



The Role of Playful-Mindfulness in Building Children's Psychological Well-Being and Mental Resilience

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Abstract: Playful mindfulness is an effective and sensitive technique that plays an active role in the mental, physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children. This theoretical article shows playful mindfulness converts negative emotions of children into positive ones and enables them to face challenges with a positive attitude and optimism in the face of adversity, thereby developing psychological well-being and mental resilience in the child. The purpose of the study is to explore the impact of playful mindfulness on the psychological well-being and mental resilience of the children and also what is the connectiveness with emotional regulation. Some particularly notable theories are- "Mindfulness Interventions" (Kabat-Zinn), "Mindfulness Based Play Theory" (Lynn Louise Wonders), "Mindful Games Framework" (Susan Kaiser Greenland), "PERMA well-being model" (Martin Seligman) "Development Resilience Theory" (Michael Rutter and Ann Masten), "Cognitive and Social Development Theory" (Piaget and Vygotsky), etc. In addition, other theories have laid the foundation stone for this article, each theory talking about developing students with positive behavior, prosocial attitudes and conscious experiences to enrich their mental health and emotions. It concluded that these theoretical articles present a conceptual framework that demonstrates that playful mindfulness plays a mediating role in shaping children's psychological well-being and mental resilience. This model can be recognized as an effective and developmental approach in educational institutions, families, communities and clinical settings.

Keywords: Children, Playful Mindfulness, Psychological Well-Being, Mental Resilience, Emotional Regulation.

Introduction: One of the most important aspects of human development is mental development, which reaches its highest-level during childhood. Generally, the period from 3/4 to 11/12 years of age is called childhood. The highest rate of overall development of human life is seen in this childhood stage. During this time, children face emotional, social, and educational challenges. Childhood is the best time to build adaptive capacity, mental health and resilience in children. Nowadays, excessive stress, anxiety, social problems and emotional imbalance are observed among children. Which is disrupting their mental well-being and resilience. mindfulness training may be a promising program that promotes the synergistic engagement of mind and body to achieve the goals of enhancing psychological well-being, (Kong et al.,2015). That is why special interventions are needed that will further enrich children's mental well-being and resilience.

Mindfulness is a widely used method that helps children control their emotions, increase awareness and focus. However, some traditional mindfulness practices, such as sitting meditation and walking meditation, are not always appealing to children. Currently, the new intervention of Playful Mindfulness approach is widely used because children love to learn through play and joy. Playful Mindfulness helps children develop their emotions fully, increases social communication, mental well-being and resilience.

Playful Mindfulness includes-- five sense game, Mindful colour game, storytelling, art, movement, role play, creative activity etc. The awareness that increases in children through these activities can help them face the upcoming challenges of life in a positive way. The combination of MBSR and exercise

intervention demonstrated improvements in anxiety, depression, sleep quality and BSRS-5 scores in patients with NSCLC. (Li ,2021).

While there is a lot of research on mindfulness-based interventions, there is very little research on systematically incorporating playful mindfulness. empirical support for the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in raising PWB and resilience (VKS Oh ,2022).

Playful Mindfulness can make children's awareness accessible and enjoyable, which further enriches their social, emotional balance, adaptive capacity, mental well-being and resilience. Therefore, Playful Mindfulness deserves more research or investigation.

Related Literature Review:

Psychological Well-Being in childhood: Psychological well-being in childhood refers to whether a child is able to acquire knowledge and practically solve problems, whether he is able to use his thinking power properly, whether any fear or mental anxiety is hindering his confidence and independent decision-making.

Cheng et al.(2025). Study about post- pandemic Psychological Well-Being among Teacher for Children with development disability: The Role of Mindfulness and Resilience, focuses on relationship between mindfulness, resilience and psychological well-being among teacher of children with developmental disability in China .The author use questionnaire which are administrated to 339 teachers of CWDD. The result of the study showed the mindfulness and resilience negatively predicted post – pandemic psychological well- being, while mindfulness positively predicted resilience. The suggestion of the authors that should improve of post -pandemic psychological well-being of teachers of children with developmental disability randomly.

