



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# An examination of the reliability and factor structure of the mindfulness process questionnaire (MPQ)



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**Abstract** This study examined the factor structure and reliability of the seven item and eight item mindfulness process questionnaire (MPQ). The MPQ differs from other psychological measures of mindfulness in that it quantifies the process of being mindful, rather than mindfulness as a state. Cronbach's alphas were examined across and within to determine the overall reliability of the MPQ. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was utilized to assess the factor structure of the seven item and eight item MPQ. The results indicated that two items lowered the overall reliability; item seven and item two from the eight item MPQ, and item two from the seven item MPQ. The EFA suggested a two factor structure with the seven item MPQ and a three factor structure for the eight item MPQ.

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**Análisis de la fiabilidad y la estructura del factor del cuestionario del proceso de mindfulness (MPQ)**

**Resumen** Este estudio analizó la estructura del factor y la fiabilidad del cuestionario del proceso de *mindfulness* (Mindfulness Process Questionnaire [MPQ]) de 7 y de 8 ítems. El MPQ se diferencia de otras medidas psicológicas del *mindfulness* en que cuantifica el *mindfulness* como un proceso de ser consciente, en lugar de hacerlo como si se tratara de un estado. Los alfa de Cronbach se analizaron transversalmente y por dentro para establecer la fiabilidad general del MPQ. Se utilizó el análisis factorial exploratorio (EFA) para evaluar la estructura del factor de los 7 y de los 8 ítems del MPQ. Los resultados indicaron que 2 elementos reducían la fiabilidad general: el ítem 7 y el ítem 2 de los 8 ítems del MPQ, y el ítem 2 de los 7 ítems del MPQ. El EFA sugirió una estructura de 2 factores en el MPQ de 7 ítems y una estructura de 3 factores en el MPQ de 8 ítems.

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## Introduction

The mindfulness process questionnaire (MPQ) is one of the few mindfulness measures that focuses on the process of being mindful, rather than the outcome of being mindful (Erisman & Roemer, 2011). The process of being mindful, as well as trait mindfulness, has been associated with a number of positive outcomes; such as, reducing physical and psychological distress; improving quality of life and overall well-being; facilitating presence in the current moment; and helping to sustain positive emotions. With such findings, mindfulness has become an essential component to integrate within intervention strategies for a myriad of symptoms and diagnoses. Therefore, there is a need for a mindfulness measure that not only measures the process of being mindful but also one that exhibits sound psychometric properties.

The mindfulness process questionnaire (MPQ; Erisman & Roemer, 2011) has made little appearance in psychological literature. This could possibly be due to the fact that the MPQ is relatively new. It could also be due to the lack of existing research examining the psychometric properties of the MPQ. The MPQ is unique in that it is one of few measures that attempts to quantify the process of mindfulness, which is more closely related to the original concept of mindfulness as opposed to quantifying the traits of mindfulness, like many other mindfulness measures do (Carlson & Brown, 2005; Davis, Lau, Mark, & Cairns, 2009; Gill & Hodgkinson, 2007). Examining the reliability and factor structure of the mindfulness process questionnaire would add to the literature and may lead to providing evidence that this process measure could be used to assess the benefits of intervention strategies since it has been designed to focus on process, which is more aligned with the Eastern view of mindfulness (Erisman & Roemer, 2011). Without proper assessment of the psychometric properties of the MPQ professionals would be wary to utilize this measure with clients or even for basic research purposes. Additionally, as the number of mindfulness-based interventions increases it is vital that professionals not only use a measure that examines the process of being mindful, but also one that does so accurately and consistently.

## Mindfulness

Mindfulness, or more specifically the process of being mindful, originates from Buddhist philosophy (Lindahl, 2015). The process of mindfulness comprises of being mindful in the present moment with clear comprehension and directed toward discernment of the wholesome and unwholesome aspects of the current moment. Mindfulness has been adapted conceptually within a myriad of intervention techniques for varying psychological symptoms and diagnoses (Lindahl, 2015). The adapted conceptualization of mindfulness focuses on being present in the current moment while maintaining nonjudgment throughout the process (Erisman & Roemer, 2011). Due to Western psychology's incorporation of mindfulness, there have been a number of individuals that have raised concern in adapting this Eastern conceptualization into a Western field (Lindahl, 2015). Some argue that incorporating the conceptualization of mindfulness without

the ethical framework that coincides is culturally and ethically inappropriate; while others argue that mindfulness and mindfulness meditation are secular from the religious or philosophical roots of Buddhism (Lindahl, 2015). Of those concerned, they stress the importance of our understanding and correct implementation of mindfulness into our field, as well as underpin the cultural sensitivity of whether or not it is acceptable to utilize Eastern understandings for Westernized conditions (Turnbull & Dawson, 2006). Researchers are concerned that without proper social and cultural consideration, implementation of mindfulness could result in inadvertent consequences resulting from the revision of an Eastern concept to a Western one. Others urge professionals to undergo ethical training that presents the Buddhist foundation that coincides with the conceptualization of mindfulness, before utilizing mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs; Baer, 2015). Erisman and Roemer (2011) have adapted their conceptualization of mindfulness to incorporate the process of being mindful with the emphasis of being present in the moment and reflecting on the thoughts that coincide in a nonjudgmental manner, which is more closely related to the original Buddhist conception of mindfulness compared to other mindfulness measures (Baer et al., 2008; Davis et al., 2009; MacKillop & Anderson, 2007). Mindfulness, and the process of being mindful, exhibits its pertinence through diminishing physical and psychological anguish, as well as amplifying quality of life and overall wellness (Erisman & Roemer, 2011). Therefore, continuing to utilize reliable and valid mindfulness measures within psychological research is essential.

## Trait and process measures of mindfulness

The MPQ quantifies the process of being mindful, which closely relates to the original Buddhist concept of mindfulness (Erisman & Roemer, 2011). Other mindfulness measures within the literature operationally define mindfulness as a state, a single moment in time, or as a trait facilitated by meditation, rather than as a process (Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015). Examining mindfulness measures with samples consisting of individuals who practice meditation and those who do not has provided insight into the process of being mindful, with evidence that meditation experience facilitates the necessary skills needed to be mindful. Buddhist philosophy also perpetuates that long-term meditation fosters the necessary skills to be mindful (Baer et al., 2008). Therefore, one aim of mindfulness research has been the comparison of those with meditation experience and novice individuals based on different mindfulness measures (Davidson & Kaszniak, 2015).

With the increase of mindfulness research in recent years, a systematic review was conducted to evaluate the psychometric properties of self-reported mindfulness measures, specifically looking at reliability, validity, and responsiveness (Park, Spong, & Gross, 2013). The Mindful Attention and Awareness Scale (MAAS) is a unidimensional mindfulness measure conceptually adapted from the self-regulation theory (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Studies utilizing the MAAS found adequate internal consistency estimates with reported Cronbach's alphas ranging from .78 to .92

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