

MINDFULNESS FOR TUFTS UNIVERSITY OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY GRADUATE STUDENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Mindfulness Institute for Emerging Adults (MIEA)

- Formally Koru, MIEA was developed using common stressors noted for college students^{9, 8}
- Mindfulness programming decreases perceived stress and increases mindfulness in college students.^{3, 11, 12}

OT students & wellbeing

- Research indicates entry-level OT students experience above average stress related coursework.^{5, 13}

Addressing the Gap

- In a 2023 needs assessment survey, most Tufts OT students indicated interest in a 4-week MIEA course.
- However, decreased participation indicates participation barriers, such as time restraints, stress levels, and lack of education.^{5, 1, 4}

PURPOSE & AIMS

Purpose: determine effect of MIEA programming on Tufts OT graduate students' mental health & wellbeing.

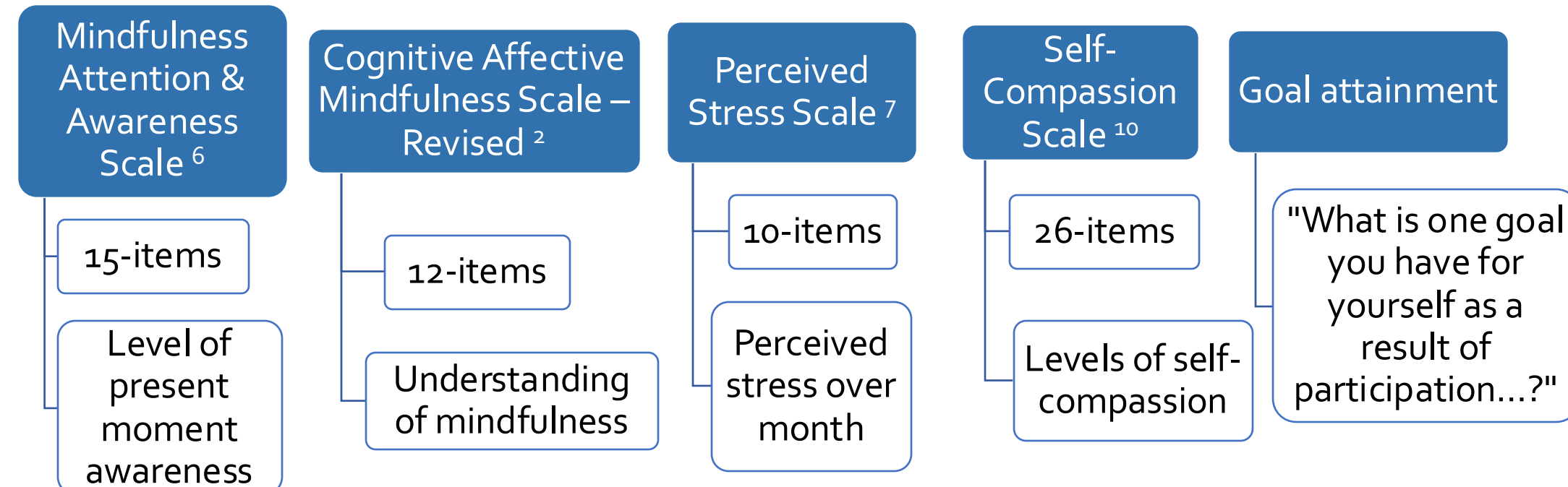
Aim #1: implement & evaluate MIEA program effectiveness

Aim #2: assess barriers to participation in MIEA program

METHODS

1. Recruitment: email invitation to all Tufts OT students

2. Pre-tests: via Qualtrics



3. Four weekly 75-minute mindfulness sessions led by MIEA certified instructor

4. Post-tests: administered via Qualtrics at conclusion of 4 weeks

5. Data analysis: compare pre- and post-tests using paired T-tests in SPSS and thematic analysis in NVivo

6. Administer barriers to mindfulness survey via Qualtrics to Tufts OT students who could not participate

7. Data analysis of survey responses using thematic analysis with NVivo

RESULTS

PARTICIPANTS

Summer '24 & Spring '25

Pre-test: N=19
Post-test: N = 15*
• Quantitative: N = 14

Years:
• OTD 1: 7
• OTD 2: 2
• OTD 3: 4
• PPM: 2

Barriers to mindfulness:

N=28

Years:
• OTD 1: 10
• OTD 2: 7
• OTD 3: 11
• PPM: 0

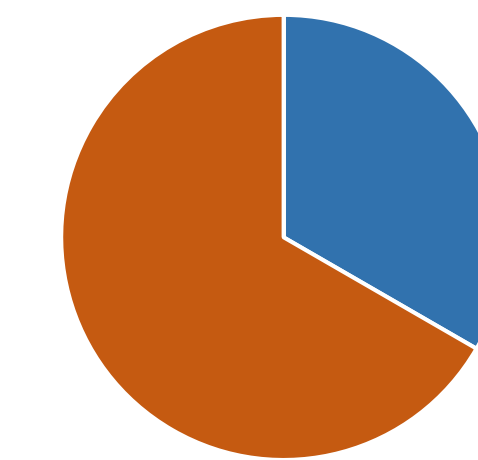
GOAL ATTAINMENT

Themes

Mental health
- Compassion
- Decrease stress
- Emotional regulation

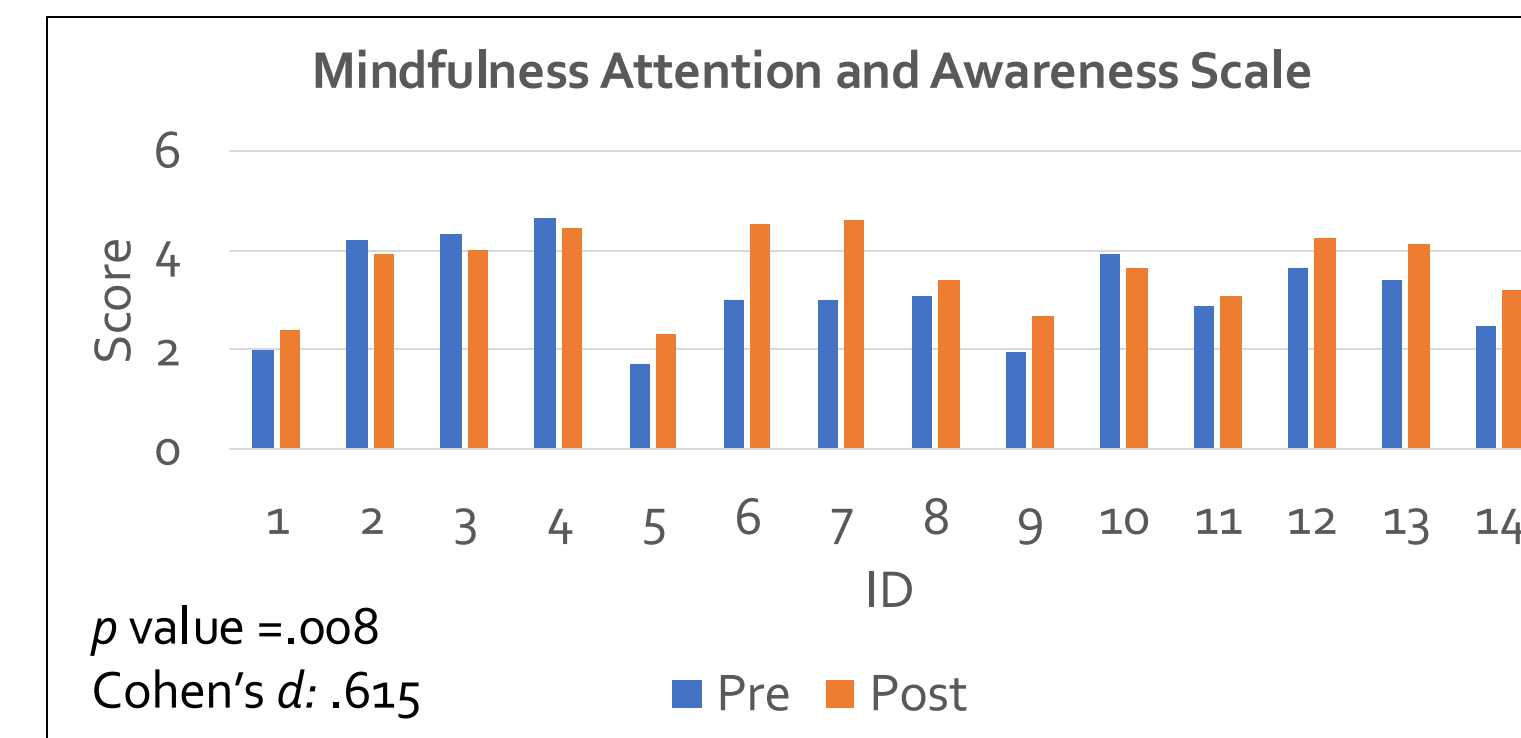
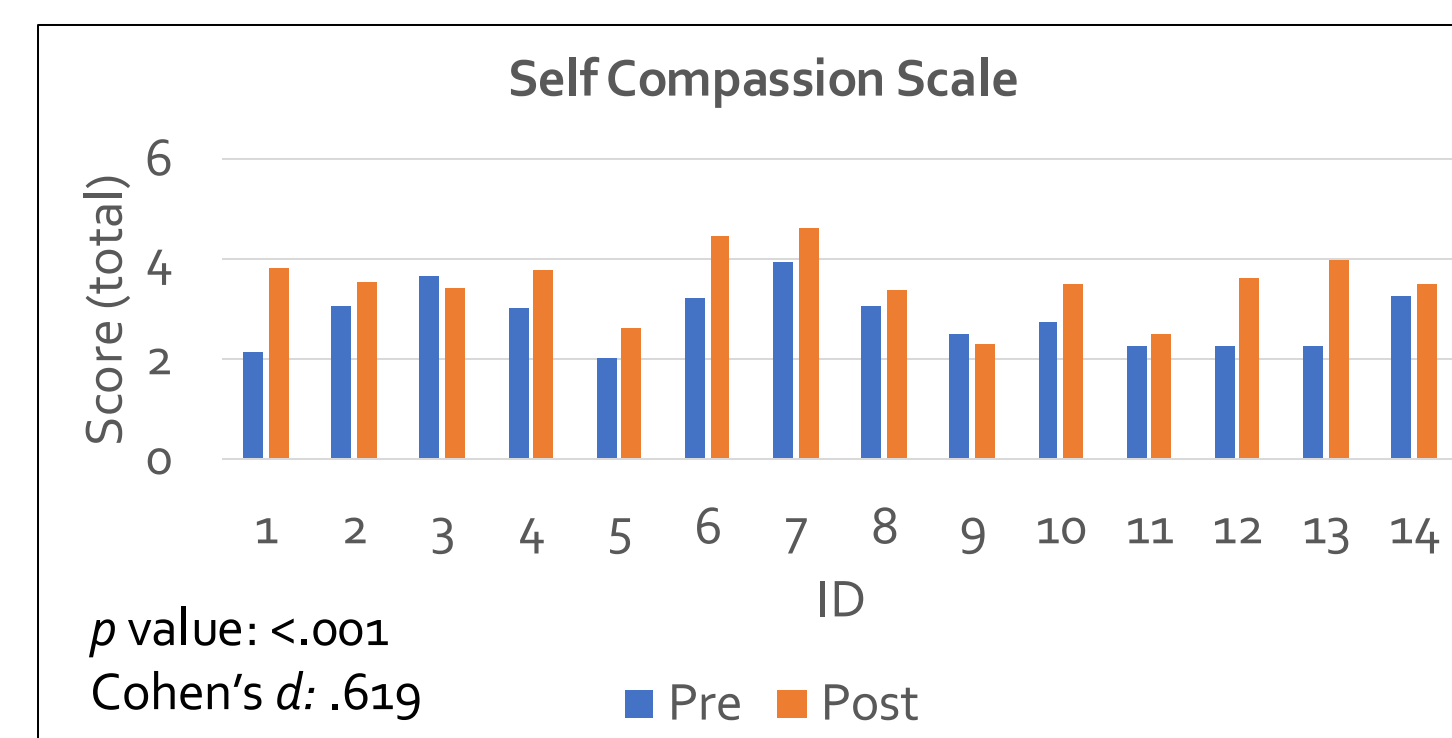