Gunjan & Rana (2025). The study looks forward to investigate the role of psychological well-being as a mediator in the relationship between mindfulness and happiness. The sample of the study was 180 students (graduate and post graduate) aged 18-25 years from various districts of Haryana (India). It is a quantitative study. Self-report measures including 'MAAS, Psychological Well-Being Scale, and Oxford Happiness Questionnaires' were used to collect the data from the sample. The obtained data was statistically analyzed with the help of descriptive statistics, bivariate correlation, and regression analysis in SPSS and PROCESS macro software. The results of the study indicated an inter-correlation among mindfulness, psychological well-being, and happiness.

It also refers to the full development of social relationships, honesty, morality, values, cooperation and empathy in all aspects, which makes a child a good citizen and a good personality for the future. Mindfulness training may be a promising program that promotes the synergistic engagement of mind and body to achieve the goals of enhancing psychological well-being (Tang et al.,2019).

Therefore, psychological well-being depends on the full development of a child's cognitive, emotional, social and moral aspects during childhood.

Resilience in Childhood: Resilience refers to a quality or mental strength that teaches a child to face challenges with a positive attitude in adverse situations. Childhood is the perfect time to build this resilience. This is because during this time a child engages in play and creative activities and also develops a need for love and security.

Pangngay (2024). Explores the causal relationship of resilience to subjective wellbeing and psychological distress as mediated by mindfulness and coping. It is a non-experimental mediation design, using 365 college students recruited through stratified random sampling were administered with online self-report measures. Authors use Parallel mediation analysis to analysis the obtained data. The findings of the study are provide a practical framework for outcome-based resilience intervention programs where interventionists would heavily emphasize enhancing resilience, mindfulness, and adaptive coping to achieve good mental health outcomes.

Munawar et al. (2025). Conducted a study the impact of perceived discrimination on psychological well-being, with resilience as a mediator and mindfulness as a moderator, among university students. It was a quantitative study. The sample of the study was 300 students whose age between to 18 - 30 years. Authors used the multiple scale to measure these specific aspects of these students. The discoveries underscore the central role of resilience-building and mindfulness-based interventions in advancing psychological well-being in young adults confronted with discrimination.

Mandal and Bairagya (2019). conducted a study aimed at exploring children's positive psychological patterns, cognitive processes, and overall healthy functioning in the context of contemporary

digital children's media. Using a descriptive survey design, the researchers sought to understand how childhood social behavior and developmental tendencies are shaped by engagement with media content. The findings highlighted several aspects of children's resilience and self-regulation, showing that their interaction with popular media significantly influences both home and school environments.

The initial trials at the British Army Infantry Training Centre Catterick have delivered tangible improvements in infantry recruits' use of psychological skills within real-life training contexts (**Precious & Lindsay,2019**).

It is during this time that a child develops a greater thirst for self-identity and self-esteem. Children develop the ability to solve problems through thinking or intellect, to stay positive in the face of adversity, to control emotions, to develop a sense of adaptability, social solidarity and to understand oneself and one's inner. The role of resilience is most important in recognizing qualities.

So, it goes without saying that when a child is socialized in childhood, it is important to maintain good relationships by eliminating stress in the new environment, Resilience helps the most in developing responsible personalities in education and social life.

Playful Mindfulness: In childhood, children's awareness develops through play, meaning that children are able to develop their mental, physical and creative abilities through play.

Oh et al.(2022). This study sought to close this gap by exploring the role that mindfulness practice plays in millennials' psychological well-being and subsequent increases in resilience to adversity. It was a qualitative approach. The sample of the study were the Ti-Ratana Youth in Malaysia and the Buddhist Missionary Society of Malaysia (BMSM) Youth Section .The method of the study was survey to supervise mindfulness practice of each participants .The findings of the study was, in times of high uncertainty, mindfulness-based intervention programs should be expanded to include all young people. This study offers empirical support for the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions in raising positive PWB and resilience..

Palalas (2022). Explores how playful mindfulness practices build children's resilience through various mindful games. The study is based on qualitative approach by reviewing developmental psychology and various mindfulness intervention studies as well. The result of the study is playful mindfulness enhancing the self- awareness, stress reduction, and encouraging the resilience of children. Author suggest that to integrate playful mindfulness into classroom routines for better psychological well beings and children's resilience.

