

Examining the Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy on Narcissism and Perfectionism in Single Women Reluctant to Marry

Fahimeh. Sistani¹, Felor. Khayatan^{2*}, Zahra. Yousefi³

¹ PhD Student, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

² Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: F.khayatan@yahoo.com

Article Info

Article type:

Original Research

How to cite this article:

Sistani, F., Khayatan, F., & Yousefi, Z. (2024). Examining the Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy on Narcissism and Perfectionism in Single Women Reluctant to Marry. *Journal of Adolescent and Youth Psychological Studies*, 5(12), 132-140.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.61838/kman.jayps.5.12.15>



© 2024 the authors. Published by KMAN Publication Inc. (KMANPUB), Ontario, Canada. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License.

ABSTRACT

Objective: The present study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy on narcissism and perfectionism in single women reluctant to marry.

Materials and Methods: The research design was quasi-experimental with a pretest-posttest and follow-up structure and a control group. The statistical population included all female students from Azad universities in Isfahan in the academic year 2022–2023. Participants were selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. A total of 30 participants were recruited using convenience sampling and were randomly assigned to the experimental and control groups (15 participants per group). A pretest was conducted for both groups. The experimental group then received mindfulness-based cognitive therapy across eight sessions, while the control group did not receive any intervention. Data were collected using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory by Ames, Rose, and Anderson (2006), the Perfectionism Questionnaire by Hill et al. (2004), and the Marital Inclination Scale by Heidari et al. (2004). Data were analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) in SPSS version 23.

Findings: The results indicated that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy significantly reduced narcissism and perfectionism in single women reluctant to marry, and the therapeutic effects persisted in the follow-up phase ($F = 9.95$, $P < 0.01$).

Conclusion: Based on the findings of this study, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy can be utilized to reduce narcissism and perfectionism in single women reluctant to marry.

Keywords: Reluctance to marry, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, narcissism, perfectionism, women.

1. Introduction

One of the primary needs of humans is to have a secure emotional connection and stable attachment bond with close individuals in life, such as a spouse, parents, and children (Harvey, 2012). Marriage is described as the most fundamental and significant human relationship because it provides the foundational structure of the family and nurtures the next generation. A successful marriage gives meaning and identity to life and represents the first and most crucial stage in the family and life cycle, during which spouse selection takes place. Spouse selection is a complex issue and a decision that significantly influences an individual's future life (Abedi et al., 2024; Ahmadi et al., 2024). Achieving personal and social goals through marriage largely depends on how this choice is made. Marriage, as a social event and one of the most critical moments in an individual's life, has always drawn the attention of sociologists, marriage counselors, and family experts (Abbasi et al., 2019; Hormozi et al., 2024). Marital inclination refers to the motivation and interest of young men or women in marriage, reflecting their desire for unity. Unfortunately, young people, including young women of marriageable age, often show little inclination toward establishing a marital life (Pahlavanzade et al., 2019). Amid repeated frustrations, some women who miss the opportunity to marry gradually adapt to single life and become indifferent to marriage (Afzali Goroh et al., 2019).

In general, societal realities indicate a decline in the willingness of youth to marry, with delayed marriage increasingly becoming a social trend. Official statistics suggest that eight million young Iranians are ready to marry, while unofficial estimates put this number at approximately 12.5 million (Abbasi et al., 2019). Among the factors influencing a lack of interest in marriage, personality traits are significant. It is not feasible to examine personality traits and intimate relationships separately (Gaines Jr, 2016). Having close social relationships, such as marriage, is linked to individual well-being and psychological and physical health outcomes (Fatehizadeh & Bahrami, 2014).

One personality trait that profoundly affects intimate relationships is narcissism. Some studies have reported an increase in narcissism among the normative population in recent decades (Moradi et al., 2018). Narcissism has been globally increasing over time (Altinok & Kilic, 2020). Among personality disorders, narcissistic personality disorder holds particular diagnostic and therapeutic significance as it remains in the fifth edition of the

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), with a prevalence rate of over 21% in clinical populations and between 0–6% in the general population (Rahnemae & Asadi, 2022). Moreover, narcissistic women report more interpersonal problems (Lavner et al., 2016). Research indicates that no other personality trait exhibits such inconsistent behaviors as narcissism (Gruda et al., 2021). Among various disorders, interactions with narcissistic individuals create significant challenges for others. Studies show that narcissistic individuals manage their relationships to maintain a positive view of themselves, which can have negative consequences for their intimate partners, even at the trait level (Lavner et al., 2016).

