

# PRIMJENA KOGNITIVNE TERAPIJE USREDOTOČENE SVJESNOSTI USMJERENE NA STRES SA SLUŽBENICIMA ZATVORSKOG SUSTAVA

## APPLICATION OF STRESS-FOCUSED MINDFULNESS-BASED COGNITIVE THERAPY WITH PRISON SYSTEM STAFF

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### SAŽETAK

Službenici zatvorskog sustava izloženi su visokim razinama stresa, što dugoročno može rezultirati razvojem psihičkih smetnji i smanjenom radnom učinkovitošću. Stoga je važno razvijati preventivne programe te istraživati njihovu učinkovitost, ali i prihvatljivost službenicima jer je riječ o populaciji koja nerado priznaje poteškoće. Programi zasnovani na usredotočenoj svjesnosti (engl. *mindfulness*) pokazali su se korisnima u radu s različitim populacijama korisnika. Ciljevi ovog rada bili su: istražiti prihvatljivost, prikladnost, kvalitetu, obuhvat ciljne skupine te ishode primjene tečaja kognitivne terapije usredotočene svjesnosti usmjerene na stres sa zatvorskim službenicima. Službenici (N = 36) iz četiriju kaznenih tijela u Hrvatskoj sudjelovali su na osam dvosatnih grupnih radionica tijekom dva mjeseca. Prije tečaja, neposredno nakon tečaja te dva mjeseca nakon tečaja primijenjeni su upitnici koji mjere dimenzije *mindfulnessa*, psihopatološka odstupanja te stres i sagorijevanje. Nakon završetka tečaja ispitani su različiti aspekti kvalitete implementacije tečaja. Rezultati su pokazali da su službenici bili visoko uključeni u tečaj, zadovoljni tečajem i da su ga procjenjivali korisnim. Nakon završetka tečaja izvještavali su da više opažaju te manje prosuđuju i automatski reagiraju na svoja iskustva (dimenzije *mindfulnessa*), o manje problema i simptoma, većoj dobrobiti i funkcioniranju te manjim razinama stresa i sagorijevanja. Sve promjene održale su se i u naknadnom praćenju.

**Ključne riječi:** *mindfulness*, usredotočena svjesnost, zatvorski sustav, službenici zatvorskog sustava, preventivni program

### ABSTRACT

Prison system staff are exposed to high levels of stress, which can result in the development of mental disorders and reduced work efficiency in the long run. Therefore, it is important to develop prevention programs and explore their effectiveness and acceptability to prison staff, because this population is reluctant to admit difficulties. Mindfulness-based programmes

have proven useful in working with different populations. The aims of this study were to investigate acceptability, appropriateness, quality of delivery, programme reach and implementation outcomes of the Stress-Focused Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy Programme with prison staff. Employees (N=36) from four penal institutions in Croatia participated in eight two-hour group workshops over two months. Before the course, immediately after the course and two months after the course, questionnaires were used to measure the dimensions of mindfulness, general psychopathology, and stress and burnout. At the end of the course, different aspects of course implementation quality were examined. The results showed that the staff was highly involved in the course, satisfied with the course and found it useful. Upon course completion, they reported being more observing and less judging, and less prone to respond automatically to their experiences (dimensions of mindfulness), having fewer problems and symptoms, greater well-being and functioning, as well as lower levels of stress and burnout. All changes were maintained during the follow-up period.

**Key words:** mindfulness, correctional system, prison staff, prevention programme

## UVOD

Boravak unutar zatvorskih zidova izrazito je stresan, ne samo za zatvorenike već i za osobe koje u tom okruženju svakodnevno rade. Osim operativnih stresora kao što su rad s vrlo zahtjevnim korisnicima i izloženost situacijama koje uključuju ponižavanje, nasilje i smrt, osobe zaposlene u zatvorima suočavaju se s nizom organizacijskih stresora poput prevelika radnoga opterećenja, nedostatka opreme za rad, neadekvatne plaće, otežana napredovanja, problema u odnosima s kolegama i nadređenima te pretjerane birokracije (Brough i Biggs, 2010; Finney, Stergiopoulos, Hensel, Bonato i Dewa, 2013; Novak, Laušić i Jandrić Nišević, 2008; Schaufeli i Peeters, 2000; Stöver, 2017).

Dugotrajna izloženost stresu na poslu može ozbiljno ugroziti psihičko i tjelesno zdravlje zatvorskog osoblja. Tako je u jednom istraživanju utvrđeno da je psihičko i tjelesno zdravlje zatvorskih službenika koji rade na poslovima osiguranja značajno lošije u usporedbi sa zdravljem službenika koji rade izvan zatvorskog sustava (Sygit-Kowalkowska, Weber-Rajek, Szrajda i Kraszkiewicz, 2017). Stres zbog rada u zatvorskom okruženju često se povezuje s povećanom depresivnošću (Gayman i Bradley, 2013), manjim zadovoljstvom životom (Lambert, Jiang, Liu, Zhang i Choi, 2018) i otežanim balansiranjem zahtjeva poslovnoga i obiteljskoga života (Armstrong, Atkin-Plunk i Wells, 2015; Liu, Lambert, Jiang i

## INTRODUCTION

Spending time inside prison walls is extremely stressful, not only for prisoners, but also for those working in that environment on a daily basis. In addition to operational stressors such as working with very demanding users and being exposed to situations that include humiliation, violence and death, prison employees also face a number of organisational stressors such as excessive workload, lack of equipment for work, inadequate salaries, difficulties in promotion, problems in relations with co-workers and superiors, and too much red tape (Brough and Biggs, 2010; Finney, Stergiopoulos, Hensel, Bonato and Dewa, 2013; Novak, Laušić and Jandrić Nišević, 2008; Schaufeli and Peeters, 2000; Stöver, 2017).

Long-term exposure to stress at work can seriously endanger the mental and physical health of prison staff. A survey thus found the mental and physical health of prison staff working on security-related jobs to be significantly worse off compared to the health of staff working outside the prison system (Sygit-Kowalkowska, Weber-Rajek, Szrajda and Kraszkiewicz, 2017). Stress caused by working in the prison environment is often associated with increased depression (Gayman and Bradley, 2013), diminished life satisfaction (Lambert, Jiang, Liu, Zhang and Choi, 2018) and difficulties in balancing the requirements of work and family life

Zhang, 2017). Neka istraživanja sugeriraju da stresna priroda rada u zatvoru može rezultirati i negativnim promjenama u ličnosti. Tako je uočeno da kod osoblja osiguranja s vremenom dolazi do porasta neuroticizma koji je vidljiv već nakon tri do četiri godine radnoga staža (Suliman i Einat, 2018). S porastom psihološkog distresa kod zatvorskog osoblja povezana je i lošija percepcija tjelesnog zdravlja (Harvey, 2014), češće bolovanje (Lambert, Edwards, Camp i Saylor, 2005) te veća želja za davanjem otkaza (Setti i Argentero, 2015).

Ako se na nj ne odgovori na adekvatan način, dugotrajni stres može rezultirati i sagorijevanjem na poslu čija su glavna obilježja emocionalna iscrpljenost, depersonalizacija i smanjen osjećaj učinkovitosti (Maslach, Schaufeli i Leiter, 2001). Više istraživanja potvrđuje da je radni stres povezan sa sagorijevanjem na poslu i kod zatvorskih službenika (Gayman i Bradley, 2013; Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail i Baker, 2010; Jin, Sun, Jiang, Wang i Wen, 2018; Schaufeli i Peeters, 2000). Pritom se čini da rad na odjelu tretmana predstavlja veći rizik za razvoj emocionalne iscrpljenosti, a rad na odjelima s višim stupnjem osiguranja za razvoj cinizma te osjećaja otuđenosti (Nylander, Lindberg i Bruhn, 2011). Pojava sagorijevanja na poslu posebno je velik problem u pomagačkim zanimanjima (Maslach i sur., 2001) jer može smanjiti učinkovitost u radnim zadacima koji traže ulaganje značajna emocionalnoga i kognitivnoga napora, toleriranje frustracije i empatiju, koji su osobito važni u radu sa zahtjevnim populacijama korisnika kao što su zatvorenici. Većina istraživanja stresa i sagorijevanja zbog rada u zatvoru dosad je bila usmjerena na osoblje osiguranja, no ona u kojima je sudjelovalo i tretmansko i administrativno osoblje uglavnom pokazuju da među različitim skupinama zaposlenika nema većih razlika u intenzitetu teškoća te rizičnim i zaštitnim čimbenicima (Andersen, Andersen, Gadegaard,

(Armstrong, Atkin-Plunk and Wells, 2015; Liu, Lambert, Jiang and Zhang, 2017). Some studies suggest that the stressful nature of prison work may also result in negative changes of personality. It has been noted that, over time, security personnel experience an increase in neuroticism, which is evident after 3 to 4 years of service (Suliman and Einat, 2018). Increased psychological distress among prison staff is also associated with a lower perception of physical health (Harvey, 2014), more frequent use of sick leave (Lambert, Edwards, Camp and Saylor, 2005) and a greater desire to quit (Setti and Argentero, 2015).

If not adequately addressed, long-term stress can also result in burning out at work, typically characterised by emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced sense of efficiency (Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, 2001). Several studies have shown that work stress is related to burnout at work in prison staff as well (Gayman and Bradley, 2013; Griffin, Hogan, Lambert, Tucker-Gail and Baker, 2010; Jin, Sun, Jiang, Wang and Wen, 2018; Schaufeli and Peeters, 2000). Working in treatment wards seems to represent a greater risk for developing emotional exhaustion, while working in higher-security wards seems to be conducive to the development of cynicism and a sense of alienation (Nylander, Lindberg and Bruhn, 2011). The occurrence of work burnout is a particularly serious problem in helping professions (Maslach et al., 2001) as it can reduce efficiency in performing tasks that require investing significant emotional and cognitive efforts, tolerating frustration, and empathy, which is exceptionally important in working with demanding populations of users such as prisoners. Most research into stress and burnout due to prison work has so far been focused on security personnel, but studies involving both treatment and administrative personnel typically show that there are no major differences in the

Høgh, Prieur i Lund, 2017; Armstrong i Griffin, 2004; Garner, Knight i Simpson, 2007; Keinan i Malach-Pines, 2007).

Zatvorski službenici razlikuju se po svojim kapacitetima i načinima nošenja sa stresom na radnom mjestu. Dio njih koristi neadaptivne strategije suočavanja koje se pokazuju povezanima s emocionalnom iscrpljenošću, depersonalizacijom i smanjenom radnom učinkovitošću (Gould, Watson, Price i Valliant, 2013), kao i s lošijim psihofizičkim zdravljem (Sygit-Kowalkowska i sur., 2017). Iako se pronalazi da zatvorski službenici uglavnom koriste adaptivne strategije, valja primijetiti da unatoč tomu izvještavaju o visokoj razini profesionalna sagorijevanja (Gould i sur., 2013) zbog čega je nužno osigurati im sustavnu pomoć u nošenju sa stresom, ublažavanju njegovih posljedica i sprečavanju pojave ozbiljnijih psihopatoloških problema. Osim što podučavanje učinkovitijim načinima suočavanja sa stresom olakšava nošenje sa zahtjevima zatvorskog okružja, ono je povezano i s povećanjem radne učinkovitosti i zadovoljstva poslom (Sygit-Kowalkowska, Poklek i Pastwa-Wojciechowska, 2019).

Jedan od načina na koji se zatvorsko osoblje može podučiti uspješnijem upravljanju stresom je uključivanje u programe utemeljene na usredotočenoj svjesnosti (engl. *mindfulness*). Usredotočena svjesnost ili *mindfulness* obično se opisuje kao svjesnost koja nastaje obraćanjem pozornosti na namjeran način, u sadašnjem trenutku, otvorena uma i bez prosuđivanja (Williams, Teasdale, Segal i Kabat-Zinn, 2007). Pomoću tehnika *mindfulnessa* moguće je promijeniti način na koji ljudi doživljavaju svoja iskustva, posebice ona stresna. Otvoren, suosjećajan i prihvaćajući stav koji se razvija redovitim vježbanjem *mindfulnessa* pomaže u odmicanju od prosuđivanja i kritiziranja samoga sebe i drugih te angažiranja u štetnim oblicima nošenja sa stresom poput prejedanja,

intensity of difficulties, or risk and protection factors, between different groups of prison staff (Andersen, Andersen, Gadegaard, Høgh, Prieur and Lund, 2017; Armstrong and Griffin, 2004; Garner, Knight and Simpson, 2007; Keinan and Malach-Pines, 2007).

Prison staff vary in their capacities for and ways of coping with workplace stress. Some use non-adaptive coping strategies that prove to be related to emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced work efficiency (Gould, Watson, Price and Valliant, 2013), as well as to poorer physical and mental health (Sygit-Kowalkowska et al., 2017). Although prison staff have been found to mainly use adaptive strategies, it should be noted that they nevertheless report a high level of occupational burnout (Gould et al., 2013), which is why it is necessary to provide them with systematic assistance in managing stress, mitigating its effects, and preventing the occurrence of serious psychopathological problems. Besides making their coping with the requirements of the prison environment easier, training staff about more efficient ways of stress management is also associated with increasing work efficiency and satisfaction (Sygit-Kowalkowska, Poklek and Pastwa-Wojciechowska, 2019).

One of the ways in which prison staff can be trained to better manage stress is to include them in mindfulness-based programmes. Mindfulness is usually described as awareness created by paying attention, in a deliberate way, to the present moment, with an open mind and without judgment (Williams, Teasdale, Segal and Kabat-Zinn, 2007). Mindfulness techniques can change the way people live through their experiences, especially stressful ones. An open, compassionate and accepting attitude developed by regular exercising of mindfulness helps to move away from judgement and criticism of oneself and others, and from engaging in

konzumiranja alkohola, pušenja, izbjegavanja važnih ljudi i aktivnosti zbog straha i sl.