Napoli et al.(2004). Investigate a formative evaluation of whether participation in a mindfulness training program affected first, second, and third grade students' outcomes on measures of attention .The study was designing to help students learn to focus and pay attention. The method was Pilot study with elementary school children, 24-week training employed a series of exercises including breathwork, body scan, movement, and sensorimotor awareness activities. The findings of the study was the students show significant differences between those who did and did not participate in mindfulness practice training. Author emphasize playfulness to sustain engagement and maximize psychological benefits.

Aerobic–strength exercises and mindful yoga exercises, together with reflective journaling, may be effective in increasing mindfulness in the college population (**Marenus et al., 2021**).

Mindfulness to be a positive and significant predictor of self-compassion while negatively and significantly predicting difficulties in emotion regulation, (**Sünbül and Güneri,2019**).

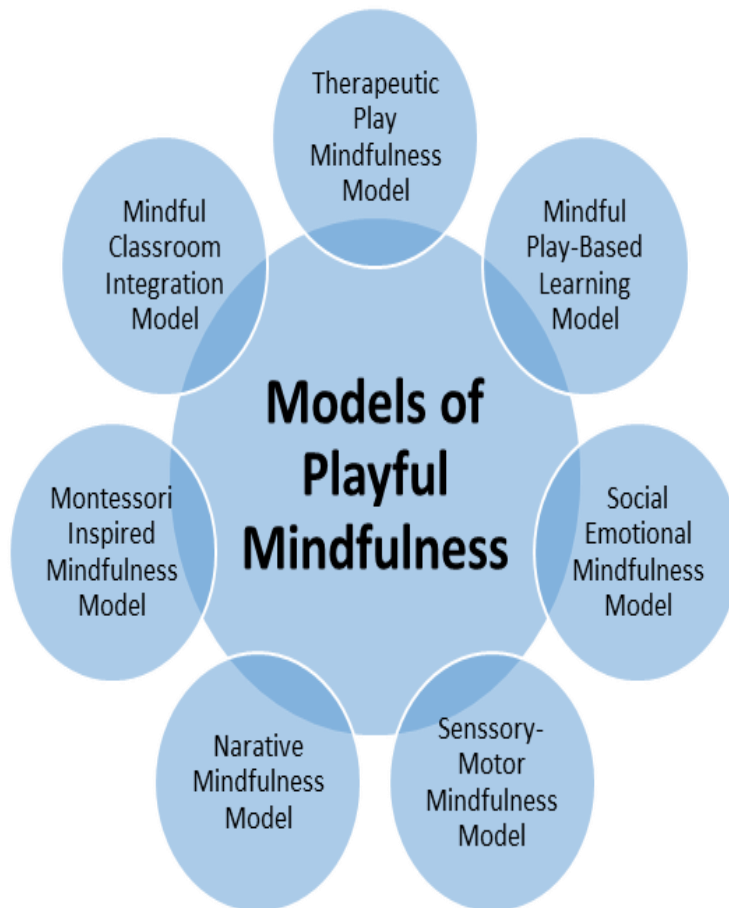
Some components of Playful Mindfulness in childhood are-

- Children are able to develop accurate knowledge and awareness by properly applying their curiosity through play.
- Children can increase their ability to maintain attention through breathing exercises.
- Through play, children are able to use their five sense organs and five action organs appropriately.
- Children can become aware of their physical and mental awareness through playing, moving, jumping and running.
- Through play, children are taught to reduce stress and control emotions (laughter, crying, anger etc.).
- It is possible to develop memory, imagination, thinking and creativity through play, teaching children to enjoy the present moment and accumulate experience.
- Through play, children develop a sense of teamwork, mutual respect and cooperation, which makes a child completely social.

There is a fine relation between the playfulness with mindfulness, mindfulness with improvisation, or improvisation with playfulness (**Hassan,2019**).

