

The Counseling Relationship Assessment Measure (CRAM): Initial Validation and Psychometric Properties

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction, paragraph 2, the sentence “the relationship has been shown to be the most consistent and robust predictor of outcome” would benefit from specifying the scope of this evidence—e.g., adult psychotherapy only, or across treatment modalities—and the range of meta-analytic effect sizes to support the claim.

The statement in paragraph 3 of the Introduction that “goals and tasks are not overtly outlined or discussed” requires citations to specific traditions (e.g., psychodynamic, existential). Currently it sounds anecdotal. Provide empirical evidence or authoritative theoretical support.

In the Discussion, the sentence “The CRAM assesses framework consensus without limiting the assessment to agreement on goals and tasks” requires a more explicit comparative analysis, possibly including conceptual diagrams contrasting CRAM vs. WAI-S and CALPAS.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the section “Beyond Bordin,” paragraph 1, the sentence “the new measure will not be limited to the assessment...solely on goals and tasks” reads as a critique of WAI but does not sufficiently explain how CRAM uniquely improves upon the limitations of WAI. A clearer conceptual differentiation is needed.

In the paragraph describing Framework Consensus, the sentence “The client’s input may be effortlessly incorporated...” should be expanded with examples of when client-driven frame-setting risks ruptures or misalignments, given Safran & Muran (2006) emphasize these dynamics.

The Hypotheses section lists the expectation that CRAM will not correlate with private self-consciousness, yet later results show a significant relationship for clients. A brief explanation of why this violation might have occurred should be added.

In the short-form development section, the sentence “We purposely selected items from each of these areas...” should discuss whether this artificially enforces multidimensional content on a unidimensional factor structure. This is a major conceptual tension requiring justification.

In the counselor ESEM results, CFA was not performed “due to insufficient sample size.” A post-hoc power analysis or simulation-based justification for sample adequacy should be added, because the counselor short form is being proposed for clinical use.

In the Construct Validity section for the client form, correlations between CRAM and WAI-S are extremely high ($r = .90$). This raises concerns about redundancy. Authors should discuss whether CRAM offers incremental validity beyond WAI-S.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.