Tehnike *mindfulnessa* već su duže vrijeme integrirane u kognitivno-bihevioralnu terapiju (KBT) te se uspješno koriste u tretmanu različitih vrsta problema i s različitim populacijama. Postoje čvrsti dokazi da kognitivna terapija utemeljena na *mindfulnessu* učinkovito umanjuje rizik za ponovnu pojavu simptoma kod osoba koje su doživjele tri ili više epizoda depresije (Piet i Hougaard, 2011). Poznato je da pomaže i u smanjenju brojnih drugih teškoća kao što su suicidalnost (Williams, Fennell, Barnhofer, Crane i Silverton, 2015), anksiozne smetnje (Chiesa i Serretti, 2011; Galante, Iribarren i Pearce, 2013), posttraumatski stresni poremećaj (Jasbi i sur., 2018; King i sur., 2013; Markanović i Bagarić, 2019), poremećaj pažnje i hiperaktivnosti (Gu, Xu i Zhu, 2018) i sl. Sve je više nalaza o povoljnim učincima intervencija utemeljenih na *mindfulnessu* na stres i subjektivnu dobrobit i u nekliničkim uzorcima (Chiesa i Serretti, 2009; Colard, Avny i Boniwell, 2008; Querstret, Morison, Dickinson, Cropley i John, 2020). Istraživanja upozoravaju da se djelotvornost tih tehnika u tretmanu depresivnosti, anksioznosti i stresa može pripisati tomu što pomažu u prihvaćanju neugodnih emocija i postizanju odmaka od preplavljujućih situacija (Hofmann, Sawyer, Witt i Oh, 2010), odnosno tomu što dovode do promjena u teorijski pretpostavljenim mehanizmima poput usredotočene svjesnosti, kognitivne i emocionalne reaktivnosti te suosjećanja (Gu, Strauss, Bond i Cavanagh, 2015; van der Velden i sur., 2015).

Među različitim okružjima u kojima se provode programi utemeljeni na *mindfulnessu* nalaze se i zatvori. Međutim, dosad su uglavnom bili usmjereni na zatvorenike, kod kojih je opaženo smanjenje depresivnosti, anksioznosti, stresa, ljutnje i hostilnosti, impulzivnosti, manje uporabe sredstava ovisnosti i snažnije povezanosti

harmful forms of stress management such as overeating, drinking alcohol, smoking, avoiding important people and activities due to fear, etc.

Mindfulness techniques have been integrated into cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) for some time now and are successfully used in treating different kinds of problems with different populations. There is solid evidence that mindfulness-based cognitive therapy effectively reduces the risk of recurrence of symptoms in individuals who have experienced three or more depressive episodes (Piet and Hougaard, 2011). It is also known to help reduce a number of other difficulties such as suicidality (Williams, Fennell, Barnhofer, Crane and Silverton, 2015), anxiety disorders (Chiesa and Serretti, 2011; Galante, Iribarren and Pearce, 2013), post-traumatic stress disorder (Jasbi et al., 2018; King et al., 2013; Markanović and Bagarić, 2019), attention disorder and hyperactivity (Gu, Xu and Zhu, 2018) etc. There are growing findings on the beneficial effects of mindfulness-based interventions on stress and subjective well-being in non-clinical samples as well (Chiesa and Serretti, 2009; Colard, Avny and Boniwell, 2008; Querstret, Morison, Dickinson, Cropley and John, 2020). Research suggests that the effectiveness of these techniques in treating depression, anxiety and stress can be attributed to helping to accept unpleasant emotions and move away from overwhelming situations (Hofmann, Sawyer, Witt and Oh, 2010), or to leading to changes in theoretically presumed mechanisms such as focused awareness, cognitive and emotional reactivity and compassion (Gu, Strauss, Bond and Cavanagh, 2015; van der Velden et al. 2015).

The various environments in which mindfulness-based programmes are implemented include prisons. However, they have so far mainly been focused on prisoners, who have noted a decrease in depression, anxiety,

s ostalim zatvorenicima u grupi (Chethiyar i Rukumangadan, 2020; Derlic, 2020; Per, Spinelli, Sadowski, Schmelefske, Anand i Khoury, 2020). Slična poboljšanja na mjerama psihičkog zdravlja, stresa, samoregulacije, upravljanja ljutnjom, uporabe psihoaktivnih supstancija, kvalitete življenja i sklonosti kriminalu pronađena su i kod maloljetnika (Murray, Amann i Thom, 2018; Simpson, Mercer, Simpson, Lawrence i Wyke, 2018). Iako te rezultate treba još dodatno potvrditi metodološki rigoroznijim studijama, postojeći nalazi upućuju da bi intervencije utemeljene na *mindfulnessu* mogle biti dragocjen dodatak postojećim programima koji se provode u zatvorskim ustanovama.

S druge strane, *mindfulness* programi namijenjeni osobama koje rade u zatvorskom sustavu tek su u začetku. S obzirom na to da predstavljaju relativno nov fenomen u zatvorskom okružju, trenutno nema metodološki kvalitetnih studija o njihovoj učinkovitosti (Maull i Crisp, 2018), no dosadašnji istraživački nalazi vrlo su ohrabrujući. Tako je u jednom istraživanju kod 15 zatvorskih službenika nakon sudjelovanja u osmotjednom *mindfulness* programu došlo do značajna poboljšanja na mjerama kognitivne kontrole, stresa i varijabilnosti srčanog ritma kao fiziološkog pokazatelja stresa (Davies, Ugwudike, Young, Hurrell i Raynor, 2021). Čini se da bi od značajne koristi mogle biti čak i kraće intervencije utemeljene na *mindfulnessu*. U jednom pilot-programu osoblju osiguranja koje je radilo s maloljetnicima ponuđen je dvodnevni trening sastavljen od vježbi, psihoedukacije i rasprava čija je svrha bila podučiti ih o stresu, emocijama, sagorijevanju, empatiji i *mindfulness* vještinama za smanjenje stresa. Reakcije sudionika bile su pozitivne; *mindfulness* vježbe ocijenili su pomažućima, osjećali su da će se naučenim vještinama moći koristiti u svojem odgovoru na svakodnevni stres te su izvijestili da će program preporučiti i ostalim kolegama. Smatrali su da je trening bio dobro usklađen

stress, anger and hostility, impulsivity, as well as decreased use of addictive substances and stronger connection with other prisoners in the group (Chethiyar and Rukumangadan, 2020; Derlic, 2020; Per, Spinelli, Sadowski, Schmelefske, Anand and Khoury, 2020). Similar improvements on mental health, stress, self-regulation, anger management, use of psychoactive substances, quality of life and propensity to crime have also been found in minors (Murray, Amann and Thom, 2018; Simpson, Mercer, Simpson, Lawrence and Wyke, 2018). Although these results are yet to be further confirmed by methodologically more rigorous studies, the present findings suggest that mindfulness-based interventions could be a valuable addition to existing programmes implemented in penal institutions.

On the other hand, mindfulness programmes intended for persons working in the prison system are just in the beginning. Since they represent a relatively new phenomenon in the prison environment, there are currently no methodologically reliable studies on their efficiency (Maull and Crisp, 2018), but the research findings so far have been very encouraging. In one study, 15 prison employees showed significant improvements in cognitive control, stress, and heart rate variability as indicators of physiological stress after participating in an eight-week mindfulness programme (Davies, Ugwudike, Young, Hurrell and Raynor, 2021). It seems that even shorter mindfulness-based interventions may be of significant benefit. One pilot programme provided security personnel working with minors with a two-day training consisting of exercises, psychological training and discussions aimed at teaching them about stress, emotions, burnout, empathy, and mindfulness-based stress reduction skills. The participants' reactions were positive; mindfulness exercises were assessed as helpful, they felt that they could use the skills learned in

s njihovim potrebama te da im je pomogao u sprečavanju gubitka motivacije i osjećaja smisla na poslu (Ekman, 2015).

Učinkovitost *mindfulness* programa u smanjenju profesionalnoga stresa i sagorijevanja kod zatvorskog osoblja tek treba istražiti, no opravdano je pretpostaviti da bi mogli biti od koristi i toj populaciji jer se akumulira sve više dokaza o dobrobitima *mindfulness* programa kod zaposlenika istih profesionalnih profila u izvanzavodskim sustavima. Primjerice, zdravstveni djelatnici koji rade u drugim također stresnim okruženjima nakon završetka različitih *mindfulness* programa izvještavaju o pozitivnim učincima tih programa na stres, sagorijevanje, anksioznost, subjektivnu dobrobit, svjesnost, suosjećanje prema sebi i drugima i tjelesno zdravlje (Burton, Burgess, Dean, Koutsopoulou i Hugh-Jones, 2017; Irving, Dobkin i Park, 2009; Klein, Taieb, Xavier, Baubet i Reyre, 2020; Morgan, Simpson i Smith, 2015; Raab, 2014; Regehr, Glancy, Pitts i LeBlanc, 2014; Ruiz-Fernández, Ortíz-Amo, Ortega-Galán, Ibáñez-Masero, Rodríguez-Salvador i Ramos-Pichardo, 2020). Slični učinci opaženi su i kod stručnjaka za mentalno zdravlje (Aggs i Bambling, 2010; Christopher, Chrisman, Trotter-Mathison, Schure, Dahlen i Christopher, 2011; de Zoysa, Ruths, Walsh i Hutton, 2014; Dobie, Tucker, Ferrari i Rogers, 2016; Lam, Sterling i Margines, 2015; Rudaz, Twohig, Ong i Levin, 2017; Ruths, de Zoysa, Frearson, Hutton, Williams i Walsh, 2013; Suyi, Meredith i Khan, 2017), kao i kod policijskih službenika (Christopher i sur., 2016; Eddy, Bergman, Kaplan, Goerling i Christopher, 2019; Grupe, McGehee, Smith, Francis, Mumford i Davidson, 2019; Márquez, Galiana, Oliver i Sansó, 2020).

Iako bi takvi programi mogli biti od pomoći zatvorskim službenicima, potrebno je istražiti koliko su im prihvatljivi. Naime, riječ je o populaciji koja nerado priznaje da pati od stresa.

responding to everyday stress, and reported that they would recommend the programme to other colleagues. They considered the training as well adjusted to their needs and helpful in preventing the loss of motivation and sense of meaning at work (Ekman, 2015).

The effectiveness of mindfulness-based programmes in reducing occupational stress and burnout in prison staff is yet to be investigated. However, it can justifiably be assumed that they could benefit this population as there is increasing evidence of the benefits of mindfulness-based programmes in employees of the same professional profiles in out-of-prison systems. For example, after completing different mindfulness-based programmes, medical professionals working in other stressful environments reported their positive effects on stress, burnout, anxiety, subjective well-being, awareness, compassion for themselves and others and physical health (Burton, Burgess, Dean, Koutsopoulou and Hugh-Jones, 2017; Irving, Dobkin and Park, 2009; Klein, Taieb, Xavier, Baubet and Reyre, 2020; Morgan, Simpson and Smith, 2015; Raab, 2014; Regehr, Glancy, Pitts and LeBlanc, 2014; Ruiz-Fernández, Ortíz-Amo, Ortega-Galán, Ibáñez-Masero, Rodríguez-Salvador and Ramos-Pichardo, 2020). Similar effects have also been observed in mental health professionals (Aggs and Bambling, 2010; Christopher, Chrisman, Trotter-Mathison, Schure, Dahlen and Christopher, 2011; de Zoysa, Ruths, Walsh and Hutton, 2014; Dobie, Tucker, Ferrari and Rogers, 2016; Lam, Sterling and Margines, 2015; Rudaz, Twohig, Ong and Levin, 2017; Ruths, de Zoysa, Frearson, Hutton, Williams and Walsh, 2013; Suyi, Meredith and Khan, 2017), and police officers (Christopher et al., 2016; Eddy, Bergman, Kaplan, Goerling and Christopher, 2019; Grupe, McGehee, Smith, Francis, Mumford and Davidson, 2019; Márquez, Galiana, Oliver and Sansó, 2020).

Primjerice, dok stres kojem su izloženi njihovi kolege procjenjuju visokim, rijetko priznaju da su osobno izloženi visokom stresu (Cheek i Miller, 1983). Također, spremniji su priznati da pate od nekih tjelesnih simptoma stresa, negoli psihičkih (Cheek i Miller, 1983). Tu pojavu istraživači su nazvali „John Wayne” sindrom (Cheek i Miller, 1983). S druge strane, takvi programi podrazumijevaju upravo razgovor o poteškoćama i neugodnim emocijama.

Programi utemeljeni na *mindfulnessu* u našoj su zemlji donedavno bili gotovo nepoznati, pa tako nije bilo ni pokušaja njihove primjene u zatvorskom okruženju. S obzirom na ohrabrujuće podatke iz literature, čini se vjerojatnim da bi mogli imati blagotvoran učinak na psihičko i tjelesno zdravlje službenika zaposlenih i u našem zatvorskom sustavu koji se suočava s brojnim izazovima kao što su ograničeni resursi, manjak stručnjaka i velika radna opterećenost. Stoga smo službenicima iz našega zatvorskog sustava ponudili jedan takav program u okviru projekta „*Mindfulness* program suočavanja sa stresom za zaposlenike zatvorskog sustava” koji je financiralo Ministarstvo pravosuđa Republike Hrvatske i provelo Hrvatsko udruženje za bihevioralno-kognitivne terapije (HUBIKOT). Prema našim saznanjima, prije navedenog projekta u zatvorskim se ustanovama u našoj zemlji službenicima nisu nudili slični programi za prevenciju i ublažavanje stresa prouzročena prirodnom posla zbog čega smo ovim istraživanjem ponajprije namjeravali istražiti različite indikatore uspješnosti implementacije takvog programa. Ovo se istraživanje ujedno nalazi među prvim ispitivanjima primjene *mindfulness* intervencija sa zatvorskim osobljem u svijetu.

## **CILJ ISTRAŽIVANJA**

Ciljevi ovoga istraživanja bili su: ispitati ishode implementacije programa kognitivne

While such programmes could be helpful to prison staff, it is necessary to examine how acceptable they find them as this is a population that reluctantly admits suffering from stress. For instance, while they assess the stress their colleagues are exposed to as high, they seldom admit to being personally exposed to high stress (Cheek and Miller, 1983). Additionally, they are more willing to admit that they suffer from some physical symptoms of stress than from mental ones (Cheek and Miller, 1983). Researchers have called this phenomenon the “John Wayne syndrome” (Cheek and Miller, 1983). On the other hand, such programmes include exactly discussing problems and unpleasant emotions.

Mindfulness-based programmes were almost unknown in Croatia until recently, so there was no attempt to apply them in the prison environment. Given encouraging data from the literature, it seems likely that they could also have a beneficial effect on the mental and physical health of employees of the Croatian prison system that faces numerous challenges such as limited resources, lack of expert professionals and excessive staff workload. That being the case, we offered Croatian prison system employees one such programme as part of the project “Mindfulness-based stress-facing programme for staff in the prison system” financed by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia and implemented by the Croatian Association for Behavioural-Cognitive Therapies (HUBIKOT). According to our knowledge, prior to the above-mentioned project, Croatian penal institutions had not offered any similar programs for the prevention and alleviation of work-related stress, which is why this research primarily aims to investigate various performance indicators in the implementation of such a programme. This study is also among the first studies of the application of mindfulness-based interventions with prison staff in the world.



terapije usredotočene svjesnosti, s pojačanim fokusom na probleme stresa i sagorijevanja na poslu, u hrvatskome zatvorskom sustavu; prihvatljivost intervencije, obuhvat ciljne skupine (uključenost korisnika), kvalitetu provedbe i prikladnost. Također, htjeli smo provjeriti dolazi li nakon programa do promjene u različitim dimenzijama *mindfulnessa*, simptomima općih psihopatoloških odstupanja i stresa na poslu.

