



Development of a Mindfulness Intervention Guide as an Effort to Optimize Self-Love to Maintain Student Mental Health

Dhevy Puswiartika^{1*)}, Bau Ratu², Yusdin Gagaramusu³, Hasan⁴, Amiruddin⁵, Putri Inayah⁶

Department of Educational Science, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Tadulako

ABSTRACT

This research aimed to develop a mindfulness intervention guide and test the effectiveness of implementing the mindfulness intervention guide as an effort to optimize self-love to maintain college students' mental health. The research method was the research and development model. This research and development procedure includes 1) the preparation stage, 2) the implementation stage, namely preparing a product draft, and 3) product testing, product validation, and preparation of the final product. This product was tested and validated by a team of experts in the field of psychology. In the implementation phase of the mindfulness intervention guide, the researchers assessed the respondents' mental health before and after administering the mindfulness intervention. Research data was analyzed descriptively, quantitatively, and qualitatively. This research showed that the intervention guide had been developed validly regarding usefulness, accuracy, suitability, and ease of guidance in implementing college student mindfulness interventions. This study also showed increased mental health levels in college students after providing mindfulness intervention to optimize self-love to maintain students' mental health. This research implied that lecturers and college students could use this mindfulness intervention guide for optimizing self-love on a limited basis to maintain daily mental health. Apart from that, this intervention guide can also be widely used by various practitioners in the mental health field, such as psychologists, counselors, guidance and counseling teachers, and social workers.

Keywords: mindfulness, self-love, mental health.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyusun panduan intervensi mindfulness dan menguji efektivitas implementasi panduan intervensi mindfulness sebagai upaya optimalisasi self-love untuk menjaga kesehatan mental mahasiswa. Metode yang digunakan adalah model research and development. Prosedur penelitian pengembangan ini, meliputi: 1) tahap persiapan, 2) tahap pelaksanaan, yaitu penyusunan draft produk, dan 3) uji coba produk, validasi produk, dan penyusunan produk akhir. Produk ini diuji dan divalidasi oleh tim ahli pada bidang ilmu psikologi. Pada fase implementasi panduan intervensi mindfulness dilakukan asesmen terhadap kesehatan mental para responden sebelum dan sesudah pemberian intervensi mindfulness. Data penelitian dianalisis secara deskriptif kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa panduan intervensi telah dikembangkan secara valid dari sisi kegunaan, ketepatan, kesesuaian dan kemudahan panduan di dalam pelaksanaan intervensi mindfulness bagi mahasiswa. Hasil penelitian ini juga menunjukkan adanya peningkatan skor kesehatan mental pada mahasiswa setelah pemberian intervensi mindfulness sebagai upaya optimalisasi self-love untuk menjaga kesehatan mental mahasiswa. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah panduan intervensi mindfulness untuk optimalisasi self-love ini dapat digunakan secara terbatas oleh dosen dan mahasiswa untuk menjaga kesehatan mental sehari-hari. Selain itu panduan intervensi ini juga dapat digunakan secara luas oleh berbagai praktisi di bidang kesehatan mental, seperti: psikolog, konselor, guru BK, dan pekerja sosial.

Kata kunci: mindfulness, self-love, kesehatan mental.

Corresponding author: Dr. Dhevy Puswiartika, S. Psi., M.Psi., Psikolog
Department of Educational Science, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Tadulako
Jl. Soekarno-Hatta KM.9, Tondo, Mantikulore, Palu, Sulawesi Tengah 94148
Email: dhevyprodibk@gmail.com
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INTRODUCTION

The global Covid-19 pandemic has recently begun to subside. Society has been able to adapt to the new normal situation. This condition is inseparable from various aspects of life, such as education, health, social, economic, political, psychological, and etc (Pranita & Nursastri, 2020). Specifically in the aspect of education in higher education, lectures for the 2022/2023 academic year implement a return to the classical learning model offline after almost two years or four semesters of being conducted online due to the spread of the COVID-19 virus outbreak. The decision on this learning system was based on the joint decision of four Ministers, namely the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Mendikbudristek), the Minister of Religion (Menag), the Minister of Health (Menkes), and the Minister of Home Affairs (Mendagri) regarding Guidelines for Organizing Learning during the Pandemic Covid-19 (Wahyono & Husamah, 2020).

