

INFLUENCE OF MINDFULNESS TRAINING ON DISPOSITIONAL MINDFULNESS AND ANXIETY

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ABSTRACT

Throughout our lives, we suffer in one or the other way. We often struggle to come out of emotional pain after we've confronted with adverse situations. Mindfulness is an age old concept and has been practicing for thousands of years. It focuses on the human ability to live in the present, while being aware of oneself and the immediate external environment, without being reactive to it. Adopting the techniques of mindfulness into our life would pave way for reduced rumination, reduced stress and emotional reactivity, increased focus, more cognitive flexibility etc. The present study aimed to identify the effectiveness of mindfulness training on dispositional mindfulness and anxiety. The research used experimental single group pretest post test design, with a sample size of 15 adults, selected through purposive sampling. The study used Mindful Attention awareness scale (MAAS), developed by Brown & Ryan (2003) and State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI), developed by Spielberger (1983), to measure the state, trait and total anxiety level. The study used statistical techniques such as paired sample t- test.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Dispositional Mindfulness, Receptive awareness, State Trait Anxiety.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout our lives, we suffer in one or the other way. We often struggle to come out of emotional pain after we've confronted with adverse situations. Mindfulness is an age old concept and for the past few decades it has been prominent in the form of clinical interventions. The concept of mindfulness was popularized from the Buddhist text which focuses on being in the present, being aware of the changes in the moment while being non judgemental. Many studies have proven its effectiveness in the reduction of stress, negative affect, increase in emotion regulation, focus, cognitive flexibility and improvement in working memory. Mindfulness are of

two kinds. State mindfulness and dispositional mindfulness. Dispositional mindfulness is a human trait that allows us to be completely aware of the present moment even during when we are engaged in other ordinary tasks.

Anxiety is that condition of human that disable the individual's Capacity to think rationally and affect the ability to accurately perceive social situations. The individuals turn out to have low ability to regulate her/his emotions. These people usually detect threat more likely than other people who are less anxious. Anxiety can be of two types, Trait anxiety and state anxiety.

The practice of mindfulness enables an individual to focus on oneself, by training her/him to achieve an inner peace , it ia an useful method for eliminating the stressors within oneself. As this method of therapy has no side effects, it could be practiced readily to reduce the symptoms of anxiety

Several studies on Mindfulness have shown its effectiveness on anxiety and other stress reduction. A remarkable study by Peterson & Pbert (1992), shows that mindfulness meditation has a positive effect on the reduction of symptoms of generalized anxiety and panic disorder.

A study conducted by Li, Chang, Zemon & Midlarsky (2008) investigated the effect of Zen meditation on anxiety and musical performance quality and have found that meditation improved the concentration and mindfulness which inturn lead to a reduced performance anxiety in the participants, thus improving the musical performance.

The major objective of the study is to find the influence of mindfulness training on dispositional mindfulness and anxiety among adults.

METHOD

The present study used experimental single group pre test post test design. The participants of the study includes 15 adults who are undergoing therapy, selected through purposive sampling, the sample consists of individuals of age group from 20-30. Each participants were given mindfulness training for a period of two months. The mindfulness training included mindful breathing, mindful meditation, mindful body scanning, mindful walking, mindful hearing and mindful eating The tools used in the study are Mindfulness attention awareness scale. The MAAS is a 15 item scale , developed by Brown & Ryan (2003), designed to assess a core characteristic of mindfulness, namely, a receptive state of mind in which attention, informed by a sensitive awareness of what is occurring in the present, simply observes what is taking place. It is scored by computing the mean of the 15 items, the higher score reflects higher level of dispositional mindfulness. The MAAS showed high test-retest reliability, discriminant and convergent validity, known-groups validity, and criterion validity. STAI,developed by

Speilberger (1983), is a 40 item inventory to measure the state, state and trait anxiety of the individuals. The inventory consists of Form Y1 and Form Y2, consisting of 20 items each. Here each STAI item is given a score of 1- 4. A rating of 4 indicates high level of anxiety for each 10 state and trait anxiety. A high rating for remaining items indicates the absence of anxiety. The inventory has an excellent internal consistency, it was found to have a high reliability. The data obtained were statistically analyzed through paired sample t-test.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: comparison of difference in study variables before and after the mindfulness awareness using paired sample t-test.

Variable	Mean		SD		t- value	p-value
	Pre test	Post test	Pre test	Post test		
Dispositional mindfulness	55.866	62.33	13.184	15.050	-2.52	0.02**
Trait anxiety	45	39.33	8.185	8.747	3.832	0.02**
State anxiety	44.26	37	10.017	8.358	4.179	0.01*

Mindfulness has been extensively used as a method for reduction of anxiety, Table 1 shows the result obtained when the datas obtained before and after the intervention was given. The paired sample t- test was used to find out the difference in study variables like state anxiety, trait anxiety and dispositional mindfulness before and after the mindfulness training was given to the participants. The result indicated that the dispositional mindfulness was found to have an increase after the mindfulness training, the mean obtained before and after the training were 55.86 and 62.33 respectively. It had a standard deviation of 13.18 and 15.05 respectively, the test was found to have significance at 0.05 level. The variable, trait anxiety was significant at 0.05 level, the means obtained in pretest and post test were 45 and 39.33 respectively, it had a standard deviation of 8.185 and 8.747 respectively. state anxiety is significant at 0.01 level, the mean obtained in pre test was higher than that of post test, i.e, 44.26 and 37, it has a standard deviation of 10.017 and 8.358 in pretest and post test respectively.

Dispositional mindfulness, simply means the level of mindfulness a person achieves during her/his day to day activities, mindfulness meditation training was found to have an eventual increase in dispositional mindfulness, researches have shown that the individuals with

dispositional mindfulness have more probability of having better well being and adaptability. Dispositional mindfulness are also associated with a decreased level of anxiety, emotional reactivity, depression and rumination, as well as an increased ability to cope with adverse situations. In the present study, with an increased practice of mindfulness, the individuals were seemed to have an increase in the trait or dispositional mindfulness. (Bergomi, Strohle, Michalak, Funke & Berking, 2013)

The state anxiety and the trait anxiety was found to have a slight decrease after the mindfulness training was given. Mindfulness is an intervention technique, that allows our mind to focus on the present moment, making us to perceive the things as they are rather than allowing our mind to misperceive the stimulus. In the study, the trait anxiety, which is a personality characteristic, was found to have decreased with mindfulness training, a decrease in trait anxiety in turn had bring about a decrease in the level of state anxiety also.

From the theories and related studies on mindfulness, it was evident that mindfulness training can be a beneficial method in reducing the symptoms of anxiety. The three principles – intention attention and attitude, as suggested by SL Shapiro. Et. al (2006), is involved in the reduction of anxiety among participants. It asserts that being attentive of the present moment, which is possible through having complete awareness of the moment in hand and having a positive outlook enables the individual to reduce the feeling of anxiety within them. As we know, anxiety is the condition that prevents an individual to think rationally and affect the capacity to perceive a social situation in its real sense, being mindful will help to regulate the behavior without perceiving threat in that situation.

The current study had few limitations, the sample size has been too small. The results would have been more reliable if there were diverse group with a larger sample size. the result could not be analysed based on the socio demographic variables due to limited sample size. The study would have been more relevant if the mindfulness training had been given for a longer period.

The study showed that mindfulness training has a positive effect on dispositional mindfulness and state- trait anxiety among the clinical population. Our study would have been more relevant if the sample size was more as well as if the intervention took a quite longer duration.

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