## METODA

### Sudionici

U program kognitivne terapije usredotočene svjesnosti usmjerene na stres (u nastavku: tečaj *mindfulnessa*) bilo je uključeno 55 sudionika, zaposlenika zatvorskog sustava Ministarstva pravosuđa iz četiriju kaznenih tijela: Kaznionice u Glini, Kaznionice u Lepoglavi, Zatvora u Gospiću i Zatvora u Zagrebu. U predtestu je sudjelovalo 47 osoba, u posttestu 42 osobe te naknadnom praćenju 38 osoba. U svim trima testiranjima sudjelovalo je 36 osoba te one čine konačni uzorak ovog istraživanja.

U istraživanju je sudjelovalo 29 žena i 7 muškaraca, prosječne dobi od  $M = 43,53$  godine ( $SD = 8,66$ ,  $TR = 27 - 59$ ). S obzirom na stručnu spremu najveći broj sudionika imao je visoku stručnu spremu, njih 21, višu stručnu spremu imalo je troje sudionika, a srednju stručnu spremu 12 sudionika. S obzirom na radno mjesto, u evaluaciji tečaja sudjelovalo je 12 stručnih suradnika/savjetnika u odjelu tretmana (uglavnom socijalni pedagozi, socijalni radnici i psiholozi), devet upravnih referenata, šest voditelja odjela/odsjeka, tri pravosudna policajca, dva zdravstvena djelatnika, jedan nadzornik pravosudne policije, jedan financijski knjigovođa, jedan pomoćnik upravitelja te jedan psiholog u dijagnostici. Sudionici su naveli da imaju sljedeće somatske smetnje: poremećaj

## RESEARCH AIM

The aim of this research was to examine the outcomes of implementing a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy programme, with an increased focus on stress and burnout at work, in the Croatian prison system: acceptability of intervention, target group coverage (user involvement), quality of delivery, and appropriateness. We also wanted to find out if any changes occur after the programme with respect to different dimensions of mindfulness, symptoms of general psychopathological deviations, and stress at work.

## METHODOLOGY

### Participants

The stress-focused mindfulness-based cognitive therapy programme (hereinafter: mindfulness course) included 55 participants, employees of the Ministry of Justice prison system, from four penal institutions: the prisons in Glini, Lepoglava, Gospić, and Zagreb. 47 persons took part in the pre-test, 42 in the post-test, and 38 in the follow-up. 36 persons participated in all three tests and they form the final sample of this research.

The study involved 29 women and seven men, with a median age of  $M=43.53$  years ( $SD=8.66$ ,  $TR=27-59$ ). With regard to the level of education, the most participants (21) had a university degree, three had a college degree and 12 had a secondary school degree. With regard to the job position, the course was evaluated by 12 expert associates/consultants in the treatment department (mostly social pedagogues, social workers and psychologists), nine administrative clerks, six department/unit heads, three judicial police officers, two health workers, one judicial police supervisor, one

rada štitnjače (3), ulcerozni kolitis (2), visoki krvni tlak (2), gastritis (1), dijabetes (1) i bubrežni kamenci (1). Od psihičkih smetnji, jedan sudionik naveo je da boluje od narkolepsije, a drugi od depresije.

## Instrumenti

*Upitnik o sociodemografskim podacima i zdravstvenom statusu* konstruiran je za potrebe ovog istraživanja. Osim pitanja o sociodemografskim podacima (dob, spol, stručna sprema i zanimanje), upitnik uključuje pitanja o somatskim i psihičkim smetnjama.

*Očekivanja od tečaja* ispitana su dvama pitanjima. Sudionici su trebali označiti koliko očekuju da će im program pomoći u nošenju sa stresom te poboljšanju opće psihičke i fizičke dobrobiti na ljestvici od 1 (nimalo) do 7 (mnogo).

*Petofaktorski upitnik mindfulnessa (Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire – FFMQ; Baer i sur., 2006)* mjeri pet različitih dimenzija usredotočene svjesnosti u svakodnevnom životu u pet supskala: (1) opažanje, odnosno primjećivanje unutarnjih iskustava kao što su misli, emocije i tjelesne senzacije te vanjskih podražaja poput zvukova, mirisa i sl. (*Primjećujem mirise i okuse*); (2) opisivanje, odnosno etiketiranje unutarnjih iskustava riječima (*Teško mi je pronaći prave riječi da izrazim svoje osjećaje o nečemu*), (3) svjesnost, odnosno djelovanje pri čemu je pažnja usmjerena na to djelovanje, nasuprot distraktnosti i djelovanju na „automatskom pilotu“ dok se za to vrijeme razmišlja o nečem drugom (*Ne obraćam pažnju na to što radim jer sanjam, brinem se ili mislim o nečem drugom*); (4) nereagirane na unutarnje iskustvo, odnosno otpuštanje misli i osjećaja umjesto da ih se analizira ili započinje s njihovim rješavanjem (*Kad imam uznemirujuće misli, mogu ih samo primijetiti a da ne reagiram na njih*) i (5) neosuđivanje vlastitoga unutarnjeg iskustva,

financial accountant, one assistant manager and one diagnostic psychologist. The participants indicated having the following somatic disorders: thyroid dysfunction (3), ulcerative colitis (2), high blood pressure (2), gastritis (1), diabetes (1) and kidney stones (1). As for mental disorders, one participant said they suffered from narcolepsy, and another from depression.

## Instruments

*A questionnaire on socio-demographic data and health status* was designed for the purpose of this research. In addition to questions about socio-demographic data (age, gender, qualifications and occupation), the questionnaire included questions about somatic and mental disturbances.

*Expectations from the course* were examined by two questions. The participants were asked to indicate how much they expected the programme to help them cope with stress and improve their general mental and physical well-being, on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (a lot).

The *Five-Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ)* (Baer et al., 2006) measures five different mindfulness dimensions in everyday life through five subscales: (1) observation, or noticing internal experiences such as thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations, as well as external stimuli such as sounds, smells, etc. (*I notice smells and tastes*); (2) description, or labelling internal experiences with words (*I find it hard to find the right words to express my feelings about something*), (3) awareness, or acting where attention is paid to the action, as opposed to distraction or acting on an “automatic pilot” while thinking about something else (*I’m not paying attention to what I’m doing because I’m daydreaming, worrying or thinking about*

odnosno postojanje neprosuđujućeg stava prema svojim mislima i osjećajima nasuprot npr. samokritiziranju ili zabrinutosti zbog tih iskustava (*Govorim si da se ne bih trebao osjećati kako se osjećam*). Sastoji se od 39 čestica na koje sudionik odgovara na ljestvici od 1 (nikad ili rijetko) do 5 (često ili uvijek). Rezultat se računa za svaku supskalu posebno te se može kretati od 8 do 40, odnosno 7 do 35 za supskalu nereagiranja na unutarnje iskustvo. Pouzdanost tipa unutarnje konzistentnosti iznosi 0,72 do 0,92, ovisno o supskali. S obzirom na to da u trenutku provedbe ovog istraživanja nije postojala validirana hrvatska verzija FFMQ upitnika, prijevod je napravljen za potrebe ovog istraživanja. Prvo je dvojezični psiholog preveo upitnik na hrvatski jezik, a potom je o prijevodu raspravio s autoricama istraživanja (psihologinjama i voditeljicama tečaja *mindfulnessa*) na temelju čega su učinjene manje prilagodbe prijevoda. Razumijevanje sadržaja testirano je na malome prigodnom uzorku. Nisu prijavljene teškoće u razumijevanju. U ovom istraživanju pouzdanost je iznosila između 0,74 i 0,93 u predtestu, između 0,70 i 0,91 u posttestu te između 0,77 i 0,90 u naknadnom praćenju, što govori o zadovoljavajućoj pouzdanosti.

*Upitnik općih psihopatoloških teškoća (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation – CORE-OM; Evans i sur., 2000)* obuhvaća četiri dimenzije: subjektivnu dobrobit (*Bio sam zadovoljan sa sobom*), probleme/simptome (*Osjećao sam se napeto, tjeskobno ili nervozno*), svakodnevno funkcioniranje (*Postizao sam ono što sam želio*) i rizik (*Padalo mi je na pamet da se ozlijedim*). Sastoji se od 34 čestice na koje sudionici odgovaraju na ljestvici od „nikada“ do „gotovo uvijek“. Ukupan prosječni rezultat kreće se do 0 do 4. Rezultat koji upućuje na postojanje klinički značajnih smetnji na hrvatskoj populaciji smatra se vrijednost od 1,38 (Jokić-Begić, Korajlija, Jurin i Evans, 2014). Pouzdanost tipa unutarnje konzistencije iznosi 0,86 za nekliničku

*something else*); (4) not responding to one's inner experience, or releasing thoughts and feelings instead of analysing them or trying to solve them (*When I have disturbing thoughts, I can just notice them without reacting to them*); and (5) not judging one's inner experience, or the existence of a non-judgmental attitude towards one's thoughts and feelings as opposed to e.g. self-criticism or concerns about these experiences (*I keep telling myself that I shouldn't feel the way I feel*). It consists of 39 units to which participants answer on a scale from 1 (never or rarely) to 5 (often or always). The result is calculated for each subscale separately and can range from 8 to 40, or from 7 to 35 for the subscale of non-response to inner experience. The reliability of the internal consistency type is .72 to .92, depending on the subscale. As there was no validated Croatian version of the FFMQ questionnaire at the time of the research, it was translated for research purposes. The questionnaire was first translated by a bilingual psychologist into Croatian, after which the translation was discussed with the research authors (psychologists and mindfulness course facilitators), based on which minor adjustments were made to it. Understanding the content was tested on a convenient small sample, and no difficulties in understanding were reported. In the research, the reliability was between .74 and .93 in the pre-test, between .70 and .91 in the post-test, and between .77 and .90 in the follow-up, which indicates satisfactory reliability.

The *Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation (CORE-OM) Questionnaire* (Evans et al., 2000) covers four dimensions: subjective well-being (*I was satisfied with myself*), problems/symptoms (*I felt tense, anxious or nervous*), everyday functioning (*I achieved what I wanted*) and risk (*It occurred to me that I could injure myself*). It consists of 34 units to which participants answer on a scale from “never” to “almost

skupinu i 0,93 za kliničku skupinu, a test-retest pouzdanost 0,88 (Jokić-Begić i sur., 2014). Slični koeficijenti unutarnje konzistencije dobiveni su na našem uzorku te su iznosili 0,92 u predtestu, 0,93 u posttestu i 0,93 u naknadnom praćenju.

*Upitnik intenziteta stresa na poslu (ISP; Radošević-Vidaček, 2006)* mjeri simptome pretjerana stresa na radnom mjestu. Sastoji se od 20 tvrdnji na koje se odgovara na ljestvici od 0 (nikad) do 4 (gotovo uvijek). Ukupan rezultat je zbroj odgovora na svim tvrdnjama, a kreće se od 0 do 80. Rezultat od 26 ili više upućuje na sagorijevanje na poslu. Na našem uzorku koeficijent unutarnje konzistencije iznosio je 0,90 (predtest), 0,90 (posttest) te 0,91 (naknadno praćenje).

*Upitnik uključenosti u tečaj* konstruiran je za potrebe ovoga istraživanja, i to da bi se provjerila redovitost pohađanja radionica te redovitost samostalnoga formalnoga i neformalnog prakticanja *mindfulnessa*. U prvom pitanju sudionici označuju na koliko radionica su sudjelovali, a u drugim dvama pitanjima procjenjuju koliko su redovito prakticirali formalne, odnosno neformalne *mindfulness* vježbe na ljestvici od 1 (uopće nisam vježbao) do 7 (vježbao sam svaki dan).

*Upitnik subjektivne evaluacije tečaja mindfulnessa* također je osmišljen za potrebe ovoga istraživanja. Prvih pet pitanja ispituje zadovoljstvo sljedećim aspektima tečaja: sadržajem radionica, pisanim radnim materijalima, radnim materijalima s internetske stranice HUBIKOT-a, voditeljicama i tečajem u cjelini, na ljestvici od 1 (nimalo) do 7 (u potpunosti). U sljedećim dvama pitanjima sudionici procjenjuju koliko im tečaj pomaže u nošenju sa stresom te u poboljšanju opće fizičke i psihičke dobrobiti na istoj ljestvici. U posljednjim četirima pitanjima otvorenog tipa sudionici procjenjuju što su dobili od tečaja / što im je bilo najkorisnije, čime su bili posebno zadovoljni, čime nisu

always". The total average score ranges from 0 to 4. A value of 1.38 is considered to be the result indicating the existence of clinically significant disturbances in the Croatian population (Jokić-Begić, Korajlija, Jurin and Evans, 2014). The reliability of the internal consistency type is 0.86 for a non-clinical group and 0.93 for a clinical group, and the test-re-test reliability is 0.88 (Jokić-Begić et al., 2014). Similar internal consistency coefficients were obtained on our sample and amounted to 0.92 in the test, 0.93 in the post-test and 0.93 in the follow-up.

The *Workplace Stress Intensity Questionnaire* (ISP; Radošević-Vidaček, 2006) measures symptoms of excessive workplace stress. It consists of 20 statements that are answered on a scale from 0 (never) to 4 (almost always). The overall score is a sum of the answers to all statements, ranging from 0 to 80. A score of 26 or more indicates burnout at work. On our sample, the internal consistency coefficient was 0.90 (pre-test), 0.90 (post-test) and 0.91 (follow-up).

The *Course Participation Questionnaire* was designed for the purposes of the research, to track the regularity of workshops attendance and the regularity of independent mindfulness exercise, both formal and informal. In the first question, participants indicate how many workshops they participated in, and in the other two they estimate how regularly they practiced mindfulness exercises, formally or informally, on a scale from 1 (*Did not exercise at all*) to 7 (*I exercised every day*).