A narcissistic person believes and openly states that they deserve more attention, privileges, and resources because of their perceived entitlement. They expect others to follow them, give them priority, and cater to their demands. This self-image is intertwined with concepts such as competence, capability, and uniqueness. Consequently, the narcissist assumes they are justified in acting according to their wishes and expects others to fulfill their desires and needs (Stranieri et al., 2021). The cognitive characteristics of narcissists indicate that they hold unrealistic perceptions of themselves, their abilities, and others. This unrealistic perception, based on grandiosity and self-aggrandizement, manifests in all aspects of a narcissist's life, including family, work environment, and emotional relationships (Hasanvandi et al., 2023). Individuals with higher levels of narcissism report a strong need for power and often fantasize about possessing it (Vrabel et al., 2019).

A reduction in empathy lies at the heart of interpersonal problems associated with narcissism. Even at the subclinical level, narcissism is associated with a wide range of interpersonal issues. Narcissistic individuals lack commitment in their relationships and are more prone to criminal behaviors (Bukowski & Samson, 2021). Their abusive and retaliatory behaviors create distance between them and others. They tend to bolster their self-esteem by dominating others, distrusting people, discrediting them, and devaluing individuals who threaten their sense of superiority. The heightened entitlement of narcissistic individuals has destructive consequences for their interpersonal relationships and social interactions. Narcissism undermines the effects of empathy and other variables on the quality of interpersonal relationships and, consequently, reduces social interactions. This ultimately leads to a negative impact on the quality of their

relationships with others, particularly with their spouses (Rezapour Mirsaleh et al., 2022; Rezapour et al., 2017).

One factor influencing individuals' criteria for spouse selection is their level of perfectionism (Diehl et al., 2021). Some people establish numerous detailed criteria for marriage, believing that their partner must meet each criterion. Such behavior stems from a psychological trait called perfectionism. Perfectionists have countless criteria for spouse selection, and compromising on any of them is challenging or even impossible, often making decision-making difficult or delaying marriage significantly (Tazari & Naemi, 2016). According to Adler (1956), people strive for superiority and perfection in all dimensions of their lives, both marital and non-marital, hoping to perform better than others. If they fail to achieve this, they may develop an inferiority complex, which negatively affects their conscious and subconscious activities (Tavakoli, 2016).

Given that personality traits can influence various aspects of an individual's life, including spouse selection, the present study aims to examine the effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy on narcissism and perfectionism in single women reluctant to marry.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This study was conducted as a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest and follow-up structure, along with a control group. The statistical population included all female students aged 35 and above from Azad universities in Isfahan during the 2022–2023 academic year. The Marital Inclination Scale was distributed among them, and 30 students who scored low on the scale were selected. It is noteworthy that for intervention studies, a sample size of 15 participants per subgroup is sufficient (Delavar, 2018). Therefore, 30 eligible participants were selected based on the inclusion criteria and randomly assigned to two equal groups (15 participants in the intervention group and 15 in the control group).

Inclusion Criteria: Participants aged over 35 years, with a total score below 80 on the Marital Inclination Scale, indicating low inclination toward and motivation for marriage; no prior individual psychological or counseling services during the intervention sessions; no specific physical or mental health conditions based on diagnostic interviews.

Exclusion Criteria: Lack of willingness to participate in the study and absence from more than three therapy sessions.

After selecting and assigning participants to the groups, they completed the questionnaires. The experimental group underwent mindfulness-based cognitive therapy over eight 90-minute weekly sessions, while the control group received no intervention. Both groups completed the questionnaires during the posttest and follow-up phases. Since the study focused on single women with low marital inclination, ethical considerations were strictly observed, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring participant confidentiality and privacy, obtaining consent forms, and avoiding bias.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Narcissistic Personality

This 16-item self-report questionnaire measures traits associated with narcissistic personality. Initially developed as a 54-item version by Raskin and Hall in 1981, it was revised to 40 items by Raskin and Terry in 1988 and finally condensed to 16 items by Ames, Rose, and Anderson in 2006. The inventory has no subscales and assesses narcissism as a unidimensional construct. Each item consists of paired statements, and respondents select one option. A response from column "A" scores one point, while a response from column "B" scores zero. The total score is the sum of all items, ranging from 0 to 16. The test-retest reliability reported by the original authors was 0.85 over five weeks. In Iran, Mohammadzadeh (2009) reported an internal consistency reliability of 0.79 (Mohammadzadeh, 2009).