The return to face-to-face learning is marked by many new challenges regarding the readiness of facilities and infrastructure to support face-to-face learning. Apart from that, students and lecturers also feel the challenges of adaptation. The change in the learning model from online for almost two years is considered to have provided comfort and become a new habit for students and lecturers, but they have to return to a face-to-face or offline learning system. Students and lecturers must prepare time, energy, and physical and mental to return to the face-to-face learning model. Online learning running during the COVID-19 pandemic is currently carried out using blended or hybrid learning variations. Blended learning is a learning model that is carried out using a mixed online and offline pattern with specific proportions according to the needs and considerations of the existing conditions at each university.

Adapting to learning model changes after the COVID-19 pandemic subsides is challenging for students. So that this adaptation process can run smoothly and students can pursue higher education well, all students must be healthy physically and mentally. In particular, the results of previous research conducted by the author show that, in general, students at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) Tadulako University showed high levels of anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic. This high anxiety level score indicates that students experience anxiety symptoms, such as physical symptoms, cognitive symptoms, affective symptoms, and psychomotor symptoms. Students experience physical symptoms, such as pain, fatigue, stomach ache, nausea, headaches, and heart palpitations. For cognitive symptoms, they often experience attention deficits, memory loss, and nightmares. They also experience affective symptoms, such as feelings of worry, sensitivity, sadness, fear, and depression. They experience nervousness, cry easily, have trouble sleeping, wake up at night, and reduced interest in hobbies due to psychomotor symptoms (Puswiartika, Ratu, et al., 2021).

Student mental health is one of the essential things that must be maintained so that students can participate in learning at university more optimally and productively. If mental health is disturbed, it can cause psychological problems, which can lead to mental disorders. Mental disorders can change the way a person handles stress, interacts with others, makes choices, and triggers desires to harm themselves. Mental health often also has an impact on physical health. An unhealthy mentality can cause various emotional disorders or interfere with other physical functions of the body (Puswiartika, 2022).

Students who are in the early adulthood development stage are vulnerable to mental health problems. Students must face the demands of the academic and social environment, prepare themselves to pursue a career, work, build a household, and take responsibility as citizens (Hurlock, 2006; Santrock & Santrock, 2014).

Students can maintain mental health and reduce the risk of psychological disorders by optimizing self-love. Self-love is not defined as fulfilling everything somebody wants, especially if it is useless. On the contrary, this concept encourages someone to be able to recognize and accept themselves and then treat themselves well and as they are. Self-love is a state of appreciation for oneself that grows from actions that support physical, psychological, and spiritual growth. The purpose of self-love is so that individuals can respect themselves and achieve optimal self-development (Borenstein, 2020; Khoshaba, 2012). Optimizing self-love helps maintain mental health because it makes it easier for a person to think positively so that everyday life will feel more manageable and enjoyable. Individuals can focus more on their life goals and feel safe, comfortable, and at ease when socializing (Khoshaba, 2012).

One intervention that can be given to students to increase self-love and maintain mental health is mindfulness intervention. Every individual can be mindful, especially when consciously carrying out behavior. On the other hand, a person's capacity to remain mindful is an ability that can also be learned. In this regard, mindfulness can be viewed from two points of view: as a trait (general tendency) or as a temporary state (Good et al., 2016).

Mindfulness as a stable dispositional characteristic or trait includes characteristics or tendencies related to innate individual differences. In this case, mindfulness is a natural human capacity that every individual can possess to varying degrees, even individuals who have not been trained (Brown et al., 2007; Dane, 2011; Glomb et al., 2011).

Mindfulness can also be viewed as a state or skill, including a series of situationally specific skills that are not permanent and can be developed through intervention, training, and practice in daily life (Brown et al., 2015). This state of mindfulness occurs when a person focuses on a particular experience with acceptance and curiosity. State mindfulness can be measured through engagement in mindfulness practices and state self-report (Lau et al., 2006). Mindfulness practice includes focusing attention (readiness of perception by regulating breathing) and openness to various sensory stimuli, which can be done with mindful movement (Lutz et al., 2015). This practice is usually included in intervention programs, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) (Kabat-Zinn, 2003).

Previous research conducted by the author has proven the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions in maintaining participants' mental health. Nurses' stress levels can decrease after attending mindfulness training (Puswiartika & Ratu, 2020). The good mental health of employees of telecommunications service providers after attending mindfulness training has proven effective in increasing service commitment to customers and the community (Puswiartika, Bettiga, et al., 2021).

