



Mediating role of coping competence on the relationship between mindfulness and flourishing

Ahmet Akin* and Umran Akin

Sakarya University, Turkey

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to investigate the mediator role of coping competence on the relationship between mindfulness and flourishing. Participants were 284 university students who completed a questionnaire package that included the Cognitive and Affective Mindfulness Scale, the Coping Competence Questionnaire, and the Flourishing Scale. The relationships between coping competence, mindfulness, and flourishing were examined using correlation and regression analysis. According to results, both coping competence and flourishing were predicted positively by mindfulness. On the other hand, flourishing was predicted positively by coping competence. In addition, coping competence mediated on the relationship between mindfulness and flourishing. Together, the findings illuminate the importance of mindfulness on psychological and cognitive adjustment. The results were discussed in the light of the related literature and dependent recommendations to the area were given.

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Papel mediador del afrontamiento de la competencia en la relación entre la concienciación y el florecimiento

RESUMEN

El objetivo de esta investigación es estudiar el papel mediador del afrontamiento de la competencia en la relación entre la concienciación y el florecimiento. Participaron 284 estudiantes universitarios que rellenaron un paquete de cuestionarios que incluía la Escala de Concienciación Cognitiva y Afectiva, el Cuestionario de Afrontamiento de la Competencia, y la Escala de Florecimiento. Se examinaron las relaciones entre el afrontamiento de la competencia, la concienciación y el florecimiento utilizando un análisis de correlación y regresión. De acuerdo con los resultados, tanto el afrontamiento de la competencia como el florecimiento fueron predichos de manera positiva por la concienciación. Por otro lado, el

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*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: aakin@sakarya.edu.tr (A. Akin).

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florecimiento fue predicho positivamente por el afrontamiento de la competencia. Además, el afrontamiento de la competencia medió en la relación entre la concienciación y el florecimiento. En conjunto, los hallazgos ilustran la importancia de la concienciación en el ajuste psicológico y cognitivo. Se analizaron los resultados a la luz de la literatura relacionada, otorgándose las recomendaciones dependientes del área en cuestión.

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Mindfulness was derived from Buddhist meditation traditions which maintain that the regular practice of mindfulness meditation reduces suffering and enhances positive qualities such as insight, wellbeing, openness, wisdom, equanimity, and compassion (Baer, Lykins, & Peters, 2012) by facilitating emotional regulation (Feldman, Hayes, Kumar, Greeson, & Laurenceau, 2007; Kumar, 2002). It has been adopted in contemporary psychology as an approach for increasing awareness and responding skillfully to mental processes that contribute to emotional distress and maladaptive behavior (Bishop et al., 2004). Mindfulness was described firstly by Kabat-Zinn (1994, 2005) as an awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experiences, including emotions, cognitions, and bodily sensations, as well as external stimuli such as sights, sounds, and smells moment to moment. Within this notion, mindfulness was considered as contrasted with excessive rumination about the past or future, negative self-evaluation and behaving in a reactive way (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Moore, 2008). Because it prevents habitual reacting and encouraging a more adaptive deliberate response to experiences (Baer, Smith & Allen, 2004; Segal, Williams & Teasdale, 2002), mindfulness is also believed to enhance affective balance and psychological well-being (Schroevers & Brandsma, 2010).

More recently, the definition of the construct has been extended by Bishop et al. (2004) as being composed of two main elements: paying attention to one's present moment experience as it is happening (self-regulation of attention) and adoption of a particular orientation towards one's experiences. Self-regulation of attention allows an individual for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment and refers to non-elaborative observation and awareness of thoughts, feelings, or sensations from moment to moment (Keng, Smoski & Robins, 2011). This kind of attention requires both the ability to concentrate on what is actually occurring and the ability to intentionally move attention from one aspect of the experience to another. The second dimension, orientation to experience, includes adopting a particular orientation towards one's experiences in the present moment and relating to this experience with a curious, open, and accepting stance (Bishop et al., 2004; Feldman et al., 2007; Neff & Germer, 2013) which, in turn, allows people to experience events fully, without resorting to either extreme of excessive preoccupation with, or suppression of, the experience (Keng et al., 2011).

Mindfulness facilitates acknowledging emotions as transient phenomena and fully experiencing emotions without necessarily acting upon them (Kabat-Zinn, 1994), thus providing higher levels of emotional intelligence (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Feldman et al., 2007). Mindfulness is considered as a potentially effective antidote against common forms of psychological distress, many of which involve the maladaptive tendencies to suppress, over-engage with, or avoid one's distressing thoughts and emotions (Hayes & Feldman, 2004; Keng et al., 2011). Non-mindful approaches to internal experiences, on the other hand, have been characterized as under- or over-engagement with internal experiences (Buchheld, Grossman & Walach, 2002; Feldman et al., 2007; Hayes & Feldman, 2004). The former, emotional under-engagement, is related mainly experiential avoidance and thought suppression while the latter, over-engagement, involves one's exaggeration or elaboration of initial symptoms of distress such as worry, rumination, and over-generalization (Feldman et al., 2007).

The past two decades have seen an explosion of research into the benefits of mindfulness (Neff & Germer, 2013) and an ample of evidence has shown that it has positive psychological, social, and cognitive effects on people's daily life. These studies found mindfulness to be associated positively with subjective well-being, behavioral regulation, reduced negative symptoms and emotional reactivity (Keng et al., 2011), cognitive flexibility, mood repair, clarity of feelings (Feldman et al., 2007), self-esteem, life satisfaction, positive affect, and optimism (Brown & Ryan, 2003). On the contrary, mindfulness was related negatively to distress, anxiety, depression (Cash & Whittingham, 2010; Feldman et al., 2007), social anxiety (Rasmussen & Pidgeon, 2011), negative affect, worry, rumination, and brooding (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Feldman et al., 2007).

Coping competence

The coping competence theory proposes that challenges can be classified into three domains (Moreland & Dumas, 2008); affective (challenges requiring solutions to primarily emotional situations and demands), social (challenges mainly related with interpersonal and social situations and demands), and achievement (challenges linked to significant goal-directed activities, e.g., physical and cognitive abilities and academic or work-related demands and responsibilities). Coping competence has been conceptualized by Schroder and Ollis (2013) as a trait-like protective factor against the development of

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