2.2.2. Perfectionism

This 59-item questionnaire assesses perfectionism across several dimensions, including organization, goal-setting, striving for excellence, high standards for others, need for approval, focus on mistakes, perceived parental pressure, and rumination. Items are rated on a Likert scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Hill et al. (2004) confirmed the model's fit through confirmatory factor analysis with 366 university students. The scale demonstrated convergent and divergent validity with related and contradictory questionnaires and had an internal consistency reliability of 0.90. In a study by Jamshidi (2009), Cronbach's alpha coefficient confirmed an acceptable reliability of 0.80, and the questionnaire's validity was confirmed by the relationship between negative perfectionism dimensions and mental health.

2.2.3. Marital Inclination

This 23-item Likert-type scale measures attitudes toward marriage. It was standardized by Heidari et al. (2004). Additionally, a single item at the end of the questionnaire assesses the "optimal age for marriage." The questionnaire development process involved selecting 23 items from an initial pool of 45 based on criteria such as alignment with the main dimensions (general attitude toward marriage, family, spouse, marital relationships) and reflecting individual readiness for marriage. Test-retest reliability over a two-week interval showed a correlation of 0.89, significant at the 0.001 level. Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicated an internal consistency of 0.92 (Heydari et al., 2004).

2.3. Interventions

2.3.1. Mindfulness Training

The therapy sessions were based on the mindfulness training protocol (Baer, 2003).

Session 1: The first session focuses on introducing meditation and mindfulness practices. Participants engage in the "raisin exercise" to develop mindful awareness through eating. A 45-minute body scan meditation is conducted, followed by a discussion about the physical and emotional sensations experienced during the exercise. Homework includes practicing mindfulness in everyday activities and extending the raisin exercise concept to other routine tasks.

Session 2: This session begins with a review of the previous week's homework and a discussion of challenges encountered during practice, along with mindfulness strategies to overcome them. Participants practice a 45-minute body scan meditation, seated meditation, and mindful breathing throughout the day. Homework involves repeating the body scan meditation and increasing awareness during daily activities such as eating, bathing, sitting, and brushing teeth.

Session 3: The third session includes a review of homework, a 45-minute meditation session, and a body scan. Participants discuss myths about meditation and complete a "pleasant events calendar" to track positive experiences. They are introduced to the three-minute breathing space exercise. Homework involves maintaining the events calendar, continuing daily mindfulness activities, and practicing meditation.

Session 4: This session reviews homework and includes a 45-minute meditation and body scan exercise. Participants explore stress responses and practice a one-minute breathing

space exercise. They continue to complete the "pleasant events calendar" and are introduced to tracking "unpleasant events" as part of their mindfulness homework, which also includes the three-minute breathing space exercise.

Session 5: Participants discuss their homework and engage in a 45-minute meditation and body scan practice. The session includes a review of the three-minute breathing space exercise and introduces a "communication worksheet" to reflect on weekly interactions with significant individuals. Homework involves completing the communication worksheet and continuing mindful daily activities.

Session 6: This session focuses on reviewing homework and practicing a 45-minute meditation and body scan exercise. Participants discuss conflict management styles, stress responses, and their reactions to challenging situations. They explore alternative attitudes and behaviors. Homework involves continuing the meditation and body scan exercises, along with maintaining mindful awareness during daily activities.

Session 7: In this session, participants review their homework and engage in a 45-minute meditation and body scan practice. The discussion centers on pain management, the process of releasing pain, and addressing anger. Participants report their personal experiences with pain and practice mindfulness techniques for emotional regulation.

Session 8: The final session includes a review of homework, a 45-minute meditation and body scan, and a three-minute breathing space exercise. Participants reflect on their overall learning, progress toward their expectations, personal growth, and coping skills development. They are encouraged to discuss whether they feel motivated to continue practicing mindfulness and meditation in the future.

2.4. Data Analysis

Collected data were analyzed using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) in SPSS version 23.

3. Findings and Results

The participants in this study consisted of 30 single female students aged 35 and above who were reluctant to marry. They were divided into two groups: experimental (15 participants) and control (15 participants). The study aimed to examine the impact of Kabat-Zinn and Stahl's mindfulness skills training on narcissism and perfectionism in single women reluctant to marry. Descriptive statistics are presented in [Table 1](#).