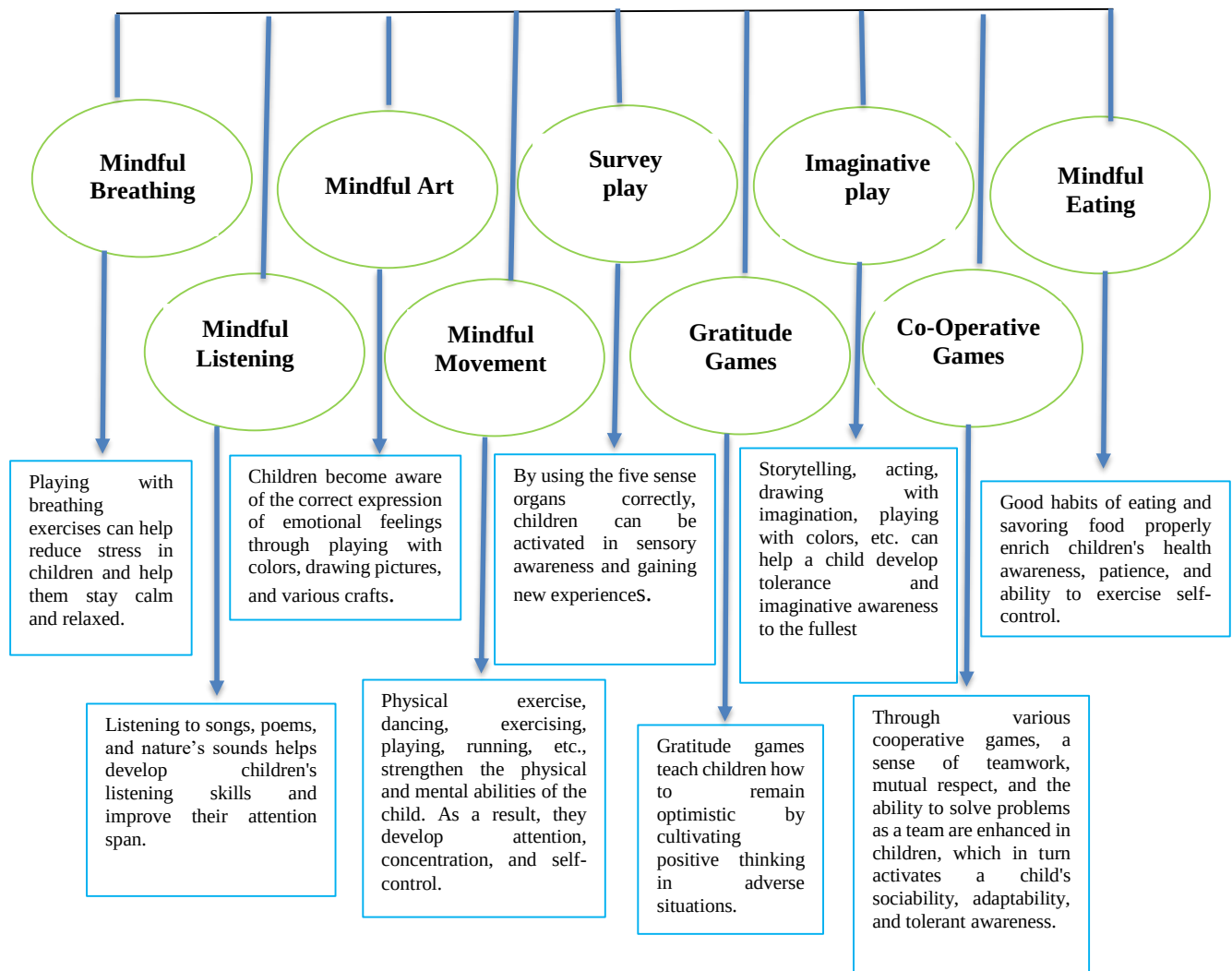
Models of Playful Mindfulness:

Psychological well-being and resilience of children is based on various models of Playful Mindfulness. Some of the notable models are as follow..



Types of Playful Mindfulness: There are many types of Playful Mindfulness in childhood, some significant Plays are given below:

Playful Mindfulness



Objectives: After discuss the key features and related literature review, the investigator tries to signify some specific objectives, which are given below:

- To explore the impact of playful mindfulness on the psychological well-being of the children.
- To examine how the playful mindfulness builds the children's resilience.
- To evaluate the relationship between playful mindfulness and mental resilience.
- To assess the connectivity between resilience and emotional regulation.

Theoretical Analysis:

Although there is no independent theory related to Playful Mindfulness, various recent teams have given a structural form to the theories. The following highlights some of the notable theories are:

- **“Cognitive, Social Development Theory” and Playful Mindfulness-**

Jean Piaget (1920-36)- said that the experiences children gain through play enrich their schema formation and the process of assimilation and accommodation, enabling them to adapt easily to new situations.