Based on the explanation regarding the effectiveness of mindfulness interventions above in maintaining mental health, the author is interested in conducting research related to the preparation of mindfulness intervention guidelines to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain the mental health of students at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP) Tadulako University. Lecturers and students can use this intervention guide on a limited basis to maintain daily mental health. Apart from that, this intervention guide can also be widely used by various practitioners in the mental health field, such as psychologists, counselors, guidance and counseling teachers, and social workers.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research methods

The mindfulness intervention guide prepared in this research refers to the practical techniques of Mindfulness in Everyday Life (Puswiartika, 2022), which was developed by the author referring to Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) Segal et al.(2018). Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) is a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy with mind-oriented activities that focus on oneself, one of which is meditation. Individuals will be invited to free themselves from negative thought patterns that have been bothering them with Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy MBCT (Williams & Penman, 2011).

This research uses research and development methods, or Research and Development (R & D). The development research procedures include the preparation and implementation stages, namely the preparation of the product draft, product validation, and product testing, as well as the final product preparation stage (Sugiyono, 2013). Research and development methods are used to produce specific products and test the effectiveness of these products (Sugiyono, 2013). Research and development models can be procedural, conceptual, and theoretical models (Gall et al., 2003). The authors used a procedural model because it is considered suitable for the development objectives to be achieved, namely to produce a product and test the feasibility of the resulting product, in this case in the form of a mindfulness intervention guide product to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain mental health.

Research subject

The subject of this research consists of 3 components, including a subject from an expert or expert component to provide expert judgment, namely two lecturers with a background in psychology who hold doctorates; subjects from the guide user component, namely psychologists and Guidance Counseling teachers, as well as subjects from the target component, namely: five FKIP students at Tadulako University.

Method of collecting data

The data collection methods used in this research were questionnaires, inventories, and interviews. The questionnaire used in this research is in the form of a mindfulness intervention guide assessment scale to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain mental health. There are four main aspects assessed in developing this intervention guide, including the usefulness aspect of the guide (utility), the accuracy aspect of the guide (accuracy), the suitability aspect of the guide (feasibility), and the guide ease aspect (flexibility). Apart from that, researchers also used the Mental Health Inventory (MHI) instrument compiled by Veit & Ware (1983) and adapted into an Indonesian version by Aziz (2019) to measure the level of mental health in students as subjects of the target component, before and after administering mindfulness intervention to optimize self-love. Meanwhile, the interview method was carried out to determine subjects' opinions regarding the intervention guide after a field trial from the user component of the guide, namely psychologists and guidance and counseling teachers.

Data analysis technique

Based on the assessment of the three subject components in this study, further improvements to the intervention guide were made, and data analysis regarding the feasibility of the intervention guide was carried out. Data analysis was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of average scoring from the intervention guide assessment scale from expert judgment and the results of filling out the inventory by the target subjects. Qualitative data in interviews resulting in user subjects' comments, suggestions, and criticism was then analyzed qualitatively using theme analysis techniques (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of preparing the intervention guide refer to expert judgment regarding the guide's contents. Aspects of assessment of intervention guides include aspects of the usefulness of the guide (utility), aspects of the accuracy of the guide (accuracy), aspects of the suitability of the guide (feasibility), and aspects of the ease of the guide (flexibility). Based on expert judgment, in this case, two lecturers with a background in psychology who hold doctoral degrees, it shows that the mindfulness intervention guide for optimizing self-love to maintain mental health is assessed well in terms of usefulness, accuracy, suitability, and ease of use. The experts who became expert judgments also assessed that there were several improvements in the content of the intervention guide that needed to be made, including appropriateness of the introduction and conclusion of the intervention guide, more proportional timing of each section, as well as appropriateness of the props or media and editorial themes in each section, from the intervention guide.

The mindfulness intervention guide for optimizing self-love to maintain mental health, reviewed by expert judgment, follows a trial process to be implemented in providing intervention for five students. The intervention implementation in the field for the five students was by the guidelines validated by the two experts (expert judgment). The results of the intervention showed that five subjects showed improved mental health. After participating in the mindfulness intervention to optimize self-love, the subjects showed several changes, including decreased psychological distress and increased psychological well-being. Specifically, the reduction in psychological distress in subjects includes reduced anxiety, absence of depression, and behavior that is more controllable by the subjects. The increased psychological well-being is shown by increased life satisfaction, stable emotional conditions, and positive feelings in the subject.

