

The Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment–Based Training on Anger Rumination and Marital Satisfaction among Couples with Obsessive–Compulsive Disorder

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The final Introduction sentence, “Accordingly, the aim of the present study was to determine the effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment–Based Training on anger rumination and marital satisfaction among couples with obsessive–compulsive disorder,” should be supplemented by explicit directional hypotheses. Given the quasi-experimental design, the authors should state that participants receiving the intervention were expected to demonstrate significantly lower posttest anger-rumination scores and significantly higher posttest marital-satisfaction scores than controls after adjustment for baseline values. Specifying hypotheses would improve alignment among the theoretical framework, statistical analyses, results, and discussion.

In the Methods paragraph stating that “The statistical population consisted of couples with obsessive–compulsive problems who attended specialized counseling and psychotherapy centers in Tehran during 2026,” the participant eligibility criteria are insufficiently specified. The authors should report explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria, including age range, minimum

duration of marriage, diagnostic status of OCD, medication stability, concurrent psychotherapy, psychiatric comorbidity, acute suicidality or psychosis, substance-use disorders, previous exposure to ACT, literacy requirements, and minimum session attendance. Without these criteria, the sample cannot be adequately characterized or replicated, and potential confounding due to simultaneous treatments cannot be assessed.

The description of the 47-item ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire requires greater methodological precision. The paragraph currently states broadly that the instrument assesses “important relational domains” and that scoring is “adjusted in accordance with the direction of the individual items where required.” The authors should identify exactly which 47-item version was used, cite its validated Persian adaptation, specify its subscales, indicate which items are reverse scored, provide the possible total-score range, and clarify whether the analysis used the overall marital-satisfaction score or selected subscales. Because multiple ENRICH versions exist, reproducibility requires identification of the exact instrument and scoring protocol.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The Methods section contains a potentially important inconsistency in the statement that “32 individuals, corresponding to 16 couples, were selected... [and] randomly assigned... to either the experimental group or the control group, with 16 individuals, equivalent to eight couples, in each group.” The manuscript must clarify whether randomization occurred at the individual level or the couple level. Spouses from the same couple cannot appropriately be randomized independently to different conditions without creating contamination and serious dependence problems. If entire couples were randomized, the authors should state this explicitly, describe the random-sequence generation and allocation procedure, and identify the couple—not the individual—as the allocation unit.

The sample-size justification is absent from the Methods. Given a total sample of only 32 individuals or 16 couples, the authors should report an a priori power analysis or another defensible sample-size calculation based on the expected effect size, alpha level, statistical power, number of groups, number of covariates, and anticipated attrition. The very large partial eta-squared values later reported may be unstable in such a small sample, making the absence of power justification particularly consequential. If the sample size was determined pragmatically, this should be acknowledged transparently and the study characterized as preliminary where appropriate.

The Methods should include a clear ethical statement. The paragraph noting that “participants were informed about the voluntary nature of participation and were asked to provide informed consent” is insufficient for a clinical intervention study. The authors should report the approving institutional ethics committee, ethics approval code, procedures for protecting confidentiality, participants’ right to withdraw without penalty, management of psychological distress, and whether the control group was offered the intervention after study completion. If the study was prospectively registered, the registration identifier should also be provided; if not, this should be stated according to the journal’s requirements.

In the Data Collection Tools paragraph for the Anger Rumination Scale, the sentence reporting that “The original developers reported strong internal consistency... approximately .97” and that an Iranian study found “approximately .95” should be improved by reporting reliability from the current sample. Reliability coefficients obtained in previous studies do not demonstrate reliability in the present participants. The authors should calculate and report Cronbach’s alpha and, preferably, McDonald’s omega for the total scale and relevant subscales at baseline. The same recommendation applies to the ENRICH measure. Current-sample psychometric information is essential because measurement error directly affects the credibility of intervention effects.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.