The *Mindfulness Course Subjective Evaluation Questionnaire* was also designed for the purposes of the research. The first 5 questions examine participants' satisfaction with the following aspects of the course: content of the workshops, written handouts, materials from the HUBIKOT website, facilitators, and the course in general, on a scale from 1 (not

bili zadovoljni / što nije bilo korisno te daju prijedloge za poboljšanje tečaja.

Upitnik stavova o primjeni *mindfulnessa* u zatvorskom sustavu također je konstruiran za potrebe ovog ispitivanja. Uključuje tri pitanja kojima se na ljestvici od 1 (nimalo) do 7 (mnogo) ispituje koliko sudionici tehnike *mindfulnessa* smatraju korisnima na vlastitome radnom mjestu, koliko vjeruju da bi one mogle biti korisne drugim zaposlenicima u zatvorskom sustavu te u prilagođenom obliku zatvorenicima. Posljednje pitanje namijenjeno je samo stručnjacima tretmana, a ispituje njihov interes za uključenje u trening za učitelje *mindfulnessa*. Sudionici odabiru odgovor „da“ ili „ne“.

### **Kognitivna terapija usredotočene svjesnosti usmjerena na stres (tečaj *mindfulnessa*)**

Tečaj *mindfulnessa* uvelike je slijedio program kognitivne terapije usredotočene svjesnosti (engl. *Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy – MBCT*) Segala, Williamsa i Teasdalea (2013). Taj strukturirani program originalno je razvijen za osobe s depresijom te se provodi u grupnom formatu tijekom osam dvosatnih radionica, tempom od jedne radionice tjedno. Na svakoj se radionici obrađuju unaprijed zadane teme koje uključuju: (1) upoznavanje temeljnih koncepata i trening pažnje, (2) učenje vještijih odgovora na neugodna iskustva te (3) prepoznavanje osobnih znakova povrata depresije i razvoj akcijskog plana za teška razdoblja. Uči se iskustveno, nizom formalnih meditativnih vježbi u sjedećem (npr. usredotočena svjesnost disanja) ili ležećem položaju (npr. pregled tijela) odnosno u pokretu (npr. usredotočeno svjesno hodanje), te različitim vježbama iz KBT-a (npr. međudjelovanje misli, osjećaja i ponašanja). Vježbe su praćene vođenim raspravama radi produblivanja i proširivanja učenja. Sudionici se upućuju na samostalno vježbanje između

at all) to 7 (completely). In the next two questions participants assess, on the same scale, how much the course helps them cope with stress and improving their general physical and mental well-being. Through the final four open-type questions, participants assess what they got from the course/what was most useful to them, made them particularly satisfied, as well as what they were not satisfied with/what was not useful, and provide suggestions for course improvement.

The *Mindfulness Application in the Prison System Questionnaire* was also designed for the purposes of the research. It includes three questions examining, on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (a lot), how much participants consider mindfulness techniques to be useful in their own workplace, how much they believe they could benefit other prison staff and, in an adapted form, inmates. The last question is intended for treatment professionals only, and examines their interest in participating in a course for mindfulness trainers. Participants are asked to select the “yes” or “no” answer.

### **Stress-Focused Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (mindfulness course)**

The mindfulness course largely followed the mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) programme by Segal, Williams and Teasdale (2013). This structured program was originally developed for persons with depression and is implemented in group format through 8 two-hour workshops, at a rate of one workshop a week. Each workshop deals with pre-defined topics that include: (1) learning about basic concepts and attention training; (2) learning about more skilful responses to unpleasant experiences; and (3) recognising individual signs of a recurrence of depression and developing an action plan for difficult periods. Learning is

radionica uz pomoć popratnih tekstualnih i auditivnih materijala, u trajanju od oko 40 minuta dnevno.

U tečaju provedenom u okviru našeg istraživanja zadržani su svi ključni elementi originalnog programa (format, sadržaj i vježbe, struktura, način učenja, duh pristupa), uz manje sadržajne i procesne prilagodbe. Sadržaj je prilagođen tako da je: (1) umjesto na depresiju bio više usmjeren na tematiku stresa i sagorijevanja (npr. umjesto razgovara o ulozi odnosa prema osjećaju tuge u održavanju depresije, govorilo se o ulozi odnosa prema anksioznosti, ljutnji, tuzi i sl. u razvoju stresa i sagorijevanja; uvedene su dvije kratke vježbe o procjeni stresora na 1. i 8. radionici), (2) uvedeno je više uvodnih vježbi u pokretu i ležećem položaju radi sabiranja uma i ublažavanja neugodnih tjelesnih i emocionalnih posljedica rada jer su se radionice održavale unutar radnog vremena sudionika i (3) za sudionike su pripremljeni dodatni tekstualni, audiovizualni i drugi materijali za razjašnjavanje i dopunjavanje učenja. Procesne prilagodbe uključivale su početno neinzistiranje na otkrivanju emocija, obavljanje dijela rasprava o osobnim i osjetljivim temama u parovima i manjim grupama umjesto u velikoj grupi te dostupnost obveznih i dodatnih radnih materijala na internetskoj stranici HUBIKOT-a. Tečaj su u svim četirima grupama zajedno vodile autorice, psihologinje sa završenom edukacijom iz KBT-a i MBCT-a.

Sudionici su pozvani da na tečaju sudjeluju što redovitije, uz napomenu da je za uspješno praćenje sadržaja i stjecanje potvrde o završenom tečaju nužno prisustvovati na barem šest od osam radionica. Međutim, u obradu su uključeni svi sudionici koji su sudjelovali u evaluaciji tečaja, bez obzira na broj radionica na kojima su sudjelovali da bi se ispitala dobit od tečaja u svakodnevnim uvjetima, a ne

experience-based, through a series of formal meditative exercises in a sitting (e.g. focused awareness of breathing) or lying position (e.g. body examination), or in motion (e.g. focused conscious walking), as well as through various CBT exercises (e.g. interaction between thoughts, feelings and behaviour). The exercises are accompanied by guided discussions aimed at deepening and expanding learning. Participants are instructed to exercise individually between workshops with the help of supporting textual and auditory materials, for about 40 minutes a day.

The course conducted as part of our research retained all key elements of the original programme (format, content and exercises, structure, learning method, spirit of approach), with minor adjustments of the content and process. The content was adjusted as follows: (1) instead of depression, focus was more on the topic of stress and burnout (e.g. instead of discussing the role of relating to the feeling of grief in maintaining depression, the role of relating to anxiety, anger, sadness etc. in the development of stress and burnout was discussed; two short stressor assessment exercises were introduced in workshops 1 and 8); (2) several introductory exercises were introduced to be performed in movement or a lying position to pull one's mind together and mitigate the unpleasant physical and emotional consequences of work, as workshops took place during the participants' working hours; and (3) additional textual, audio-visual and other materials intended for clarifying and complementing learning were prepared for the participants. The process adjustments included initial non-insistence on the participants revealing emotions, holding some discussions on personal and sensitive topics in pairs and smaller groups instead of the large group, and making obligatory and auxiliary working materials available on the HUBIKOT website. The course was conducted

ona u idealnim uvjetima i s visokomotiviranim sudionicima.

## Postupak

Projekt „*Mindfulness* program suočavanja sa stresom za zaposlenike zatvorskog sustava“ provodio se od 12. siječnja 2017. do 11. siječnja 2018. godine. Provedbu istraživačkog dijela projekta odobrio je Etički odbor HUBIKOT-a te je pribavljena suglasnost Ministarstva pravosuđa Republike Hrvatske.

Na početku projekta rukovoditelji četiriju uključenih kaznenih tijela informirani su o projektu i tečaju *mindfulnessa*. Za sudjelovanje u tečaju *mindfulnessa* sudionici su odabrani na temelju procjene rukovoditelja da bi se rad u kaznenim tijelima za vrijeme tečaja nesmetano odvijao. Od 65 zaposlenika koji su inicijalno odabrani za sudjelovanje u programu, deset zaposlenika se u konačnici nije moglo uključiti jer je u vremenu od informiranja o tečaju do njegova početka došlo do nekih organizacijskih promjena. Preostalih 55 zaposlenika sačinjavalo je četiri grupe koje su tečaj pohađale u četiri kaznena tijela: 6 u Kaznionici u Glini, 13 u Kaznionici u Lepoglavi, 16 u Zatvoru u Gospiću i 20 u Zatvoru u Zagrebu (od čega 3 iz Centra za dijagnostiku i 5 iz Središnjeg ureda Uprave za zatvorski sustav i probaciju). Kao što je ranije spomenuto, samo je dio njih sudjelovao u evaluaciji tečaja.

Sudionici su prvo sudjelovali u predtestu koji je uključivao popunjavanje Upitnika o sociodemografskim podacima i zdravstvenom statusu, pitanja o očekivanjima od programa, FFMQ, CORE-OM i ISP. Potom su sudjelovali u osmotjednom tečaju *mindfulnessa* koji se odvijao unutar radnog vremena u prostoru kaznenih tijela. Nakon završetka tečaja uslijedio je posttest koji je obuhvaćao: FFMQ, CORE-OM, ISP, Upitnik uključenosti u tečaj, Upitnik subjek-

in all four groups by the authors, psychologists who had completed CBT and MBCT training.

The participants were invited to attend the course as regularly as possible, and were told that attending at least six out of the eight workshops was necessary to successfully adopt the content and obtain a course completion certificate. However, all participants involved in the course evaluation were processed, regardless of the number of workshops they had attended. This was done to examine the benefits of the course in everyday circumstances, and not just in ideal conditions and with highly motivated participants.

## Procedure

The project “Stress-Facing Mindfulness Programme for Prison System Staff” was implemented from 12 January 2017 to 11 January 2018. Carrying out the research under the project was approved by the HUBIKOT Ethics Committee and given consent by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Croatia.

At the beginning of the project, managers of the four involved penal institutions were informed about the project and the mindfulness course. Participants to take part in the mindfulness course were selected based on their managers' assessment, to ensure that work in the penal institutions during the course would go unhindered. Out of 65 employees initially selected to participate in the programme, 10 could not eventually join because of some organisational changes that had occurred in the time since the course was announced. The remaining 55 employees constituted four groups that attended the course in four penal institutions: 6 in the Glina prison, 13 in the Lepoglava prison, 16 in the Gospić prison, and 20 in the prison in Zagreb (of which three from the Diagnostic Centre and 5 from the Head

tivne evaluacije tečaja *mindfulnessa* te Upitnik stavova o primjeni *mindfulnessa* u zatvorskom sustavu. Dva mjeseca nakon završetka tečaja sudionici su sudjelovali u naknadnom praćenju koje je uključivalo: FFMQ, CORE-OM i ISP. Svi upitnici primijenjeni su putem digitalnog obrasca, a sudionicima su poziv za sudjelovanje u evaluaciji te dva podsjetnika poslana e-poštom.

## **Metode obrade podataka**

### **Rezultati su obrađeni SPSS programom, verzija 26 (IBM Corporation, 2019).**

Da bismo provjerili je li kod sudionika došlo do promjene u različitim dimenzijama *mindfulnessa*, psihopatološkim simptomima te stresu i sagorijevanju na poslu, trima točkama mjerenja provedene su dvije MANOVA-e za zavisna mjerenja: jedna za supskale upitnika FFMQ, druga za supskale upitnika CORE-OM, te ANOVA za zavisna mjerenja za upitnik ISP.

## **REZULTATI**

Prvo će biti prikazani rezultati vezani uz praćenje kvalitete implementacije tečaja *mindfulnessa* (prihvatljivost, kvaliteta provedbe, uključenost korisnika i prikladnost tečaja), a potom ishodi tečaja mjereni psihologijskim upitnicima (FFMQ, CORE-OM i ISP).

### **Ishodi implementacije tečaja**

#### **Prihvatljivost i kvaliteta provedbe tečaja**

Sudionici su izvijestili da očekuju da će im tečaj *mindfulnessa* umjereno pomoći u suočavanju sa stresom ( $M = 4,36$ ,  $SD = 1,27$ ) te da će im umjereno pomoći u povećanju psihičke i fizičke dobrobiti ( $M = 4,42$ ,  $SD = 1,29$ ). Na Slici 1 prikazane su frekvencije pojedinih odgovora.

Office of the Administration for Prison System and Probation). As mentioned earlier, only a part of them participated in the evaluation of the course.

The participants first took part in a pre-test that included a questionnaire on socio-demographic data and health status, questions about programme expectations, and FFMQ, CORE-OM and ISP. They then participated in an 8-week mindfulness course that took place during the working hours on the premises of each penal institution. Upon course completion, they were given a post-test that included: FFMQ, CORE-OM, ISP, the Course Participation Questionnaire, the Mindfulness Course Subjective Evaluation Questionnaire, and the Mindfulness Application in the Prison System Questionnaire. Two months after completing the course, the participants took part in a follow-up which included: FFMQ, CORE-OM and ISP. All questionnaires were applied via digital forms and the participants were invited to take part in the evaluation. In addition, two reminders were sent by e-mail.

### **Data Processing Methodology**

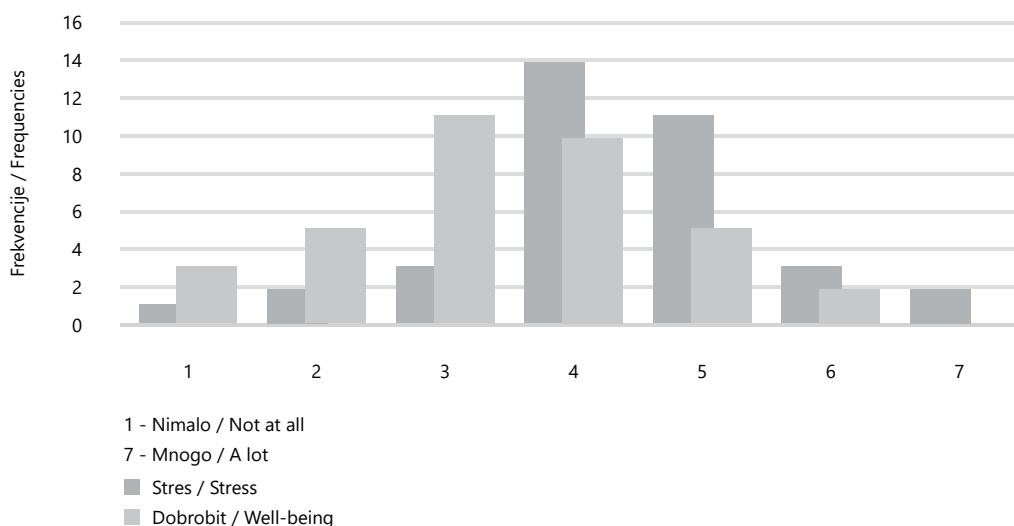
The results were processed by SPSS software version 26 (IBM Corporation, 2019).

