

The Effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy on Social Anxiety and Academic Procrastination in Adolescents

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction, the paragraph beginning with “Adolescence is recognized as one of the most sensitive developmental periods” relies heavily on broad descriptive statements without sufficiently integrating a theoretical framework explaining the causal relationship between social anxiety and academic procrastination. The authors should incorporate a clearer conceptual model, such as self-regulation theory, avoidance learning theory, or cognitive-affective processing models, to explain why CBT would simultaneously influence both constructs.

The statement “Recent social and technological changes have also contributed to the intensification of social anxiety symptoms among adolescents” requires stronger empirical grounding. The paragraph cites Instagram-related emotional comparison research, but the manuscript does not adequately explain whether the sample population was assessed for social media use, screen exposure, or digital stressors. Without such contextual variables, this argument appears disconnected from the study design and should either be empirically justified or substantially reduced.

The paragraph discussing academic procrastination states that procrastination is associated with “poor academic performance, low self-efficacy, emotional distress, reduced motivation, and impaired psychological adjustment,” yet no distinction is made between trait procrastination and situational procrastination. Because adolescents may procrastinate for different motivational or emotional reasons, the manuscript should clarify which conceptualization guided the intervention targets and interpretation of findings.

The description of exclusion criteria is inadequate. The authors only mention “absence from more than two intervention sessions” and “unwillingness to continue participation,” but they do not address psychotropic medication use, concurrent psychotherapy, neurological disorders, learning disabilities, or severe depressive symptoms that could confound outcomes. These factors should be explicitly controlled or acknowledged.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning with “Several psychological and interpersonal factors contribute to the emergence and maintenance of academic procrastination,” the authors imply a mediational relationship between social anxiety and procrastination through fear of criticism and avoidance tendencies, but this relationship is not tested statistically in the study. The manuscript should avoid causal or mediational language unless appropriate mediation analyses are conducted.

The literature review on CBT effectiveness is generally descriptive rather than analytical. For example, the paragraph beginning “Cognitive behavioral therapy employs a variety of techniques” lists several CBT components but does not specify which elements were actually emphasized in the present intervention. The authors should better align the literature review with the operational content of their eight-session protocol.

The manuscript repeatedly refers to “emotion regulation” as a central mechanism of change, particularly in the paragraph discussing Garke et al. (2025), yet emotion regulation was not directly measured in the present study. The authors should avoid mechanistic interpretations unsupported by empirical data and instead frame such explanations as hypothetical interpretations rather than demonstrated pathways.

The rationale paragraph beginning with “Despite the substantial body of evidence supporting the effectiveness of CBT” needs a stronger justification for novelty. The manuscript claims limited Iranian research simultaneously examining social anxiety and procrastination, but no systematic synthesis or gap analysis is presented. The authors should more clearly explain what specifically distinguishes this study from prior Iranian adolescent CBT studies.

In the Methods section, the phrase “obtaining elevated scores on measures of social anxiety and academic procrastination” is insufficiently precise. The manuscript does not specify the cutoff scores used for inclusion, the operational definition of “elevated,” or whether clinical diagnostic interviews were conducted. This omission weakens the study’s internal validity and participant characterization.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.