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Master Thesis Defense

Entitled

*EFFECT OF BREATHING EXERCISES ON PERCEIVED STRESS LEVEL AMONG THE FRENCH-
SPEAKING COMMUNITY IN ABU DHABI, UAE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN ONLINE AND
MOBILE APPLICATION DELIVERY METHODS*

by

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Abstract

Breathing exercises have many health benefits, especially in terms of stress reduction. Several studies have examined the effect of breathing on stress levels; however, there is a lack of studies comparing delivery methods. This study aimed to compare the difference in perceived stress levels in people who performed breathing exercises face-to-face using an online video conferencing tool versus people who used a mobile breathing application. The sample consisted of sixty-two French-speaking individuals living in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Before beginning the study, volunteers completed the Perceived Stress Scale-14 items (PSS, Cohen, et al., 1983). Those with results that showed a medium to a high level of stress were recruited. Participants were randomly divided into two groups, the internet meeting (IM) group, and the mobile application (MA) group. The participants of the IM group were subject to direct training breathing classes via an internet meeting program once per week for four weeks; each session lasted 20 minutes (including welcoming, explanations, questionnaire, breathing exercises, and discussion with the researcher); they were then instructed to apply the breathing exercises on their own two other times per week. The MA group used the "Breathe: Relax and Focus" mobile application three times per week for 5 minutes for four weeks. At midpoint and endpoint, all participants completed the PSS-14 to measure their perceived stress. Results showed that both delivery methods were equally successful in reducing perceived stress. This study paves the way to show that it is essential to consider the delivery methods used in stress management and that the future of clinical practice is moving towards the administration of blended treatment delivery.

Keywords: Breathing, Perceived Stress, Face-to-Face, Mobile Application, Stress Management, Mental Health