Specifically, regarding the increase in the subject's ability to control emotions, predominantly negative emotions as a result of daily stress, after administering mindfulness intervention, the subjects were able to identify the content of disturbing thoughts and change them with more realistic and optimistic thought content. Apart from that, they can also find wisdom and learn from the problems they have experienced. These improvements make the students as subjects in this research more capable of dealing with the effects of stress they feel so that their sense of security increases.

Furthermore, after the field trials, the researchers prepared the final product in the form of a mindfulness intervention guide to optimize self-love to maintain mental health. This final product was assessed by subjects from the user component of the guide, namely psychologists and Guidance Counseling teachers. The research results show that guide users think that the intervention guide is to the needs of psychologists and Counseling Guidance teachers regarding providing counseling and therapy services to overcome various psychological problems of clients in the field. Psychologists and Guidance and Counseling teachers as subjects who use this intervention guide also stated that this mindfulness intervention guide to optimize self-love to maintain mental health is also easy to use because it is equipped with detailed and systematic practical steps for implementing the intervention.

The contents of the mindfulness intervention guide to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain mental health as the final product of this research and development include an introduction, the urgency of mindfulness techniques to maintain physical and mental health, facilitator preparation, techniques in mindfulness intervention for self-optimization -love, and closing. The systematic guidelines for mindfulness intervention to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain mental health can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1
Systematic Guidelines for Mindfulness Interventions

Part	Contents of the Intervention Guide
Introduction	Basic concepts of mindfulness
The Urgency of Mindfulness Techniques	The benefits of mindfulness for maintaining physical and mental health
Facilitator Preparation	Technical instructions for facilitators who will provide mindfulness interventions
Mindfulness Techniques	Mindfulness meditation, mindful breathing, inner smile technique, mindful movement, body scanning, mindful eating, mindful walking, and mindful reading
Closing	Conclusions and suggestions for users of the intervention guide

The introductory section of the intervention guide contains the basic concepts of mindfulness, including the definition of mindfulness, components of mindfulness, and mechanisms of mindfulness. The definition of *mindfulness* is a characteristic/tendency/condition of an individual to focus conscious attention on the internal state within himself and the environment outside himself in his experience of being here and now, accept every thought, feeling, or sensation that arises, without passing judgment (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Mindfulness consists of several components (Bishop et al., 2004), including attention, which focuses on the present-moment experience involving physical conditions, thoughts, and emotions, and being aware of experiences (awareness) openly, without judgment, and with an accepting attitude (acceptance).

The section on the urgency of mindfulness techniques for maintaining mental health contains the benefits of mindfulness for maintaining physical and mental health. Specifically, the benefits of mindfulness for maintaining physical health include increasing energy levels, improving sleep quality, reducing chronic pain, improving heart function, and helping overcome digestive problems. Meanwhile, the benefits of mindfulness for maintaining mental health include

optimizing self-love, dealing with stress, reducing anxiety, maintaining mood and emotional stability, increasing happiness, increasing self-confidence, and increasing concentration (Puswiartika, 2022).

The facilitator preparation section of this intervention guide contains technical instructions for facilitators who will provide mindfulness interventions. This mindfulness intervention to optimize self-love to maintain mental health is designed to be facilitated by at least one facilitator and one co-facilitator. The facilitator's task is to lead the intervention process, including providing psychoeducation related to mindfulness material, providing instructions on mindfulness techniques, providing explanations regarding the tasks of all participants, leading the discussion process, and observing participant behavior during the intervention process. Apart from that, the facilitator also has the task of taking notes regarding the intervention process that has been carried out, related to group dynamics or the results of individual observations of participants. Meanwhile, the duties of the co-facilitator include assisting the facilitator's tasks, distributing and ensuring that all participants receive training tools and materials, helping to observe the training progress, and reminding the facilitator of tasks deemed not by procedures.

The techniques section in the mindfulness intervention guide for optimizing self-love contains various mindfulness practice techniques that can be applied in intervention and everyday life. Mindfulness practice techniques in the mindfulness intervention guide to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain mental health (Puswiartika, 2022), include mindfulness meditation, mindful breathing techniques, inner smile techniques, physical movement techniques (mindful movement), body scanning techniques, mindful eating techniques, mindful walking techniques, and mindful reading techniques.

The concluding section of the mindfulness intervention guide for optimizing self-love contains conclusions from the various mindfulness techniques that have been described previously and suggestions for guiding users.

