

Can Mindfulness-based therapy reduce executive impairment in adults with autism spectrum disorders (ASD)?

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Introduction

Impairment in executive functioning is one of the core deficits in autism. In adults with autism specifically, executive function deficits have been predominantly reported in the areas of cognitive flexibility, planning and working memory. Treatment opportunities for executive impairment in adults with ASD are limited and lack scientific proof. Mindfulness-based therapy (MBT) is a relatively new form of treatment that has been proven effective in reducing executive impairment in various disorder groups. MBT has been examined in adults with ASD and results showed a reduction in symptoms of depression and anxiety (Spek, 2013).

Aims

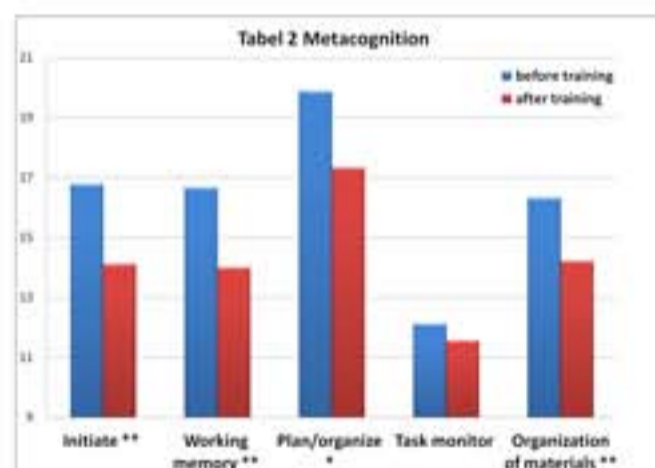
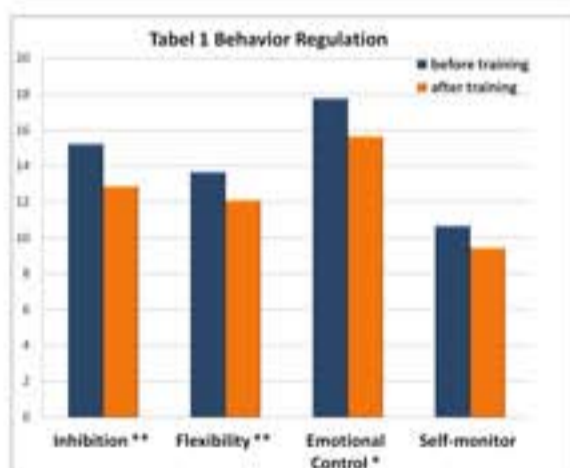
This study aims to examine the effects of MBT on executive functioning in adults with ASD.

Method

Participants 9 adults with ASD of which 8 males and 1 female, all with normal intelligence (FSIQ > 85)
Mean age 39.4
Diagnoses Based on ADI-R and DSM-IV criteria
Instrument BRIEF (Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function)

Participants were examined before and after a 9-week group mindfulness training.

Results



* = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$

Conclusions

The results indicate that MBT may be helpful for adults with ASD in reducing executive impairment. Therefore, we advise further research, incorporating a larger number of participants and a control group.

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