



# The Effectiveness of Anger Management Skills Training and Assertive Behavior Training on Interpersonal Relationships and Tendency Toward Drug Use Among Female High School Students


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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The literature review lacks a sufficiently integrated conceptual framework linking anger dysregulation, assertiveness deficits, interpersonal dysfunction, and substance use tendency. Although these constructs are individually discussed, the manuscript does not clearly explain the theoretical mechanism through which both interventions are expected to influence the two outcome variables simultaneously. A clearer conceptual model or mediational explanation should be added.

The Introduction contains several broad claims that require stronger empirical precision. For example, the sentence “The growing influence of digital communication and social media platforms has also altered the nature of interpersonal interactions among adolescents” is overly general and not directly tied to the study variables. The authors should either provide stronger evidence connecting social media use to interpersonal dysfunction and substance use risk or remove this section to improve conceptual focus.

The rationale for comparing anger management training with assertiveness training remains underdeveloped. The manuscript explains why each intervention is individually important, but it does not adequately justify why these two specific

interventions should be comparatively examined within one experimental design. The authors should clarify whether they expected differential effects based on theoretical assumptions or prior evidence.

The “Data Analysis” section contains a major inconsistency. The authors initially state that “multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA)” was used, whereas the Results section primarily reports repeated-measures ANOVA analyses. This inconsistency raises concerns regarding analytical accuracy. The authors must clarify exactly which statistical model was employed and revise the methodology accordingly.

The assumption testing section requires revision. The manuscript reports “Mauchly’s test was significant for both variables,  $W = 1.00$ ,  $\chi^2 = 1.00$ ,  $p = .001$ ,” which is statistically implausible because a  $W$  value of exactly 1.00 generally indicates perfect sphericity. The reported values appear inconsistent and require verification.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the “Study Design and Participants” section, the authors describe the study as “descriptive in terms of data collection method,” which is conceptually inaccurate because the design is explicitly quasi-experimental. This terminology should be corrected to avoid methodological inconsistency.

The participant recruitment process requires greater transparency. The manuscript states that convenience and voluntary sampling were used, yet random assignment was later implemented. The authors should clarify how volunteers were screened, how many students initially expressed interest, how many were excluded, and whether allocation concealment procedures were applied during randomization. A CONSORT-style participant flow diagram would substantially improve methodological transparency.

The sample size justification is insufficiently rigorous. The manuscript merely states that the sample size was “adequate based on similar studies and according to Cohen’s formula.” The authors should explicitly report the power analysis parameters, including expected effect size, alpha level, power level, statistical test family, and estimated minimum sample size. Reporting the software used for power estimation would further strengthen methodological rigor.

The intervention descriptions are highly detailed procedurally but lack information regarding intervention fidelity and therapist competence. The manuscript should specify who conducted the sessions, their professional qualifications, whether treatment manuals were used, whether fidelity checklists were employed, and whether supervision procedures ensured consistency across sessions.

The anger management intervention consisted of 12 sessions of 90 minutes, whereas the assertiveness intervention involved 10 sessions of 60 minutes. This substantial discrepancy in intervention dosage represents a major methodological confound. The authors should justify why unequal exposure durations were considered acceptable and discuss how differences in treatment intensity may have influenced outcomes.

The description of the “Interpersonal Relationship Scale” is excessively lengthy and includes unnecessary item-level detail that reduces readability. For example, listing all reverse-scored items and individual item allocations for each subscale is not essential in the main text. These details should be summarized more concisely or transferred to an appendix.

The psychometric properties of the “Tendency Toward Drug Use Scale” are inadequately reported. The authors cite Cronbach’s alpha from a previous thesis but fail to report reliability coefficients obtained from the current sample. Internal consistency estimates for both scales in the present study should be reported to establish measurement reliability within the study population.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.