Every individual can be mindful, especially when consciously carrying out behavior. On the other hand, a person's capacity to remain mindful is an ability that can also be learned. Mindfulness can also be viewed as a state or skill, including a series of situationally specific skills that are not permanent and can be developed through intervention, training, and practice in daily life (Brown et al., 2015). This state of mindfulness occurs when a person focuses on a particular experience with acceptance and curiosity.

Specifically, mindfulness interventions given during the product trials in this study can increase the state of mindfulness in students. The application of this mindfulness intervention, which is followed by the practice of this mindfulness technique in everyday life, can optimize self-love in students as the subject of the target in this study. Self-love is not interpreted as fulfilling everything somebody wants, especially if they are not very useful. Conversely, this concept encourages someone to recognize and accept themselves and then treat themselves well and as they are. Self-love is a state of self-appreciation that grows from actions that support physical, psychological, and spiritual growth. The purpose of self-love is that individuals can respect themselves so optimal self-development is achieved (Borenstein, 2020; Khoshaba, 2012).

The results of this study are in line with the results of previous studies conducted by Srivastava&Panday (2016) which show that the provision of structured and systematic psychoeducation has proven to be effective in improving the mental health of clients who experience psychological disorders and mental health of family members who accompanied him during treatment. The results of this study are also in line with the results of previous studies conducted by Bäuerle et al. (2020) who found that mindfulness-based e-mental health interventions were effective in reducing the level of psychological distress and anxiety symptoms, as well as increasing self-efficacy in adult individuals in Germany during the Covid-19 pandemic period. Furthermore, the results of this study were also strengthened by previous studies conducted by Van Gordon et al. (2014) which show that psychological intervention based on mindfulness has proven effective in reducing work stress and improving employee mental.

Previous studies that the author has conducted have also proven the effectiveness of providing mindfulness interventions in maintaining participants' mental health. Nurses' stress levels can decrease after attending mindfulness training (Puswiartika & Ratu, 2020). Mental health maintained in telecommunications service providers' employees after mindfulness training has proven effective in increasing service commitment to customers and the community (Puswiartika, Bettega, et al., 2021).

Specifically, optimizing self-love helps maintain mental health because it makes it easier for someone to think positively, making daily life more manageable and fun. Individuals can focus more on their life goals and feel safe, comfortable, and calm when socializing with others around them (Khoshaba, 2012). The students are more able to love themselves, marked by solid self-awareness of their thoughts, feelings, and behavior, a strong appreciation for themselves, strong self-confidence, and concern for caring for themselves, both physically and mentally.

Optimal self-love improves students' mental health by making them more easily think positively, accept feelings, and manage their behavior more effectively. Optimal self-love also can have an impact on more awake physical health. Finally, students can follow the learning process and academic and organizational activities in their daily lives well and smoothly.

The findings of this research provide implications for related parties. Mindfulness Intervention Guide to Self-Love Optimization is expected to be used limited by lecturers and students to maintain daily mental health. In addition, this intervention guide can also be widely used by various practitioners in the mental health field, such as psychologists, counselors, BK teachers, and social workers.

Limitations of this study are product trials in the form of intervention guidelines carried out on a limited basis. Application of Mindfulness Intervention Guidelines to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain mental health in students from other faculties or universities or even for other subject groups from various age categories in the community can provide more in-depth information about the generalization of the findings of this study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research that has been previously explained, it can be concluded that mental health in students can be developed through efforts to optimize self-love using the mindfulness intervention guide researchers have developed. This intervention guide has been proven effective through the application of Research and Development (R&D) procedures, through the preparation stage, the implementation stage (the preparation of the product draft, the product validation stage, the product trial stage), and the final product preparation stage, in the form of the final version of the guide Mindfulness intervention to optimize self-loves as an effort to maintain mental health.

Suggestions related to the use of products in the form of mindfulness intervention guidelines to optimize self-love as an effort to maintain mental health as a result of this research and development, including the need for training for facilitators as a user before the use of guidelines, the need for adjusting the implementation of guidelines with diverse client conditions, Students need to do informal mindfulness exercises regularly and regularly in daily life, the process of internalization of mindfulness on campus also needs to be done by making slogans/taglines, artifacts, and yells with mindfulness themes to facilitate students in remembering and understanding mindfulness, and techniques Simple mindfulness can also be practiced by students and lecturers together, for example: before starting lectures, both luring and online. The simple mindfulness techniques that can be practiced together include mindful breathing, meditation with stories, and mindful movements.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

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