Exploring the Impact of Mindfulness Training on Mindfulness and Ethical Decision Making in Pre-Licensure and Post Graduate Nurses

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WEAPONS OF MASS DISTRACTION
Introduction

- Distracted, partially attentive people tend to engage in more unethical behaviors, which may negatively affect patient outcomes (Riskin, 2009).

- The absence of awareness of one’s present experience, is known as mindlessness (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2011).

- Mindlessness may contribute to unethical decision making, since awareness is a critical component of ethical decision making (Ruedy & Schweitzer, 2011).
Research Aim

• To evaluate and compare the effects of participating in mindfulness training on mindfulness and ethical decision making in pre-licensure and practicing nurses.
Methods

- Following IRB approval, participants were recruited to participate in an 8 session mindfulness training program.

- A mindfulness program tailored to nursing was developed in collaboration with a mindfulness expert.

- Pre-recorded video taped sessions

- Course created using an online learning platform

- Guided practice, mindfulness education, and dialogues around participants’ feelings, thoughts, and sensations during practices were included
Mindfulness Course
Methods

- Pre-Post Design
- The Freiburg Mindfulness Inventory (FMI) (Walach, et al. 2006)
- Defining Issues Test of moral judgment version 2 (DIT-2) (Rest, 1975)
- Journal Entries
- Compensation 75$ gift card offered upon completion
Results

- Forty five participants enrolled in the study (N= 34 pre-licensure, N= 11 post graduate). 27 participants completed the study (N=20 pre-licensure, 7 post graduate).

- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and paired t tests were used to carry out the analysis.
Results - FMI

- Overall, there was a statistically significant improvement in the FMI scores $p = .003$.

- The pre-licensure group had a higher baseline FMI (mean = 36.79) as compared to the post graduate group (mean = 30.33, $p = .013$).

- Post training FMI scores were not found to be statistically significantly different ($p = .354$) when comparing the groups.

- While both groups improved their scores pre to post, the post training FMI score for the post graduate group (mean = 36.71) did not achieve the baseline scores of the pre-licensure group.

- The pre-licensure group did not show a statistically significant improvement in their FMI scores pre to post training ($p = .281$), however the post graduate group did ($p = .004$).
Results - DIT

- Statistically significant pre - post scores were found in two schemas of the DIT-2 (P [Post conventional] score, $p = .039$ and N2 [maintaining norms] score, $p = .032$).

- The post-conventional schema focuses on organizing a society by appealing to consensus-producing procedures, insisting on due process, and the safeguarding of minimal basic rights. Arguments presented in this schema include those appealing to moral ideals and / or theoretical frameworks.

- The maintaining norms schema focuses on the existing legal system, maintaining existing roles, and formal organizational structure. Arguments presented in this schema include those that appeal to maintaining social laws and norms (Bebeau and Thoma, 2003; Grometstein & Schilling, 2009).
Conclusions

• Mindfulness training improves mindfulness in both pre-licensure and post-graduate nurses, however the improvement is more profound in post-graduate nurses.

• Mindfulness training likewise improves some aspects of ethical decision making, especially those appealing to the maintenance of social laws, social norms, moral ideals, and theoretical frameworks.

• Study Limitations
Implications for Nursing Education

- Incorporation of a video recorded mindfulness training program into both the undergraduate and graduate nursing

- Further investigation of mindfulness in post graduate nurses would need to be carried out to fully explore the impact that graduating and working in the field of nursing has on mindfulness
Mind Full, or Mindful?
Bebeau, M.J., & Thoma, S.J. (2003). Guide for DIT-2. The Guide is designed for two kinds of users: (a) researchers wanting a brief account (3 pages) on how to use DIT-2 and interpret the REPORT; (b) researchers who want more detail: how to customize the DIT-2, add dilemmas of their own design, and information on about 50 variables calculated from DIT data.


