

**Enhancing Positive Outlook of CICL Using Mindfulness: A Convergent Parallel Study***De Leon, Jon Carlo M, Menardo, Jolina P., Magtabog-Suan, Charlene, Dominguez, Jemerson N.*

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Abstract - Mindfulness has been acknowledged in recent decades as both an aid in various health programs, as well as actual treatment for various conditions in both psychological and physical wellness. It has been empirically proven to relieve stress and pain, and even improve one's disposition, giving a practitioner a positive outlook in life. The research seeks to answer the question of whether a mindfulness program will improve the outlook of children in conflict with the law (CICL) aged eighteen to nineteen years old. Four (4) participants from the Bahay Kalinga juvenile center in Dasmariñas City, Cavite underwent twenty (20) minutes of mindfulness practices for five (5) straight days. There was a pre, mid, and post-test to determine their progress. The researchers used a convergent parallel mixed method design in which quantitative and qualitative data gathering were conducted at the same time, analyzed separately, and interpreted together. The results showed that participants' baseline scores in the positive outlook domain and psychological well-being increased in varying degrees during the treatment condition and upon returning to the baseline condition, scores of participants showed decrease or return to the baseline scores.

Keywords - mindfulness; meditation; children; outlook; psychology; Cavite

**Introduction**

In Republic Act No. 9344 of the Republic of the Philippines, Juvenile Justice, and Welfare Act of 2006, "Child in Conflict with the Law" refers to a child who is alleged as, accused of, or adjudged as, having committed an offense under Philippine laws. Since President Rodrigo Roa Duterte assumed office in 2016, the Philippine National Police (PNP) reported that crime has steadily decreased. In the article of Tupas (2022), the decrease of crime is attributed to enhanced police operations and the COVID-19 pandemic. But 2022 is significant because it is an election year, which happens every six years, where a new president will assume power, as well as the country slowly opening more than ever regarding activities and movement of people, since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country in 2019. Despite the said decrease in crime, juvenile delinquency has remained a big issue in society, and with congress, heavily covered by media, pushing to lower the age of criminal liability from fifteen years-old to twelve years-old. Although they have committed various criminal acts, they are still children. These are individuals who typically hail from the low socio-economic bracket, low attainment in education, low quality of life (QOL) and have had adverse childhood experiences (ACE). These situations affect a child's outlook and social skills. (Ferguson, Bovaird, & Mueller, 2001). In a study by Zitterkopf (2019), juvenile detention centers have had high recidivism and repeat offenders. In other countries such as the United States and New Zealand, institutions have included mindfulness-based interventions in detention centers which have yielded positive results such as feeling more relaxed and less-stressed. (Simpson et al, 2018).

The practice of mindfulness or mindful meditation has steadily been gaining popularity in the field of mental health, as well as other medical and physical health practices over the decades. It is practiced on its' own or as an adjunct to other modalities of healing such as pharmacology and movement. Mindful meditation is simply non-doing, of being where you already are, just focusing on the moment and the breath. (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). It has been described as direct attention to present experiences with an attitude of acceptance. (Bishop et al, 2004). It is rooted in eastern spiritual and philosophical practices, particularly those found in Buddhism and Yoga. Many empirical studies have been studied on the methods and benefits of mindfulness throughout the decades on various populations, genders, and ages. (Keng, Smoski & Robins, 2011). Buddhist meditation, from which the mindfulness practice of meditation is derived from is an age-old practice that originated in the Indian region and was developed to be a holistic system which combines meditation and breathing techniques, as well as Yogic physical poses. Although these modalities, as well as philosophies, began in the East, they have influenced the West and proponents of western medicine started to see the various benefits associated with consistent practice for both the body and the mind. Although these practices have existed for over two thousand years, the first formal mindfulness-based intervention used for health was founded in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center where he established what he called

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) with the aim of helping individuals cope with and manage stress and pain. (Dunning et al, 2019). Mindfulness has been integrated into western medicine practices with health professionals adding the practice as an intervention for various physical and psychological disorders. (Keng et al, 2011). Mindfulness based interventions (MBIs) have yielded positive results on cognition and mental health in children and adolescents. (Dunning et al, 2019). The methods to be used are guided meditations where a trained facilitator will guide the children in meditation using his voice and words, and the other method is the use of mindful breathing techniques, simply focusing on the breath.