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Dependent Variables by Group (M (SD); Each Group: 15 Participants)

Variable	Group	Pretest	Posttest	Follow-Up
Perfectionism	Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy	198.20 (16.42)	163.46 (22.20)	169.66 (21.69)
	Control	197.66 (21.81)	196.80 (21.34)	198.00 (21.41)
Narcissism	Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy	7.33 (2.63)	4.40 (2.66)	3.86 (2.50)
	Control	8.73 (2.43)	8.73 (2.08)	8.33 (2.52)

As shown in Table 1, the mean (M) and standard deviation (SD) scores for perfectionism and narcissism decreased significantly more in the experimental group compared to the control group in the posttest and follow-up phases relative to the pretest. For instance, the mean score for narcissism in the experimental group decreased from M = 7.33 (SD = 2.63) in the pretest to M = 4.40 (SD = 2.66) in the posttest. Similarly, the mean score for perfectionism in the experimental group decreased from M = 198.20 (SD = 16.42) in the pretest to M = 163.46 (SD = 22.20) in the posttest.

No significant changes were observed in the control group. A repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare the intervention group (mindfulness-based cognitive therapy) with the control group in terms of within-group and between-group changes in the dependent variables. Before conducting this analysis, the assumptions required for repeated-measures ANOVA,

including normal distribution of scores, homogeneity of variances, and equality of covariances, were evaluated. The Shapiro-Wilk test indicated that the normality assumption for narcissism and perfectionism scores in both groups across all three stages was upheld ($p > 0.05$). Levene's test results showed that the assumption of equal variances was satisfied for both variables across all stages ($p > 0.05$). Finally, Mauchly's test of sphericity showed that the assumption of equality of covariances was violated for both variables ($p < 0.05$); therefore, the Greenhouse-Geisser correction was applied for repeated-measures ANOVA. A one-way ANOVA confirmed that there were no significant differences between the groups at the pretest stage for either variable (narcissism: $F = 1.88, p = 0.142$; perfectionism: $F = 0.294, p = 0.829$), ensuring baseline homogeneity.

The results of repeated-measures ANOVA for within-subject effects on narcissism and perfectionism are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Repeated-Measures ANOVA for Within-Subject Effects on Narcissism and Perfectionism

Source	Test	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value	Effect Size	Power
Time (Narcissism)	Sphericity Assumed	292.433	2	146.217	137.951	0.001	0.711	1.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	292.433	1.760	166.134	137.951	0.001	0.711	1.000
Time × Group	Sphericity Assumed	91.522	6	15.254	14.391	0.001	0.435	1.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	91.522	5.281	17.332	14.391	0.001	0.435	1.000
Time (Perfectionism)	Sphericity Assumed	1762.644	2	881.822	68.797	0.001	0.551	1.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	1762.644	1.214	1451.439	68.797	0.001	0.551	1.000
Time × Group	Sphericity Assumed	6055.156	6	1009.193	7.880	0.001	0.297	1.000
	Greenhouse-Geisser	6055.156	3.642	1662.486	7.880	0.001	0.297	0.994

The results indicate that there were significant differences in the mean scores of narcissism and perfectionism across the study phases ($p < 0.001$). Additionally, the interaction effect of time and group membership was significant for

both variables ($p < 0.001$). The total variance explained by time was 71% for narcissism and 55% for perfectionism. The time × group interaction explained 43.5% of the variance in narcissism and 29.7% in perfectionism.

Table 3

Bonferroni Post-Hoc Test Results for Mean Differences in Narcissism and Perfectionism Across Study Phases

Group (Variable)	Phase 1	Phase 2	Mean Difference	Significance (p-value)
Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (Perfectionism)	Pretest	Posttest	34.73	0.001
		Follow-Up	28.53	0.001
	Posttest	Follow-Up	-6.2	0.03
Control (Perfectionism)	Pretest	Posttest	0.867	0.991
		Follow-Up	0.33	0.999
	Posttest	Follow-Up	1.2	0.476
Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (Narcissism)	Pretest	Posttest	2.93	0.001
		Follow-Up	3.47	0.001
	Posttest	Follow-Up	0.533	0.215
Control (Narcissism)	Pretest	Posttest	0.001	0.999
		Follow-Up	0.4	0.415
	Posttest	Follow-Up	0.4	0.333

The Bonferroni post-hoc test results in [Table 3](#) show that in the experimental group, significant differences were observed between pretest and posttest as well as between pretest and follow-up for both narcissism and perfectionism ($p < 0.001$). However, no significant differences were found between posttest and follow-up ($p > 0.05$), indicating the stability of treatment effects during follow-up.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) on narcissism and perfectionism in single women reluctant to marry. The results of repeated-measures ANOVA indicated that MBCT had a significant effect compared to the control group in reducing narcissism and perfectionism in these women, with these effects persisting during the follow-up phase.

