

The Effectiveness of Mindfulness Training on Self-Control and Social Adaptation in Housewives

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of mindfulness training on self-control and social adaptation in housewives.

Methods and Materials: The research method was a quasi-experimental design using a randomized two-group pretest-posttest approach. The statistical population of the study comprised all housewives visiting Fateh Garden in the Jahanshahr neighborhood of Karaj in 2023. Considering that the minimum sample size for a quasi-experimental design is 30 participants, housewives who exercised at Fateh Garden during the week, met the research criteria, and were willing to participate after receiving explanations about the procedures and ethical assurances from the researchers, were selected. A total sample size of 30 participants (15 in the experimental group and 15 in the control group) was chosen using a voluntary sampling method and randomly assigned to the two groups. Data were collected using the Bell Social Adaptation Scale, the Tangney Self-Control Scale, and sessions based on the mindfulness training by Lovas and Schuman-Olivier (2018).

Findings: Results indicated that mindfulness training had a positive and significant impact on self-control and social adaptation in housewives.

Conclusion: Thus, the potential of mindfulness training to enhance aspects such as self-control and social adaptation in couples can be utilized.

Keywords: Mindfulness training, Self-control, Social adaptation.

1. Introduction

Mindfulness, or presence of mind, means being aware of one's thoughts, behaviors, emotions, and motivations in order to better manage and regulate them. In other words, mindfulness involves attention in a specific manner (Britton, 2019; Goldberg et al., 2022). Having a right mind means that a person directs their awareness from the past and the future to the present. When a person is in the

present, they see all aspects of reality, both internal and external, and realize that they are constantly reflecting and engaging in internal dialogue with judgments and interpretations (Mettler et al., 2023; Parsons et al., 2017). When an individual realizes that the mind is constantly interpreting and understanding, they can pay more attention to their thoughts, examine them without hatred or judgment, and discover the reason for their existence. The practice of mindfulness gives individuals the ability to understand that

"a thought is just a thought," and when they realize it may not be correct, they can more easily let go of their thoughts. A person always hears messages or sounds through the mind of reason. It is very important for them to be aware of their mind's messages when thinking so they can let them go without getting caught up in them (Williams & Penman, 2011; Yüksel & Yilmaz, 2020). Currently, the most common method for reducing stress is Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), also known as stress reduction and relaxation programs (Lovas & Schuman-Olivier, 2018; Mettler et al., 2023). In all mindfulness training, participants are taught to focus on their activity (e.g., breathing or walking), be aware of their position at each moment, and observe feelings, sensations, or cognitions without judgment while processing them (Rash et al., 2019; Yüksel & Yilmaz, 2020).

Bernard and Teasdale in the Interactive Cognitive Systems (ICS) theory in 1990 proposed that the mind has multiple aspects of receiving and processing new information, cognitively and emotionally. One aspect of the mind unintentionally suppresses another (Lovas & Schuman-Olivier, 2018; Mettler et al., 2023). The two main aspects of the mind, the functional aspect and the being aspect, also referred to as the shifting aspect, are very purposeful and arise when there is a discrepancy between what one desires and what one wants. The second aspect of the mind, the being aspect, instead of focusing on achieving a specific goal, is acceptance and letting go as it is without immediate pressure to change. A key component of the ICS model is metacognition (Rash et al., 2019; Williams & Penman, 2011).

In mindfulness training, individuals are encouraged to pay attention to moment-to-moment internal experiences such as feelings, thoughts, and bodily emotions, and this attention to environmental aspects such as sight and hearing is encouraged (Goldberg et al., 2022; Hofmann & Gómez, 2017). For individuals who accept things without judgment, their awareness encourages them to develop these attitudes. This means creating people's perception of perceptions, cognitions, feelings, or emotions, but not judging and evaluating them as good or bad, right or wrong, healthy or unhealthy, important or unimportant (Rash et al., 2019; Williams & Penman, 2011). A review of studies shows that the role of mindfulness on various factors such as anxiety reduction; stress, worry, and rumination; planning and flexibility; marital compatibility; adaptation and self-control has been considered (Babakhani, 2019; Britton, 2019; Goldberg et al., 2022; Hofmann & Gómez, 2017; Lovas &

