



Evaluation of the effectiveness of mindfulness training on high-risk and procrastination behaviors and fear of success among students

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Abstract

Aim: The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of mindfulness interventions on high-risk behaviors and procrastination and fear of students' success. **Method:** The method of this research is quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test with a control group. The statistical population consists of female high school students in the city of Jaghtai in the academic year 2021-22. The study sample was 30 people. Among the students, 30 people were selected by available sampling and then 15 people were randomly assigned to the experimental group and 15 people to the control group. Then the academic procrastination questionnaires of Solomon and Roth Blum (1984), fear of Zuckerman and Allison success (1979) and Mohammadkhani high risk behaviors questionnaire (2016) were given to the statistical sample. After the training sessions of Segal et al. (2002) mindfulness for the experimental groups, post-test was performed. The collected data were analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance and SPSS software. Analysis of variance with repeated measures and SPSS software were used to analyze the data. **Results:** The results showed that mindfulness training on high-risk behaviors ($F=78.35$, $p<0.001$), procrastination ($F=19.65$, $p<0.001$), and fear of success ($F=21.23$, $p<0.001$) was effective in female high school students. **Conclusion:** The results of this study indicate that mindfulness training has a significant effect on high-risk behaviors and procrastination and fear of success among students and can be effective in improving the problems of students.

Keywords: *mindfulness, risky behaviors, procrastination, fear of success.*

Introduction

Adolescence is one of the most critical periods of life. In general, most theories agree that adolescents face many tensions and, in addition, various conflicts arise in the parent-adolescent relationship (Kumpfer & Magalhais, 2018). Adolescence, as it brings opportunities, also brings risks. Teenagers are on the verge of falling in love, entering the world of work, and participating in the company of adults. But adolescence is also a time when some teenagers engage in behaviors that reduce their choices and limit their opportunities and possibilities. Today, researchers are more and more focused on how to help adolescents who have an unfavorable environment avoid the risks that can prevent their development and the blossoming of their potential abilities (Gansner, Bifort, Cook, Leahy, Colon et al., 2019). Mainly, adolescence is associated with conflicting feelings, physiological movements and tense emotions. Perhaps no developmental period causes more confusion for parents, teachers, and clinicians than adolescence (Coopy, Martz, Hardy, Zeuker, & Hitzig, 2019). Adolescence is a stage of development with a high risk for substance abuse, risky sexual behaviors, and adjustment problems (Fagan & Novak, 2018).

The society achieves progress and success if it has healthy and cheerful people, and these people have evolved by establishing healthy relationships and their personality grows. Meanwhile, we cannot ignore procrastinating people (Rostam et al., 2013). Procrastination is one of the things that researchers have always discussed. Procrastination causes students to stay away from academic success and progress (Sokolowska, 2019). A large number of researchers have shown in their studies that procrastination in academic affairs has many harmful effects and sometimes leads to probation and even dropping out of school, and this factor has negative effects on the education system (Ferrari, 2017).

Among the types of psychological treatments such as biofeedback, mental imagery, cognitive therapy, and the method based on mindfulness, there is a group intervention that seems to be a promising help in the treatment of various psychological problems, as cognitive therapy based on mindfulness focusing on Individual and interpersonal cognitions and feelings at present create mental peace for the individual and increase the adaptation and tolerance of the individual against physical and psychological pressures (Crane, 2009). Mindfulness can be described as a way to pay attention to what is present now and not judge it, in fact, mindfulness means thinking about the current situation without predicting what will happen in the future (Rosenzog et al. , 2016; Wang, 2019). Concerning the cases mentioned above and the fact that researchers recently showed that mindfulness interventions have been very effective in similar cases, it can be acknowledged that mindfulness causes a person to be completely focused on the present and his past and future. (Volstad, 2018) The research results of Wang (2019) and Marsh et al. (2012) showed that mindfulness effectively reduces depression and anxiety and improves mental health.

Therefore, this research aimed to investigate the impact of mindfulness interventions on high-risk behaviors and procrastination and fear of success among students. The current research sought to answer the following questions:

- 1- Was mindfulness training effective on high-risk behaviors, procrastination and fear of students' success in the post-exam phase?
- 2- Was mindfulness training on high-risk behaviors, procrastination and fear of students' success sustainable in the follow-up phase?