With mindfulness having a reputation for being an intervention that focuses on the positive (Lindsay et al, 2018), this study would like to determine if mindfulness programs will influence the outlook of children in detention centers in the Philippine setting. Merriam-Webster defines outlook as a “point of view” or “the prospect of the future.” Since the population is comprised of children who are associated with the future generation of society, the study would like to determine if mindfulness will have an impact on how they will view their individual prospective futures. In a study on mindfulness by Kiken and Shook (2014), the results showed that mindfulness attenuates thoughts associated with negativity, while an article by Graves (2021) reported that mindfulness can boost positive thinking. Hence, this research aims to determine if mindfulness can be a viable intervention for Filipino children in conflict with the law during their stay in the institution.

The mindfulness to meaning theory conceptualized by Dr. Eric Garland, Ph.D., is a model by which cognition, emotion, and neurobiological processes are activated through mindfulness practice leading to states of psychological positivity and having realizations of meaning in times of stress and adversity. The theory asserts that mindfulness aids in allowing one to separate stressors from one’s center thereby having a state of awareness regarding information that can possibly cause stress and on the other end, what will not cause stress, and promotes resilience, positive outlook, and overall health (Garland & Fredrickson, 2015).

Mindfulness has been defined as a psychological state of awareness, and various practices such as tai chi, yoga and even walking or simply breathing which espouse this mental state, aid in achieving that state. It allows for non-judgement nor attachment to all thoughts and just simply being in the present moment. (Davis, D. & Hayes, J., 2012) The theory is holistic and involves a practitioner’s emotions and feelings which lead to optimism and a positive outlook in life. The researchers deemed it beneficial to introduce mindfulness to individuals in juvenile centers where outlook and quality of life are expected to be low. By introducing mindfulness techniques, participants are expected to gain tools to increase positive thoughts and emotions and change the way they look at their current situation and the future.

Participants of the study range from 18 to 19 years old, which is categorized under stage 5 of Erik Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development, in which they are expected to deal with identity versus confusion, and in which relationships play an important role in life (Feist, Feist, & Roberts, 2017). These are formative years where one starts to have a voice of one’s own, but still very impressionable and highly influenced by peers and their surroundings. During this phase, individuals begin to form their identity with the world which can also cause confusion leading to rebellion and even unhappiness (McLeod, 2018). This stage is crucial not just to an adolescent, but to one’s whole life as this sets the stage for what the person will transition to and become as an adult, and how they relate to the future regarding their identity as present-day children in conflict with the law. Hence, there have been empirical studies that have correlated mindfulness techniques with variables of positive psychology and positive functioning (Allen, J, Romate, J & Rajkumar, E. 2021).

With the steady growth in popularity of mindfulness practices all over the world, and some criminal institutions, both for adults and for children, introducing mindfulness as added intervention to aid in one’s rehabilitation (Lyons & Cantrell, 2016), we have yet to hear of a formal platform within our country’s penal systems, let alone centers that were established for children in conflict with the law. Thus, this study aims to instill awareness to the possibility of introducing a mindfulness program that is low-cost, does not need special equipment nor a special facility or place, to our juvenile detention centers. It paves the way for the practice to also be utilized outside the center by the children when their rehabilitation process has expired and is transitioning to life outside the center. All one needs is to invest a short amount of time in their schedule and be open to new experiences. Hence, the research would like to answer the question whether practicing mindfulness techniques such as mindful breathing, creative visualization, and gratitude meditation can increase children in conflict with the law’s outlook in life within a short period of time.

## Methods

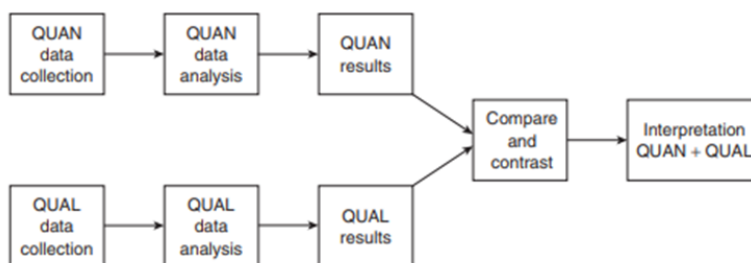
### Participants

Researchers used a purposive sampling technique in obtaining participants for the study. Purposive sampling as defined by Ritchie et. al., (2013) is a strategy of selecting participants or choosing a sample which will reflect a specific location or kind in relation to the criterion. Purposive sampling yields data that differs from that obtained by probability sampling. Nonetheless, by relying on many viewpoints, it can add value to quantitative and mixed-methods studies, exposing the relevance of informants' positionality in relation to the research in issue. (Robinsons, 2014). Participants were all Filipino males with ages ranging from 18 – 19 years old, stayed at the detention center for a minimum of nine (9) months and able to read and write. Participants of the study all have low to average pre-test scores in the psychological well-being scale and flourishing scale. Participants don't have confirmed medical and psychological conditions that may affect the results and mortality rate of the study.