One of the pressing issues in contemporary society, which has become a concern for policymakers and has prompted sociologists and psychologists to conduct extensive research, is the increasing average age of marriage and the reluctance of young Iranians to form families and marry ([Pahlavanzade et al., 2019](#)). Therapists and counselors have emphasized the importance of premarital education and life skills training to reduce errors and poor decisions, address dysfunctional beliefs about marriage, and prevent marital breakdowns ([Jahanbakhshi & Kalantarkousheh, 2012](#)).

Various studies suggest that while initial interpersonal capabilities may exist, when coupled with narcissism, these abilities deteriorate over time, leading to adverse effects on interpersonal relationships. Narcissism plays a crucial role in shaping, developing, and limiting interpersonal relationships and is thus a determinant of the duration and depth of relationships. Narcissistic individuals often exhibit

controlling and exploitative interpersonal styles. They do not focus on intimacy, warmth, or other positive aspects of long-term relationships. Instead, narcissism is negatively associated with forming and maintaining long-term relationships characterized by closeness, empathy, and emotional warmth ([Rezapour Mirsaleh et al., 2022](#); [Rezapour et al., 2017](#)). High levels of narcissism increase aggression, disrupt interpersonal relationships, and are associated with lower life satisfaction, greater risk of self-harm, and suicidal behaviors. Narcissistic individuals think grandiosely, consider themselves extraordinarily important and unique, yet possess fragile self-esteem and are highly sensitive to criticism ([Rahnemae & Asadi, 2022](#)). Narcissism disrupts interpersonal relationships ([Khodabandelou et al., 2017](#)). Although studies directly examining the effect of MBCT on narcissism are limited, the findings of this study align with similar research ([Afshari & Ghaffari, 2019](#); [Aldbyani & Al-Abyadh, 2022](#)). For example, [Jafari Ghale Beig \(2023\)](#) found that mindfulness training significantly reduced dark personality traits, including narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, in socially vulnerable girls in the posttest and one-month follow-up phases ([Jafari Ghale Beig et al., 2023](#)).

MBCT appears to influence cognitive systems and information processing by increasing individuals' present-moment awareness through techniques like mindful breathing, body scanning, and focusing attention on the present moment ([Madani & Hojati, 2015](#)). This study also demonstrated the positive effects of MBCT on reducing narcissism. Narcissistic individuals often compare themselves to others, perceiving their superiority as a natural right and seeking ways to prove it. Such thought patterns create barriers to healthy relationships and can contribute to

their reluctance to marry. Mindfulness helps individuals learn to prevent negative thoughts and emotions from dominating their actions. In this study, women learned to let go of destructive thoughts, conserve their energy, and redirect their focus toward their physical sensations and the present moment using mindfulness exercises like body scanning and seated meditation. By shifting their focus away from negative emotions and distorted perceptions related to marriage, participants were able to reduce the influence of narcissistic thoughts on their interpersonal relationships.

Perfectionism is defined as the tendency to set high standards, strive for flawlessness, and experience dissatisfaction due to perceived imperfections (SeyedEbrahimi, 2020). A multidimensional approach to perfectionism reveals its interpersonal, intrapersonal, and social dimensions, which encompass high expectations of oneself, others, and vice versa (Hewitt et al., 2017). Perfectionism often intensifies in evaluative contexts, leading to interpersonal challenges (Vois & Damian, 2019). It is considered a neurotic and negative behavioral pattern that contributes to interpersonal difficulties, predicting a significant portion of personality disorders (Afshari & Ghaffari, 2019). Mindfulness, as the awareness of thoughts, behaviors, emotions, and motivations, facilitates better management and regulation of these elements. Mindfulness encourages attention that is purposeful, present-focused, and nonjudgmental, fostering clarity and acceptance of reality (Madani & Hojati, 2015).