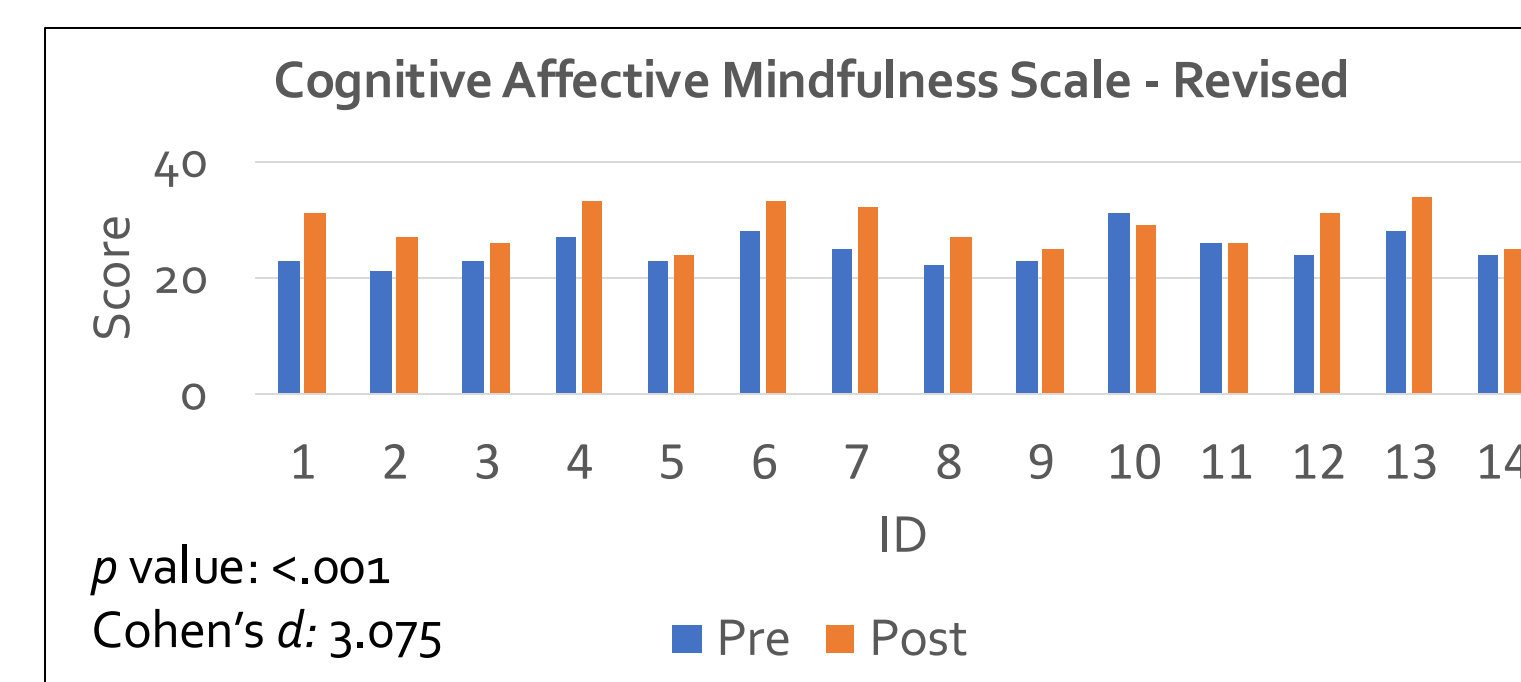
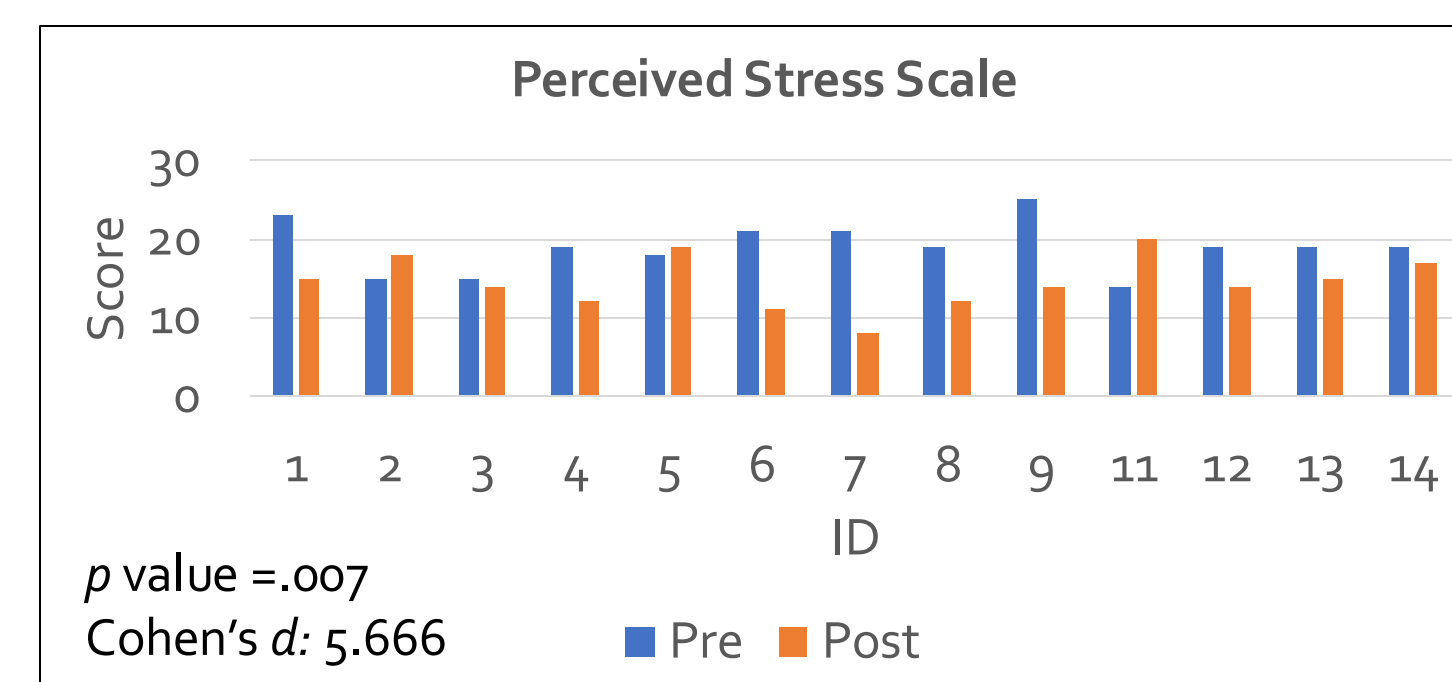
Well-being
- Increase mindfulness
- Help others
- Well-being tool