### Design

The study utilized convergent parallel mixed method. According to Cresswell and Vicky (2016), this design is used by researchers if they want to compare the statistical result and qualitative findings directly, or if they want to expand and validate the result of qualitative research. Furthermore, as cited by Schoonenboom and Johnson (2017), in convergent parallel design, quantitative and qualitative research are conducted to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data. Hence, results will be analyzed separately but will be interpreted together as shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Flow diagram for convergent parallel mixed method design**



For the quantitative part of the study, the researchers utilized quasi-experimental design. In field situations where random assignment is difficult or impossible, quasi-experiments are most likely to be done. It is often used to assess the efficacy of a treatment, such as psychotherapy or an educational intervention (Price. et.al., 2013). Also, participants of this study were not randomly assigned since mindfulness intervention already has proven its efficacy. As stated by Harris et al. (2014), ethical considerations will not allow the withholding of an intervention that is already known to be effective. Accordingly, A-B-A design were utilized to allow for evaluation of the introduction of the treatment by comparing the dependent variable between the first two phases (A-B sequence) as well as evaluation of the removal of the treatment by comparing the dependent variable between the last two phases (B-A sequence). According to Kazdin (2020), this greatly reduces the possibility of a coincidental treatment effect, which may occur in the simpler A-B design. This is a type of single-case design having three phases: a baseline condition in which no treatment is present (Phase A), a treatment condition in which manipulation is introduced (Phase B), and a return to the no-treatment condition (Phase A).

Moreover, semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researchers to obtain qualitative data. These semi-structured interviews aimed to collect open-ended qualitative data, show participants thoughts, feelings, and opinions about certain topics, and to have an in-depth discussion about sensitive matters, if any.

### Procedure

The interview guide underwent validation from registered psychometricians with expertise in conducting study with CICL and on positive outlook in life. Afterwards, it was translated to the Filipino language by a professional in

consideration of participants capacity and limitations in reading and writing. The researchers sought the City Social Welfare and Development (CSWD) office's approval before conducting the study as part of the required procedure.

After completing all the necessary documents, the researchers visited the detention center in Cavite and began the study. They sought assistance from the house parent in identifying target participants. The house parent chose five (5) Filipino males aged 18-19.

Before conducting the intervention program, the researchers obtained the participants' pretest scores. It was a combination of quantitative and qualitative data which were collected concurrently. During the pretest, participants were asked to answer a 26-item standardized questionnaire which aimed to measure the participant's positive outlook of the future. The tool was a combination of an 8-item Flourishing scale developed by Deiner, E. et.al., (2010) and an 18-item Psychological Well Being Scale by Ryff & Keyes (1995). Simultaneously, the researchers interviewed each participant with the goal of building rapport, understanding their outlook in life, and addressing questions through a semi-structured interview.

After gathering all the pretest results, the participants underwent a mindfulness program crafted by a certified Yoga, meditation and mindfulness teacher (see appendix A) who was trained in several modalities and styles including traditional Yoga meditation and Pranayama (breath control) under various lineages such as Rishikul Yogshala, Bhrama Kumaris, Sahaj Marg and Yin Meditation, as well as creative visualization under the Silva Method US and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) under Palouse Mindfulness. The researcher and mindfulness teacher led the participants for five (5) straight days in several mindfulness practices such as mindful breathing, creative visualization, mindful gratitude meditation and laughter yoga. During the week, a mid-test and a check-in were conducted with the participants in which they were asked to answer the rearranged 26-item questionnaire and be interviewed again. Questions for both the quantitative and qualitative method were purposely rearranged to eliminate testing threat or the participants tendency to show higher productivity at the end of the study because the same test was administered. Through the mid-test, the researchers were able to ensure that the program did not bring any negative impact to participants overall psychological wellbeing. Also, the scores were utilized to check participants' states during the intervention proper. After five (5) consecutive sessions of the mindfulness program, posttests were administered using the same tool. Participants, staff, and house parents were oriented regarding the possibility of conducting the same mindfulness procedure on their own. In this way, there will be sustainability of experienced improvement and noticeable interest among the participants.