This study's findings on MBCT's impact on perfectionism are consistent with previous research (Dehghan Manshadi et al., 2021; Sattari & Erfani, 2019; SeyedEbrahimi, 2020). As demonstrated in the results section, MBCT effectively reduces perfectionism, affirming earlier studies' findings. MBCT conceptualizes mindfulness as a state of focus, nonjudgment, attention, and awareness. It teaches individuals to perceive current experiences as less distressing, allowing them to distance themselves from perfectionistic thoughts and recognize them as cognitive processes rather than absolute truths.

Through MBCT, participants learned to focus on the present moment, detaching from past or future concerns, which reduced negative perfectionism. Mindfulness training enabled participants to approach perfectionistic thoughts with an open and receptive mindset, avoiding ineffective strategies for coping with associated emotions like anger, tension, anxiety, and irritability. By focusing on bodily sensations, participants could fully experience their inner states without judgment, enhancing their information-

processing capacity and cultivating a nonjudgmental perspective. Mindfulness increased participants' ability to observe their thoughts and emotions without reacting destructively or impulsively. This allowed them to accept events fully and address daily challenges more effectively, improving their interpersonal relationships and marital decision-making.

5. Limitations & Suggestions

This study faced several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. The small sample size, limited to single women aged 35 and above from specific universities, restricts the generalizability of the results to broader populations. Additionally, the reliance on self-reported questionnaires may introduce response bias, as participants might not accurately reflect their true thoughts or behaviors. The short follow-up period of one month does not allow for an assessment of the long-term sustainability of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) effects on narcissism and perfectionism. Furthermore, the study did not explore potential moderating variables, such as cultural factors or social support, which may influence the effectiveness of the intervention.

Future studies should consider expanding the sample size to include a more diverse population, encompassing various age groups, cultural backgrounds, and marital statuses, to enhance the generalizability of findings. Longitudinal research with extended follow-up periods is recommended to assess the enduring effects of MBCT on narcissism and perfectionism. Additionally, qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, could be integrated to capture participants' subjective experiences and insights into the mechanisms of change. Future research might also explore the role of potential mediators or moderators, such as emotional intelligence, mindfulness trait levels, or support networks, to better understand factors that enhance or hinder the intervention's success.

The findings of this study suggest that MBCT can be a valuable tool in psychological interventions aimed at reducing narcissism and perfectionism, particularly in populations reluctant to form intimate relationships or marry. Mental health practitioners, counselors, and therapists can incorporate mindfulness-based strategies into premarital counseling and life skills training programs to address dysfunctional thought patterns and improve interpersonal relationships. Policymakers and educators might also consider integrating mindfulness training into

public health initiatives and educational curricula to foster emotional regulation and adaptive coping mechanisms, thereby contributing to healthier relationships and societal well-being.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to all those who cooperated in carrying out this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

Funding

This research was carried out independently with personal funding and without the financial support of any governmental or private institution or organization.

Authors' Contributions

This article is derived from the first author's doctoral dissertation. All authors equally contributed to this article.

