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Comparing the Effectiveness of Mindfulness Training and Compassion Therapy on Dark Personality Traits and Psychological Adaptation in Socially Disadvantaged Girls

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Abstract

Purpose: Socially disadvantaged people have many psychological problems, especially in the field of increasing dark personality traits and decreasing psychological adjustment. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of comparing the effectiveness of mindfulness training and compassion therapy on dark personality traits and psychological adaptation in socially disadvantaged girls.

Methodology: This research in terms of purpose was practical and in terms of implementation, method was semi-experimental with a pretest, posttest and one-month follow-up design with a control group. The research population was socially disadvantaged teenage girls in health homes under the supervision of the welfare organization of North Khorasan province in the second half of 2021 year. The research sample was considered 45 people who were selected by available sampling method and were replaced by simple random method in three equal groups including two experimental groups and one control group. Each of the experimental groups received 8 sessions of 60 minutes (one session per week) separately with methods of mindfulness training and compassion therapy, and the control group did not receive any training during this period. The research tools were dark personality traits questionnaire (Jonason and Webster, 2010) and psychological adaptation scale (Biesecker et al., 2013) and the data obtained from their implementation were analyzed by analysis variance with repeated measures and Bonferroni post hoc test in SPSS software.

Findings: The findings showed that both methods of mindfulness training and compassion therapy in compared to the control group caused a significant decrease in dark personality traits (and its three components including narcissism, machiavellism and psychopathy) and a significant increase in psychological adaptation (and its three components including experience, deliberation and social integration) in the posttest and one-month follow-up stages in socially disadvantaged girls ($P < 0.001$). Other findings showed that there was no significant difference between the two methods of mindfulness training and compassion therapy in reducing dark personality traits and psychological adaptation and the components of each of them in the posttest and one-month follow-up stages in socially disadvantaged girls ($P > 0.05$).

Conclusion: According to the results of this study, health professionals and therapists can use both mindfulness training and compassion therapy methods in their psychological interventions to improve health-related characteristics, including reducing dark personality traits and increasing psychological adaptation.



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Detailed abstract

Purpose: Social disadvantages arise as a result of social issues and problems, and the level of social vulnerability of men and women is different. Social disadvantages effect women more than men. Socially disadvantaged people have many psychological problems, especially in the field of increasing dark personality traits and decreasing psychological adaptation. Personality is a pattern of traits and characteristics that make up the elements of personality and predict behavior, and personality disorder is a stable pattern of experiencing personal behavior that clearly contradicts with social and cultural expectations. In general, there are three dark personality traits, including narcissism, machiavellism and psychopathy, which these traits overlap together and all focus on social evil, emotional coldness, hypocrisy, and aggression, but they are conceptually and empirically distinct from each other. Three dark personality traits are placed in a conceptual cluster due to having common dimensions, and although they are considered socially undesirable and undesirable, but they are placed in the field of normal functioning and can be observed in the normal population. These traits are undesirable social traits that are associated with characteristics such as unreliability, lack of empathy, dishonesty, antisocial tendencies, malice, social resentment, aggression, impulsivity, risk-taking, and drug and alcohol abuse, and lay the groundwork for a person's tendency toward abnormal social behaviors or conflict with the law. Also, adaptation is the sequential consistency and coordination with environmental changes and establishing a relationship between the individual and environment in such a way that maximum coordination is possible to increase social well-being by compliance the environmental realities. Therefore, adaptation can be considered a personality trait or a product of a combination of several personality traits and social, family, etc. factors that play an important role in reducing conflicts in intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships. Psychological adaptation means adapting, confronting and managing the problems, challenges and demands of daily life, which play an important role in increasing life satisfaction and the absence of mental illness symptoms. The structure of psychological adaptation has three components of experience, deliberation and social integration. One of the methods of improving psychological characteristics is the method of mindfulness training, which indicates stable, purposeful and conscious attention, awareness of the context, attention to the present moment and non-judgment. In mindfulness training, a person tries to gain insight into the patterns of thoughts, emotions, and interactions with others, and based on that, he/she can skillfully choose purposeful responses and implement them instead of habitual and unconscious responses. This method of intervention is related to various health consequences such as reducing stress and improving the quality of life and life satisfaction, and it can free people from unhealthy behavior patterns and destructive habits and create happiness and life expectancy. Another methods of improving psychological characteristics is the method of compassion therapy, which includes three components of self-kindness instead of self-judgment, human commonality instead of isolation, and consciousness instead of extreme assimilation. Compassion therapy is a multifaceted process with emotional, cognitive, and motivational elements that plays an effective role in creating opportunities for growth and change with gentleness and care. In compassion therapy, people learn not to avoid painful feelings and not to suppress them. So, they can recognize their experience and feel compassion for it. Therefore, instead of focusing on changing people's self-evaluation, people's relationship with self-evaluation is changed, and for this purpose are used from relaxation, self-compassion and mindfulness. Socially disadvantaged people have many psychological problems, especially in the field of increasing dark personality traits and decreasing psychological adjustment. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of comparing the effectiveness of mindfulness training and compassion therapy on dark personality traits and psychological adaptation in socially disadvantaged girls.

Methodology: This research in terms of purpose was practical and in terms of implementation method was semi-experimental with a pretest, posttest and one month follow-up design with a control group. The research population was socially disadvantaged teenage girls in health homes under the supervision of the welfare organization of North Khorasan province in the second half of 2021 year. The research sample was considered 45 people who were selected by available sampling method and were replaced by simple random method in three equal groups including two experimental groups and one control group. For selecting these people were considered the criteria which include female gender, being at least 14 and at most 17 years old, present in health centers for at least three months due to socially disadvantaged, not receiving other psychological treatments at the time of the research, not taking psychiatric medication, not having physical, psychological and emotional problems, and written consent to participate in the research, and the exclusion criteria included refusing to continue cooperation, taking psychiatric medication due to relapse and missing more than one session. Each of the experimental groups received 8 sessions of 60 minutes (one session per week) separately with

methods of mindfulness training and compassion therapy, and the control group did not receive any training during this period. The research tools were dark personality traits questionnaire (Jonason and Webster, 2010) and psychological adaptation scale (Biesecker et al., 2013) and the data obtained from their implementation were analyzed by analysis variance with repeated measures and Bonferroni post hoc test in SPSS software.

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Conclusion: According to the results of this study, health professionals and therapists can use both mindfulness training and compassion therapy methods in their psychological interventions to improve health-related characteristics, including reducing dark personality traits and increasing psychological adaptation.