

Effectiveness of Working Memory Training on Executive Functions and Cognitive Flexibility in Students with Specific Learning Disorder

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the opening paragraph discussing DSM-5 criteria for SLD, the manuscript cites both American Psychiatric (2013) and (2015) without clarifying why both editions are needed. Please explicitly justify the dual citation or consolidate the diagnostic reference to avoid conceptual ambiguity regarding the diagnostic framework used.

The BRIEF is completed by parents, yet no teacher report or multi-informant triangulation is included. Please acknowledge this as a limitation and briefly justify why parent ratings alone were deemed sufficient.

Although reliability indices are reported, there is no discussion of cultural or normative adaptation of the WCST for Iranian children. Please clarify whether local norms were used or justify reliance on international norms.

The detailed intervention description lacks information on treatment fidelity. Please specify whether session adherence, therapist training, or protocol compliance was monitored, and if not, acknowledge this as a methodological limitation.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The paragraph beginning “Among the cognitive mechanisms implicated in SLD...” provides a broad definition of executive functions but does not explicitly state which subcomponents are operationalized in the present study. Please add a bridging sentence clarifying how the theoretical construct maps onto the BRIEF and WCST measures used later.

In the discussion of cognitive flexibility, the manuscript treats flexibility as both an executive subcomponent and an outcome variable. Please clarify whether cognitive flexibility is conceptualized as independent from executive functions or as a nested construct, and justify this distinction theoretically.

The paragraph stating “Several studies have reported positive effects of working memory training...” would benefit from a more explicit articulation of the near-transfer vs. far-transfer distinction. Please specify whether the current study primarily targets near transfer (executive measures) or claims far transfer (broader academic or behavioral outcomes).

The final paragraph of the Introduction states that “fewer studies have systematically examined the combined effects...”. Please strengthen this claim by specifying what is methodologically novel in the present study (e.g., follow-up design, combined use of BRIEF and WCST, Iranian context).

In the Study Design section, the manuscript labels the design as quasi-experimental but also reports random assignment. Please clarify which element prevents this from being a true randomized controlled trial (e.g., convenience sampling, lack of random recruitment).

While extensive psychometric properties are reported, it is unclear how this instrument was used analytically (screening vs. covariate vs. descriptive). Please clarify its functional role in the study design and analyses.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.