

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title:

The Effect of Self-Comforting Behaviours on Emotional Regulation and Academic Resilience in Students Facing Academic Failure: A Randomized Controlled Trial

Principal Investigator:

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1. Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study conducted by Dr. Kennedy O. Obohwemu at the Global Banking School, Birmingham. The study aims to explore how self-comforting behaviours, such as mindfulness and meditation, can help improve emotional regulation and academic resilience in students who have faced academic failure or challenges. This information sheet provides you with important details about the study to help you make an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

Please read this sheet carefully. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the study team before you agree to participate.

2. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to test the Self-Comforting and Coping Theory (SCCT) and examine whether mindfulness and meditation practices can improve students' ability to cope with stress, particularly in response to academic failure. We will also assess how students' attitudes towards self-comforting strategies influence their success in improving their emotional regulation and academic resilience.

3. Why have I been invited?

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a student at the Global Banking School and have experienced academic challenges, such as poor grades or academic probation. The study aims to understand how different coping strategies, specifically mindfulness and meditation, can help students who have experienced academic failure.

4. What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be randomly assigned to one of two groups:

1. **Intervention Group:** You will participate in a 4-week mindfulness and meditation programme. This programme will consist of weekly 90-minute group sessions, where you will learn mindfulness techniques to help manage academic stress. You will also be encouraged to practice mindfulness for 15 minutes daily at home.
2. **Control Group:** You will continue with your normal academic tasks but will not receive the intervention.

You will be asked to complete assessments at the beginning of the study (baseline), at the end of the 4-week intervention (post-intervention), and at a one-month follow-up. These assessments will include the Self-Comforting and Coping Scale (SCCS) and the Self-Comforting Attitude Scale (SCAS), which measure your use of self-comforting behaviours and your attitudes towards them.

5. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Participation in this study may help you:

- Develop coping skills to manage academic stress, particularly through mindfulness and meditation practices.
- Improve emotional regulation and academic resilience, potentially enhancing your ability to cope with future academic challenges.
- Contribute to scientific understanding of how self-comforting behaviours can help students manage stress and improve academic outcomes.

Although the direct benefits to you as an individual may not be guaranteed, your participation will contribute to improving academic support for students facing academic failure.

6. What are the possible risks of taking part?

The study has minimal risks. Some individuals may find mindfulness or meditation practices challenging or uncomfortable at first. However, these techniques are generally safe, and you will be guided by trained instructors throughout the intervention. If you experience any discomfort, you can stop participating at any time without any negative consequences.

If you feel uncomfortable or stressed during any part of the study, you are encouraged to talk to the study team or your lecturer. Additionally, if you experience any distress

related to academic failure during the study, the study team can refer you to appropriate support services.

7. Will my participation be confidential?

Yes, all information collected during the study will be kept strictly confidential. Your personal details and responses will be anonymized, and only the research team will have access to your data. Your identity will not be shared in any publications or presentations of the study findings. Data will be stored securely and in compliance with data protection regulations.

8. Do I have to take part?

No, participation is entirely voluntary. You can choose whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide not to participate, this will not affect your academic standing or relationship with the Global Banking School in any way.

If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without providing a reason. There will be no penalties or negative consequences for withdrawing, and your data will not be used if you choose to leave the study.

9. What happens if I decide to withdraw from the study?

If you decide to withdraw from the study, you can do so at any time without any negative consequences. You may also choose to withdraw your data from the study, and it will not be included in the analysis. To withdraw, simply inform the study team, and they will remove your data from the research.

10. How will I know the results of the study?

After the study is complete, the results will be summarized and shared in a publication, and you may request a summary of the findings. If you wish to receive the results, you can contact the study team using the contact information provided below.

11. Who should I contact for more information?

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, or if you would like to know more before deciding whether to participate, please contact the principal investigator:

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Thank you for considering participation in this study. Your involvement could make a valuable contribution to improving academic support for students facing academic failure.