

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy's Effects on Perceived Stress and Psychosomatic Signs in Students with Psychosomatic Disorders

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Extended Abstract

Aim

Psychosomatic diseases are a class of diseases in which a person experiences physical and physical signs and symptoms that are either caused by psychological factors or can be exacerbated by psychological factors and stressors. Psychosomatic diseases manifest in the form of stomach-intestinal problems, nausea and vomiting, cardiovascular disorders, breathing problems, skeletal-muscular problems, reproductive-urinary system involvement, skin and other problems including migraine headaches, dizziness, and extreme fatigue. Memory and concentration difficulties, as well as insomnia, can all be observed; there is a significant relationship between psychological disorders and physical symptoms. In addition to biological mechanisms, it appears that psychological and emotional factors contribute to the occurrence of these diseases. In this fashion, different levels of hostility, depression, anxiety, and stress are associated with psychosomatic disorders' dominant basic factors. Emotional disorders, anxiety, and stress are among the most prevalent psychological symptoms of individuals with psychosomatic diseases and are largely related to their impairments and unfavorable life circumstances. Accordingly, the present study investigated the efficacy of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy on perceived stress and psychosomatic symptoms in students with psychosomatic disorders.

Methodology

The study employed a quasi-experimental design with a pre- and post-test, a control group, and a two-month follow-up period. In the academic year 2020-21, the statistical population included secondary high school students with psychosomatic disorder in the city of Khomeini Shahr. Using a method of purposive sampling, 37 students with psychosomatic disorder symptoms were selected and randomly assigned to experimental and control groups (18 in the experimental group and 19 in the control group). Over the course of two months, the experimental group received eight 75-minute mindfulness-based cognitive therapy sessions. This study utilized the psychosomatic complaints scale (PCS) and perceived stress scale (PSS) as its questionnaires. The study's data were analyzed using mixed ANOVA and SPSS-23 software.

Findings

The outcomes demonstrated that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy has a significant impact on perceived tension and psychosomatic symptoms in students with psychosomatic disorder ($p < 0.001$). This treatment was therefore able to reduce the average scores of perceived stress and psychosomatic symptoms among students with psychosomatic disorders. These results remained unchanged during the two-month follow-up period.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy can be used as an effective therapy to reduce perceived stress and psychosomatic symptoms in students with psychosomatic disorder through mindful activities and attitudes, as well as by addressing problematic feelings and emotions. In addition, the training of mindfulness cognitive therapy techniques assists students with psychosomatic disorders in focusing exclusively on the present and ignoring future events. This process enables these students to effectively manage their tension and anxiety and other negative psychological aspects of their lives.

Keywords: Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, Psychosomatic Disorders, Perceived Stress.