

Effectiveness of Self-Healing Training on Death Anxiety, Hope, and Loneliness in Older Adults

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning “Death anxiety represents a core existential concern...”, the manuscript cites multiple correlational studies. However, a clear conceptual model explaining how death anxiety, loneliness, and hope interact is missing. Consider adding a short integrative paragraph or figure that theoretically links these constructs.

While the authors state that “empirical studies examining [self-healing] among institutionalized elderly individuals remain scarce”, no systematic justification is provided. Please explicitly distinguish this study from prior Iranian or regional interventions targeting death anxiety in older adults.

The sentence “analyzed using SPSS software, version 26” should be expanded to include alpha level, handling of missing data (if any), and confirmation that assumptions were tested prior to hypothesis testing.

In Table 1, the posttest mean of death anxiety drops from 8.96 to 1.56 in the experimental group. Please comment on whether this represents a floor effect or an unusually large change, and justify its plausibility.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

Consider specifying directional hypotheses (e.g., reduction vs. improvement) and clarifying whether effects were expected to be large or moderate.

In “Using convenience sampling, 50 individuals were selected...”, please clarify how many residents were eligible, how many declined participation, and whether allocation concealment was used during random assignment.

The Results section reports a mean age of 77.84 years in the control group vs. 74.16 in the experimental group. Please statistically justify whether this difference required age as a covariate, or report that it was nonsignificant.

In the DAS description, multiple reliability coefficients from different studies are listed. For clarity, please condense this section and emphasize only (a) original psychometrics and (b) reliability obtained in the present sample.

Given that participants were over 70 years old, please discuss whether questionnaire length (47 total items across scales) posed cognitive fatigue, and how this was managed during data collection.

The intervention description is rich but very dense. Please consider adding a session-by-session table summarizing objectives, techniques, and homework to improve replicability for future researchers.

While the protocol is adapted from Lloyd and Johnson (2005), the manuscript does not explain why this framework is theoretically suitable for existential outcomes such as death anxiety. A brief theoretical justification is needed.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.