



# Comparison of the effectiveness of self-compassion-based mindfulness package with mindfulness-based cognitive therapy package on emotional in overweight women

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**Abstract**  
**Aim:** The purpose of this research was to compare the effectiveness of self-compassion-based mindfulness package with mindfulness-based cognitive therapy package on emotional eating in overweight women.  
**Method:** The current research was practical and semi-experimental with a pre-test-post-test design along with a follow-up period. Among the overweight women in Isfahan who referred to weight control and weight loss centers and offices in 2019, 45 people were selected by convenience sampling and randomly assigned to the research groups. The research tool was the Van Strien et al Dutch Eating Behavior Questionnaire (1986). Each of the self-compassion-based mindfulness groups by Haji Rostam (2019) and the mindfulness-based cognitive therapy group Based on the approach of Teasdale et al (1995) underwent eight treatment sessions, and the control group did not receive any treatment. The results were analyzed using SPSS software and using variance analysis method with repeated measurements.  
**Results:** The findings showed that the mindfulness package based on self-compassion and the cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness on the desire to eat ( $F = 7.15, P = 0.001$ ) and eating behavior ( $F = 5.74, P = 0.002$ ) have had a lasting positive effect on overweight women.  
**Conclusion:** In this way, in order to improve the desire to eat and eating behavior in overweight women, the mindfulness package based on self-compassion and the cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness can be used.  
**Keywords:** *overweight, self-compassion-based mindfulness package, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy package, emotional eating.*

## Introduction

Overweight, a chronic disorder and a risk factor for a range of diseases such as Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, certain types of cancer, and hypertension (Crow, Randowa, Tsigos, Kaltsas, & Martin, 2018). This public health issue has been on the rise since the first half of the 20th century and is considered the most significant nutritional disorder and social problem globally (Lin & Li, 2021; Serkato & Fonseca, 2019), with its prevalence increasing in both developed and developing countries, including Iran (Azizi, Hosseini, & Hosseini, 2021; Tai, Barcelona, & Ganderson, 2018). The importance of investigating this issue stems from the fact that overweight is not only a precursor to physical health problems but also recognized as one of the interferences between physical and mental health and a factor in behavioral problems (Sobel-Goldberg & Rabinowitz, 2016). Overweight is bidirectionally linked with psychological disturbances and psychiatric states, such that many psychological issues can be primary and stable factors leading to obesity, and conversely, overweight can lead to many adverse psychological outcomes and dissatisfaction with life (Narimani & Nemati, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to encourage individuals who are overweight to take action to lose weight, and in this regard, attention to certain constructs related to weight loss is important.

Based on the theoretical foundations and empirical evidence presented, mindfulness and self-compassion therapy techniques have positive effects on emotional eating in overweight individuals, but a gap existed in the lack of attention to the specific characteristics of overweight women, which sometimes reduced the long-term effectiveness of these techniques. Hence, the researcher in this study aimed to identify the specific characteristics of overweight women and arrange the techniques of these two treatments based on these identified characteristics, to design a self-compassion-based mindfulness package, to ensure the lasting impact of both treatments on the emotional eating of overweight women. Furthermore, considering the empirical evidence on the usefulness of a cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness to help overweight women, this treatment package was used as a basis to determine the effectiveness of the developed package. Therefore, given the prevalence of overweight among Iranian women and the susceptibility of overweight to emotional eating, the present study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. Is the self-compassion-based mindfulness package effective in improving emotional eating in overweight women?
2. Is there a significant difference in the effectiveness of the self-compassion-based mindfulness package and the cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness in improving emotional eating in overweight women?

## Method

The current research was practical and semi-experimental with a pre-test-post-test design along with a follow-up period. Among the overweight women in Isfahan who referred to weight control and weight loss centers and offices in 2019, 45 people were selected by convenience sampling and randomly assigned to the research groups. The research tool was the Van Strien et al Dutch Eating Behavior Questionnaire (1986). Each of the self-compassion-based mindfulness groups by Haji Rostam (2019) and the mindfulness-based cognitive therapy group Based on the approach of Teasdale et al (1995) underwent eight treatment sessions, and the

control group did not receive any treatment. The results were analyzed using SPSS software and using variance analysis method with repeated measurements.

### Results

The findings showed that the mindfulness package based on self-compassion and the cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness on the desire to eat ( $F = 7.15$ ,  $P = 0.001$ ) and eating behavior ( $F = 5.74$ ,  $P = 0.002$ ) have had a lasting positive effect on overweight women.

### Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to compare the effectiveness of a self-compassion-based mindfulness package with a cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness on emotional eating (desire to eat and eating behavior) in overweight women. The results of the study indicated that both the self-compassion-based mindfulness package and the cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness had positive and lasting effects on emotional eating (desire to eat and eating behavior) in overweight women. In other words, both the self-compassion-based mindfulness package and the cognitive therapy package based on mindfulness led to a reduction in emotional eating (desire to eat and eating behavior) in overweight women.

This study, like previous studies, had limitations that should be considered when generalizing the results. One of the limitations of the current study was that the sample was limited to overweight women in the city of Isfahan, thus caution should be exercised in generalizing the results to other populations. A short-term follow-up of three months was another limitation of the present study. Finally, in light of the study's findings, it is recommended that professionals use both self-compassion-based mindfulness and cognitive therapy based on mindfulness interventions to reduce emotional eating in overweight women, in order to ensure the continuation of dietary and exercise programs.

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