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Notice for the PhD Viva Voce Examination

Mr Anu Varghese, Registration Number: 2270189, PhD Scholar at the School of Psychological Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University) will defend his PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Friday, 28 August 2026 at 10.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R&D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

Title of the Thesis	:	Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Relationship Enhancement Intervention on Relational Mindfulness, Pro-Partner Dispositions and Behaviors among Married Individuals
Discipline	:	Psychology
External Examiner - I	:	Dr Joseph Antony Jacob Associate Professor and Vice-Principal Postgraduate and Research Department of Social Work Loyola College Sterling Road, Nungambakkam Chennai - 600034 Tamil Nadu
External Examiner - II	:	Dr Dilwar Hussain Professor Department of Humanities and Social Sciences Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati Assam – 781039
Supervisor	:	Dr Thaddeus Alfonso Associate Professor School of Psychological Sciences CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Bengaluru - 560029 Karnataka

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Registrar (Academics)

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 06 August 2026

ABSTRACT

Relational mindlessness can lead individuals to engage in overinterpretation and impulsive reactions during stress-inducing interactions with significant others, undermining positive relationship quality, with special attention to the rising trend of marital dissolution in Indian metropolitan areas. Therefore, this research aims to examine the effectiveness of the Mindfulness-Based Relationship Enhancement (MBRE) intervention, which incorporates dyadic mindfulness practices and related well-being components to cultivate relationship

mindfulness and promote pro-partner dispositions and behaviors among married individuals. For this purpose, the study employed a quasi-experimental, non-equivalent comparison group design with pretest, posttest, and follow-up assessments. Using a purposive sampling strategy, data were collected from ($N = 595$) married individuals from Kerala aged 25 to 40, who were in the first ten years of their marriage. Based on low or moderate mean scores on the Relationship Mindfulness Measure (RMM) and a non-random allocation strategy, the screened participants ($N = 100$) were recruited into the study ($n = 54$) and non-equivalent

comparison ($n = 46$) groups prior to the intervention phase. The MBRE intervention consisted of 8 sessions, each lasting 2.5 hours and delivered once per week, in community settings. Pro-partner dispositions and behaviors were assessed using the Experiences in Close Relationships-Short Scale (ECRS), Relational Interdependent Self-Construct (RISC) Scale, the Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ), and the Emotional Forgiveness Scale (EFS). A two-way repeated-measures ANOVA and Bonferroni post hoc analyses in IBM SPSS Statistics version 23 showed a significant intervention effect on study outcomes with moderate to large effect sizes. The results regarding relationship mindfulness ($F(2) = 54.1, p < 0.00, \eta^2 p = 0.41$), non-judgment ($F(1.54) = 15.8, p < 0.00, \eta^2 p = 0.17$), non-reactivity ($F(2) = 9.1, p < 0.00, \eta^2 p = 0.10$), insecure adult attachment ($F(2) = 23.8, p < 0.00, \eta^2 p = 0.23$), RISC ($F(2) = 10.7, p < 0.00, \eta^2 p = 0.12$), gratitude ($F(2) = 32.5, p < 0.00, \eta^2 p = 0.30$), and emotional forgiveness ($F(1.73) = 15.7, p < 0.00, \eta^2 p = 0.17$), indicated differential positive changes between the study and comparison groups. Consistent with Karremans et al.'s model of the mindfulness mechanism and the broaden-and-build theoretical perspective in shaping relationship-specific processes, the results demonstrated MBRE's distinct potential to cultivate context-specific mindfulness and promote secure attachment, self-other interconnectedness, and positive psychological constructs, such as gratitude and emotional forgiveness, among married individuals. The dyadic mindfulness practices and related psycho-education components of the MBRE program are an effective therapeutic resource for relationship trainers and therapists to assist married individuals with attachment vulnerabilities and insufficient positive emotions due to relational mindlessness.

Keywords: MBRE, non-equivalent comparison, positive psychological constructs, pro-relationship dispositions, quasi-experiment, relationship mindfulness, young couples

Publications:

1. **Varghese, A., & Alfonso, T. (2025).** A Scoping Review of Relationship-Specific Mindfulness and Factors Influencing Psychological and Relational Well-Being in Intimate Partner Relationships. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 51(7), 732–749. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0092623X.2025.2537866>
2. **Varghese, A. & Alfonso, T. (2026).** A Scoping Review of Mindfulness Instruments: Mapping Available Uni- and Multi-Dimensional Relationship-specific Measures in Couple Contexts. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 55(4), Accepted.
3. **Varghese, A. & Alfonso, T. (2026).** Relationship mindfulness, gratitude, and emotional forgiveness among married individuals: Moderating role of relational self-construal. *Family Relations*, Under Revision.