To check, through three measuring points, whether the participants experienced changes in different mindfulness dimensions, psychopathological symptoms, and stress and work burnout, two MANOVAs were carried out for dependent variables: one for FFMQ questionnaire subscales, and another for CORE-OM questionnaire subscales. An ANOVA was also carried out for dependent variables for the ISP questionnaire.



**Slika 1. Očekivanja sudionika o tome koliko će im tečaj mindfulnessa pomoći u nošenju sa stresom i u poboljšanju psihičke i fizičke dobrobiti (N=36).**

**Figure 1. Participants' expectations about how much the mindfulness course would help them cope with stress and improve their mental and physical well-being (N=36)**



Sudionici su bili vrlo zadovoljni različitim aspektima tečaja: sadržajem radionica (M = 6,09, SD = 1,27), pisanim materijalima (M = 6,29, SD = 1,25), digitalnim materijalima na internetskoj stranici HUBIKOT-a (M = 6,29, SD = 1,78) i voditeljicama (M = 6,74, SD=.56), kao i tečajem u cjelini (M = 6,11, SD = 1,21). Nakon završetka tečaja procijenili su da im je prakticiranje *mindfulnessa* umjereno pomoglo u nošenju sa stresom (M = 4,8, SD = 1,28) te u poboljšanju psihičke i fizičke dobrobiti (M = 4,66, SD = 1,28).

U odgovorima na pitanja otvorenog tipa naveli su da najkorisnijim smatraju nove metode nošenja sa stresom, drugačiji pogled na vlastite reakcije, dopuštanje neugodnih emocija, vrijeme posvećeno sebi, odmor i opuštanje, nove spoznaje itd. Najzadovoljniji su bili s voditeljicama i načinom vođenja radionica, atmosferom na tečaju te specifičnim vježbama. Na pitanje o tome čime su nezadovoljni, većina sudionika, njih 23, navelo je da ne postoji ništa čime su nezadovoljni, 6 nije odgovorilo, a ostalih 6 je navelo da su nezadovoljni prostorom u kojem se tečaj odvijao (2), činjenicom da su članovi

## FINDINGS

Results related to monitoring the quality of mindfulness course implementation (acceptability, quality of delivery, user attendance and course appropriateness) will be presented first, followed by course outcomes measured by psychological questionnaires (FFMQ, CORE-OM and ISP).

### Course implementation outcomes

#### Course acceptability and quality of delivery

The participants reported that they expected the mindfulness course to moderately help them cope with stress (M=4.36, SD=1.27), and that it would moderately help them improve their mental and physical well-being (M=4.42, SD=1.29). The frequencies of particular answers are shown in Figure 1.

The participants were very satisfied with different aspects of the course: content of the workshops (M=6.09, SD=1.27), written

grupe osobe s kojima rade (1), da grupa nije bila dovoljno povezana (1), vježbom rad na teškoći (1), što je svaka radionica bila slična (1) i činjenicom da nekada nisu mogli izdvojiti vrijeme za tečaj zbog količine posla (1). Na pitanje o prijedlozima za poboljšanje tečaja, 19 sudionika je navelo da nemaju nikakvih prijedloga i da ne bi ništa mijenjali, 10 nije odgovorilo, a preostali su naveli da bi tečaj trebalo produljiti ili nastaviti (4), poboljšati prostorne uvjete (1), povećati broj vježbi u pokretu (1) te provoditi tečaj u prirodi (1).

### Uključenost korisnika

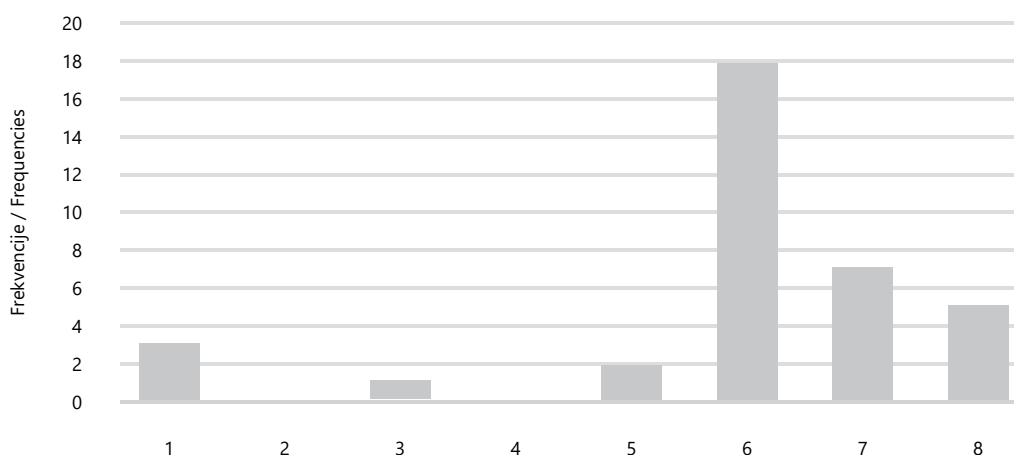
Na Slici 2 prikazani su podatci o redovitosti pohađanja tečaja. Ukupno je 83,3% sudionika sudjelovalo na preporučenom broju radionica, tj. 6 i više. Na Slici 3 prikazana je i procjena sudionika o redovitosti vježbanja formalnih i neformalnih *mindfulness* vježbi, iz koje je vidljivo da su sudionici bili nešto redovitiji u vježbanju neformalnih vježbi. Na Slici 4 prikazana je redovitost vježbanja u naknadnom praćenju, odnosno tijekom dva mjeseca nakon završetka tečaja, iz koje je vidljivo da se redovitost vježbanja nešto smanjila.

materials (M=6.29, SD=1.25), digital materials on the HUBIKOT website (M=6.29, SD=1.78), and facilitators (M=6.74, SD=.56), as well as with the course in general (M=6.11, SD=1.21). Upon course completion, they assessed that practising mindfulness moderately helped them cope with stress (M=4.8, SD=1.28) and improve their mental and physical well-being (M=4.66, SD=1.28).

In their answers to open-type questions, they stated as the most useful the new methods of coping with stress, different views of their own reactions, allowing unpleasant emotions, time dedicated to themselves, rest and relaxation, new insights, etc. They were satisfied the most with the facilitators and the way the workshops were conducted, the atmosphere at the course, and some particular exercises. When asked about dissatisfaction, most participants, 23 of them, indicated that there was nothing they were dissatisfied with, 6 did not answer, and the remaining six expressed dissatisfaction with the premises where the course took place (2), the fact that members of the group were persons they work with (1), and that there was not enough connection within the group (1),

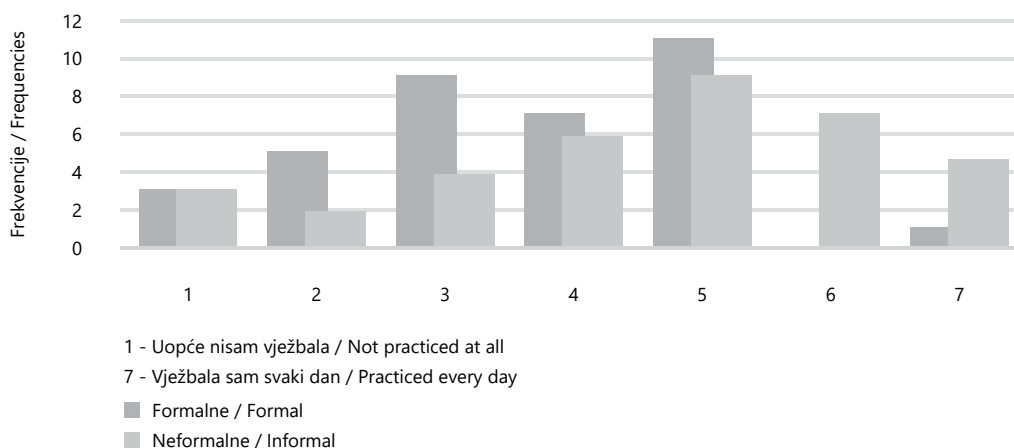
**Slika 2. Redovitost pohađanja tečaja mindfulness – frekvencije sudionika koji su sudjelovali na pojedinoj broju radionica, od 1 do ukupno 8 radionica (N=36).**

**Figure 2. Regularity of mindfulness course attendance – frequencies of the participants attending a number of workshops, from 1 to 8 (N=36)**



**Slika 3. Redovitost u vježbanju formalnih i neformalnih mindfulness vježbi kod sudionika tečaja za vrijeme tečaja (N=36).**

**Figure 3. Regularity in practising formal and informal mindfulness exercises by course participants during the course (N=36)**



### Prikladnost tečaja

Stečene vještine *mindfulnessa* sudionici su procijenili umjereno primjenjivima na svojem radnom mjestu ( $M = 4,14$ ,  $SD = 1,42$ ). Tečaj bi vrlo vjerojatno preporučili drugim zaposlenicima zatvorskog sustava ( $M = 5,94$ ,  $SD = 1,41$ ), a umjereno vjeruju da bi tečaj u prilagođenu obliku trebalo ponuditi i zatvorenicima ( $M = 4,61$ ,  $SD = 1,68$ ). Otprilike polovica službenika tretmana, njih 9 od 19, navelo je da su zainteresirani u budućnosti pohađati dodatnu edukaciju za trenere *mindfulnessa* da bi i sami mogli voditi takav tečaj za druge službenike i zatvorenike.

### Psihologijske mjere ishoda tečaja

#### Ishodi tečaja – preliminarne analize

Deskriptivna statistika za FFMQ, CORE-OM i ISP prikazana je u Tablici 1. U istoj tablici prikazani su i rezultati testiranja normaliteta distribucija. Kolmogorov-Smirnovljev test je pokazao da od normaliteta značajno odstupa samo supskala rizika CORE-OM upitnika, i to u svim trima točkama mjerenja. Te distribucije

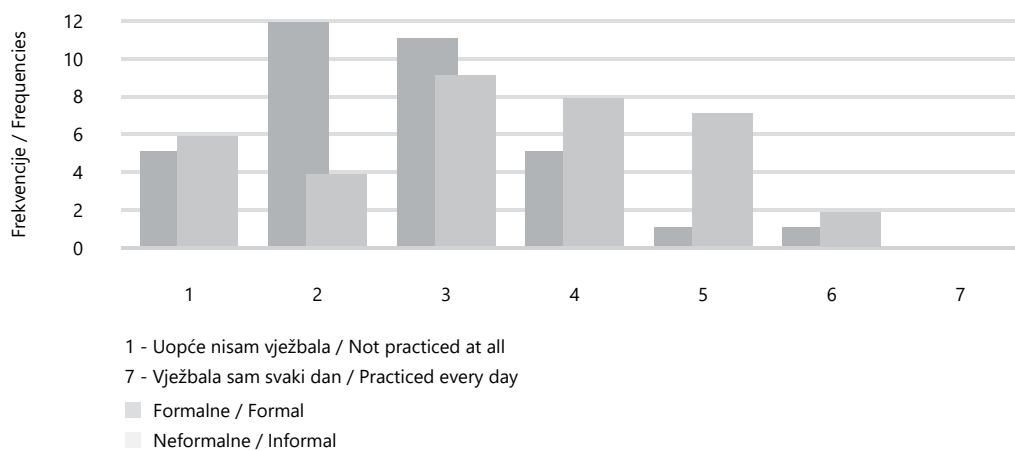
the exercise of working on a difficulty (1), the perception that all workshops were similar (1) and the fact that sometimes they could not find the time for the course due to heavy workload (1). When asked about proposals to improve the course, 19 participants stated that they had no proposals and would not change anything, 10 did not answer, and the remainder noted that the course should be extended or continued (4), the conditions on the premises improved (1), the number of exercises involving movement increased (1) and the course conducted outdoors (1).

#### User attendance

Figure 2 shows data on the regularity of course attendance. In total, 83.3% of the participants attended the recommended number of workshops, i.e. six and more. Figure 3 shows the participants' assessment of the regularity in practising formal and informal mindfulness exercises, which shows that the participants were somewhat more regular in practising informal exercises. Figure 4 shows the regularity of exercising in the follow-up, i.e. within two months following course completion, which

**Slika 4. Redovitost u vježbanju formalnih i neformalnih mindfulness vježbi kod sudionika tečaja u naknadnom praćenju (N=36).**

**Figure 4. Regularity in practising formal and informal mindfulness exercises by course participants in the follow-up (N=36)**



izrazito su pozitivno asimetrične (simetričnost – pretest 1,75; posttest 4,74; naknadno praćenje 3,34), što je i očekivano jer ljestvica ispituje suicidalne misli i namjere, samoozljeđivanje i ozljeđivanje drugih koji su relativno rijetki simptomi u općoj populaciji. Međutim, MANOVA je robusna na odstupanja od normaliteta kada je broj sudionika po situaciji veći od 20, što je ovdje slučaj (Tabachnick i Fidell, 2013). Računanjem Mahalanobis distance za ovih 30 varijabli (10 ljestvica u 3 točke mjerenja) nisu utvrđeni multivarijatni ekstremni rezultati.

### Ishodi tečaja – glavne analize

*Mindfulness.* Pokazalo se da je multivarijatni efekt točke mjerenja na rezultat na skali FFMQ statistički značajan ( $F(10,132) = 5,07, \lambda = 0,52, p > .001, \eta^2 = .28$ ). Post-hoc testiranja ANOVA-om pokazala su da je do promjena došlo na supskalama opažanja, neprosuđivanja i nereagiranja te da je riječ o velikim veličinama učinka, dok na supskalama opisivanje i svjesnost nisu registrirane značajne promjene (Tablica 2).

Jednostavni kontrasti za ove tri supskale uputili su na isti obrazac promjena u vremenu (Slika 5). Sudionici su nakon tečaja izvještavali

shows that the regularity of exercising had decreased slightly.

### Course appropriateness

The participants assessed the gained mindfulness skills as moderately applicable at their workplace ( $M=4.14, SD=1.42$ ). They would probably recommend the course to other prison system employees ( $M=5.94, SD=1.41$ ), and are moderately convinced that the course, in an adapted form, should also be offered to prisoners ( $M=4.61, SD=1.68$ ). About half of the treatment officers, nine out of 19, said they were interested in attending additional training for mindfulness trainers in the future so that they could facilitate such a course for other employees and prisoners themselves.