The data from the quantitative and qualitative methodology were analyzed separately and interpreted together as part of the convergent parallel mixed method procedure.

#### Flourishing Scale (FS)

This scale is a 7-point-likert scale ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement and consist of eight items describing important aspects of one's outlook and functioning such as positive relationships, sense of competence, and meaning, as well as purpose in life. (Diener et al., 2010). Individual scores can range from eight (8) to fifty-six (56), which implies strong agreement on all scales. A series of studies in Flourishing Scale (FS) demonstrated high reliability Cronbach's alpha of .78 to .95. (Diener et al., 2010). A recent study found that FS has strong longitudinal invariance across sex in which FS is a reliable measure of well-being in adolescence within a two-month interval (Tan et al., 2021). Hence, different language adaptations demonstrated a similar single-factor structure (Didino et al., 2019; Ramírez-Maestre et al., 2017; Tong & Wang, 2017; Perera et al., 2018; Sadauska & Koļesovs, 2021; Romano et al., 2020; Buckley et. al., 2021). In the current study, the research utilized the eight-item scale following a less than two-month interval testing of the previous research.

#### Scale of Psychological Wellbeing (SPWB)

This scale was developed by psychologist Carol D. Ryff originally composed of 42-items to measure six aspects of wellbeing and happiness: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance (Ryff et al., 2007 adapted from Ryff, 1989). Different versions of SPWB (20-item, 14-item, 9-item, and 3-item) have been widely tested in a variety of contexts among adult samples (Gao & McLellan, 2018). Hence, in a study of SPWB by Chen et al. (2012) suggested that samples' characteristics are important in the variation of SPWB factorial structure, such as cultural background (Cheng & Chan, 2005), gender (Burns & Machin,

2008), and the most recently discussed, age (Ryff & Singer, 2006; Springer et. al, 2011). While the Hong Kong study provided promising evidence of applying the SPWB to adolescents (Chan et al., 2019), a recent Chinese study suggests that the sub-scales of the SPWB had satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach  $\alpha \geq .70$ ) except for the sub-scale of autonomy with Cronbach alpha of .60 (Gao & McLellan, 2018). It shows fairly low item internal consistency on autonomy sub-scale. However, according to cross-cultural scholars, it is not surprising for the sample to obtain a low internal consistency for autonomy items since, in China, having a collectivistic society, interdependence and obedience are highly valued (Kagitcibasi, 2013). Nonetheless, further research is needed to make the items more relevant and appropriate to adolescents as well as across cultures (Gao & McLellan, 2018). Hence, in this study, the researchers opted to utilize the 18-item version of SPWB keeping the autonomy subscale items included to understand the subscale's appropriateness to Filipino culture and avoid the tendency of having this as an unforeseen external factor. The standardized short version of the SPWB was utilized with the consideration of possible subjective test fatigue increased with increasing-time-on-task (Ackerman & Kanfer, 2009). Therefore, participants' tendency to be impatient during the data gathering was controlled (Carroll et. al, 2006; Miyazaki et.al, 2012; Drake, 2020).

Accordingly, these two scales were translated to the Filipino language by a professional considering the participants reading skills capacity.

### Qualitative Measures

A total of 18-item open-ended questions were asked to participants at the same phase as quantitative measures. Questions are composed of three (3) main parts; rapport building (4), motive or the topic (12), and closing (2). The motive questions include topics to explore participant's passion, positive relations with others, and outlook in life. During the post-intervention, an addition of two (2) motive questions were asked to participants in relation to the mindfulness activities they have experienced. This is to forthright identify participants perspective/s and positive or negative experience/s from the intervention program. These guide questions were validated by three (3) identified subject matter experts and was translated to the Filipino language by a professional.

### Data Analysis

Hypotheses were tested using the Friedman test to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between scores from multiple testing phases. This test is, in most cases, utilized for non-parametric one-way repeated measures analysis of variance by ranks (Baldwin, 2019). The results were then validated through visual inspection of A-B-A design allowing comparison of pre-mid-post for quantitative data (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2016). In this study, participants were measured and analyzed multiple times to see changes from mindfulness intervention and group means in pre-mid-post.