Do you feel that you met or progressed toward the goal that you established...?

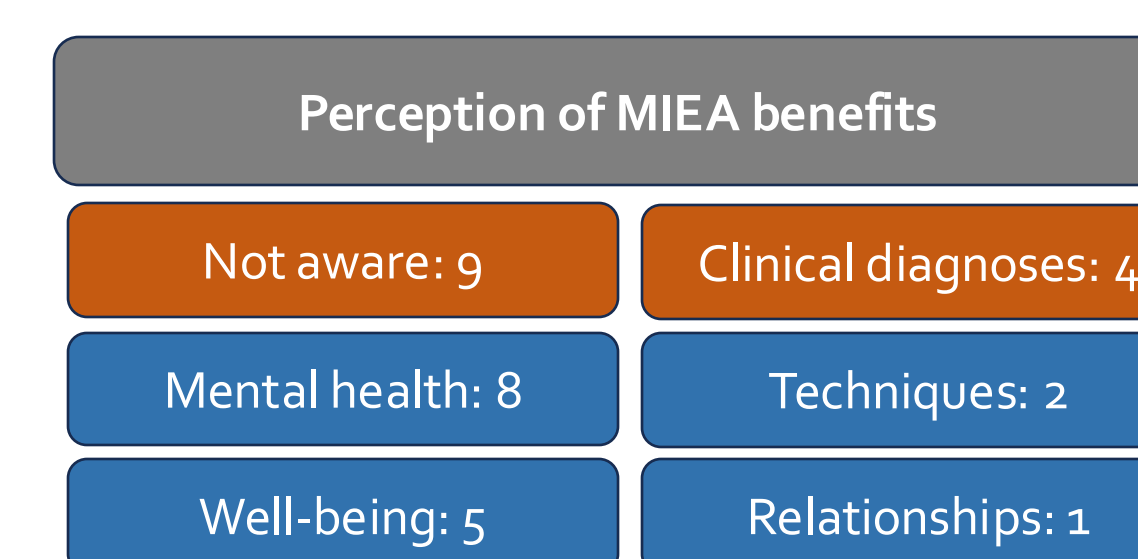