### Psychological measures of course outcomes

#### Course outcomes – preliminary analysis

Descriptive statistics for FFMQ, CORE-OM and ISP is presented in Table 1. The table also shows the results of the distribution normality testing. Kolmogorov-Smirnov's test showed that

**Tablica 1. Deskriptivna statistika i Kolmogorov-Smirnovljev Z za supskale upitnika mindfulnessa (FFMQ), općih psihopatoloških smetnji (CORE-OM) te upitnik stresa i sagorijevanja na poslu (ISP)**

**Table 1. Descriptive statistics and Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z for mindfulness (FFMQ), general psychopathological disturbances (CORE-OM) and work stress and burnout (ISP) questionnaire subscales**

UPITNIK/QUESTIONNAIRE	PRETEST/PRE-TEST		POSTTEST/POST-TEST		NAKNADNO PRAĆENJE/FOLLOW UP	
	M (SD)	K-S Z	M (SD)	K-S Z	M (SD)	K-S Z
FFMQ opažanje/observation	3,34 (.56)	.70	3,63 (.55)	.77	3,55 (.58)	.62
FFMQ opisivanje/description	3,68 (.62)	.71	3,62 (.59)	.64	3,74 (.64)	.50
FFMQ svjesnost/awareness	3,35 (.81)	.62	3,44 (.67)	.68	3,52 (.64)	.64
FFMQ neprosuđivanje/non-judgment	3,50 (.65)	.78	3,77 (.74)	.63	3,91 (.63)	.95
FFMQ nereagiranje/non-response	3,00 (.64)	1.02	3,35 (.50)	.61	3,37 (.52)	.62
CORE-OM funkcioniranje/functioning	.98 (.47)	.77	.81 (.49)	.74	.80 (.49)	.78
CORE-OM problemi/problems	1,11 (.61)	.71	.83 (.53)	.70	.68 (.50)	.85
CORE-OM dobrobit/well-being	1,17 (.68)	.94	.92 (.58)	.92	.75 (.46)	1.07
CORE-OM rizik/risk	.06 (.11)	2,45***	.09 (.26)	2,45***	.06 (.17)	2,30***
ISP	27,83 (12,20)	.57	22,14 (10,38)	.43	22,53 (11,25)	.56

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

da više opažaju svoja iskustva ( $p = .007$ ), a ta promjena se održala i dva mjeseca nakon tečaja ( $p = .33$ ). U skladu s tim, sudionici su nakon tečaja izvještavali da su manje prosuđivali svoja iskustva ( $p = .007$ ) i manje automatski na njih reagirali ( $p = .005$ ), što se održalo i u naknadnom praćenju (neprosuđivanje  $p = .14$ ; nereagiranje  $p = .69$ ).

*Opći psihopatološki simptomi.* Multivarijantni efekt točke mjerenja na rezultat na upitniku CORE-OM pokazao se statistički značajnim ( $F(8,28) = 3,04, \lambda = 0,54, p = .014, \eta^2 = .47$ ). Kao što je vidljivo u Tablici 3, post-hoc testiranjem pokazalo se da je do statistički značajnih promjena došlo na supskalama funkcioniranja,

only the CORE-OM questionnaire risk subscale deviated significantly from normality, in all three measuring points. These distributions are highly positively asymmetric (symmetry – pre-test 1.75; post-test 4.74; follow-up 3.34), which was expected because the scale examines suicidal thoughts and intentions, self-injury and injuries to others, which are relatively rare symptoms in the general population. However, MANOVA proved robust to deviations from normality when the number of participants per situation is greater than 20, as is the case here (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013). A calculation of the Mahalanobis distance for these 30 variables (10 scales in 3 measuring points) did not reveal multivariate extreme results.

**Tablica 2. F-omjeri, njihova značajnost i veličine učinka za supskale upitnika FFMQ**

**Table 2. F-ratios, their significance and effect sizes for FFMQ questionnaire subscales**

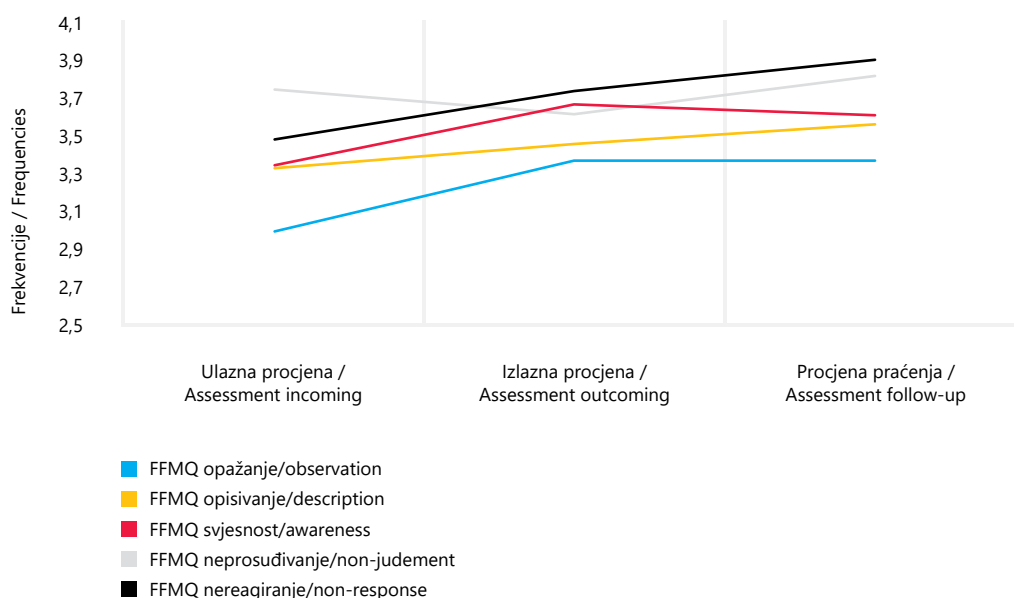
Upitnik/supskala Questionnaire/subscale	F	p	$\eta^2$
FFMQ opažanje/observation	5,49	.006	.14
FFMQ opisivanje/description	1,30	.278	.04
FFMQ svjesnost/awareness	1,07	.336	.03
FFMQ neprosuđivanje/non-judgment	9,65	<.001	.22
FFMQ nereagiranje/non-response	8,97	.001	.20

*Napomena:* Zbog višestrukih usporedbi p-vrijednost iznosi  $.05/5 = .01$ . Za supskale FFMQ upitnika: svjesnost i nereagiranje uvjet o sferičnosti nije zadovoljen pa su navedene p-vrijednosti uz Greenhouse-Glasser korekciju.

*Note:* Due to multiple comparisons, the p-value is  $.05/5 = .01$ . For the awareness and non-response FFMQ questionnaire subscales, the sphericity condition is not met, and the p-values are listed with Greenhouse- Glasser correction.

**Slika 5. Rezultati na supskalama upitnika FFMQ prije tečaja mindfulnessa, poslije tečaja te dva mjeseca nakon završetka tečaja (supskale na kojima je došlo do značajne promjene nakon tečaja mindfulnessa označene su tamnijom bojom) (N=36).**

**Figure 5. Results on the FFMQ questionnaire subscales before the mindfulness course, after the course, and 2 months after course completion (subscales with a significant change after the mindfulness course are shown in darker lines) (N=36)**



problema i dobiti, gdje su redom utvrđene velike veličine učinka, dok na supskali rizika nisu registrirane značajne razlike.

Pokazalo se da je došlo do značajna smanjenja problema i simptoma ( $p = .004$ ) te značajna povećanja rezultata u mjerama dobiti ( $p = .03$ ) i funkcioniranja nakon tečaja ( $p = .03$ ), u odnosu na rezultate prije tečaja, a ove pozitivne promjene održale su se i u naknadnom praćenju (problemi i simptomi  $p = .06$ , dobiti  $p = .18$ , funkcioniranje  $p = .39$ ). Rezultati su grafički prikazani na Slici 6.

*Stres i sagorijevanje na poslu.* ANOVA je pokazala da je efekt točke mjerenja na rezultat na ISP upitniku statistički značajan ( $F(1,7, 59,5) = 9,10, p = .001, \eta^2 = .21$ ) – uz Greenhouse-Glasser korekciju). Post-hoc testiranja pokazala su da je nakon tečaja došlo do statistički značajnoga, i u smislu veličine učinka velikoga smanjenja u stresu i sagorijevanju na poslu u odnosu na

### Course outcomes – main analysis

*Mindfulness.* The multivariate effect of the measuring point on the result on the FFMQ scale proved statistically significant ( $F(10,132)=5.07, \lambda=0.52, p>.001, \eta^2=.28$ ). Post-hoc ANOVA tests showed that changes occurred on the observation, non-judgement and non-response subscales, and that these were great effect sizes, while no significant changes were registered on the description and awareness subscales (Table 2).

The simple contrasts for these three subscales point to the same pattern of changes over time (Figure 5). The participants reported after the course that they noticed their experiences more ( $p=.007$ ), which change was maintained even 2 months after the course ( $p=.33$ ). Accordingly, the participants reported after the course that they tended to judge their experiences less ( $p=.007$ ) and reacted to them

**Tablica 3. F-omjeri, njihova značajnost i veličine učinka za supskale upitnika CORE-OM**  
**Table 3. F-ratios, their significance and effect sizes for CORE-OM questionnaire subscales**

Upitnik/supskala Questionnaire/subscale	F	p	η <sup>2</sup>
CORE-OM funkcioniranje/functioning	5,28	.007	.13
CORE-OM problemi/problems	11,77	<.001	.25
CORE-OM dobrobit/well-being	5,77	.008	.14
CORE-OM rizik/risk	.57	.52	.02

*Napomena:* Zbog višestrukih usporedbi *p*-vrijednost iznosi .05/3 = .017. Za supskale dobrobit i rizik, uvjet o sferičnosti nije zadovoljen pa su navedene *p*-vrijednosti uz Greenhouse-Glasser korekciju.

*Note:* Due to multiple comparisons, the *p*-value is .05/3=.017. For the well-being and risk subscales, the sphericity condition is not met, and the *p*-values are listed with Greenhouse-Glasser correction

pretest ( $F(1,35) = 12,61, p = .001, \eta^2 = .27$ ), dok između posttesta i naknadnog praćenja nije bilo statistički značajne razlike ( $F(1,35) = 5,55, p = .119, \eta^2 = .003$ ), što implicira da se poboljšanje održalo u razdoblju od dva mjeseca.

## RASPRAVA

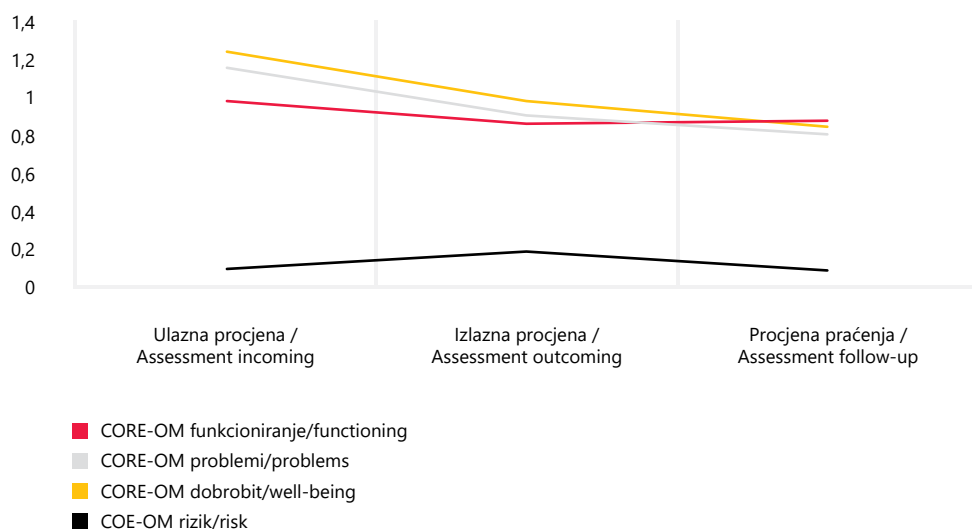
Glavni cilj ovog istraživanja bio je ispitati različite aspekte kvalitete implementacije programa kognitivne terapije usredotočene svjesnosti usmjerene na stres u hrvatskom

less automatically ( $p=.005$ ), which was also maintained in the follow-up (non-judgement  $p=.14$ ; non-response  $p=.69$ ).

*General psychopathological symptoms.* The multivariate effect of the measuring point on the CORE-OM questionnaire score proved statistically significant ( $F(8,28)=3.04, \lambda=0.54, p=.014, \eta^2=.47$ ). As shown in Table 3, post-hoc testing showed that statistically significant changes occurred on the functioning, problems and well-being subscales, in all of which great effect sizes were found, while no significant differences were noted on the risk subscale.

**Slika 6. Rezultati na supskalama upitnika CORE-OM prije tečaja mindfulnessa, poslije tečaja te dva mjeseca nakon završetka tečaja (N=36).**

**Figure 6. Results on the CORE-OM questionnaire subscales before the mindfulness course, after the course, and 2 months after course completion (N=36)**



zatvorskome sustavu: prihvatljivost intervencije, kvalitetu provedbe, obuhvat ciljne skupine (uključenost korisnika) i prikladnost.

U cjelini, rezultati istraživanja upućuju na dobre implementacijske ishode navedenog programa. Službenici zaposleni u našem zatvorskome sustavu bili su visoko angažirani u sudjelovanju u ponuđenom tečaju *mindfulness*; većina njih redovito je sudjelovala na radionicama te redovito samostalno vježbala formalne i neformalne vježbe, što govori o primjerenu obuhvatu ciljne skupine. Ipak, nalaz da su sudionici u naknadnom praćenju vježbali nešto manje govori o tome da su nakon završetka programa možda potrebne povremene radionice održavanja i jačanja nastalih promjena. Nadalje, o prihvatljivosti i kvaliteti tečaja govori vrlo visok stupanj zadovoljstva službenika različitim aspektima tečaja. Konačno, službenici su tečaj vidjeli primjenjivim u svojem okruženju, kako za sebe osobno tako i za druge službenike i zatvorenike, što govori o prikladnosti te intervencije. Slična istraživanja u svijetu tek su u začetcima, no zasad se čini da su pozitivne reakcije naših sudionika slične onima zabilježenima u drugim ispitivanjima (Ekman, 2015).

