

Comparing the Effectiveness of Communication Skills Training and Emotion Regulation Training on Psychological Well-Being and Loneliness among Adolescents with Internet Addiction

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Izet Pehlić ¹ Full professor for Educational sciences, Islamic pedagogical faculty of the University of Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina izet.pehlic@unze.ba	Reviewer 1: Zahra Yousefi ² Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan Branch (Khorasgan), Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. Email: Z.yousefi1393@khuif.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Kamdin Parsakia ³ Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: kamdinparsakia@kmanresce.ca

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction paragraph discussing psychological well-being, the authors write: “Psychological well-being emphasizes positive functioning, self-acceptance, autonomy, purposeful living, personal growth, environmental mastery, and positive relationships with others.” This section describes Ryff’s model; however, the manuscript does not sufficiently explain which dimensions of psychological well-being are expected to be most responsive to communication skills training versus emotion regulation training. The authors should expand this paragraph by providing mechanism-specific hypotheses regarding how each intervention may influence different aspects of well-being.

The paragraph stating that “Loneliness may function both as a risk factor and as a consequence” provides an important bidirectional explanation, but the causal assumptions of the study remain insufficiently clarified. Since the design evaluates interventions among adolescents already experiencing internet addiction, the authors should clarify whether loneliness is conceptualized primarily as an outcome, maintaining factor, or mediating mechanism within their intervention model.

In the final Introduction paragraph, the authors state: “Comparing communication skills training and emotion regulation training can clarify whether interpersonal or emotional intervention pathways are more effective.” However, the study

hypotheses are not explicitly presented. The authors should add clearly formulated hypotheses specifying expected differences among communication skills training, emotion regulation training, and the control group for both psychological well-being and loneliness.

In the Methods section, the authors state: “The statistical population consisted of all female adolescents aged 15 to 18 years who were studying in upper secondary schools during the 2024–2025 academic year.” However, the geographic location, school selection process, and recruitment procedures are insufficiently detailed. The authors should specify the city/region, number of schools approached, sampling method before screening, and whether participants were recruited through convenience, cluster, or random sampling.

In the participant selection paragraph, the authors mention: “Initially, 80 students who met the preliminary criteria were screened using the Internet Addiction Test.” The manuscript should clarify how these 80 students were identified before screening and provide a participant flow diagram or detailed recruitment pathway showing assessment, exclusion, allocation, intervention completion, and final analysis numbers.

In the Emotion Regulation Training Protocol section, the authors describe techniques such as the ABC model, cognitive restructuring, and Socratic questioning. Since these techniques overlap considerably with cognitive-behavioral therapy, the authors should clarify the theoretical foundation of the emotion regulation intervention and distinguish it from general CBT-based training.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

Regarding sample size calculation, the authors state: “The sample size was estimated using GPower software based on a significance level of 0.05 and statistical power of 0.80.” This information is incomplete because GPower calculations require an assumed effect size, statistical test family, and model parameters. The authors should report the expected effect size, source of the effect size estimation, number of groups, and exact statistical procedure used for power analysis.

In the Methods section, the authors report that participants were “randomly assigned to three equal groups.” The randomization procedure requires further clarification. The manuscript should specify whether computer-generated randomization, random numbers, sealed envelopes, or another allocation method was used, and whether allocation concealment was implemented to reduce selection bias.

In the Measures section, the authors describe the Young Internet Addiction Test and state that “scores from 50 to 79 indicate being at risk of internet addiction or problematic internet use.” Since both at-risk users and addicted users appear eligible, the authors should clarify the exact inclusion cut-off used in this study and provide descriptive statistics for participants’ baseline internet addiction severity.

In the description of the Ryff Psychological Well-Being Scale, the authors mention that “the overall Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for the short form has been reported at approximately 0.71.” However, reliability coefficients from the present sample are missing. The authors should calculate and report Cronbach’s alpha or other internal consistency indicators for all instruments based on the current dataset rather than relying only on previous validation studies.

In the UCLA Loneliness Scale paragraph, the authors state that “the Persian version has also been used in Iranian psychological studies after translation, preliminary implementation, and psychometric evaluation.” This statement is too general. The authors should cite the specific Persian validation study and report exact reliability and validity evidence, including internal consistency coefficients and factor structure findings.

In the Intervention section, the authors provide detailed session content for communication skills training but do not mention the theoretical source or manual underlying the intervention. The paragraph beginning “The communication skills training program was implemented for the first experimental group in eight structured group sessions” should include references to the original protocol, evidence supporting its effectiveness, facilitator qualifications, and fidelity monitoring procedures.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.