On the other hand, to analyze the results of qualitative data, researchers used the deductive approach of thematic analysis in which the latter approached the interview responses with preconceived themes, based on theory and research hypothesis. Consequently, the researchers followed the manual procedure of thematic analysis from familiarization, coding, themes generation, and themes naming.

### Ethical Considerations

The researchers complied with two (2) necessary documents that were required by the institution before conducting their study. First was the Informed Consent Form (ICF), which outlines the research's goals, methods, and procedures. It also further discussed participants' right to decline and withdraw from the study. Also, the participants' anonymity and confidentiality of all the information and data obtained from the study were secured and would be kept private. The second document complied by the researchers was a formal letter addressed to the City Mayor of Dasmariñas City, Cavite, asking permission to allow the researchers to conduct the experiment in the institution where CICL's were held.

The mindfulness program was crafted by an expert and certified mindfulness teacher. The researchers underwent an orientation in mindfulness and training in leading the step-by-step exercises to ensure preparedness and competence in conducting the study. Further, a debriefing with the participants was conducted after the five (5) consecutive sessions, to manage participants' expectations and gain a better understanding of the research goal. Due to participants restrictions to contact researchers directly, they were asked to coordinate with their houseparent should they have

clarifications and questions to the latter. Staff and house parents, on the other hand, underwent an orientation and were given access to researchers contact details. Supervision of a registered psychologist was not sought due to restrictions provided by the institution with the number of allowed visitors, rather, researchers ensured the presence of a houseparent in every scheduled session as well as close monitoring of participants by the staff in charge before, during, and after the engagement.

## Results and Discussion

This part holds a detailed presentation of data analysis and the results of both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the study. The participants were initially composed of five (5) male CICL with one (1) valid withdrawal due to a change in court hearing schedule. Hence, a total of four (4) participants were able to complete the procedure of the study.

The table below shows the mean scores and mean ranks of the pretest, midtest, and posttest of the scales that the researchers have used. Since the data obtained in this study was nonparametric, Friedman's Test was utilized through the use of SPSS application.

**Table 1. Mean Ranks: Purpose in Life Pretest, Midtest, & Posttest Scores**  
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank
Pretest (Purpose in Life)	4	13.75	2.217	2.13
Midtest (Purpose in Life)	4	15.50	2.082	2.75
Posttest (Purpose in Life)	4	11.00	1.414	1.13

Table 1 shows the mean scores and mean ranks between the pretest, midtest, and posttest of the purpose in life scores. With a total of N=4 participants, the mean score for the pretest was 13.75 with a mean rank of 2.13, while the midtest obtained a mean score of 15.50 with a mean rank of 2.75. By comparing the mean rank of the pretest and Midtest, we can see that there was an increase in the mean score from pretest to midtest. Furthermore, it decreases on the posttest with a mean score of 11.00 with a mean rank of 1.13

**Table 2. Purpose in Life Friedman Test Results (using SPSS)**  
Test Statistic

N	4
Chi-Square	5.733
df	2
Asymptotic Significance	.057

The researchers obtained  $(2) = 5.733$ ,  $p = 0.057$ , which indicates that there is no significant difference between the pretest, midtest and posttest scores but as it shows in the table, there is a close to significant difference. Thus, the researchers assume that there is still a significant difference between the scores which can also be supported with their mean score and mean ranks and can be improved.

**Table 3. Mean Ranks: Flourishing Scale Pretest, Midtest, & Posttest Scores**  
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Rank
Pretest (Purpose in Life)	4	49.50	1.291	2.13
Midtest (Purpose in Life)	4	50.50	.577	2.75
Posttest (Purpose in Life)	4	47.25	1.500	1.13

Table 3 shows the mean scores and mean ranks between the pretest, midtest, and posttest of the flourishing scale scores. With a total of N=4 participants, the mean score for the pretest was 49.50 with a mean rank of 2.13, while the midtest obtained a mean score of 50.50 with a mean rank of 2.75. Consistent with the purpose in Life Score, there was

an increase from the pretest to Midtest scores then decreases on the posttest with a mean score of 47.25 with a mean rank of 1.13.

