Mindfulness Mediation and Gender Effects on Anxiety and Self-Efficacy

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INTRODUCTION

College counselors’ top three concerns are anxiety, depression, and stress among student clients. (13)
Life satisfaction, self-esteem, optimism, self-efficacy, and psychological distress were the most important contributors to stress among students. (19)
The general relationship of mindfulness activities and mental health has been well established. [7, 8, 20, 23]

**Mindfulness** is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally. (24)

Current study examined if participating in a coloring activity increases academic self-efficacy, and decreases academic stress and anxiety more than the mindful-based breathing exercise among undergraduates.

METHOD

**Materials:**
- **Art Condition**
  - Pre-designed mandala
  - Color pencils
- **Meditation Condition**
  - Audio-guided mindful activity
- **Stopwatch**
- **Scales & Forms**
  - Informed consent
  - State Anxiety Inventory (STAI)
  - Academic stress (AS) & self-efficacy (ASE)
  - General Self-Efficacy (GSE)
  - Demographics
  - Debrief

**Procedure:**
1. Informed Consent
2. Pre-test measures (GSE, STAI, AS, & ASE)
3. Activity (10 min)
4. Post test measures (STAI, AS, & ASE) and demographics
5. Debrief

RESULTS

**Significant:**
- Interaction between gender and state anxiety pre-post test \[F (1, 16) = 4.52, MS_E = .05, p = .049\].

**Not Significant:**
- State anxiety and the mindfulness treatment condition \[F (2,19) = .06, MS_E = 1.18, p = .95\].
- Academic stress and mindfulness activities \[F (2,19) = .18, MS_E = 7.13, p = .84\].
- Academic self-efficacy and mindfulness conditions \[F (2,19) = .41, MS_E = 5.78, p = .67\].

DISCUSSION

The preliminary results indicate that the mindfulness activities had similar effects on state anxiety, academic stress, and academic self-efficacy.

State anxiety was reduced in males more than in females for both coloring and breathing exercise.

Future research: larger sample size, longer duration of mindfulness activities, samples from different universities.

REFERENCES


Participants:
- Tennessee Tech University undergraduates
- 18 or older
- Free from auditory or visual impairments
- Recruited through emails
- N = 23 (8 males & 15 females)