Journal Website

Article history:
Received 24 July 2026
Revised 18 September 2026
Accepted 11 October 2026
Initial Publication 28 October 2026
Final Publication 01 December 2026

Psychological Research in Individuals with Exceptional Needs

OPEN PEER-REVIEW REPORT

E-ISSN: 3060-6713

Effectiveness of Mindfulness- and Emotion Regulation-Based Psychological Interventions on Parenting Stress, Quality of Life, and the Parent–Child Relationship in Mothers of Children with Intellectual Disabilities: A Systematic Review of the Evidence

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning “PRISMA refers to a set of guidelines designed to facilitate transparent and systematic reporting...,” PRISMA is appropriately recognized as a reporting framework, but the manuscript occasionally treats it as if it were itself the review methodology. The authors should clearly distinguish between the methodological procedures used to conduct the review and PRISMA 2020 as the reporting guideline. The manuscript should additionally report whether a review protocol was prospectively registered, for example in PROSPERO or OSF, and should provide the registration number where applicable. If the review was not preregistered, this should be acknowledged as a methodological limitation because post hoc changes to eligibility criteria and synthesis procedures can increase the risk of selective decision-making.

The study identification strategy requires substantially greater reproducibility. In the paragraph beginning "The proposed databases for the English-language search were ScienceDirect, Scopus, Web of Science, and SpringerLink," the authors should distinguish bibliographic databases from publisher platforms. ScienceDirect and SpringerLink are primarily publisher/content platforms, whereas Scopus and Web of Science are multidisciplinary indexing databases. For a systematic review involving psychological interventions, databases such as PsycINFO, PubMed/MEDLINE, Embase, or CINAHL would ordinarily be highly relevant. The authors should justify the database selection and state whether additional databases were considered. Failure to search major psychological and biomedical databases may introduce database-selection bias and should either be addressed by additional searching or explicitly discussed.

Table 2, "Dimensions and Criteria Extracted from the Reviewed Studies," combines theoretically distinct constructs, measurement dimensions, clinical indicators, and contextual factors within the same hierarchy. For example, the parenting-stress column includes "parental distress," "parent–child interaction," "child characteristics," and "resources and support," although these do not necessarily belong to the same psychometric construct across commonly used parenting-stress measures. Similarly, "social relationships" and "sacrificing personal needs" may represent domains of parental experience rather than validated quality-of-life dimensions. The authors should identify whether each criterion was inductively derived from the included literature or deductively mapped from validated instruments, and they should avoid presenting heterogeneous indicators as interchangeable subdimensions unless construct equivalence has been demonstrated.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The English search string presented in the Data Analysis section is overly restrictive and contains a duplicated parenting-stress block. Specifically, "("parenting stress" OR "parental stress" OR "parental distress")" occurs twice, while the parent–child relationship construct—one of the principal study outcomes—is absent from the displayed search strategy. Requiring mindfulness AND emotion regulation AND parenting stress AND quality of life AND intellectual disability in a single Boolean expression will also exclude many highly relevant studies examining only one intervention and one or two target outcomes. The authors should reconstruct the search strategy using concept blocks that reflect the review question and conduct separate or appropriately combined searches for mindfulness interventions, emotion-regulation interventions, target populations, and outcomes. The full database-specific search syntax should be provided in a supplementary appendix.

The eligibility criterion in Table 1 stating "examination of at least three of the principal relationships among the six constructs or an intervention related to them" conflicts with the subsequent statement that studies examining individual key relationships were also included. The inclusion rule therefore appears to have changed during screening. The authors should specify one coherent eligibility framework and apply it consistently. A structured framework such as PICOS/PICO—Population, Intervention/Exposure, Comparator, Outcomes, and Study design—would substantially improve transparency. For example, the population could be defined as parents or caregivers of children with intellectual disability; interventions as mindfulness- or emotion regulation-based psychological interventions; comparators as usual care, waitlist, active control, or pre–post comparison; and outcomes as parenting stress, quality of life, and parent–child relationship measures.

The manuscript reports that "of the 472 articles identified through database searches... the number of articles [was reduced] to 211... then 84... and finally... 42 highly relevant and valid articles remained." This numerical description is insufficient for PRISMA-compliant reporting because it does not specify the number of duplicates removed, records screened by title/abstract, reports sought for retrieval, reports not retrieved, full-text reports assessed, full-text exclusions by reason, and final studies included in each synthesis. The authors should provide a complete PRISMA 2020 flow diagram and ensure that all numerical transitions are arithmetically traceable. The terminology should also distinguish "records," "reports," and "studies," because multiple reports may originate from one underlying study.

The manuscript states that "for randomized controlled trials, nonrandomized intervention studies, and observational studies, appropriate design-specific assessment tools were to be used," but the actual tools and appraisal results are not reported. This

E-ISSN: 3060-6713

is a major methodological omission. The authors should name the instruments used—for example, RoB 2 for randomized trials, ROBINS-I for nonrandomized interventions, and an appropriate JBI or Newcastle–Ottawa instrument for observational studies—and describe the appraisal procedure, including the number of reviewers, whether assessments were conducted independently, and how disagreements were resolved. A study-level risk-of-bias table should be provided, and the synthesis should explicitly consider whether conclusions differ when studies at high risk of bias are excluded.

The manuscript should clarify the screening and extraction process, particularly whether duplicate independent reviewers were used. The paragraph stating that "for each article, the following information was recorded" lists many relevant extraction fields but does not identify who performed extraction, whether a standardized form was piloted, whether extraction was independently verified, or whether inter-reviewer agreement was assessed. Because study selection and extraction are vulnerable to subjective error, particularly when synthesizing heterogeneous psychological constructs, at least two independent reviewers are generally preferable. If only one reviewer conducted screening or extraction, verification by a second reviewer should be reported and the associated risk of bias acknowledged.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.

E-ISSN: 3060-6713