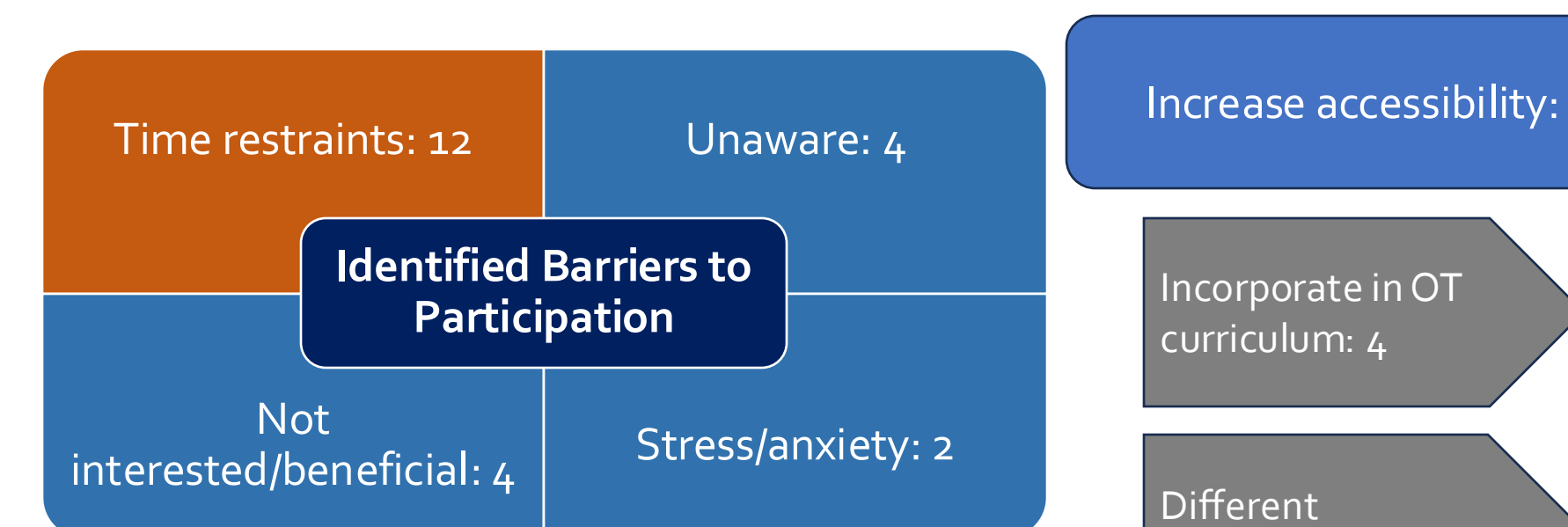
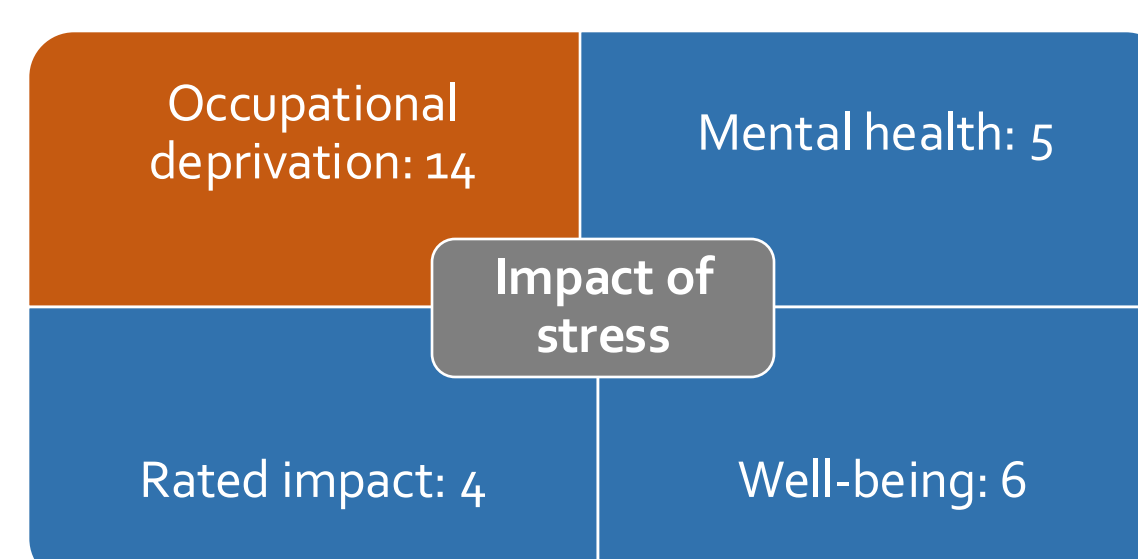
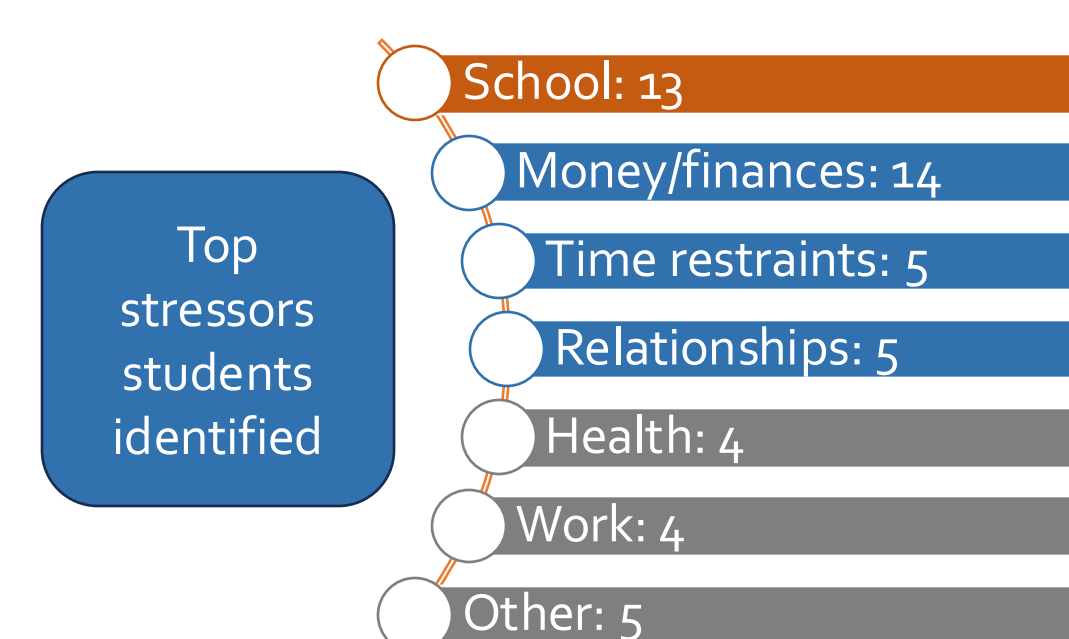