S obzirom na to da je skoro polovica službenika tretmana navela da bi se željela dodatno educirati o provedbi ovakvog programa, što također govori o prikladnosti intervencije, u narednim projektima razvili smo edukaciju za službenike tretmana koji su prema svojem primarnom obrazovanju stručnjaci pomagačkih zanimanja (psiholozi, socijalni pedagozi i socijalni radnici). Edukacija se sastoji od četiriju stupnjeva koji se provode tijekom četiri godine. Stručnjaci koji su sudjelovali u ovom istraživanju, njih 12, upravo su dovršili treći stupanj edukacije. Prema našim saznanjima, ovo je prva edukacija za voditelje kognitivne terapije utemeljene na *mindfulnessu* u našoj zemlji.

The results point at a significant decrease in problems and symptoms ( $p=.004$ ), and a significant increase in well-being measures ( $p=.03$ ), as well as post-course functioning ( $p=.03$ ), compared to the results before the course, which positive changes were maintained in the follow-up (problems and symptoms  $p=.06$ , well-being  $p=.18$ , functioning  $p=.39$ ). The results are graphically presented in Figure 6.

*Stress and burnout at work.* ANOVA showed that a statistically significant effect of the measuring point on the ISP questionnaire score ( $F(1,7,59.5)=9.10, p=.001, \eta^2=.21$  – with Greenhouse-Glasser correction). Post-hoc testing indicated a statistically significant, and in terms of the effect size, major decrease in stress and work burnout after the course relative to the pre-test ( $F(1,35)=12.61, p=.001, \eta^2=.27$ ), while there was no statistically significant difference between the post-test and the follow-up ( $F(1,35)=5.55, p=.119, \eta^2=.003$ ), which implies that the improvement held over a two-month period.

## DISCUSSION

The main aim of this research was to examine various aspects of the quality of implementation of the stress-focused mindfulness-based cognitive therapy programme in the Croatian prison system: acceptability of intervention, quality of delivery, target group coverage (user involvement), and appropriateness.

As a whole, the findings of the research indicate good implementation outcomes of the programme. Employees of our prison system were highly engaged in the mindfulness course offered to them; most regularly participated in the workshops and individually practiced formal and informal exercises, which suggests an appropriate coverage of the target group.



Ovim smo istraživanjem također namjeravali ispitati dolazi li nakon sudjelovanja u programu do promjene na različitim psihologijskim mjerama, među kojima su i dimenzije *mindfulnessa*. Rezultati sugeriraju da bi provedeni tečaj mogao biti koristan u razvijanju tih dimenzija, i to opažanja iskustva te neprosuđivanja i nereagiranja na iskustvo. One imaju izrazito važnu ulogu u učinkovitijem nošenju sa stresom jer pomažu u brzo i preciznu primjećivanju neugodnih unutarnjih iskustava (misli, emocija, tjelesnih senzacija i poriva prema ponašanjima), njihovu sagledavanju s odmakom i zauzimanju suosjećajna i dopuštajućega stava umjesto ulaska u automatske reakcije koje održavaju i pogoršavaju teškoće, odnosno u svjesnu odabiru vještijih odgovora na doživljenu neugodu (Segal i sur., 2013). Ti rezultati u skladu su s nalazom o boljim samoprocijenjenim dimenzijama *mindfulnessa* kod osoblja osiguranja koje je sudjelovalo u jednom značajno kraćem *mindfulness* programu (Ekman, 2015), kao i onim dobivenim provjerom jednog programa sličnog našem, nakon kojega je kod zatvorskog osoblja uočen trend unapređenja na različitim dimenzijama *mindfulnessa* koji zbog malog broja sudionika i rigoroznije metodologije nije dosegnuo statističku značajnost (Davies i sur., 2021).

Zašto nije došlo do promjena na preostalim dimenzijama *mindfulnessa* (opisivanje i svjesnost), možemo samo nagađati. Prvo, moguće je da je za njihov razvoj potrebno dulje vrijeme prakticiranja *mindfulnessa*. Drugo, možda su sudionici prakticirali svjesnost samo u trenucima izražene emocionalne neugode ili ugone, kada je motivacija za time bila veća, ali ne i u svakodnevnim neutralnim aktivnostima u kojima su i dalje često bili na „automatskom pilotu“. Naime, prakticiranje *mindfulnessa* ne podrazumijeva da je osoba cijelo vrijeme usredotočeno svjesna, već da može svjesno odlučiti kada stvari činiti s usredotočenom svjesnošću, a kada si dopustiti planiranje, analiziranje ili

However, the finding that the participants exercised somewhat less in the follow-up suggests that occasional workshops to maintain and reinforce introduced changes may be necessary after programme completion. Furthermore, a very high level of employees' satisfaction with different aspects of the course points to its acceptability and quality. Finally, the prison system staff saw the course as applicable in their environment, both for themselves and for their co-workers and prisoners, which indicates the appropriateness of this intervention. Similar research efforts are only beginning globally, but the positive reactions of our participants so far seem to be similar to those observed in other studies (Ekman, 2015).

Since almost half of the treatment staff expressed a desire to be further trained on the implementation of this programme, which also speaks of the appropriateness of intervention, we have developed a training programme for treatment staff who are, by their primary education, helping professionals (psychologists, social pedagogues and social workers). The training includes four levels implemented over four years. The 12 professionals who participated in this research have just completed the third level of the training. According to our knowledge, this is the first training for mindfulness-based cognitive therapy trainers in Croatia.

This research also aimed to examine whether any changes occur in various psychological measures after programme participation, including the dimensions of mindfulness. The results suggest that the course could be useful in developing these dimensions, in particular the observation of experience and non-judgement and non-response to experience. They play an exceptionally important role in more effective coping with stress, because they help in quick and precise observation of unpleasant inner experiences (thoughts, emotions, bodily sen-

maštanje. Treće, dimenziju opisivanja sudionici su mogli doživjeti negativno jer se u *mindfulness* vježbama potiče izravno osjećanje npr. tjelesnih senzacija ili zvukova, umjesto njihova opisivanja riječima (iako se predlaže npr. kratko etiketiranje misli radi osvještavanja razlike među mislima i činjenicama te prolaznosti i subjektivnosti misli). O specifičnosti te dimenzije govori i nalaz da je to jedina dimenzija *mindfulnessa* koja nije bila negativno povezana s psihičkim smetnjama (de Bruin, Topper, Muskens, Bögels i Kamphuis, 2012). Međutim, to nije dosljedan nalaz (Baer i sur., 2008) te bi mogao biti odraz specifičnosti populacije. U skladu s tim, pokazalo se da ta dimenzija ima veću prediktivnost za afektivne smetnje u uzorcima osoba sa somatskim problemima u odnosu na one s psihičkim smetnjama te studentske uzorke, te uzorcima iz istočnjačkih u odnosu na zapadnjačke kulture (Carpenter i sur., 2019). Posljednje, dimenzija opisivanja obično se vidi suprotnom od aleksitimije (de Bruin i sur., 2012; Veehof, Peter, Taal, Westerhof i Bohlmeijer, 2011) koja se pokazuje stabilnom crtom ličnosti (Mikolajczak i Luminet, 2006).

Naše je istraživanje nadalje pokazalo da tečaj *mindfulnessa* može biti koristan i u smanjenju općih psihopatoloških smetnji. U odnosu na razdoblje prije uključivanja u tečaj, nakon njegova završetka službenici su izvijestili o značajno manje različitih problema i simptoma, kao i većem doživljaju subjektivne dobrobiti i boljem svakodnevnom funkcioniranju. Nalaz da na supskali rizika nije došlo do promjene logičan je s obzirom na vrlo niske vrijednosti i prije tečaja (tzv. efekt poda). Povoljne promjene održale su se i u naknadnom praćenju. Smanjenje izraženosti općih psihopatoloških smetnji i održavanje tih promjena tijekom dvomjesečnog praćenja osoba s različitim psihičkim poteškoćama pronašle su i Barbarić i Markanović (2015) u istraživanju učinaka osmotjednog tečaja *mindfulnessa* koji je kombinirao kognitivnu terapiju usredotočene svjesnosti s elementima

sations and impulses to act), their appreciation from a distance, and assuming compassionate and permissive attitudes instead of entering automatic reactions that maintain and exacerbate difficulties, i.e. in consciously choosing more skilful responses to the discomfort experienced (Segal et al., 2013). These results are in line with the findings on better self-evaluated dimensions of mindfulness in security staff that participated in another, significantly shorter mindfulness programme (Ekman, 2015), as well as those obtained through reviewing a programme similar to ours, after which a trend of improvement in different dimensions of mindfulness was observed among prison staff which, due to a small number of participants and a more rigorous methodology, did not reach statistical significance (Davies et al., 2021).

As to why there were no changes in the remaining dimensions of mindfulness (description and awareness), we can only speculate. Firstly, it is possible that it takes practicing mindfulness longer for them to develop. Secondly, the participants may have practiced awareness only in moments of extreme emotional discomfort or comfort, when the motivation for this was greater, but not in everyday, neutral activities, where they often remained on an "automatic pilot". Practising mindfulness does not mean that a person is in focused awareness all the time, but that they can consciously decide when to do things with focused awareness, and when to allow themselves to plan, analyse or fantasise. Thirdly, the description dimension may have been negatively perceived by the participants because mindfulness exercises encourage directly experiencing, for example, bodily sensations or sounds, instead of describing them with words (although it is suggested, for example, to briefly label thoughts in order to become aware of differences between thoughts and facts, and the transience and subjectivity of thoughts). The specificity of this dimension

terapije prihvaćanjem i posvećenošću. Takve promjene nisu utvrdile u skupini stručnjaka pomagačkih zanimanja, što je i razumljivo s obzirom na to da oni ni početno nisu postizali klinički značajne rezultate.

Konačno, rezultati našeg istraživanja sugeriraju da sudjelovanje u tečaju *mindfulnessa* pomaže u smanjenju doživljaja stresa i sagorijevanja kod zatvorskih službenika. Neposredno prije uključivanja u program službenici su na mjeri stresa postigli rezultat koji upućuje na sagorijevanje na poslu, baš kao što je ranije utvrđeno i u nizu drugih studija sa zatvorskim osobljem (Gould i sur., 2013; Keinan i Malach-Pines, 2007; Roy, Novak i Mikšaj-Todorović, 2010; Schaufeli i Peeters, 2000). Neposredno nakon završetka tečaja službenici su izvijestili o značajno slabijem intenzitetu stresa, koji je ostao na sličnoj razini do kraja razdoblja praćenja. Povoljni učinci sličnoga osmotjednog *mindfulness* programa na izraženost stresa pronađeni su u još jednom istraživanju sa zatvorskim službenicima (Davies i sur., 2021), kao i u domaćem istraživanju sa stručnjacima pomagačkih zanimanja kod kojih je prije programa utvrđena razina stresa na granici sagorijevanja, a nakon završetka programa 66% njih izvijestilo je o značajnu smanjenju profesionalnog stresa te većoj subjektivnoj psihičkoj i fizičkoj dobrobiti koji su se održali i tijekom dvomjesečnog praćenja (Barbarić i Markanović, 2015).

Nepovoljni učinci rada u stresnom okružju poput zatvorskog ne utječu samo na pojedinca, već i na cijelu radnu organizaciju, uključujući i njezine krajnje korisnike. Ako pronađu bolje načine upravljanja stresom, može se očekivati da će zatvorski službenici biti mnogo učinkovitiji u svojim radnim ulogama te da će u konačnici u većoj mjeri pomoći i zatvorenicima u postizanju njihovih ciljeva. Neka istraživanja upozoravaju na to da zatvorski službenici adekvatnijom procjenjuju svoju obuku za rad sa zatvorenicima

is also confirmed by the finding that this is the only dimension of mindfulness not negatively associated with mental disturbances (de Bruin, Topper, Muskens, Bögels and Kamphuis, 2012). However, this is not a consistent finding (Baer et al., 2008) and could reflect the specificity of the population. Accordingly, this dimension has been shown to have a greater predictability for affective disorders in samples of persons with somatic problems compared to those with mental disturbances, student patterns, as well as samples from Eastern cultures compared to Western cultures (Carpenter et al., 2019). Lastly, the description dimension is usually seen as opposite to alexithymia (de Bruin et al., 2012; Veehof, Peter, Taal, Westerhof and Bohlmeijer, 2011) which shows to be a stable personality trait (Mikolajczak and Luminet, 2006).

Our research further showed that the mindfulness course can also be useful in reducing general psychopathological disturbances. In relation to the period before the course, the participants reported significantly fewer different problems and symptoms after its completion, as well as a greater experience of subjective well-being and better everyday functioning. The finding that no change occurred on the risk sub-scale is logical considering the very low values before the course (the so-called floor effect). Favourable changes were maintained in the follow-up as well. In their study of the effects of an eight-week mindfulness course which combined mindfulness-based cognitive therapy with elements of acceptance and commitment therapy, Barbarić and Markanović (2015) also found a reduction in the expression of general psychopathological disturbances and retaining these changes during two months of monitoring persons with different mental problems. Such changes were not found in the group of helping professionals, which is understandable as they had not initially achieved clinically significant results.

nego obuku za nošenje sa stresom te navode da bi im koristilo uključivanje u programe za upravljanje stresom (Keinan i Malach-Pines, 2007). Sudionici našeg istraživanja također su vjerovali da bi takvi programi mogli biti od pomoći ne samo službenicima zatvorskog sustava već i zatvorenicima. Iako se stres i sagorijevanje na poslu često percipiraju kao osobni problem službenika te se očekuje da ga sami riješe, poznato je da ne raspolažu svi dovoljno učinkovitim strategijama suočavanja, kao ni dovoljno širokim repertoarom strategija nužnih za suočavanje s raznolikim stresorima karakterističnima za njihovo radno okruženje (Gould i sur., 2013; Mulligan, 2014; Sygit-Kowalska i sur., 2017). Stoga je nužno ponuditi im programe usmjerene na zaštitu od stresa i unapređivanje vještina brige za sebe, koji bi trebali biti usmjereni na cjelokupno osoblje, bez obzira na njihove stručne profile i mjesto u hijerarhiji (Stöver, 2017). Upravo to je prepoznalo Ministarstvo pravosuđa koje je u opisani *mindfulness* program uključilo osoblje iz različitih sektora, od osiguranja, preko tretmana, do menadžmenta, što svakako možemo smatrati posebnom prednošću našeg istraživanja.