**Table 4. Flourishing Scale Score Friedman Test Results (using SPSS)  
Test Statistics**

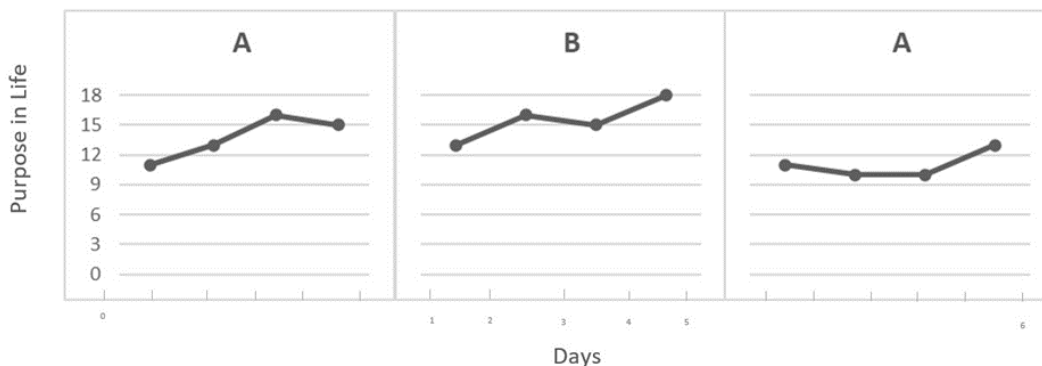
<b>N</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Chi-Square</b>	<b>6.615</b>
<b>df</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Asymptotic Significance</b>	<b>.037</b>

Table 4 shows that there is significant difference between the pretest, midtest and posttest scores,  $(2) = 6.615, p = 0.037$ . Thus, this indicates that with the flourishing scale, it supports the claim that mindfulness can really enhance the positive outlook of CICL. In fact, when the intervention was withdrawn, there was a notable decrease on the participants scores which is consistent with the obtained mean scores and mean rank of the flourishing scale.

In support, the researchers also utilized visual inspection to show the trend, level, and latency of the dependent variable across the baseline-treatment-baseline condition. Meanwhile, thematic analysis was utilized to show the result of the qualitative data.

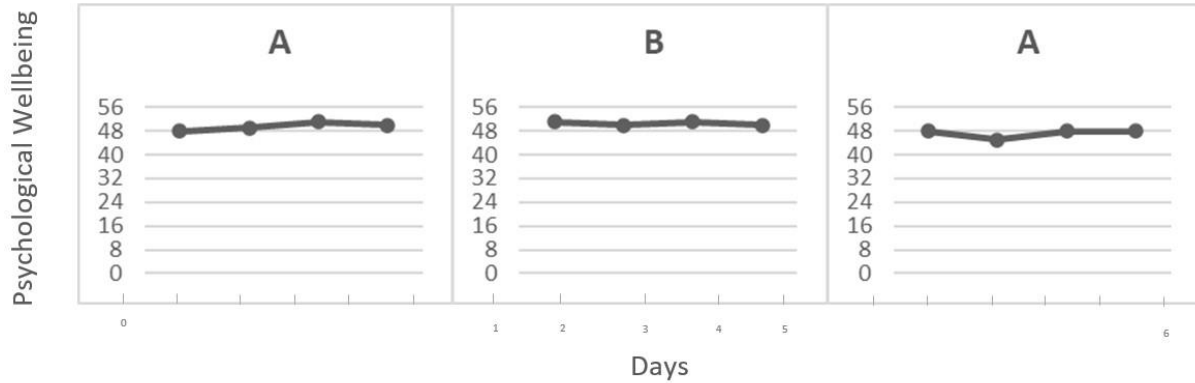
The analysis through visual inspection in Fig. 2 showed that mindfulness intervention has an immediate effect on participants' outlook or purpose in life. To know whether there's improvement due to intervention conducted, participants purpose in life was measured before intervention, during intervention, in five (5) consecutive days, and after intervention with two (2) days delay. Under condition A, the level is low-average and has an increasing trend. Under condition B, the level is higher than under condition A and the trend is increasing. Under condition A again, the level is significantly lower than the first time and the trend is almost zero. For each change, latency is short, and variability is low, showing that the treatment or the mindfulness intervention is the reason for the change in participants' outlook.