References

- Abbasi, M., Ramzi Fard, M., Lotfi Sarjini, A., & Ghezelsefloo, M. (2019). The Effect of Schema Therapy on Marriage Values and the Marriage Tendency in Single Girls in Tehran. *Community Health Journal*, 13(2), 45-55. https://chj.rums.ac.ir/article_95551.html
- Abedi, G., Ataefar, R., & Ghamari, M. (2024). The Effectiveness of Group Marital Conflict Resolution Training Based on Choice Theory on Emotional Divorce and Hope for Life in Married Women. *International Journal of Education and Cognitive Sciences*, 5(3), 136-146. <https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ijecs.5.3.10>
- Afshari, A., & Ghaffari, M. (2019). Relationship between Metacognition and Perfectionism with Duration of Methadone Maintenance Treatment in Addicts Referring to Addiction Treatment Centers. *Feyz*, 23(2), 177-184. <https://civilica.com/doc/1182529/>
- Afzali Goroh, S., Nazari, A., & Zahra Kar, K. (2019). Investigating the Consequences of Survival from Marriage of Girls Over 30 Years Old in Kerman City (2019). *Two Seasons of Scientific-Research Journal, Lifestyle Journal*, 6(10), 117-144. <https://civilica.com/doc/1126069/>
- Ahmadi, G., Akbarzadeh Amirdehi, N., Imani Rad, E., Kashanian, A., Mohammadi Tileh Nouei, S., & Babaei, N. (2024). Comparing the Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Couples Therapy and Integrative Acceptance and Commitment Schema Therapy on the Acceptance of Couples Seeking Divorce. *Mental Health and Culture*. <https://doi.org/10.30479/mhc.2024.19719.1032>
- Aldbyani, A., & Al-Abyadh, M. H. A. (2022). Relationship between Dark Triad, Mental Health, and Subjective Well-being Moderated by Mindfulness: A Study on Atheists and Muslim Students. *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal*, 5(1). <https://doi.org/10.25217/igcj.v5i1.2642>
- Altınok, A., & Kılıç, N. (2020). Exploring the Associations between Narcissism, Intentions towards Infidelity, and Relationship Satisfaction: Attachment Styles as a Moderator. *PLoS One*, 15(11), e0242277. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0242277>
- Baer, R. A. (2003). Mindfulness Training as a Clinical Intervention: A Conceptual and Empirical Review. *Clinical Psychology Science and Practice*, 10(2), 125-143. <https://doi.org/10.1093/clipsy/bpg015>
- Bukowski, H., & Samson, D. (2021). Automatic Imitation is Reduced in Narcissists but Only in Ego-centric Perspective-Takers. *Acta Psychologica*, 213, 103235. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2020.103235>
- Dehghan Manshadi, M., Dibaazar, S., Heydari, Y., & Kalantari Zadeh, F. (2021). Effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy on Reducing Stress and Perfectionism in Female Students of Public Secondary Schools in Yazd. *Health Rise Journal*, 1(20), 69-79. <https://doi.org/10.18502/tbj.v20i1.6184>
- Diehl, A. B. R. P., Euzebio, L. D. C., & Mosmann, C. P. (2021). Perfectionist Personality and Marital Relationship: A Systematic Review. *Contextos Clínic*, 14(1), 186-203. <https://doi.org/10.4013/ctc.2021.141.09>
- Fatehizadeh, M., & Bahrami, F. (2014). *Enriching Marital Life Training*. Dangier Publishing.
- Gaines Jr, S. O. (2016). *Personality and Close Relationship Processes*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781316271926>
- Gruda, D., McCleskey, J., Karanatsiou, D., & Vakali, A. (2021). I'm Simply the Best, Better Than All the Rest: Narcissistic Leaders and Corporate Fundraising Success. *Personality and individual differences*, 168, 110317. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2020.110317>
- Harvey, M. (2012). *Couple Therapy*. Dangier Publishing.
- Hasanvandi, M., Akbarnejad, M., Morovati, S., & Rahimian Bogar, A. (2023). Cognitive Features of Narcissistic Personality Disorder from the Perspective of Psychology and Islamic Teachings. *Journal of Islamic Studies in Health Domain*, 7(3), 61-72. https://ish.tums.ac.ir/article_40360.html
- Hewitt, P. L., Flett, G. L., & Mikail, S. F. (2017). *Perfectionism: A Relational Approach to Conceptualization, Assessment, and Treatment*. Guilford Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315536255-20>
- Heydari, M., Mazaheri, M., & Pouretamad, H. (2004). Constructing and Standardizing the Questionnaire of Marriage Desire Gauge, Student Version (Prasad). *Journal of Psychology*, 8(3), 261-250. <https://www.sid.ir/paper/54397/fa>
- Hormozi, M., Farahbakhsh, K., & Gholamzadehjofreh, M. (2024). Investigating communication actions in successful marriages:

