

# The Effectiveness of Assertiveness Training on Resilience and Empathy in High School Girls in Varamin

Maryam. Tajik Khaveh<sup>1</sup>, Morteza. Andalib Koraim<sup>1\*</sup>, Elham. Zargami<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Psychology, Faculty of Humanities, VaP.C., Islamic Azad University, Varamin, Iran

\* Corresponding author email address: Mortezaandalub65@gmail.com.com

## E d i t o r

Anela Hasanagic<sup>id</sup>  
Full Professor, Department of  
Psychology, Faculty of Islamic  
Education, University of Zenica,  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
anela.hasanagic@unze.ba

## R e v i e w e r s

**Reviewer 1:** Zahra Yousefi<sup>id</sup>  
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad  
University, Isfahan, Iran.  
Email: yousefi1393@khuisf.ac.ir  
**Reviewer 2:** Mehdi Rostami<sup>id</sup>  
Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond  
Hill, Ontario, Canada.  
Email: dr.mrostami@kmanresce.ca

## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The opening paragraph provides a strong general rationale for studying adolescence; however, the sentence “Adolescence is a critical developmental period...” is too broad and would benefit from integrating more specific theoretical models or frameworks to anchor the argument and avoid over-generalization.

In the sentence “Assertiveness training has emerged as one of the most effective psychoeducational interventions...” the term “most effective” appears overstated. Consider qualifying this claim or clarifying the comparison standard (e.g., relative to what other interventions).

The paragraph links assertiveness with resilience, but the causal direction is not sufficiently justified. The manuscript should clarify whether cited evidence reflects correlational or experimental designs to avoid implying unsupported causality.

The reported increase in empathy from 19.333 to 48.066 in the experimental group is unusually large for a brief psychological intervention. The manuscript should address potential ceiling effects, scale interpretation issues, or response-shift bias.

The paragraph indicates that all ANCOVA and MANCOVA assumptions were tested and met, but no values or diagnostics are provided (e.g., Levene's p-values, skewness, kurtosis, homogeneity of regression slopes). Including actual statistics is necessary for transparency.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The statement "Empathy plays an especially important role in adolescents' social development..." is appropriate, but the paragraph would benefit from clarifying whether empathy is expected to be influenced directly by assertiveness or indirectly via emotional regulation.

The discussion of assertiveness, emotional intelligence, and academic satisfaction combines several complex constructs. The paragraph reads as an aggregation of findings without a clear conceptual model. Consider adding a figure or conceptual framework to show how these constructs relate.

The examples from Indonesia and Turkey are interesting, but the paragraph does not discuss how cultural norms regarding communication might moderate the effectiveness of assertiveness training. Including such discussion would strengthen cross-cultural relevance.

Although several Iranian studies are cited, many appear to be conference papers or non-indexed sources. Consider either justifying the inclusion of these sources or substituting peer-reviewed evidence to enhance scientific rigor.

The aim sentence correctly identifies the study's objective, but it does not clearly articulate the expected direction of results. Explicitly stating hypotheses (e.g., "We hypothesized that assertiveness training would increase...") would improve methodological alignment.

The manuscript states that the empathy questionnaire contains 21 items, but the original version typically contains 28. If a shortened or adapted version was used, more information on translation, validation, and psychometric justification is urgently needed.

The description of a "cut-off score of 50" is not part of the standard scoring procedure. Please justify this threshold or remove it to avoid implying diagnostic meaning.

The manuscript includes a section titled "Intervention," but no details follow. This is a major methodological gap. The paper must clearly describe the number of sessions, duration, training content, instructional strategies, facilitator qualifications, and adherence procedures.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.