Ipak treba istaknuti da primarni cilj ovog istraživanja nije bio testirati učinkovitost tečaja *mindfulnessa*, što ovakvim nacrtom bez kontrolne grupe nije moguće. Naša je namjera prije svega bila vidjeti hoće li takav sadržaj biti prihvatljiv i primjeren u zatvorskome sustavu u našoj zemlji. Naime, način učenja u okviru tečaja *mindfulnessa* neuobičajen je za zapadnjačku kulturu jer uključuje učenje na temelju doživljenog iskustva, a ne izravnim podučavanjem. Osim toga, principi koji potječu iz budističke tradicije, poput prihvaćanja i nereagiranja na neugodu dolaze u sukob sa zapadnjačkom filozofijom usmjerenom na rješavanje problema. Primjena tečaja u zatvorskome sustavu donosi i dodatne izazove jer je riječ o populaciji koja nerado priznaje poteškoće. Ako program službenicima

Finally, the results of our research suggest that participation in the mindfulness course helps reduce the feeling of stress and burnout in prison system employees. Immediately before joining the programme, the participants scored a result on the stress scale indicating burnout at work, just as had been previously found in a series of other studies with prison staff (Gould et al., 2013; Keinan and Malach-Pines, 2007; Roy, Novak and Mikšaj-Todorović, 2010; Schaufeli and Peeters, 2000). Immediately after the course finished, the participants reported a significantly lower intensity of stress, which remained at a similar level until the end of the monitoring period. Favourable effects of a similar eight-week mindfulness programme on the intensity of stress were also found in another study involving prison staff (Davies et al., 2021), as well as in a Croatian survey involving helping professionals, in which a near-burnout level of stress had been found prior to the programme, while 66% of the participants reported a significant reduction in occupational stress and greater subjective mental and physical well-being at the end of the programme, which held during a two-month monitoring period as well (Barbarić and Markanović, 2015).

Unfavourable effects of working in a stressful environment such as prison affect not only individuals, but also the entire work organisation, including its end users. If they find better ways to manage stress, prison staff can be expected to be much more efficient in performing their tasks and, ultimately, help prisoners achieve their goals as well. Some studies suggest that prison staff evaluate their training for working with prisoners as much more adequate than training for coping with stress, and believe that they would benefit from being involved in stress management programmes (Keinan and Malach-Pines, 2007). Participants in our research also believed that such programmes

nije prihvatljiv te je njihova uključenost niska, i učinkovitost će zasigurno biti niska. Međutim, naši rezultati pokazuju da su službenici aktivno sudjelovali u tečaju. Moguće je da vještine koje se podučavaju u okviru tečaja, poput dopuštanja, neprosuđivanja i suosjećanja prema sebi, pomažu službenicima da otvorenije govore o tim teškoćama.

Što se tiče učinkovitosti, velik broj dosad provedenih istraživanja s različitim populacijama već je potvrdio učinkovitost programa kognitivne terapije utemeljene na *mindfulnessu* (Chiesa i Serretti, 2011; Galante i sur., 2013; Goldberg, Tucker, Greene, Davidson, Kearney i Simpson, 2019; Kuyken i sur., 2016; Querstret, Morison, Dickinson, Cropley i John, 2020). Međutim, s obzirom da je tečaj proveden u okviru ovog istraživanja uključivao manje izmjene u odnosu na originalni program, nužne su metodološki rigoroznije studije njegove učinkovitosti.

### **Ograničenja istraživanja i preporuke za buduća istraživanja**

Jedan je od nedostataka ovog istraživanja nedostatak kontrolne skupine koju nije bilo moguće uvesti zbog organizacijskih razloga. Naime, u istraživački dio projekta nije bilo moguće uključiti zaposlenike koji nisu formalno uključeni u projekt, a koji bi predstavljali kontrolnu skupinu. S druge strane, očekivalo se da zaposlenici koji su uključeni u projekt budu obuhvaćeni intervencijom, a ne samo testiranjem. Opcija kontrolne grupe poput liste čekanja ili placebo kontrolne grupe nije bila moguća iz financijskih razloga jer bi oba ova nacrta podrazumijevala da se u svakom kaznenom tijelu radi s dvjema grupama, tj. da se provode dva tretmana. Izostanak kontrolne grupe svakako otežava donošenje zaključaka o efektima tretmana jer ne možemo zaključiti jesu li nastale promjene rezultat sadržaja tečaja ili činjenice da se zaposlenicima netko bavio,

could be helpful not only to prison staff, but also to prisoners. Although stress and burnout at work are often perceived as employees' personal problem, which they are expected to resolve themselves, it is well known that they do not all possess sufficiently effective coping strategies, nor a broad enough range of strategies for facing different stressors specific to their working environment (Gould et al., 2013; Mulligan, 2014; Sygit-Kowalowska et al., 2017). It is therefore necessary to offer them programmes focused on stress prevention and improving self-care skills, which should target the entire staff, regardless of their professional profiles and place in the hierarchy (Stöver, 2017). This exactly was recognised by the Ministry of Justice, which included personnel from various sectors in the described mindfulness programme, from security and treatment officers to management, which can certainly be considered a particular advantage of our research.

It should be noted, however, that the main aim of this research was not to test the efficiency of the mindfulness course, which is not possible without a control group. Our intention was primarily to see whether such content would be acceptable and appropriate in the prison system in Croatia. The learning methodology underlying the mindfulness course is unusual for Western culture because it includes learning on the basis of lived experience, and not through direct teaching. In addition, the principles stemming from the Buddhist tradition, such as acceptance and non-response to discomfort, come into conflict with Western philosophy aimed at solving problems. Applying the course within the prison system poses additional challenges because it targets a population that is reluctant to recognise difficulties. If prison staff find the programme unacceptable and their involvement is low, its efficiency will certainly be low, too. However, our results show that employees actively participated in the course. It is possi-

da su imali priliku razgovarati o onome što ih muči, da su dva sata tjedno bili pošteđeni radnih zadataka i sl.

Također, ovim istraživanjem nisu prikupljeni podatci o radnom stažu sudionika u kaznenom sustavu kao ni o eventualnim prethodnim iskustvima meditiranja. Prethodno iskustvo meditiranja moglo bi sudionike učiniti prijemčivijama za sudjelovanje u tečaju, ali možda i ograničiti veličinu dobiti od tečaja ako se tim strategijama koriste već od ranije. Staž u kaznenom sustavu također bi mogao utjecati na interes za uključenjem u tečaj i razinu angažmana, a time i na ishode tečaja. Primjerice, zaposlenici s vrlo dugim stažem mogli bi imati izraženije smetnje, ali i biti beznadni i obeshrabreni te manje skloni traženju pomoći. Ovo je svakako zanimljivo istraživačko pitanje.

Treba istaknuti i da se u ovom istraživanju nije koristilo validiranom verzijom upitnika FFMQ, što može imati posljedice na pouzdanost i valjanost instrumenta. Međutim, podatci o pouzdanosti utvrđeni na ovom uzorku vrlo su slični onima utvrđenima u inozemnoj literaturi (Baer i sur., 2006). Također, prosječne vrijednosti i raspršenja rezultata odgovaraju onima utvrđenima u validacijskoj studiji hrvatske verzije (Gračanin i sur., 2017), a dobiveni smjer rezultata u ovom istraživanju očekivan je i smislen.

Nadalje, ako razmišljamo o istraživanju iz kuta procjene učinkovitosti, činjenica da su sudionici pohađali tečaj u grupama različite veličine, da su četiri tečaja provedena u različitim organizacijskim uvjetima te da su polaznici bili heterogeni prema svojim potrebama i drugim karakteristikama, mogu se vidjeti kao nedostatci koji povećavaju pogrešku u istraživanju. Međutim, ako se usmjerimo na pitanje prihvatljivosti ili prikladnosti programa, to nam upravo govori da je program prihvatljiv i primjeren zaposlenicima različita profila i u različitim uvjetima njegove provedbe.

ble that the skills taught as part of the course, such as permissibility, lack of judgement and compassion towards oneself help prison staff to speak more openly about these difficulties.

As regards effectiveness, a large number of surveys conducted with different populations have already confirmed the effectiveness of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy programmes (Chiesa and Serretti, 2011; Galante et al., 2013; Goldberg, Tucker, Greene, Davidson, Kearney and Simpson, 2019; Kuyken et al., 2016; Querstret, Morison, Dickinson, Cropley and John, 2020). However, since the course conducted as part of this research included minor changes in relation to the original programme, methodologically more rigorous studies of its effectiveness are required.

### **Research Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

Some of the shortcomings of this research include the lack of a control group, which could not be introduced for organisational reasons. It was not possible to include in the research part of the project employees who were not formally involved in the project and who would represent a control group. On the other hand, it was expected that the employees involved in the project would be covered by the intervention, and not only by testing. The option of a control group of the waiting list type, or a placebo control group, was not possible for financial reasons, as both of these options would imply having two groups in each penal institution, i.e. carrying out two treatments. The absence of a control group certainly makes it difficult to draw conclusions about the effects of the treatment as it cannot be concluded whether the changes were brought about by the content of the course or the fact that the employees had someone to work with, an opportunity to talk

Kao značajan nedostatak može se spomenuti i činjenica da je u evaluaciji tečaja sudjelovao samo dio njegovih polaznika. Svakako je moguće da su u evaluaciji spremnije sudjelovali oni koji su tečajem bili zadovoljniji ili su bili angažiraniji oko tečaja, kao i oni koji su spretniji u radu na računalu.

U budućim istraživanjima važno je provjeriti osobe kojih karakteristika najviše profitiraju od tečaja i pod kojim uvjetima, ustraju li korisnici u vježbanju te zadržavaju li se nastale promjene i u duljem razdoblju praćenja.

## ZAKLJUČAK

Rezultati ovoga istraživanja upućuju na dobre ishode implementacije tečaja *mindfulnessa* prema principima kognitivne terapije usredotočene svjesnosti, prilagođenoga za pojačan rad na problemima stresa i sagorijevanja na poslu sa službenicima hrvatskoga zatvorskog sustava. Službenici su bili vrlo uključeni u program te su ga percipirali prihvatljivim, kvalitetnim i prikladnim za svoje radno okruženje. Naši nalazi također pokazuju da sudjelovanje u tečaju *mindfulnessa* kod ove populacije može potpomći razvoj dimenzija *mindfulnessa* kao što su opažanje iskustva, neprosuđivanje i nereagiranje na iskustvo te da može biti korisno u smanjenju stresa, sagorijevanja na poslu i psihopatoloških odstupanja.

Razvoj novih ili prilagodbe postojećih preventivnih programa za populacije korisnika kojima prvotno nisu bili namijenjeni, što je bila jedna od namjera našega projekta, od izrazite su važnosti jer zasad ne postoje programi koji učinkovito odgovaraju na sve potrebe korisnika i koji bi svima bili prihvatljivi. Ohrabrujući rezultati našeg istraživanja sugeriraju da bi intervencije utemeljene na *mindfulnessu* mogle biti dobra opcija za mnoge zatvorske službenike, no ta-

about what troubles them, were spared their work tasks for two hours a week, etc.

Moreover, the research did not collect data on the participants' work experience in the prison system, or any possible previous experience of meditation. Previous experience of meditation may have made the participants more susceptible to course participation, but may also have limited the scale of course benefit, if they have used these strategies before. The years of experience of working in the prison system may have also affected the participants' interest in course involvement, as well as the level of engagement, and thus the outcomes of the course. For example, employees with many years of experience may have more pronounced disturbances, but also be more hopeless and discouraged, and less inclined to seek help. This certainly makes an interesting research issue.

It should also be noted that the validated version of the FFMQ questionnaire was not used in the research, which may have consequences on the reliability and validity of the instrument. However, reliability data established on this sample are very similar to those established in foreign literature (Baer et al., 2006). Also, the average values and scattering of results correspond to those established in the validation study of the Croatian version (Gračanin et al., 2017), and the resulting direction of results in this research is expected and meaningful.

Furthermore, if we consider the research from the aspect of efficiency assessment, the fact that the participants attended the course in groups of different sizes, that the four courses were conducted under different organisational conditions, and that the participants were heterogeneous in terms of their needs and other characteristics can be seen as deficiencies that add to errors in the research. However, if we focus on the question of programme acceptability or appropriateness, it only tells us that the

kve inovativne pristupe nužno je podvrgnuti temeljitoj znanstvenoj provjeri. Tako je ove nalaze potrebno potvrditi novim, metodološki rigoroznijim istraživanjima s aktivnim kontrolnim skupinama te koristeći validirane mjere *mindfulnessa*. U sljedećim istraživanjima također bi valjalo voditi računa o varijablama kao što su radni staž, vrsta radnog mjesta i prethodno iskustvo s meditativnom praksom te utvrditi koje skupine službenika imaju najveću dobit od tečaja i u kojim okolnostima. Bilo bi zanimljivo ispitati i održavaju li se eventualne dobiti od programa i kroz dulja razdoblja praćenja. Konačno, sljedeće studije trebaju se usmjeriti i na ostale aspekte implementacije programa kao što su njegova dosljednost, doseg, izvedivost, diferencijacija, trošak implementacije ili održivost.

programme is acceptable and appropriate for employees of different profiles and in different conditions of its implementation.

Another significant deficiency to be mentioned is the fact that not all participants participated in the evaluation of the course. It is certainly possible that those who were more satisfied with the course or were more involved in it participated in the evaluation, as well as those with better computer skills.

In future research, it is important to select participants who, and under what conditions, benefit the most from the course, check whether participants persist in exercising, and whether changes are retained in the longer monitoring period.

## **CONCLUSION**

The results of the research point to good outcomes in the implementation of the mindfulness course conducted in accordance with the principles of focused-awareness cognitive therapy, and adjusted for increased work on problems of stress and burnout at work, with employees of the Croatian prison system. The participants were very much involved in the programme and perceived it as acceptable, high-quality and appropriate for their work environment. Our findings also show that participating in mindfulness courses may help this population develop some dimensions of mindfulness such as observation of experience, lack of judgement and not responding to experience, and can be useful in reducing stress, work burnout and psychopathological deviations.

Developing new ones or adapting existing preventive programmes for user populations that were not initially targeted by them, which was one of the intentions of our project, is of



great importance because so far there are no programmes that effectively respond to all needs of users and would be acceptable to all. The encouraging results of our research suggest that mindfulness-based interventions could be a good option for many prison employees. However such innovative approaches must undergo thorough scientific scrutiny. Therefore, these findings should be confirmed by new, methodologically more rigorous studies with active control groups and by using validated mindfulness measures. In future research, account should also be taken of variables such as the years of work experience, type of job, and previous experience with meditative practice, and it should be found which groups of employees benefit the most from the course and in what circumstances. It would also be interesting to examine whether any benefits from the programme are maintained and over longer monitoring periods. Finally, future studies should also focus on other aspects of programme implementation, such as its consistency, scope, feasibility, differentiation, implementation cost or sustainability.

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