OPEN PEER REVIEW

Open Peer Review (OPR)

As a new feature for progressing towards transparency, we decided to open a new window for all of our editors as well as authors titled "**Open Peer Review**". We hope by this new facility, our reviewers will be more motivated and authors will be more satisfied with the review process. We believe that publishing our peer review reports could make a transparent and clear environment for all our efforts within a journal, but not all reviewers tend to publish their comments.

What is "Open Peer Review" process?

An "Open Peer Review" process is making the details of all review process (including reviewers, associate editors, and EICs comments) as "Public" as it is agreed by EIC, Authors, and reviewers.

Advantages of "Open Peer Review" process

- More transparency, constructiveness and tactful comments of the peer review process: leads to an increase in the quality of reviews
- More motivations for all involved roles in the review process
- Authors' satisfactions from the review process: Increases honesty between authors and reviewers
- Education of both authors and new students
- Prevents reviewers from following their individual agendas and leading to the detection of reviewers' conflicts of interests

You can find out more at:
https://sites.kowsarpub.com/kowsar/knowledgebase/category/tree.html#opr.html

KOWSAR
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Peer Review Report for "Front-Line Medical Staff Experience About the Novel Psychological Intervention of Brief and Online Balint Group: A Qualitative Study in Iran During the COVID-19 Outbreak"

Author(s): Fatemeh Sheikhmoonesi, Maryam Rezapour, Mohammad Azizpour, Ideh Ghafour

Review Timeline:

Submit Date:	28 Jul 2020
Revised Date:	18 Feb 2021
Accepted Date:	20 Feb 2021

Revision (0)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 17 Sep 2020

Dear AE,
Comments for the authors:
Method:
- It seems that there was no explanation why the leaders decided to attend the group twice weekly and only for 4 weeks. Because as we know this is not the usual structure of the Balint group.
It was not explained how 2 co-leaders participated in groups? Usually, the group has 2 leaders and the authors did now clarify how one leader and 2 co-leaders work together. It is recommended that the authors explain why they decided to modify the setting. (Due to COVID pandemic crisis?)
- Balint group is a place to share emotions and where people can talk about their emotions,

but we should keep in mind that it is important to consider the trauma and crisis effect on the process of Balint group.
- For more clarity, it would be helpful to mention that some support techniques have been used by leaders more than a usual trend of Balint groups, especially since in the results and discussion the authors mentioned that 2 members noticed the difference in leading style between these group and previous Balint groups.
- Also, it is recommended to consider inclusion criteria for participation, are members in close clinical contact with patients, this for example would clarify how an anesthesia expert is in a doctor-patient relationship?
- It is also recommended to note what was the descriptions provided to the volunteers at the beginning?
Results:
- In Methods some questions were mentioned that the interviewer has asked interviewees, it is recommended that answers to these questions and themes and codes which were related to the questions were mentioned in a Table for more clarity. I mean what was the codes which were extracted from each question
Discussion:
- It is recommended to mention the study findings briefly in the first paragraph.
- Although there is scant literature on the virtual Balint groups it would be helpful if the authors compare their findings with other papers on online/virtual Balint groups.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Reviewer | **Revision** (0) 31 Jan 2021

Dear AE,
This manuscript deals with one of the current topics in the field of medicine and has a good innovation. But according to the attached comments, it needs minor corrections.
Thanks.

REFEREE: Associate Editor | **Revision** (0) 31 Jan 2021

Dear EIC,
This is with further reference to this paper submitted for possible publication in IJPBS.
The paper has been carefully reviewed and it is suggested that the manuscript requires considerable revision and should be modified according to the reviewers' comments which are appended below.
Thanks.

Mehran Zarghami: EIC | **Revision** (0) 31 Jan 2021

Dear Author,
Your paper has been evaluated by external peer reviewers. Please do your revisions according to the reviewers' comments. I appreciate you to do the revisions as soon as possible by using the track changes mode in MS Word and using colored text.
After revision authors are obliged to upload reviewers' comments word file in which they have replied to all comments one by one.
Besides, please pay attention to the word count limitation:

Word count limits are declared in this link: http://kowsarpub.com/en/index.php/services/for-authors/895-word-count

We look forward to receiving your revised manuscript. Thank you for sending your work to the Iranian Journal of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences.

Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (1)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Dear Editor,

Thanks for reviewing the article "**Front-line medical staff` experience about a novel psychological intervention "virtual Balint group": A qualitative study in Iran during COVID-19 outbreak"**

This is a point-by-point response to the comments.
Best regards,

Reviewer 1:

Method:
It seems that there were no explanation why the leaders decided to attend the group twice weekly and only for 4 weeks. Because as we know this is not the usual structure of Balint group.

As the reviewer mentioned correctly, the Balint group usually formed in long term, but considering crisis, we decided to held Balint group in 8 session to evaluate this brief and modified balint group in pandemic crisis, other online Balint group in this situation were done briefly,2-3 times in a week, for example in the below article, Balint group 2 times in a week for 4 session were held.

The effect of a short-term Balint group on the communication ability and self-efficacy of pre-examination and triage nurses
Yang C, Zhou B, Wang J, Pan S. The effect of a short-term Balint group on the communication ability and self-efficacy of pre-examination and triage nurses during COVID-19. J Clin Nurs. 2021 Jan;30(1-2):93-100. doi: 10.1111/jocn.15489. Epub 2020 Nov 19. PMID: 32920947.

I corrected the title to "Front-line medical staff` experience about a novel psychological intervention "brief and online Balint group": A qualitative study in Iran during COVID-19 outbreak""

It was not explained how 2 co-leaders participated in groups? Usually the group has 2 leaders and the authors did now clarify how one leader and 2 coleaders work together. It is recommended that the authors explain why they decided to modify the setting. (Due to COVID pandemic crisis?)

