JOURNAL OF A New Approach in Teaching and Learning
Research Center of Knowledge-based Businesses & Resource Management Studies
https://www.jnael.ir
Volume 1, Issue 2, Summer 2025, Pages 65 to 79
eISSN: 3150-4078
Original Article (Quantified)

The Effectiveness of Mindfulness Training on Psychological Flexibility and Academic Engagement in Elementary School Students with Anxiety

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Receive:
07 June 2025
Revise:
27 June 2025
Accept:
02 August 2025

Abstract

The present study was conducted with the aim of determining the effectiveness of mindfulness training on the psychological flexibility and academic engagement of anxious elementary school students in Sari during the 1404–1405 academic year. Given the prevalence of anxiety in childhood and its consequences for academic performance and mental health, examining the effectiveness of mindfulness-based interventions is of particular importance. This study was a quasi-experimental investigation employing a pre-test–post-test design with a control group. The statistical population consisted of all primary school students in public schools in the city of Sari during the 1404–1405 academic year. Following the administration of an anxiety questionnaire and the identification of students exhibiting anxiety, 30 individuals were selected via purposive sampling and randomly assigned to either the experimental group or the control group (15 participants per group). The experimental group received mindfulness training over eight 60-minute sessions, whereas the control group received no intervention. The research instruments included the Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire and the Academic Engagement Questionnaire. Data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) and SPSS software (version 27). The results indicated that mindfulness training led to a significant increase in psychological flexibility and academic engagement among anxious students compared to the control group ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, the obtained effect size demonstrated the intervention's favorable impact on both dependent variables. Mindfulness training can be utilized by psychologists, counselors, and educational officials as an effective method to enhance psychological flexibility and increase academic engagement among students experiencing anxiety. Implementing this intervention in elementary schools can serve as an effective step toward promoting mental health and improving students' academic performance.

Keywords:
Mindfulness, cognitive flexibility, academic engagement, students with anxiety.

Please cite this article as (APA): Rameshgar, H., Og, N. & Sadat Jalali, M. (2025). The Effectiveness of Mindfulness Training on Psychological Flexibility and Academic Engagement in Elementary School Students with Anxiety. *New Approach in Teaching and Learning,* 1(2), 65-79.

https://doi.org/10.22034/jnael.2025.251361

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Publisher: Research Center of Resource Management Studies and Knowledge-Based Business

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