**Figure 2. Visual Inspection of Psychological Well-being Scale Result (Purpose in life dimension)**



These results are consistent with the participants' result to the Flourishing Scale. As shown in the graph of Fig. 3, under condition A, level is average and has no trend. Under condition B, the level is higher than under condition A and has no trend. Under condition A again, the level is significantly lower than the first time and the trend is still almost zero. This was measured concurrent with PWB scale, thus, for each change, latency is short, and variability is low, showing consistency with data.

**Figure 3. Visual Inspection of Flourishing Scale Result (I.e. one's positive relationships, feelings of competence, and meaning and purpose in life)**



For the qualitative part, as demonstrated in Table 5, the researchers analyzed the data through a deductive approach. Preconceived themes were anchored to the theory of the Pleasant Life: Past, Present and the Future of Martin Seligman to be able to determine if mindfulness really enhances CICL’s outlook in life.

**Dealing with the Past**

The study has shown that participants are still dealing with the consequences of their actions. Others experienced boredom, “It’s hard, but somewhat ok, same thing over and over in this place, now reaching two years.” (Participant 4). But the others view it in a positive way and they become determined, “I want my life to improve,” and faithful, “Because of what I learned, although I’m not ok yet, my day went well with prayer.” (Participant 1).

**Happiness in the Present**

Most of the participants reported feelings of happiness and relaxation, at the same time, their outlook regarding the future also increased positively. They reported that mindfulness helped them to feel more relaxed and gain self-control. They expressed their gratitude for the new experience and learnings and appreciated how it gave a break from their routine activities, “We just do the same routine here. Now, there’s a new activity to do. I feel this is good that there are such activities, so we don’t get bored.” (Participant 1), “Feels good and light, lessens the heavy emotions. I do this sometimes on my own.” (Participant 3).

**Optimism about the Future**

Participants optimism and positivity about the future was notable after the mindfulness sessions. Participants were hopeful and determined to change and progress to be able to be connected again with their respective families. It was evident when participants said that “I will overcome this and be able to study.” (Participant 4), and “If I am released, I think life would be brighter.” (Participant 2). This contrasts with how they perceived the future before attending the program, “We won’t be able to say what is waiting for us in the future.” (Participants 2, 3 & 4). Lastly, one participant said outright during one of the sessions “I long to be released so I can leave this place and be with my family.” (Participant 2).

**Table 5.**  
**Thematic analysis of responses**

Codes	Themes	Example
Determination		I don’t know how, but I want my life to improve.
Faith	Dealing with the past	Because of what I learned, although I’m not ok yet, my day went well with prayer.
Boredom		It’s hard, but somewhat ok, same thing over and over in this place, now reaching two years.



Relaxed	Happiness in the present	Feels good and light, lessens the heavy emotions. I do this sometimes on my own.
		I feel relieved.
		It's happy and relaxing.
		Stress is lessened.
Thankful		Because of the wrong crowd, I ended up here. I'm very thankful that I survived after being stabbed in the neck.
		I'm very happy because you are here, able to help me.
		I'm happy because of the learnings.
New learning experience		We just do the same routine here. Now, there's a new activity to do. I feel this is good that there are such activities, so we don't get bored.
		We won't be able to say what is waiting for us in the future, but hopefully it will be ok, hopefully bright.
Hopeful	Optimism about the future	I think I've changed a lot in the span of a year.
		Hopefully, I'll be free by then.
		If I am released, I think life would be brighter.
		I will overcome this and be able to study.
Belongingness		I long to be released so I can leave this place and be with my family.

Juvenile delinquency has remained a big issue in Philippine society. As Filipinos continue to plant the seeds of hope to children, institutions in the Philippines must continue to develop systems in response to expectations of the community. Hence, as mindfulness has proven its efficacy for decades as an intervention focusing on improving one's well-being (Lindsay et al, 2018), this study would like to determine if a mindfulness program will have a positive effect on the outlook of children inside detention centers in the Philippine setting.

While most of the participants expressed their gratitude towards the institution for providing activities that make them feel better while staying in the center (i.e., prayer sessions, providing books, alternative learning systems), we have yet to hear of a formal platform within our country's penal systems that was established for children in conflict with

the law. With the results of this study, the researchers hope to instill awareness on the possibility of introducing mindfulness practices that are easy, brief, and low-cost as intervention that does not need any special equipment nor a special facility or a place for juvenile detention staff to conduct.