Lev Vygotsky showed in his book that mindfulness game and play enriches the ZPD and through conscious scaffolding, it is possible for children to control their self and emotions, which solves their behavioral problems and maintains mental well-being.

Bandura's "Social Learning Theory", - Bandura encouraged children to engage in group play and activities, which would lead to social development through observations and imitation.

- **"Flow theory"- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1975)** has given special emphasis on playful mindfulness. He said that if a child keeps himself immersed in his creative activities, dancing, singing, playing, visual observation, etc. Then the practical skills that emerge in them reduce their mental anxiety and stress and make them confident, interested in learning, self-controlled, and have a positive attitude.
- **"Mindful-Based Interventions"-- Jon Kibet Zinn (1990)** has emphasized some special aspects in the theory of Mindful-Based Interventions, which directly affect the mental health of children, those important aspects of Mindful Based Interventions are ----
 - The connection between body and mind, which is developed through body scan and breathing exercise, increases mental and physical resilience in children and controls emotional stress. It develops self-awareness and the ability to deal with problems in children.
 - Understanding the current situation. Recognizing one's own thoughts, feelings and reactions-which will help the child maintain balance in terms of sensitivity and the child to be free from mental anxiety and stress.
 - Controlling emotions and attention help prevent the child from being overly emotional and makes the child adept at controlling attention and increasing positive emotions through correct expression, verbal practice, behavior and mental stability.
 - Prevents criticism, i.e. Mindful Based Intervention emphasizes conscious decision-making rather than reactivity, which reduces the impact of criticism in children and develops empathy and tolerance, thereby enriching social skills.

- **"Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotion"-Barbara Fredrikson (1998)**

i.By **'Broaden'**, the psychologist means that -good thinking enriches the child's creativity and social skills. It makes the child think more openly and curious.

ii.By **'Build'**, the psychologist means that child learns to recognize his own strengths. The child's sense of sociality is formed from his friends, teachers, and family.

Therefore, the psychologist has focused on acquiring accurate knowledge about human resources and enriching upward and adaptive abilities by eliminating the effects of negative stress.

- **"Developmental Resilience Theory"- Michael Rutter (1970), Ann Masten (2001)** Michael Rutter mentioned two factors while talking about resilience, they are Risk factor and Protective factor.

i. Risk Factor-refer to instability, mental trauma, social avoidance and other aspects, which prevent children from developing psychological stability.

ii. Protective factors- refer to positive thinking, good social relationships, confident attitude, self-control skills, problem-solving skills, positive behavior etc., which help in maintaining the child's psychological resilience.

- **"Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy"- Zindel Segal, Mark Williams, John Teasdale (2002)** in their book "Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy For Depression" have explained that-
 - Anxiety-emotion-behavior are interrelated so, negative thoughts must be addressed through a positive perspective, so that these negative thoughts will reduce the child's depression and encourage the child to stay positive.
 - Techniques such as breathing exercises, listening to sounds, body scan, sensory play, storytelling, etc. Should be applied to children in the right way so that they are motivated to control their emotions, increase attention and build self-confidence.
 - Allowing children to work together on small tasks helps develop social skills and emotional resilience.

Through the use of various Mindfulness interventions, present moment awareness and a sense of self-awareness are developed in children, which plays a helpful role in the development of children's mental well-being and resilience.

- **“PERMA-Well-Being Model”-- Martin Seligman (2011)** in his book “Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being”-- has discussed in detail about the PERMA model, which is one of the theories of Positive Psychology. In terms of the development of mental well-being and resilience in children, he has given great importance to five basic elements. They are as follows--

In the case of –

P-Positive Emotion- psychologists say that if children have a respectful attitude towards each other, look at each other's work with appreciation and share their experiences of their activities with each other with a positive attitude, then the emotions in the child will be beautifully arranged. They will be able to reduce their own mental stress.

E-Engagement-means keeping yourself busy with work. This will help in increasing the child's concentration, physical and creative development.

R-Relationships-through the development of positive relationships between teachers, friends, guardians, and family members, children become confident and have the ability to control themselves. The good social relationships developed through this group cooperation help maintain emotional resilience in children.