Schuman-Olivier, 2018; Mettler et al., 2023; Parsons et al., 2017; Rash et al., 2019; Williams & Penman, 2011; Yüksel & Yilmaz, 2020). The review of the literature suggests that the importance of psychological and social variables with mindfulness is somewhat dim in research, especially among housewives. Therefore, the current research aims to determine the impact of mindfulness training on self-control and social adaptation in housewives with a multivariable approach.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study design and Participant

The research method employed was a quasi-experimental design using a randomized two-group pretest-posttest approach. The study population consisted of all housewives visiting Fatih Garden in the Jahanshahr neighborhood of Karaj in 2023. Given that the minimum sample size for a quasi-experimental design is 30 participants, from among the housewives who participated in exercise activities at Fatih Garden during the week, 30 women (15 in the experimental group and 15 in the control group) who met the study's entry criteria were voluntarily selected and randomly assigned to the two groups. The inclusion criteria were minimal literacy skills, full consent to participate in the training sessions, and no participation in other psychological training classes. Exclusion criteria included withdrawal of consent to participate in the study, lack of cooperation in the research, and absenteeism of more than two sessions.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Social Adaptation

This scale was developed by Bell in 1961 and consists of 32 questions covering five components: home adaptation, workplace adaptation, health adaptation, emotional adaptation, and social adaptation. It is rated on a three-point scale (yes, no, don't know), with "yes" scored as 1 and "no" as 0. The validity of the questionnaire was established through two methods. Initially, each section of the questionnaire was chosen to show a noticeable difference between the top 50% and bottom 50% in the adult score distribution. Additionally, it was validated through expert consulting efforts with adults in very good and very poor adaptation ranges, identifying the distinctions the questionnaire could detect between them. The reliability of the social fit section was 0.88, obtained using the Spearman-Brown prediction formula and odd-even correlation method.

The validity of this questionnaire in Iran was examined by Dr. Ali Delavar for the veteran sports community of Iran by Agha Mohammadian Shaarbaf, obtaining results consistent with the original test. In studies by Mika'ili and Imamzadeh, the overall reliability was 0.84 and validity was 0.80 (Maarefvand & Shafiabady, 2024). In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha as 0.88.

2.2.2. *Self-Control*

Developed by Tangney, Baumeister, and Boone in 2004, this scale consists of 13 questions aimed at measuring the degree of an individual's self-control. Responses are rated on a Likert scale ranging from "not at all" (1) to "very much" (5), with total scores ranging from 13 to 65, where higher scores indicate greater self-control. The validity of the scale was confirmed by correlating it with academic achievement, adaptation, positive relationships, and interpersonal skills scales. The statistical reliability obtained using Cronbach's alpha was 0.83 and 0.85. Mousavi Moghadam et al. reported acceptable validity and reliability in the Iranian population in 2015 (Elyasi & Eftekhary, 2023; Khorram Abadi et al., 2018; Mehraban et al., 2023). In this study, the reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha as 0.78.

2.3. *Intervention*

2.3.1. *Mindfulness*

The mindfulness training protocol by Lovas and Schuman-Olivier (2018) consists of a series of sessions designed to enhance self-awareness and emotional regulation through focused mindfulness exercises. Each session builds on the previous ones to develop a comprehensive understanding and practice of mindfulness techniques among participants (Lovas & Schuman-Olivier, 2018).

Session One

The initial session focuses on getting to know the group members and setting expectations. Discussions about confidentiality boundaries are emphasized to create a safe and trusting environment. The session includes setting the group's policy and engaging in physical mindfulness exercises. Homework assignments are given to reinforce the session's teachings and prepare for the next meeting.

Session Two

In the second session, participants review their reactions to the previous meeting and engage in further physical mindfulness exercises. A significant part of the session is dedicated to practicing mindful breathing for ten minutes, helping participants to focus on their present experiences. This session also introduces the concept of recognizing that emotions are a result of situations and our interpretations, encouraging participants to reflect on their thoughts and feelings.

