Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

22 Nov 2026

A Study of the effectiveness of mindfulness-based stress reduction therapy on test anxiety, perceived stress, quality of academic life, and motivational beliefs of female students with test anxiety in ninth grade

Protocol summary

Study aim
A study on the effectiveness of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) on test anxiety, perceived stress, academic quality of life, and motivational beliefs among ninth-grade female students with test anxiety

Design
A randomized, parallel-group, open-label (non-blinded), controlled clinical trial involving 40 patients. The `rand` function in Microsoft Excel will be used for randomization.

Settings and conduct
The statistical population for this study consists of all ninth-grade female students in the city of Ahvaz who suffer from test anxiety and seek services at the Counseling Center of the Ahvaz General Directorate of Education during the designated study period. A convenience sampling method will be employed to select the sample. Following the selection of 40 participants—based on the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria—they will be randomly assigned to either the "Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction" group (the intervention group) or the "waitlist" group (the control group).

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria: Ninth-grade girls aged 14–15 years; Anxiety score of at least one standard deviation above the mean. Exclusion criteria: Unwillingness to participate in the study; a history of clinical disorders requiring immediate medication or treatment.

Intervention groups
Intervention group: All ninth-grade girls with test anxiety who will receive Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) treatment. Control group: All ninth-grade girls with test anxiety who will not receive any intervention.

Main outcome variables
Test Anxiety, Perceived Stress, Academic Quality of Life, Motivational Beliefs

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information
IRCT registration number: **IRCT20261017071459N1**
Registration date: **2026-10-30, 1405/08/08**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-10-30, 1405/08/08**
Update count: **0**

Registration date
2026-10-30, 1405/08/08

Registrant information

Name
Nazanin Amirjani

Name of organization / entity

Country
Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone
+98 61 3446 4085

Email address
n.amirjani@iau.ir

Recruitment status
Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2026-11-01, 1405/08/10

Expected recruitment end date
2026-11-11, 1405/08/20

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date
empty

Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
A Study of the effectiveness of mindfulness-based stress reduction therapy on test anxiety, perceived stress, quality of academic life, and motivational beliefs of female students with test anxiety in ninth grade

Public title
The Effect of Mindfulness Training on Reducing Test Anxiety and Improving Quality of Life and Motivation Among Female Students

Purpose
Education/Guidance

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:
Ninth-grade girls, aged 14 to 15 Scoring one standard deviation above the mean on test anxiety

Exclusion criteria:
Unwillingness to participate in the research A history of psychotic disorders, major depression, severe generalized anxiety disorders, or other clinical conditions requiring immediate medication or treatment.

Age
From **14 years** old to **15 years** old

Gender
Female

Phase
N/A

Groups that have been masked
No information

Sample size
Target sample size: **40**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized

Randomization description
The statistical population for this study consists of all ninth-grade female students suffering from test anxiety who visit the counseling center of the General Directorate of Education during the study's designated timeframe. A convenience sampling method will be employed to select the sample. Following the selection of 40 participants—based on the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria—they will be randomly assigned to either the "Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction" group (intervention group) or the "waiting list" group (control group). Randomization will be conducted using a permuted-block design with varying block sizes (4 and 6) by an independent statistician who is not involved in the study's implementation. The randomization sequence will be generated using the RAND function in Microsoft Excel and placed into opaque, sealed, and numbered envelopes to ensure that neither the researcher nor the participants are aware of the allocation sequence (allocation concealment). The envelopes will be opened—revealing the assigned group—only at the time each participant enters the study. To ensure the equivalence of baseline variables (such as anxiety level and age) between the two groups, their distribution will be examined during the statistical analysis phase.