- A Qualitative study. *Journal of counseling research*. <https://doi.org/10.18502/qjcr.v23i89.15788>
- Jafari Ghale Beig, S., Eslami, M., & Rahimi Pardanani, T. (2023). Comparing the Effectiveness of Mindfulness Training and Compassion Therapy on Dark Personality Traits and Psychological Adaptation in Socially Disadvantaged Girls. *Sociology of Education*, 9(2), 361-374. https://www.iase-jrn.ir/article_708851.html
- Jahanbakhshi, Z., & Kalantarkousheh, S. M. (2012). Relationship between Dimensions of Early Maladaptive Schemas and Desire for Marriage among Female and Male Students at Allameh Tabatabai University. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 2(2), 234-256. https://fcp.uok.ac.ir/article_9532.html
- Khodabandelou, S., Najafi, M., & Rahimian Bogar, A. (2017). Effectiveness of Schema Therapy with a Mindset Approach on Reducing Symptoms of Narcissism in Patients with Narcissistic Personality Disorder. *Journal of Behavioral Science Research*, 15(3), 321-330. <https://rbs.mui.ac.ir/article-1-548-fa.html>
- Lavner, J. A., Lamkin, J., Miller, J. D., Campbell, W. K., & Karney, B. R. (2016). Narcissism and Newlywed Marriage: Partner Characteristics and Marital Trajectories. *Personality Disorders: Theory, Research, and Treatment*, 7(2), 169. <https://doi.org/10.1037/per0000137>
- Madani, Y., & Hojati, S. (2015). The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy on Marital Satisfaction and Quality of Life in Couples. *Applied Psychological Research Quarterly*, 6(2), 39-60.
- Mohammadzadeh, A. (2009). Validation of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (16-NPI) in the Iranian Population. *Journal of Mental Health Principles*, 11(4), 274-281. <https://www.sid.ir/paper/88447/fa>
- Moradi, A., Fatehizadeh, M., Ahmadi, A., & Etemadi, A. (2018). Effectiveness of Metacognitive Interpersonal Intervention on the Interactional Damage in Couples with Narcissistic Personality Symptoms in Men. *Clinical Psychological Studies Quarterly*, 8(32), 1-27. https://jcps.atu.ac.ir/article_9539.html
- Pahlavanzade, F., Taghiyar, Z., & Refahi, Z. (2019). The Study of the Effectiveness of Conflict Resolution Skills on Willingness and Desire to Marry and Its Dimensions in Single Girls. *Women and Family Studies*, 45(12), 29-43. https://journals.iau.ir/article_673580.html
- Rahnemae, M. J., & Asadi, J. (2022). Comparing the Effectiveness of Two Approaches of Psychoanalysis and Schema Therapy in the Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. *MEJDS*, 12, 151. <https://jdisabilstud.org/article-1-2214-fa.html>
- Rezapour Mirsaleh, Y., Mosayebi, M., Khandaghi, Z., & Nazemi, B. (2022). Identifying and Ranking the Factors Affecting Early Marital Conflicts in Newly Married Couples with Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) Approach. *Journal of Family Research*, 17(4), 541-560. <https://doi.org/10.52547/JFR.17.4.541>
- Rezapour, R., Zakeri, M., & Entesar Fomani, G. (2017). The Relationship between Use of Social Media and Social Interaction Perception, Narcissistic Personality, and Positive Feelings Toward Spouses in Couples Using Social Media. *Family and Research Quarterly*(38), 58-77. <https://qjfr.ir/article-1-563-fa.html>
- Sattari, M., & Erfani, N. (2019). The Effect of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy on Negative Perfectionism, Stress, and Anxiety in Female Students of Secondary School. *Journal of the Faculty of Medicine, Mashhad University of Medical Sciences*, 62(5), 1834-1845. https://mjms.mums.ac.ir/article_17418.html
- SeyedEbrahimi, S. A. (2020). The Effectiveness of Cognitive Therapy Based on Mindfulness and Positive Thinking on Improving Mental Health, Perfectionism and Cognitive Emotion Regulation Strategies in Family Heads with Major Depressive Disorder. *Journal of Applied Family Therapy*, 1(2), 162-184. https://www.aftj.ir/article_166054.html
- Stranieri, G., De Stefano, L., & Greco, A. G. (2021). Pathological Narcissism. *Psychiatria Danubina*, 33(Suppl. 9), 35-40. https://www.psychiatria-danubina.com/UserDocsImages/pdf/dnb_vol33_noSuppl%209/dnb_vol33_noSuppl%209_35.pdf
- Tavakoli, A. (2016). *The Relationship between Perfectionism, Task Performance, Citizenship Behavior, and Anti-Productivity Behavior: A Case Study of the Ardabil Post Office Master's Thesis* <https://elmnet.ir/doc/10947715-38346>
- Tazari, S., & Naemi, H. (2016, 12-13 July 2016). To Investigate the Relationship between Perfectionism and Mate Selection Criteria among Students of Medical Sciences, Sabzevar. Tehran, Iran.
- Vois, D., & Damian, L. (2019). Perfectionism and Emotion Regulation in Adolescents: A Two-Wave Longitudinal Study. *Personality and individual differences*, 156, 6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2019.109756>
- Vrabel, J. K., Zeigler-Hill, V., Lehtman, M., & Hernandez, K. (2019). Narcissism and Perceived Power in Romantic Relationships. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407519858685>