Session Three

Feedback from the previous session is reviewed to enhance learning and adjust practices as needed. The session includes exercises in body control and another ten-minute mindful breathing practice. Participants engage in mindful walking, which helps integrate mindfulness into simple daily activities. The homework from the previous session is reviewed, and new tasks are assigned to continue the practice outside of the sessions.

Session Four

The fourth session begins with a homework review, followed by physical mindfulness exercises and another session of ten-minute mindful breathing. Participants discuss pleasant events of the week and examine the related body sensations, thoughts, and feelings. The session also explores how to mindfully process unpleasant experiences, enhancing awareness of the body's responses to different stimuli. Homework for the week includes daily focus on work-related tasks and emotional responses to various life events.

Sessions Five and Six

These sessions involve reviewing homework, practicing body scans, and continuing with ten-minute mindful breathing exercises. Participants also discuss enjoyable events of the week and perform body sensation reviews. The exercises from the third and fourth sessions are repeated to reinforce the skills learned and ensure consistency in practice.

Sessions Seven and Eight

The final sessions introduce Zen meditation to deepen self-awareness of breath, body, sounds, thoughts, and feelings. A three-minute breathing space is practiced to explore the relationship between activity and mood. Body control exercises are revisited, and participants discuss any challenges they have faced in continuing their practices or completing tasks. Performance assessments and responses from previous sessions are reviewed to gauge progress and consolidate the mindfulness skills developed throughout the program.

2.4. Data Analysis

Data for the study were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive statistics: To describe the variables of the study for both the experimental and control groups and demographic characteristics of the participants, descriptive statistical methods such as frequency and percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used. Inferential statistical items: The statistical test of analysis of covariance was employed considering the research method to compare the empirical results before and after the experiment between the experimental and control

groups. Data were analyzed using SPSS software, version 24.

3. Findings and Results

In the present study, 30 housewives visiting Fateh Garden in the Jahanshahr neighborhood of Karaj in 2023 were investigated. The average age was 35.83 ± 8.02 years. Educational levels were 23.3% with a diploma, 46.7% with a bachelor's degree, and 30% with higher degrees. Marital status showed that 10% of the housewives were single and 90% were married.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation of Pretest and Posttest Scores for Self-Control and Social Adaptation Variables in Experimental and Control Groups

Variable	Group	Experimental Mean	Experimental SD	Control Mean	Control SD
Self-Control	Pretest	32.66	5.72	33.60	5.06
	Posttest	38.80	4.27	35.00	5.22
Social Adaptation	Pretest	3.00	1.06	2.40	0.91
	Posttest	1.86	1.12	2.20	1.08
Home Adaptation	Pretest	2.00	1.19	2.80	1.08
	Posttest	1.13	0.83	2.46	1.12
Workplace Adaptation	Pretest	2.93	0.79	3.53	1.40
	Posttest	1.33	0.89	3.06	1.48
Health Adaptation	Pretest	3.13	1.06	2.40	1.12
	Posttest	2.26	1.27	2.13	1.18
Emotional Adaptation	Pretest	2.40	1.35	2.60	1.12
	Posttest	1.60	1.35	2.40	1.24
Social Adaptation	Pretest	2.40	1.35	2.60	1.12
	Posttest	1.60	1.35	2.40	1.24

Given that the significance level derived from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in the research variables in the pre-test and post-test for the control and experimental groups was greater than 0.05, and the statistic was not significant, we can accept with 95% confidence that the distribution of

the statistical population is normal. Considering the F-value obtained from Levene's test, there is no significant difference at the $\alpha=0.05$ level between the variances, therefore, the null hypothesis of homogeneity of variances is accepted.

