

The Effects of Mindful Meditation on Self-Esteem and Self-Compassion in Female Collegiate Dance Majors

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ABSTRACT

Body image and self-esteem is an everchanging mindset that occurs in everyone, and in recent years the idea of positive thinking has become more prevalent. In physical activities such as dance, that focuses on the way the body moves and looks, perceptions of one's body image can become distorted. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of a mindful meditation intervention on self-esteem and self-compassion in female collegiate dance majors.

METHODS: A total of ten female participants (age = 22.1 ± 1.5 years) with an average of 12.6 ± 5.9 years of dance experience were recruited to participate in this study. Each participant's height, weight, body composition by Dual Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry (DEXA) scan, and body image and self-esteem measures Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Self-Compassion Scale were collected prior to the mindful meditation intervention. Over a 15-day (3, 5 day/week) period the participant group was led through a 20-minute mindful meditation session and body image and self-esteem measures were collected at the end of the week. Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks test was used to determine significant differences between the assessments over the course of the intervention with $p \leq 0.05$ set for all analyses.

RESULTS: There were no significant differences for the Pre-Wk1 assessments for either the Rosenberg or the Self-Compassion Scales. Analysis indicated significant differences for the Rosenberg Pre-Wk2 (14.8 ± 4.6 , 18.2 ± 5.9 , $p = 0.05$) and Pre-Wk3 (14.8 ± 4.6 , 19.0 ± 5.6 , $p = 0.02$) assessments. Analysis indicated significant differences for the Self-Compassion Scale Pre-Wk2 (60.9 ± 15.6 , 71.4 ± 12.8 , $p < 0.01$) and Pre-Wk3 (60.9 ± 71.4 , 83.9 ± 6.9 , $p = 0.01$) assessments.

CONCLUSION: The findings of this study support the efficacy of mindful meditation practice for enhancing both self-esteem and self-compassion in female collegiate dance majors. The major limitation of this research is the relatively small cohort from which the data was collected. A practical implication from this investigation is that the implementation of mindfulness practice could potentially positively impact both self-esteem and self-compassion by enhancing both of these parameters in this at-risk group.