



Efficacy of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy on Alexithymia, Psychological Capital, and Subjective Vitality in Mothers with COVID-19 and Autistic Children

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1. Round 1

1.1 Reviewer 1

Date: 20 November 2023

Reviewer:

Abstract: "The findings indicated that Acceptance and Commitment Therapy was effective in reducing Alexithymia ($p = .004$) increasing psychological capital ($p = .001$) and enhancing subjective vitality ($p = .001$) in the mothers with COVID-19 and autistic children ($p > .05$)."

Comment: Clarify the significance of p-values in this sentence. The inclusion of " $p > .05$ " seems contradictory. Please revise for coherence and clarity.

Introduction, Paragraph 4: "The coronavirus can affect psychological variables and mental health of mothers (Farqani et al. 2020)."

Comment: This sentence needs elaboration. How does the coronavirus affect psychological variables? Provide specific examples or mechanisms to give readers a clearer understanding.

Methods and Materials, Intervention: "The protocol aims to facilitate acceptance of difficult emotions and thoughts enhance mindfulness and commit to personal values thus fostering greater psychological flexibility."

Comment: Include a brief explanation or reference for the theoretical basis of these techniques. This will help readers understand why these particular methods were chosen.

Results, Descriptive Statistics: "The mean (standard deviation) age of participants was 39.7 (9.4) years for the experimental group and 36.2 (7.9) years for the control group."

Comment: Discuss the potential impact of this age difference on the study outcomes. Age can influence psychological capital and subjective vitality, so it's important to address any baseline differences.

Results, Repeated Measures ANOVA: "The findings indicated that Acceptance and Commitment Therapy was effective in reducing Alexithymia ($p = .004$) increasing psychological capital ($p = .001$) and enhancing subjective vitality ($p = .001$)."

Comment: Include effect sizes (e.g., Cohen's d) along with the p -values to provide a better understanding of the practical significance of the results.

Discussion, Paragraph 1: "These results are consistent with those found in the studies by Wampler and Peterson (2020) and Fiorello et al. (2016)."

Comment: Elaborate on how these studies support your findings. A brief summary of their results and methodologies will help contextualize your study within the existing literature.

Discussion, Paragraph 5: "The birth of a child with autism brings stress for the family especially for mothers who are the primary caregivers."

Comment: This statement should be supported by empirical evidence. Include references to studies that document the specific stresses experienced by mothers of children with autism.

Discussion, Paragraph 7: "Acceptance and Commitment Therapy reduces dysfunctional (irrational) beliefs cognitive vacuums and cognitive distortions..."

Comment: Provide a definition or examples of "cognitive vacuums" to clarify this term for readers who may not be familiar with it.

Discussion, Limitations: "The data for this study were obtained using self-report tools; it is recommended that future research use other data collection methods such as interviews and observations."

Comment: Discuss any potential biases or limitations associated with using self-report tools in more detail. Explain how these might have affected your findings and suggest specific methods to address these limitations in future research.

Conclusion: "It can be said that in the commitment and acceptance-based approach psychological inflexibility and avoidance of accepting distressing thoughts and feelings lead to the reinforcement of these feelings and thoughts and greater distress..."

Comment: The conclusion should provide a concise summary of the key findings, their implications, and suggestions for future research. Avoid introducing new concepts not covered in the results or discussion sections.

References: "Orsolini L Pompili S Volpe U. Schizophrenia: A Narrative Review of Etiopathogenetic Diagnostic and Treatment Aspects."

Comment: Ensure that all references follow a consistent formatting style. For example, journal names should be italicized and all authors' names should be included for each reference.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

1.2 Reviewer 2

Date: 22 November 2023

Reviewer:

Introduction, Paragraph 3: "Economic status social background lifestyle and parents' educational level do not play a role in the occurrence of autism (Hiroto & King 2023)."

Comment: This statement is too definitive. There are studies suggesting that socioeconomic factors can influence the detection and diagnosis of autism. Consider adding a nuanced discussion or citing relevant research to balance this claim.

Methods and Materials, Study Design and Participants: "The control group did not receive any training."

Comment: Specify what the control group did during the study period. Did they receive any form of placebo treatment, regular care, or were they simply waitlisted? This information is crucial for understanding the study design.

Methods and Materials, Measures, Psychological Capital: "The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were assessed in the study by Bahadorkhoshroshahi et al. (2012) and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculated in the study was above 0.70."

Comment: Provide specific values for Cronbach's alpha and any other relevant reliability statistics to give a precise measure of the tool's reliability.

Results, Table 1: "Descriptive Indices of Research Variables."

Comment: Ensure that all tables and figures are appropriately labeled and referenced in the text. Each table should have a title that clearly describes its content.

Discussion, Paragraph 3: "Acceptance and Commitment Therapy through the acceptance of unpleasant thoughts and emotions associated with being in these circumstances directly targets their worries..."

Comment: This explanation lacks specificity. Include examples of specific techniques used in ACT that address these worries and how they function theoretically.

Discussion, Paragraph 4: "Additionally this therapy by using mindfulness techniques teaches these mothers to pay attention to their internal experiences and instead of judging them simply observe them."

Comment: Cite specific mindfulness techniques used during the therapy sessions. This detail can help readers understand the intervention's practical components.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.