M-Meaning-a correct understanding of oneself and one's work inspires children live purposeful lives. Self-esteem, frustration-free and positive thinking are developed in children.

A-Accomplishment-What is the goal of education and life? By what means is it possible to achieve it? This is the issue to be considered here. Educational progress and the experience of success in achieving small goals make children competent, which directly affects their educational and personal development.

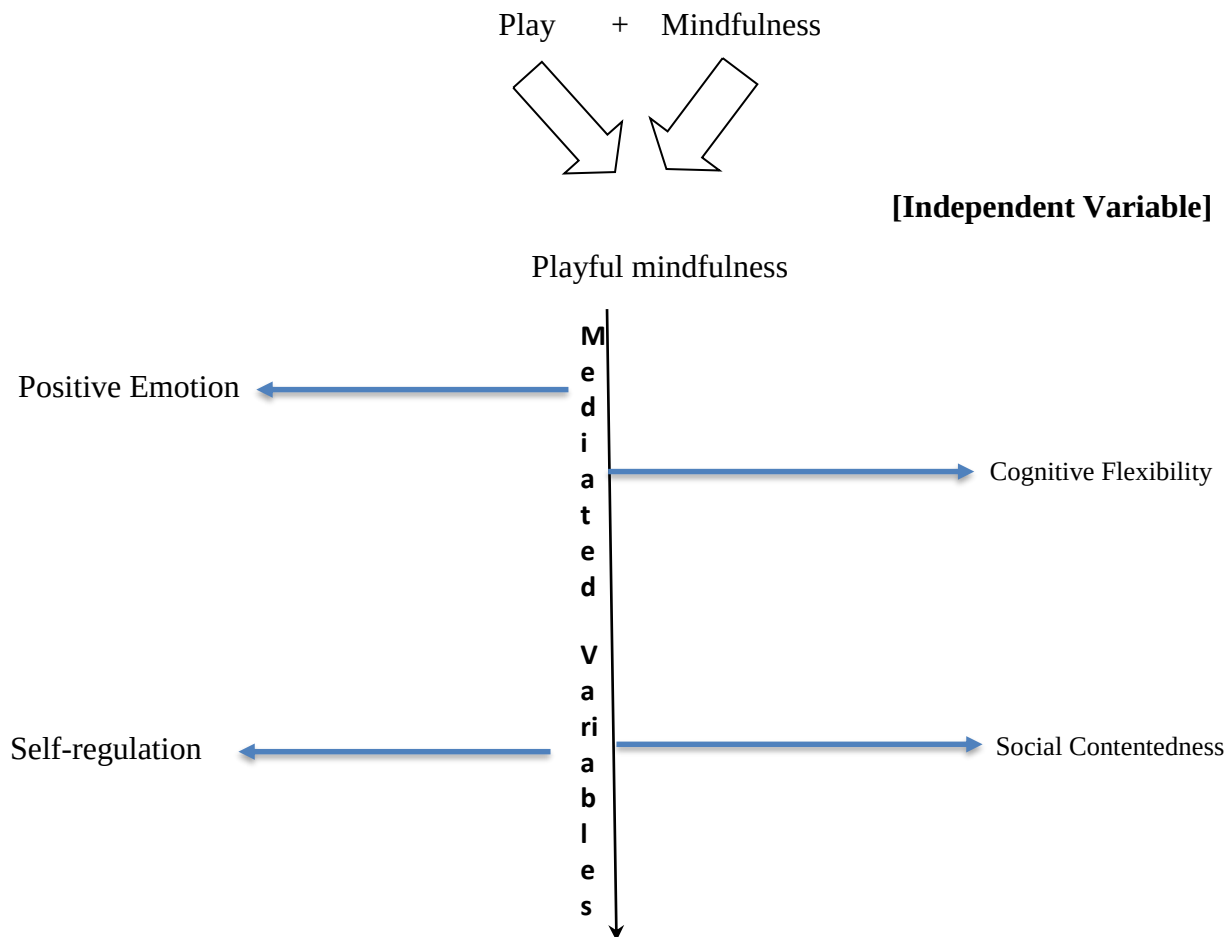
- **Ann Masten, in “Ordinary Magic”(2014).** explains that resilience is an adaptive ability that a child acquires by facing a situation. Society, family, friends, education, etc. Are very important in building a child's resilience.
- **“Mindful Games Framework”- Susan Kaiser Greenland (2016)** focuses on developing children's mental well-being and resilience through fun games and playful mindfulness practices. She includes various sense organ plays in her book, mentioned analytical games, social awareness games and attention-based games-thorough which a child becomes proactive in increasing his attention, maintaining a balance between social relationships, emotions, behavior and developing mental stability.
- **“The Self-Determination Theory” of Deci and Ryan,(2017).** In this theory the psychologist's greater importance is given to children's independent play, which will develop individuality and skills in children.
- **“Mindfulness-Based Play Therapy”- Lynn Louise Wonders (2025)** MBPT combines mindfulness practices and play therapy and has been widely used to build children's mental well-being and resilience. The main perspectives of this theory are as follows---
- Children's own thoughts, emotions, feelings, and any special sensitivities are expressed through play, which helps to develop greater awareness among children.
- Psychologist Lynn Louise Wonders has developed a trans theoretical technique by integrating various psychological theories such as CBT Humanistic Therapy etc. In her theory, which helps in solving anxiety and behavioral problems in children.
- Mindful breathing exercises, body scan, sensory play, role play, puppet play, story based Mindfulness practice etc. Play based mindfulness therapy helps in controlling attention, neurological control and emotion in children. As a result- it reduces anger, fear, physical and mental tension in children, making them healthy and confident.

