

Effect of Online Mindfulness Training to Tertiary Students' Mental Health: An Experimental Research

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Abstract : The transition to online learning has been a challenging feat on the mental health of tertiary students. This study investigated whether learning mindfulness strategies online would help in improving students' imagination, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and emotional stability, as measured by the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) Big Five Factor Markers, as well as their dispositional mindfulness as measured by the Mindfulness Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS). Fifty-two college students participated in the experiment. The 23 participants assigned to the treatment condition received 6-weekly experiential sessions of online mindfulness training and were advised to follow a daily mindfulness practice, while the 29 participants from the control group only received a 1-hour lecture. Scores were collected at pretest and posttest. Findings show that there was a significant difference in the pretest and posttest scores of students assigned in the treatment group, likewise medium effect sizes in the variables: dispositional mindfulness ($t(22) = 2.64, p = 0.015, d = .550$), extraversion ($t(22) = 2.76, p = 0.011, d = 0.575$), emotional stability ($t(22) = 2.99, p = 0.007, d = .624$), conscientiousness ($t(22) = 2.74, p = 0.012, d = .572$) and imagination ($t(22) = 4.08, p < .001$), but not for agreeableness ($t(22) = 2.01, p = 0.057, d = .419$). No significant differences were observed on the scores of the control group. Educational institutions are recommended to consider teaching basic mindfulness strategies to tertiary students, as a valuable resource in improving their mental health as they navigate through adjustments in online learning.

Keywords : mindfulness, school-based interventions, MAAS, IPIP Big Five Markers, experiment

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