Effects of two brief protocols of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy on academic procrastination: the role of values

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Introduction
- Procrastination is a discrepancy between the moment at which an individual has planned to complete an activity and the moment he/she actually does it (Glick & Orsillo, 2015).
- Procrastination occurs when a student postpones his work in order to avoid aversive private events (Glick & Orsillo, 2015).
- Values clarification may decrease procrastination by increasing the intrinsic reinforcing properties of doing academic work.
- An ACT intervention may decrease procrastination by decreasing avoidance and increasing valued action, specially that related to academics.

¿What is the distinctive effect of values clarification on academic procrastination?

Method
Participants
Nine undergraduate students from Bogotá, Colombia (5 female). Between the age of 18 and 32 years (M = 22, SD = 4.2).

Instruments

Daily measurements: Self-monitoring measures of valued actions, academic procrastination and academic activities.

Protocols

Design
In this study we use a single case design. Five participants received the intervention session after four weeks of baseline and five after three weeks.

Procedures

Discussion
Both protocols produced in both participants a decrement in academic procrastination and cognitive fusion, and an increment in valued actions. This supports the model that links procrastination and psychological flexibility (Glick & Orsillo, 2015).

The fact that cognitive fusion in Donavan’s case declined, even though protocol 2 was centered only on values clarification, supports the notion that flexibility model processes are closely linked.

May’s decrement on academic procrastination was smaller than Donavan’s. This suggests that values clarification is key to explain the occurrence of procrastination and its alleviation. While acceptance may play a smaller role.

These findings are consistent with other studies that have underscored the main role of values to explain procrastination (Glick, Millstein, y Ruiz, 2014; Glick y Orsillo, 2015). However, other research on procrastination and ACT has found that all processes of the flexibility model are relevant to explain this phenomenon (Sorrente, & Boes, 2014; Wang, Zhou, Yu, Ran, Liu, & Chen, 2015). It is worth exploring individuals with high scores in flexibility measures to understand better the relationship between procrastination and psychological flexibility.

References


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