



The Impact of Sandplay Therapy on Perceptual Reasoning and Neuropsychological Functioning in Children with Autism: A Randomized Controlled Trial

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction provides a solid foundation but could be enhanced by including more recent studies related to Sandplay Therapy. For instance, the statement "There is a growing interest in alternative and complementary therapies" could be supported with additional references from the past five years.

Provide more detail about the inclusion and exclusion criteria for participants. For example, explain if there were any criteria related to the severity of ASD symptoms or other comorbid conditions.

While the session descriptions are thorough, the Methods section should include more information on the training and qualifications of the therapists who administered the Sandplay Therapy. This ensures replicability and credibility.

Table 1 is clear, but it would be helpful to include a brief description or legend to explain the abbreviations and statistical measures used. Ensure that the means and standard deviations are consistently reported with two decimal places.

Consider including graphical representations of the key findings, such as bar graphs or line charts, to visually summarize the differences between groups over time. This can enhance understanding and interpretation of the results.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The literature review in the introduction is comprehensive. However, it would be beneficial to differentiate more clearly between the effects of Sandplay Therapy on various populations. For example, add a comparison between the findings of Cao et al. (2019) and Jang et al. (2019) to highlight the therapy's diverse applications.

The study design section would benefit from more detail on the randomization process. For instance, specify how the random assignment was conducted and if any stratification was used to ensure comparable groups.

The control group's activities should be described in more detail. Specify what "standard care" entailed to clarify any differences in engagement or attention between the groups.

In the Results section, ensure all statistical tests are reported with appropriate detail, including confidence intervals and effect sizes. For example, add confidence intervals to the reported F values in Table 2.

The discussion could be strengthened by more explicitly comparing the study's findings with previous research. For example, elaborate on how the results align or differ from those reported by Yahaya et al. (2018) regarding self-esteem improvements.

Expand on the potential mechanisms by which Sandplay Therapy may enhance perceptual reasoning and neuropsychological functioning. Discuss theories or models that could explain the observed effects, linking back to the symbolic and sensory nature of the therapy.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.