

Comparing the Effectiveness of Mentalization-Based Therapy and Dialectical Behavior Therapy on Time Perception and Self-Forgiveness in Adolescents with Self-Injurious Behaviors

Mehri. Mehrmanesh¹, Elham. Zarghami^{2*}, Bitra. Nasrolahi¹

1. Department of Psychology, Sr.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
2. Department of Psychology, Vap.C., Islamic Azad University, Varamin, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: elhamz50@iau.ir

Editor

Muhammad Rizwan
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Haripur University, Islamabad, Pakistan
muhammad.rizwan@uoh.edu.pk

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Zahra Yousefi
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.
Email: yousefi1393@khuisf.ac.ir
Reviewer 2: Azade Abooei
Department of Counseling, Faculty of Humanities, University of Science and Art, Yazd, Iran. Email: a.abooei@tea.sau.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introductory paragraph beginning with “Adolescence represents a critical developmental period...” provides a strong general framing; however, it lacks epidemiological precision. The authors should quantify the prevalence of non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) using recent meta-analytic data and specify regional prevalence (e.g., Iran vs. global rates) to strengthen contextual grounding and justify the public health relevance of the study.

In the paragraph stating “Empirical evidence suggests that adolescents who engage in self-injurious behaviors often experience profound deficits in emotion regulation...”, the authors present a broad claim without clearly distinguishing between correlational and causal relationships. It is recommended to clarify whether these deficits are antecedents, correlates, or consequences of NSSI, and to explicitly reference longitudinal evidence where available.

The integrative paragraph (“The integration of these constructs...”) is theoretically promising but lacks a clear conceptual model. The authors are encouraged to present a schematic or at least a more explicit narrative model describing hypothesized pathways between mentalization, time perception, and self-forgiveness.

In the final paragraph of the introduction (“Given the growing recognition...”), the rationale is appropriate but could be strengthened by explicitly stating the novelty of the study in one sentence (e.g., “This is the first study to...”). Currently, the contribution remains somewhat implicit.

In the Methods section, the paragraph “The present study was applied in nature...” clearly describes the design; however, the term “applied” is vague and unnecessary in methodological reporting. It should be replaced with a more standard classification (e.g., “quasi-experimental intervention study”).

The sampling description (“A total of 45 participants were selected through purposive sampling...”) raises concerns about internal validity. The combination of purposive sampling and random assignment should be clarified, particularly whether allocation concealment was implemented.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The paragraph introducing mentalization (“One of the core psychological constructs...”) is conceptually strong but theoretically underdeveloped. The authors should explicitly situate mentalization within attachment theory and specify its developmental trajectory in adolescence, particularly referencing how insecure attachment patterns disrupt reflective functioning.

In the sentence “Mentalization-Based Therapy (MBT), developed by Fonagy and Bateman...”, the authors briefly mention efficacy but do not critically evaluate the strength of evidence. It would improve rigor to differentiate between RCT evidence, quasi-experimental findings, and meta-analyses, and to report effect sizes where possible.

The paragraph on Dialectical Behavior Therapy (“In parallel, Dialectical Behavior Therapy...”) would benefit from a clearer articulation of DBT’s theoretical model (biosocial theory). Currently, the description remains descriptive rather than explanatory; incorporating the role of invalidating environments and emotional vulnerability would strengthen conceptual clarity.

The comparative paragraph (“Comparative reviews have highlighted...”) mentions differences between MBT and DBT but does not operationalize these differences. The authors should explicitly define hypothesized mechanisms of change (e.g., reflective functioning vs. skills acquisition) and connect them to the study variables (time perception and self-forgiveness).

The paragraph introducing time perception (“Beyond emotion regulation...”) is a valuable addition, but the construct is insufficiently operationalized. The authors should clarify whether they adopt Zimbardo’s time perspective framework or another model, and explain how the six dimensions measured relate theoretically to self-injury.

In the sentence “Despite its importance, time perception has received relatively limited attention...”, the authors claim a research gap but do not substantiate it. A brief systematic-style justification (e.g., number of studies or lack of intervention trials) would strengthen the argument.

The paragraph on self-forgiveness (“Another crucial construct...”) would benefit from a clearer distinction between self-forgiveness, self-compassion, and self-acceptance. These constructs are conceptually overlapping, and the authors should delineate their boundaries to avoid conceptual ambiguity.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.