Blinding (investigator's opinion)
Not blinded

Blinding description

Placebo
Not used

Assignment
Parallel

Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee
Ethics Committee of the Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz Branch

Street address
Opposite Keshavarz Street, Farhang Shahr, Golestan Highway

City
Ahvaz

Province
Khouzestan

Postal code
6134937333

Approval date
2026-10-13, 1405/07/21

Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.AHVAZ.REC.1405.569

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Test Anxiety

ICD-10 code
F41.1

ICD-10 code description
Generalized anxiety disorder

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Test Anxiety

Timepoint
1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention) 2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period) 3. One-month follow-up after the intervention

Method of measurement
Measurement will be conducted using Test Anxiety Inventory (Abolghasemi et al., 1375).

2

Description
Perceived Stress

Timepoint
1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention) 2. Post-

test (immediately after the end of the intervention period) 3. One-month follow-up after the intervention

Method of measurement

Measurement will be conducted using the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983).

3

Description

Academic Quality of Life

Timepoint

Measurement will be conducted using the Inley and Burke (1992) Academic Quality of Life Questionnaire.

Method of measurement

1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention) 2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period) 3. One-month follow-up after the intervention

4

Description

Motivational Beliefs

Timepoint

1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention) 2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period) 3. One-month follow-up after the intervention

Method of measurement

Measurement will be conducted using the Motivational Beliefs Questionnaire by Pintrich and DeGroot (1990).

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description

Intervention group: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction. Session duration: 90 minutes. Total number of sessions: 8. Session frequency: Two sessions per week. Therapeutic tools employed: This intervention focuses on developing the capacity for present-moment awareness, non-judgmental acceptance, and emotional regulation. Key components include: formal and informal mindfulness practices, the "three-minute breathing space" exercise, guided group discussions, and the identification of negative automatic thoughts related to examinations. The content of the sessions is structured as follows: Session 1: Introductions among participants, administration of pre-tests, explanation of the rationale behind mindfulness-based therapy, exploration of the concept of exam-related stress and its connection to thoughts and bodily reactions, and instruction in mindful breathing. Session 2: Introduction to the "body scan" practice to enhance awareness of physical sensations and the somatic signs of exam-related stress and anxiety. Session 3: Mindful sitting practices, focusing on the breath as an anchor for attention, and strategies for managing mental distractions during study and examinations. Session 4: Identification of negative automatic thought patterns, maladaptive academic beliefs, and catastrophic thinking regarding grades and exams; practicing the perspective of viewing thoughts as "mental events" rather than absolute facts. Session 5: Working with challenging emotions and stress, fostering emotional acceptance—rather than struggling against anxiety—and practicing the "three-minute breathing space" technique for use during moments of acute anxiety. Session 6: Examining the mind-body connection in the context of academic pressures and expectations (stemming from oneself, family, and school), and managing them through mindful awareness. Session 7: Integrating mindfulness practices into actual study situations and exam days, and developing a personalized self-care plan. Session 8: Consolidating what has been learned, reviewing key techniques to ensure the continuity of practice, administering a post-test, and scheduling a follow-up assessment.

Category

Treatment - Other

2

Description

Control group: The control group will not receive any intervention during the conduct of the study; however, to prevent threats to the study's internal validity—such as compensatory rivalry or demoralization—they will receive the intervention after the data collection phase.

Category

Treatment - Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center

Counseling Center of the General Directorate of Education in Ahvaz

Full name of responsible person

Nazanin Amirjani

Street address

Next to Shohada High School, Fatemi Boulevard, Saat Square

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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person
Aslan Egdernejad
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Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
Yes

Title of funding source
Islamic Azad University

Proportion provided by this source
100

Public or private sector
Public

Domestic or foreign origin
Domestic

Category of foreign source of funding
empty

Country of origin

Type of organization providing the funding
Academic

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Nazanin Amirjani
Position
Master's Student
Latest degree
Bachelor
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Psychology
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Person responsible for scientific inquiries

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Person responsible for updating data

Contact

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Study Protocol
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to

make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan

Not applicable

Informed Consent Form

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Analytic Code

Not applicable

Data Dictionary

Not applicable