Due to the great pressure on the pandemic in the Balint groups, we decided to run the Balint group in this way. I explained this modification in method section.

Balint group is a place to share emotions and where people can talk about their emotions, but we should keep in mind that it is important to consider the trauma and crisis effect on the process of Balint group. For more clarity, it would be helpful to mention that some support techniques has been used by leaders

more than usual trend of Balint groups, specially since in the results and discussion the authors mentioned that 2 members noticed the difference in leading style between this group and previous Balint groups.

Actually, we used more supportive technique in this modified balint group, because the all of participants were under the high pressure. I added this point in discussion.

Also it is recommended to consider inclusion criteria for participation, are members in close clinical contact with patients, this for example would clarify how an anesthesia expert is in a doctor-patient relationship?

It is also recommended to note what was the descriptions provided to the volunteers at the beginning?

As mentioned in the title of this article, this study is about the *Front-line medical staff in COVID-19. anesthesia experts worked in ICU so they are in direct contact with sever ill patients.*

Participants were recruited via message invitations on WhatsApp. The researchers introduced Balint group briefly in virtual groups related to medical staffs and the researchers suggested that every frontline medical staff tended to join the Balint group. I added this part in method section.

Results:

In Methods some questions were mentioned that the interviewer have asked interviewees, it is recommended that answers to these questions and themes and codes which were related to the questions were mentioned in a Table for more clarity. I mean what was the codes which were extracted from each questions.

It is not common in qualitative studies to analyze each question separately. In addition, the interview is not structured. Although some questions are similar, the qualitative analysis of each interview affects the questions asked of the next participant. Therefore, it is not possible to prepare such a table.

Discussion:

It is recommended to mention the study findings briefly in the first paragraph.

Although there is scant litrature on virtual Balint group but it would be helpful if the authors compare their findings with other papers on online/virtual Balint groups.

I added the result of similar studies in discussion.

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Revision (1)

Here, you can see the **Reviewers**, **Associate Editors** and **EICs'** comments from the beginning to the end of the revision process.

REFEREE: EIC | **Revision (1)** 13 Feb 2021

Dear Author,

Thank you for your recent revisions.

Your paper has now been evaluated again. Unfortunately, you have not done all of the requested revisions, nor have you responded to all of the reviewers' comments. Please do your revisions according to the attached comments. I appreciate you doing the revisions as soon as possible by using the track changes mode in MS Word and using colored text.

Thanks.

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Revision (2)

Reply to Reviewers

Ideally, the reviewing process can significantly improve the submitted manuscripts by allowing the authors to take into account the advice of reviewers. Author(s) must reply to all reviewers' comments in a separate Word file, point by point. A "**Reply to Reviewers**" document is submitted along with revised manuscript during submission of revised files, summarizing the changes that the authors made in response to the reviewers' comments. The responses to reviewers' comments specifies how the authors addressed each comment the reviewers made.

You can read the authors' responses to the reviewers' comments in the next page.

Dear Editor,

Thanks for reviewing the article "**Front-line medical staff` experience about a novel psychological intervention "virtual Balint group": A qualitative study in Iran during COVID-19 outbreak"**

I am really sorry that I had not seen attached file before, so I reply to all of suggested comments in attached file. This is a point-by-point response to the comments.

Best regards,

Comments on attached file:

In Abstract:

1- A structured abstract is required including these headings:

- **Background**
- **Objectives**
- **Methods**
- **Results**

Conclusions

Reply: I changed abstract to structured one with suggested subheadings.

2- Results and Conclusion are not related to each other.

I changed conclusion and wrote it according to results.

3- For the original research, traditional sections are required including:

Background
Objectives
Methods
Results
Discussion
Conclusion
References
Acknowledgments

I changed subheading according to IJPBS style.

Method section:

4- This study had no exclusion criteria?

Inclusion criteria were frontline medical staff in treatment of COVID-19 (including physicians, nurses, and anesthesia experts), consent to participate in Balint group.
If someone did not have such conditions, he /she excluded. I added it in the text.

5- In this section, you have given a general description of ballet groups. I do not think it is necessary. Just explain what was done in your ballet group specifically.
In other words, if your ballet group was like this and you did the same thing, change the verbs of the sentence and say our ballet group was like this and we did it.

I changed it according to reviewer` comments.

6- Was this psychiatrist the same group leader or group co-leader?

To make it easier for participants to comment and express their opinions, a psychiatrist other than leader and co-leader interviewed with them. I added this explanation in the text.

7- Please add a conclusion at the end of the discussion that reflect the front-line medical staff` experience about the novel psychological intervention “virtual Balint group” briefly.

I added it.

8- Author contribution: Did all authors read and approve the final manuscript?

Yes.I added this point.

Explain these sentences according to the journal routine as follows:

F. Sh.M. and M.R. conceived and designed the study. **M.R**. and **F.Dh.M.** analyzed and interpreted the results. **F.Sh.M**. drafted the manuscript. **F.Sh.M** was the leader and **M.A** and **M.R** were co-leader. **I.Gh** interview with participants.

I changed this section according to IJPBS style.

9- Please revise the references according to the guidelines of the journal. References No 14 and 16 are the same.

I corrected it and I revised all of reference according to IJPBS.

Reviewer 1:

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Revision (2)

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Mehran Zarghami: EIC | **Revision (2)** 20 Feb 2021

Dear Author,
We have completed our review of your manuscript and are pleased to inform you that it is considered for publication in the IJPBS. Note that the publication of your article will only be finalized upon your cooperation with the editorial processing.
Thank you for your fine contribution. On behalf of the Editors of IJPBS, we look forward to your continued contributions to the Journal.
Thanks.