- Healthcare / Education Projects
- Other: _____

Total work experience *

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

Are you currently part of a project team? *

- Yes
- No

Organization name *

Your answer _____

SECTION 2: MINDFULNESS, STRESS And PROJECT PERFORMANCE**Instruction:**

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements based on your work experience.

Scale:

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Neutral

4 = Agree

5 = Strongly agree

MINDFULNESS *

	1	2	3	4	5
I pay full attention to my work tasks.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I stay focused on what I am doing at work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am aware of my thoughts and feelings while working.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I respond calmly when something stressful happens at work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I notice when my attention starts to drift and bring it back to my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I remain mentally present during meetings and discussions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I do my work carefully rather than automatically without thinking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am aware of what is happening around me while working with my team.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

STRESS *

	1	2	3	4	5
I feel stressed because of my work responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel overwhelmed by my workload.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find it difficult to manage all the demands at work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel mentally exhausted because of my work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deadlines and time pressure increase my stress.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unexpected problems or changes at work make me feel stressed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work stress affects my ability to concentrate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel under pressure when handling multiple tasks or stakeholders	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PROJECT PERFORMANCE *

	1	2	3	4	5
My team completes tasks efficiently.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communication within my project team is effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Team members work well together.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Project tasks are completed on time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My team handles unexpected challenges effectively.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The quality of work in my team is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our project goals are generally achieved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, I am satisfied with my team's project performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>