Validating the Effects of Mindfulness Training on Nurses' Moods and Self-Esteem

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the effects of mental health training using nurses'mindfulness on nurses' mood and self-esteem.

Improvements in mood and self-esteem post-mindfulness training was observed in new nurses working in the acute care hospital, indicating the positive effects of mindfulness on mental health.

Keywords: *Mindfulness Training, Nurses' Stress management, POMS, Self-Esteem*

INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to investigate the effects of mental health training using nurses'mindfulness on nurses' mood and self-esteem and to investigate the ideal way of providing mental health support to nurses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Period

April 2019–January 2021

Methods

Subjects

90 nurses working in a general hospital in Chiba prefecture, 44 of who were recent graduates and have never worked as a nurse and 46 of whom had nursing experience in another facility andwere transferred to the hospital in April 2019.

Data collection method

Two sessions of mental health training were provided separately to both thegroups, i.e.the group of new graduate nurses and the group of nurses with pre-existing experience. The first training session was held during the period of June 2019 to July 2019 comprising a 60-minute lecture using the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare's *Jibun no SutoresuniKizukou*(Recognising Your Stress)

occupational mental health website, followed bya discussion on the ideas of cognitive behavioural therapy, and a 30-minute group workshop. In the workshop, the participants were primarily asked to discuss methods for dealing with stress.The second session was 120 minutes long and was held during the period of October 2019 to November 2019, comprising psychoeducation and mindfulness exercisesfollowed by a groupworkshop.The segment on mindfulness consisted of a lecture on the premise and benefits of mindfulness (30-minute lecture), followed by an experience-based learning workshop using existing CDs(Introduction to Mindfulness meditation by Masao Yoshida), Mindfulness on'Stabilisationof the Body's Axis', 'Meditation for Improving Concentration', 'Meditation for Appreciation' and 'Meditation for Charity'. In the group workshop, participants discussed 'Things that they learned how to do in the last half-year','Things that made them happy when to be complimented on by the instructor', 'Ingenious methods to cope with own stress' and 'Thoughts and opinions on the training';which theynoted on their own worksheets.

In the second session, participants filled in the Japanese GHQ30 General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) before the intervention, and the POMS-2 short form and Self-Esteem Scale before and after the intervention.

Assessment tools

Profile of Mood States (POMS) Short Form

TheProfile of Mood States (POMS) can evaluate not only relatively consistent emotional statesbut also shifting and transitory emotions (Yokoyama, Watanabe, 2018).

Japanese Version of the GGQ30

The Japanese version of the GHQ30 primarily reflects neurotic symptoms, anxiety and social dysfunction and can discriminate not only neurosis but also diseases associated with tension and depressive symptoms. The reliability and validity of the GHQ30 has been tested on healthy individuals, individuals with neurosis and university students and is based on score distribution, sensitivity and specificity (Nakagawa, Daibo 2013).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Self-esteem refers to feelings that one holds about oneself, including feelings of self-acceptance. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale is the most widely used scale to measure self-esteem with tested reliability and validity (Uchida, 2007).

Ethical considerations

This study was conducted by ensuring participants' free will and confidentiality. The purpose and methods of this study were explained to participants orally and in writing, andparticipants provided their consent by signing the consent form.

This study protocol was approved by the ethics committee of the Wayo Women's University in October 2019 (approval no. 1934) and by the board of the participating facility.

Results and Discussion

Participant Background

This study was conducted in a general acute care hospital in Chiba prefecture.

Valid responses were received from 32 nurses in the group of new nurses and 34 in the group of nurses with pre-existing experience, or a total of 66 nurses (73.3%). Nurses' age ranged from 20 to 35 years with a mean age of 24.9 years.

Mental Health as Evaluated by the Ghq30

The scores ranged between 0 and 24 points, and the mean score was 11.86 points (SD=5.98). Subscale mean scores are presented in Table 1.

According to Nakagaawa et al., the cutoff point is 25 points, so the participants of this study can be considered to be in good mental health status.

Table 1. *GHQ Scores in this Study*

GHQ subscale	Mean score
General tendency	2.28
Somatic symptoms	1.88
Sleeping disorders	2.53
Social dysfunction	1.48
Anxiety and mood changes	2.77
Suicidal thoughts/depression	0.93

Changes in Mood and Self-Esteem before and after Mindfulness Training

Significant changes in mood on the POMS were observed before and after the training(t=3.57, df=65, p< 0.01). On the POMS subscale, significant differences were observed in anger-hostility, confusion-bewilderment, depression-dejection, fatigue-lethargy and tension-anxiety. However, significant differences were not observed in vigour-amicability. The self-esteem scores improved significantly after training (t=−4.58, df=61, p< 0.01).

Conclusions

Improvements in mood and self-esteem post-mindfulness training was observed in new nurses(including nurses with pre-existing experience) working in the acute care hospital, indicating the positive effects of mindfulness on mental health. However, a limitation of this study is the small sample size. In the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthening mental health of healthcare workers is a universal challenge, warranting the development and verification of an online system that offers mental health skills training and support.

References

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