As the result of this research shows, brief mindfulness-based interventions, after five (5) consecutive sessions and as brief as twenty (20) minutes a day led to improvements in participants' outlook in life and overall psychological well-being. There has been similar research which supported the idea through the conduct of brief mindfulness interventions to sustain effectiveness of the program (Howarth et al. 2019; Sousa et al. 2021).

It was observed that participants initially had a hard time sharing their experiences and were slightly apprehensive about the practice since all of them have never experienced mindfulness, and some have never heard of it at all. Throughout the five (5) days, participants showed openness in sharing their experiences and perceptions regarding life and the future. The qualitative data were analyzed deductively based on the theory of Martin Seligman in which the responses were coded and grouped into three (3) identified themes; how participants deal with the Past, Present, and their thoughts about the Future. The results showed that the participants are still dealing with the consequences of their actions, and experience boredom, while some were feeling determined, and keeping faith or maintaining a close relationship with a divine being. In terms of their present state, participants were generally happy and relaxed. Lastly, when the researchers asked about their general, short term, and long-term outlook, participants showed notable improvements on how they described their future and purpose in life compared to pre intervention. Statements such as "It's ok." (Participant 3), "Not sure" (Participant 2) during pre-intervention were converted into more hopeful statements such as "I'll be able to study again." (Participants 1 & 4) and "I'm sure I'll be able to get out and see my family again." (Participants 2 & 3). Participants showed a broadened perspective and became more specific about what they think will happen in the following weeks and year to come. Descriptions of how they perceived their future in the short term and long term were, noticeably, elaborated and more specific during the mindfulness program. Excitement about what will happen to them after detention was present which contrasts with how they perceived the future before going through mindfulness activities, and as soon as the program was terminated. Moreover, gratitude for learning mindfulness exercises which broke their day-to-day routine (e.g., praying, studying, playing chess, and other recreational activities) was verbally expressed by the participants and observed by the researchers. Hence, the interest to sustain the program even after their engagement to the study was shared during the last session and posttest interview.

These results support the mindfulness to meaning theory of Dr. Garland which states that mindfulness is not just cognition, but the integration of cognition and emotion. Mindfulness leads one's positive outlook in life or realizations of one's meaning in times of adversities (Garland & Fredrickson, 2015). The researchers were also able to align the findings with Martin Selligman's pleasant life toolkit and positive psychology where participants perceptions about the future and constructive thinking about their past experiences enabled them to gain greater happiness in the present. (Seligman, 2022).

With the knowledge that a mindfulness program withdrawal can have a negative effect on one's outlook and psychological well-being, the researchers suggest that a seminar on mindfulness be conducted to the staff of the detention facility including house parents, social workers, and admin on duty so that they would be able to conduct a brief session to CICL based on the schedule and frequency they wish to have it, as well as ensure sustainability of the improvement on positive outlook.

To further improve the study, future researchers may opt to focus on either quantitative or qualitative methods to take advantage of a specific feature rather than having a mixed approach. A quantitative study on the effect of mindfulness to CICL may provide more valid and reliable data gathering, while a purely qualitative study may impart more exploratory findings and inductive analysis of data. Moreover, participants of this study were all Male from 18-19 years of age. Future researchers, without time limitations, may wish to study younger populations and of different genders which will require more time for preparation and study validation by the research committee. Lastly, a longitudinal study on the effect of mindfulness program to CICL in various institutions in the Philippines may provide a more comprehensive result.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has provided valuable insights into the potential of mindfulness programs to positively impact the outlook of children in conflict with the law (CICL). The findings suggest that engaging in mindfulness practices over a short period led to improvements in both the participants' positive outlook and psychological well-being. This indicates that mindfulness may serve as a promising intervention for this vulnerable population.

The utilization of a convergent parallel mixed method design allowed for a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences and outcomes. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data provided a nuanced perspective on the effectiveness of the mindfulness program.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the limitations of this study, such as the small sample size and the short duration of the intervention. Future research should explore the long-term effects of mindfulness programs on CICL and consider incorporating a larger and more diverse sample to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

Overall, this research contributes to the growing body of literature supporting the benefits of mindfulness in promoting well-being, particularly among marginalized populations such as CICL. By incorporating mindfulness interventions into rehabilitation programs, policymakers and practitioners may offer holistic support to young individuals involved in the juvenile justice system, ultimately fostering their personal growth and positive reintegration into society.

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