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Mindfulness and Psychological Well-being: Mediation of Cognitive Regulation of Emotion and Self-Compassion

Ehsan Keshtvarz Kondazi^{1*}, Elaheh Hedayati², Saeid Akhlaghali³, Zahra Ashkani⁴

1. Corresponding Author, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran. Email: Keshtvarzehsan@miau.ac.ir
2. Department of Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran. Email: elahehedayati70@yahoo.com
3. Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, University of Allameh-Tabatabae'i, Tehran, Iran. Email: saeidakhlaghali@gmail.com
4. Department of Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, University of Shiraz, Shiraz, Iran. Email: ashkanizahra46@gmail.com

Extended Abstract

Aim

This study aimed to investigate the mediating role of cognitive emotion regulation and self-compassion in the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being. Well-being refers to experiencing positive states and a general sense of life satisfaction, encompassing both cognitive and emotional dimensions. In psychology, well-being is defined as optimal human functioning (Yazici-Kabadayi & Öztemel, 2024). According to Ryff's (2014) model, psychological well-being comprises components such as autonomy, personal growth, environmental mastery, purpose in life, positive relationships with others, and self-acceptance.

Understanding the factors that influence psychological well-being is essential for societal advancement and growth. Mindfulness, a construct in positive psychology, is one such factor impacting psychological well-being (Tang et al., 2019). Another important factor is cognitive emotion regulation, which plays a crucial role in psychological well-being. Self-compassion, which involves treating oneself with kindness during times of failure, also positively contributes to well-being. This research seeks to answer the question: Do cognitive emotion regulation and self-compassion mediate the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being among students?

Methodology

This research is applied in purpose and uses a descriptive-correlational design to collect information, examining the relationships between research variables through structural equation modeling (SEM). The study's statistical population comprised all undergraduate students at Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht branch, enrolled during the 2018-2019 academic year.

A sample size of 386 participants was determined using a multi-stage cluster sampling method. First, four faculties (Humanities, Basic Sciences, Technical Engineering, Educational Sciences, and Psychology) were randomly selected from among the faculties of Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht branch. Then, three classes from each faculty were chosen. The subjects completed, the Ryff Scale Psychological Wellbeing (RSPWB) (Ryff, 1989), The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) (Baer et al., 2006), Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) (Neff, 2003), and Cognitive Emotion Regulation Strategies Questionnaire (CERQ) (Garnefski et al., 2002).

SPSS (version 25) was used to analyze descriptive statistics, including mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis, as well as correlations among research variables. AMOS (version 20) was employed for SEM to evaluate relationships within the research model. Additionally, the mediating role of variables was tested using the bootstrap command in AMOS (version 20).

Findings

The findings related to direct relationships revealed that mindfulness has a positive and significant direct effect on students' psychological well-being. This aligns with prior research, including studies by Tang et al. (2019) and Carsley et al. (2018). The study also found a significant direct effect of mindfulness on cognitive emotion regulation, consistent with findings from Khatibi & Yousefi (2019) and Iani et al. (2018). Another finding indicated a positive, meaningful relationship between mindfulness and self-compassion, aligning with research by Karing & Beelmann (2019). Additionally, the effect of cognitive emotion regulation and self-compassion on students' psychological well-being was found to be significant, supporting results from Kouchi et al. (2021).

In this study, the indirect effect of mindfulness on students' psychological well-being through cognitive emotion regulation was 0.12, and through self-compassion was 0.15, both significant at the $P=0.001$ level. These results indicate that cognitive emotion regulation and self-compassion mediate the relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being.

Conclusion

The examination of indirect effects using the bootstrap method confirms the hypotheses regarding the relationships between mindfulness, psychological well-being, cognitive emotion regulation ($\beta=0.12, P=0.001$), and self-compassion ($\beta=0.15, P=0.001$). These findings suggest that mindfulness can enhance students' psychological well-being by positively influencing cognitive emotion regulation and self-compassion. Given the significance of psychological well-being and its impact on other aspects of mental health, this research contributes insights into factors that may support psychological well-being.

This study encountered some limitations. Notably, self-report questionnaires were used to measure variables, and responses may have been affected by factors such as motivation, education level, and bias. Additionally, as this research employed structural equation modeling, causality cannot be established, and interpretations should be made cautiously.

Keywords: Mindfulness, Psychological Well-being, Regulation of Emotion Cognition, Self-Compassion.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical guidelines by fully explaining the research objectives, allowing participants to choose whether to participate, and assuring them of the confidentiality of all information provided. Questionnaires were administered in a random order to ensure fairness.

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Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no conflict of interest.

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