

Effects of Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) on mental and physical health in Croatian police officers

Glavina Jelaš¹, I., Pačelat, J.², Mahnet, K.³, Bagarić, B.⁴, Markanović, D.⁵, Karlović, R.⁶

¹ PhD, Police College, Zagreb, Croatia. e-mail: iglavina@fkz.hr

² mag.psych., Police College, Zagreb, Croatia. e-mail: jpacelat@fkz.hr

³ spec. ing. admin. chris., VII. Police precinct, Zagreb, Croatia. e-mail: kmahnet@mup.hr

⁴ mag.psych., Croatian Association for Behavioral-Cognitive Therapies, Zagreb, Croatia. e-mail: branka.bagaric1@gmail.com

⁵ PhD, Croatian Association for Behavioral-Cognitive Therapies, Zagreb, Croatia. e-mail: dmarkanovic@gmail.com

⁶ PhD, Police College, Zagreb, Croatia. e-mail: rkarlovic@fkz.hr

Background and objectives: For the first time in the Croatian police force, Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) was conducted with police officers. The goal of this research was to examine police officers' mental and physical health before and after the training. Prior to training, a brief lecture about stress and mindfulness was organized and conducted in the selected precinct. Out of 78 police officers who attended the lecture, 45 officers agreed to participate in MBCT.

Methods: All registered officers filled out the questionnaire constructed for the purpose of final selection of training participants and 15 officers were selected for the group. For the assessment of mental health the CORE – OM (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation – Outcome Measure, Barkham et al., 1998, 2001, 2005; Evans et al., 2002) questionnaire was used and for the assessment of physical health the PHQ (Physical Health Questionnaire, Spence et al., 1987) was used.

Results: Results showed that both – mental and physical health have significantly improved after the 8-week MBCT program. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test showed that results on CORE-OM are significantly lower after the training, $z=-2,213$, $p<0,05$. Median score on CORE-OM decreased from $Md=30$ before training to $Md=23$ after the training. Regarding the physical health, Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test showed that results on PHQ are significantly lower after the training, $z=-2,240$, $p<0,05$. Median score on PHQ decreased from $Md=40$ before training to $Md=29$ after the training.

Discussion: Results showed that both mental and physical health of Croatian police officers has significantly improved after the training. These are the results of the first group of police officers and should be considered as preliminary results. Research will continue with conduction of the MBCT on the remaining officers that agreed to participate in MBCT.

Conclusion: Results of this study confirmed the efficiency of MBCT for mental and physical health improvement with Croatian police officers.