Table 2

Analysis of Variance for the Effect of Group Variable

Effect	Test	F-value	df Hypothesis	df Error	Significance (p)	Eta Squared
Group	Pillai's Trace	7.40	5	19	0.001	0.661
	Wilks' Lambda	7.40	5	19	0.001	0.661
	Hotelling's Trace	1.94	5	19	0.001	0.661
	Greatest Root	1.94	5	19	0.001	0.661

According to the data in Table 2, all tests indicate that the experimental group had a significant effect on the dependent variable.

Table 3*Results of Multivariate Analysis of Covariance for Social Adaptation Scores*

Source of Variation	Dependent Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	Significance (p)	Partial Eta Squared
Group	Home Adaptation	3.64	1	3.64	6.08	0.022	0.209
	Workplace Adaptation	2.76	1	2.76	6.58	0.017	0.223
	Health Adaptation	3.52	1	3.52	6.65	0.026	0.197
	Emotional Adaptation	1.44	1	1.44	5.55	0.027	0.194
	Social Adaptation	3.32	1	3.32	9.67	0.005	0.296
	Self-Control	148.13	1	148.13	18.61	0.001	0.417
	Social Adaptation	109.89	1	109.89	51.22	0.001	0.663

According to the results mentioned and the F-value obtained in [Table 3](#), there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the post-test social adaptation sub-scales between the experimental and control groups. Thus, in these sub-scales, there is a significant difference in the post-test phase between the experimental group, which underwent mindfulness training, and the control group, which did not receive any intervention, with the experimental group showing better performance. There is also a significant difference between the mean scores of the post-test scales of self-control and social adaptation between the experimental and control groups. Therefore, in these scales, there is a significant difference in the post-test phase between the experimental group, which underwent mindfulness training, and the control group, which did not receive any intervention, with the experimental group showing better performance.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed significant differences between the mean scores of the post-test scales of self-control and social adaptation between the experimental and control groups. Thus, in these scales, there is a significant difference in the post-test phase between the experimental group, which underwent mindfulness training, and the control group, which did not receive any intervention, with the experimental group showing better performance. The results are approximately consistent with those of prior studies ([Ahadian fard et al., 2017](#); [Ahmadi & Valizadeh, 2021](#); [Bowen et al., 2014](#); [Enkema & Bowen, 2017](#); [Ezadi & Nemat Tavosi, 2016](#); [Gross, 2014](#); [Jafari & Shahabi, 2017](#); [Maarefvand & Shafiabady, 2024](#); [Pasandideh & Abolmoali, 2016](#); [Pascual-Madorran et al., 2021](#); [Peterson & Eifert, 2011](#); [Sedighi Arfaee et al., 2021](#); [Semple et al., 2010](#); [Sooreh et al., 2023](#)).

The results showed significant differences between the mean scores of the post-test self-control scale between the

experimental and control groups in the post-test phase. Thus, in this scale, there is a significant difference in the post-test phase between the experimental group, which underwent mindfulness training, and the control group, which did not receive any intervention, with the experimental group showing better performance. The results are approximately consistent with prior studies ([Bowlin & Baer, 2012](#); [Khorrami et al., 2019](#); [Kordnoghiabi et al., 2019](#); [Liu et al., 2022](#); [Mehraban et al., 2023](#)).

The results showed significant differences between the mean scores of the post-test social adaptation sub-scales between the experimental and control groups. Thus, in these sub-scales, there is a significant difference in the post-test phase between the experimental group, which underwent mindfulness training, and the control group, which did not receive any intervention, with the experimental group showing better performance. The results are approximately consistent with those of prior studies ([Ahadian fard et al., 2017](#); [Ahmadi & Valizadeh, 2021](#); [Babakhani, 2019](#); [Bowen et al., 2014](#); [Bowlin & Baer, 2012](#); [Britton, 2019](#); [Enkema & Bowen, 2017](#); [Ezadi & Nemat Tavosi, 2016](#); [Goldberg et al., 2022](#); [Gross, 2014](#); [Hofmann & Gómez, 2017](#); [Jafari & Shahabi, 2017](#); [Khorrami et al., 2019](#); [Kordnoghiabi et al., 2019](#); [Liu et al., 2022](#); [Lovas & Schuman-Olivier, 2018](#); [Maarefvand & Shafiabady, 2024](#); [Mehraban et al., 2023](#); [Mettler et al., 2023](#); [Parsons et al., 2017](#); [Pasandideh & Abolmoali, 2016](#); [Pascual-Madorran et al., 2021](#); [Peterson & Eifert, 2011](#); [Rash et al., 2019](#); [Sedighi Arfaee et al., 2021](#); [Semple et al., 2010](#); [Sooreh et al., 2023](#); [Williams & Penman, 2011](#); [Yüksel & Yılmaz, 2020](#)).