Method

The method of this research is quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test with a control group. The statistical population consists of female high school students in the city of Jaghtai in the academic year 2021-22. The study sample was 30 people. Among the students, 30 people were selected by available sampling and then 15 people were randomly assigned to the experimental group and 15 people to the control group. Then the academic procrastination questionnaires of Solomon and Roth Blum (1984), fear of Zuckerman and Allison success (1979) and Mohammadkhani high risk behaviors questionnaire (2016) were given to the statistical sample. After the training sessions of Segal et al. (2002) mindfulness for the experimental groups, post-test was performed. The collected data were analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance and SPSS software. Analysis of variance with repeated measures and SPSS software were used to analyze the data.

Results

The average of all variables in the post-test and follow-up phase of the experimental group was associated with a decrease in the average, if no evidence of this change was observed in the control group. The results of the analysis of variance of the repeated measurement of several variables among the studied groups in the variables of procrastination, fear of success and risky behaviors showed that the effect between the subject (group) is significant and it means that at least one of the groups with each other. In at least one of the variables of procrastination, fear of success and risky behaviors are different. The within-subject effect (time) was also significant for the research variables, meaning there was a change in at least one of the average variables from pre-test to follow-up. The variables of procrastination, fear of success and risky behaviors in the mindfulness training group were significant in the post-test compared to the pre-test ($P < 0.001$). Also, a significant difference was observed in the follow-up phase compared to the pre-test ($P < 0.05$). However, no significant difference was observed in the follow-up compared to the post-test ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion

This research aimed to investigate the impact of mindfulness interventions on high-risk behaviors and procrastination and fear of success among students. The results showed that mindfulness training significantly affects students' high-risk behaviors. In explaining this finding, it can be said that the theory of the conscious mind has many effects on emotions. In other words, mindfulness makes a person more aware of his positive feelings and this factor gives him more self-confidence to achieve success. In addition, because mindfulness focuses on the present, it can avoid risky behaviors. Therefore, doing mindfulness technique makes a person resistant to negative emotions. Therefore, it can reduce the incidence of high-risk behaviors. In general, the constant repetition of mindfulness techniques will increase awareness and awareness of the body, emotions and thoughts. Therefore, it can be said that mindfulness strengthens things that lead to regulating emotions and reducing risky behaviors.

The results showed that mindfulness training significantly affects procrastination among students. Mindfulness is one of the treatments whose main core is emphasizing the individual's awareness, being in the moment and being alert to the existing facts. Mindfulness is paying special attention to goals and the present. One of the major problems in procrastinating people is that they lose moments easily and do not postpone their goals and tasks. They can be in the moment and make the right decision. Therefore, there is always an unreasonable delay in their behavior. On the other hand, procrastination is not just a time management problem, but a complex

process that includes a person's cognitive, emotional and behavioral components and is always accompanied by a lot of stress from postponing things. Since mindfulness emphasizes the attention and concentration of a person in the moment and with repeated exercises, it turns being in the moment into an internal behavioral habit, it can be effective training in reducing procrastination and time management.

The results showed that mindfulness training has a significant effect on the fear of success among students. Mindfulness, as a way of life, helps people to become familiar with the dual states of mind and use them consciously as a unified mind by using meditation exercises that are integrated in daily life. With this method, people realize that they are not only thinking, but they can observe their own thinking. Through formal and informal meditations and habit-breaking exercises, people learn to be present in the here and now for all of life. Inability to not be present in the present moment causes a distance between a person and reality and deprives him of the possibility of correctly understanding the situation and providing reasonable and conscious answers. Mindfulness allows us to perceive incidents less than they are disturbing in the present time. When we are aware of the present time, our attention is no longer focused on the past or the future, while most of the psychological problems caused by the focus have disappeared, which in itself causes no fear of failure or success.

According to the mentioned materials, it can be stated that the mindfulness training approach has been an effective method in reducing the fear of failure and high-risk behaviors of teenagers. Therefore, this therapeutic approach can be used as the main approach in adolescent counseling. Based on the findings of this research, professors, coaches and academic advisors of students should reduce student procrastination by increasing students' interest in their field, reducing negative perfectionism, increasing internal motivation, increasing purposefulness and self-discipline, and increasing their academic self-efficacy.

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