■ Progress ■ Yes ■ No

MIEA PAIRED T-TESTS



MINDFULNESS BARRIERS



Increase accessibility:

Incorporate in OT curriculum: 4

Different time/location: 3

Accessible enough: 3

Asynchronous sessions: 2

Increase advertising: 2

DISCUSSION

MIEA SESSIONS

- The paired t-tests and goal attainment results indicate that MIEA programming improves the mental health and well-being of Tufts OT students.
- Paired t-tests reveal a significant difference in post-test scores after attending MIEA sessions for the PSS, CAMS-R, MAAS, and SCS.
- 100% of participants indicate achieving or progressing towards their goal after MIEA sessions.

MINDFULNESS BARRIERS

- Most students indicate time restraints to be a barrier to participating in the MIEA sessions and occupational deprivation due to perceived stress.
- Stress creates a sense of time scarcity, causing hesitation to add more to their schedules.
- Nine students indicate not being aware of benefits to mindfulness, with four students indicating benefits only for clinical diagnoses.
- This indicates a gap in knowledge for OT students on the benefits of mindfulness.

CONCLUSION

- ❖ Continuing the program would benefit future Tufts OT students.
- ❖ MIEA teaches strategies to promote mental health and well-being, helping students succeed in graduate school.
- ❖ Further research on mindfulness education is needed to address this barriers of participation.
- ❖ Education on the MIEA program will help students understand the benefits and time commitment.

REFERENCES & CONTACT INFO

This project would not be possible without the collaboration and participation from Tufts University Occupational Therapy Department's faculty, staff, and students.

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