The family, as the smallest social unit and the foundation of society, is crucial in preserving human emotions and should receive increasing attention. In our country, the family holds a higher importance compared to other options (work, religion, politics). The family is the most fundamental social structure and the main component of society. The stability of relationships and the strength of a healthy family are tied to numerous complex internal and

external factors. Among various factors, sexual satisfaction, marital satisfaction, lack of conflicts between spouses, and the absence of negative traits in individuals significantly impact many health and well-being indices at both individual and family levels. The emergence of problems and conflicts in life can lead to issues in interactions and social adaptation. Social adaptation involves aligning behavior to meet environmental needs, often requiring the modulation of impulses, emotions, or attitudes. People might try to avoid events that remind them of upsetting moments because these can cause psychological problems and remind them of pain and suffering, resulting in disturbed individual adaptation in the absence of sufficient social support. Individuals with low social adaptation face significant issues in verbal communication with others, life planning, self-care, daily tasks, etc.

Self-control can also impact the quality of life through the ability to avoid or eliminate unwanted thoughts, behaviors, and emotions. Self-control helps individuals cope with everyday life, work, and personal relationships. It has also been found that individuals with high self-control are likely to approach positive outcomes and future goals, achieve career advancements, and are less likely to focus on preventing negative outcomes compared to individuals with lower levels of self-control. Various educational and therapeutic methods have been employed to improve psychological, emotional, communicational, and social components of individuals. Among the modern educational methods, mindfulness training can be highlighted. Focused attention on the present moment facilitates the processing of all aspects of immediate experience, including cognitive, physiological, or behavioral activities. Through practice and mindfulness-based techniques, an individual becomes aware of their daily activities, gains awareness of the automatic functioning of the mind in the past and future, and through moment-to-moment awareness of thoughts, feelings, and physical states, gains control over them and is released from the routine, automatic mind focused on the past and future. Mindfulness, as a lifestyle, through meditative practices integrated into daily life, helps individuals become familiar with the dual aspects of the mind and consciously use them as a cohesive mind. With this approach, individuals realize that they not only think but can observe their thinking. Through formal meditations (such as breathing and body scan, mindful yoga, and body scan meditation) and informal meditations (such as eating, walking, showering, etc.) and habit-breaking exercises, individuals learn to be present in "here" and "now" in all aspects of life.

5. Limitations and Suggestions

This research was conducted among all housewives visiting Fateh Garden in the Jahanshahr neighborhood of Karaj, so the results are generalizable to this statistical population and caution should be exercised in generalizing it to other statistical populations. In the current study, self-report questionnaires were used to collect data, which have some inherent limitations. Problems related to the quick access to housewives visiting Fateh Garden in the Jahanshahr neighborhood of Karaj, lack of cooperation of some women to complete questionnaires due to busyness and lack of access, and difficult access to international databases for gathering theoretical and empirical background. The statistical population in the current study was limited to housewives visiting Fateh Garden in the Jahanshahr neighborhood of Karaj, so it is recommended that future research be conducted in other regions. Conducting research in other geographic areas and comparing the results with the current study. Using observation methods and case studies in data collection are other recommendations of this research. Based on the results obtained from mindfulness training on self-control, it is suggested that family counselors use the capacities of the self-control variable to reduce marital conflicts and increase self-control in couples. Based on the results obtained from mindfulness training on adaptation, it is suggested that the capacities of this training be used to enhance adaptation in couples to increase social adaptation.

Authors' Contributions

Authors contributed equally to this article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

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

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