- Psychologist say that it is possible to control reactions by connecting the body and mind through play, play-based mindfulness is the best method for increasing awareness and enhancing mental stability.

Resilience is a dynamic adaptive process that enables a child and individual to cope with difficult and adverse situations with a positive outlook, which in turn develops cognitive competence, self-regulation, self-confidence and a stress-free mentality in the child.

Conceptual Framework:

Based on the analysis of all the above theories, a conceptual framework can be formed, where



[Effect on Dependent Variable]

- Psychological well-being (positive behavior, self-respect, concentration, stress-less mind etc.)
- Mental resilience (positive attitude, problem solving ability, mental stability and self-control etc.)

Propositions: This conceptual framework helps to make some propositions, which are follow as:

- Playful mindfulness increases children's positive emotion and self-regulation.
- Positive emotion increase children's psychological well- being.
- Children's psychological well-being is related to their mental resilience.

Discussion:

From the theoretical analysis and related literature mentioned above, it is known that the role of playful mindfulness in building mental well-being and resilience is extensive. Nowadays the most interesting and useful method of teaching children is play method, through which children learns to make their cognitive perspective more flexible, by accepting emotions positively, social relationships are strengthened. It has been clearly mentioned in theoretical discussions that mindfulness and self-confidence can make children more focused and self-controlled.

Implication:

- **Theoretical** - cognitive-emotional-social, all aspects have been fulfilled, a process has been given a more structured form through playful mindfulness. This conscious play is the main tool in the child's psychological well-being and mental resilience.
- **Practical**- in the field of Educational, Family, Social, Clinical, playful mindfulness techniques could be applied easily.
- **Policy Based**- school curriculum, school program formation and implementation become worthfully through playful mindfulness.

Limitation:

- Limitation In application due to age differences.
- Limitation in measuring scale and techniques of playful mindfulness.
- Much more research is needed based on Geographical and cultural context.
- Its application is more noticeable in Western countries, compared to the Eastern countries.

Suggestions:

Some important suggestions for future research on the important role of playfulness mindfulness on children's mental well-being and resilience are ---

- Long term research methods can be adopted to properly assess the impact of playfulness mindfulness on children's mental well-being and resilience.
- Various creative games, breathing exercises, storytelling, etc. And other playfulness Mindfulness activities can be incorporated into the school curriculum.
- Playfulness Mindfulness requires training for parents and teachers to develop the correct practice of Mindfulness.
- Playfulness Mindfulness can be tested in different cultural contexts to increase its acceptability and usability.

Conclusion:

Based on various theoretical and conceptual discussions, it can be concluded that Playful Mindfulness helps in strengthening psychological well-being. There is a fine and depth relation between playful mindfulness and resilience, resilience and emotional regulation.

Therefore, it goes without saying that Playful Mindfulness is an effective and sensitive method for improving mental health.

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