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Effectiveness of Mentalization-Based Training and Positive Thinking for Parents of Children with Autism on Their Reflective Functioning and Aggression in Their Children

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction should provide more recent statistics on the global prevalence rates of ASD to ensure the data is up-to-date. Consider referencing newer studies or data sources.

"The statistical population included all parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) enrolled in day centers for education and rehabilitation of individuals with ASD in Tehran during the 2022-2023 academic year and their children." - Please clarify the selection criteria for these centers and how representative they are of the broader ASD population in Tehran.

"The mentalization-based and positive thinking training package (Fonagy) was then conducted in 12 sessions of 120 minutes each for the experimental group." - Elaborate on the content of these sessions and how they were tailored to the needs of parents with children with ASD.

Include a table summarizing the psychometric properties (e.g., Cronbach's alpha, test-retest reliability) of the measures used in this study to provide a clearer understanding of their robustness.

The table presents the mean and standard deviation for parents' reflective functioning and children's aggression. It would be helpful to add a column for the effect sizes to better understand the practical significance of the findings.

"The Shapiro-Wilk index for neither of the dependent variables was significant in the two groups at the three stages." - This sentence could be clearer. Specify that this indicates the data met the assumption of normality.

"Based on positive theory teachings, Fredrickson proposed the idea of upward spirals of well-being." - Provide a more detailed explanation of Fredrickson's theory and how it specifically applies to the context of this study.

The claim that "parents better understood their child's needs emotions thoughts and intentions behind behaviors" needs more supporting evidence. Consider including quotes from participants or additional qualitative data.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

"Supporting individuals with autism and their families has become an urgent priority for governmental organizations and service providers." - This statement could benefit from specific examples or references to recent policy changes or initiatives.

"Data collection tools for parents included the Reflective Functioning Questionnaire (Fonagy 2016) and for children the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist Aggression Scale (2001) Parent Form." - Provide more detailed information on the validity and reliability of these tools in the context of this study.

The results of repeated measures ANOVA are presented, but the explanation of η^2 values could be expanded to discuss the proportion of variance explained by the intervention.

The discussion would benefit from a more detailed comparison with previous studies. For instance, how do your findings align or differ from those of Borelli et al. (2024)?

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.