

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: *World Journal of Psychiatry*

Manuscript NO: 71829

Title: Randomized trial estimating effects of hypnosis versus progressive muscle relaxation on medical students' test anxiety and attentional bias

Provenance and peer review: Unsolicited manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 05270700

Position: Editorial Board

Academic degree: DSc, MD, PhD

Professional title: Professor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Bulgaria

Author's Country/Territory: China

Manuscript submission date: 2021-09-24

Reviewer chosen by: Xin Liu (Online Science Editor)

Reviewer accepted review: 2021-12-13 14:04

Reviewer performed review: 2021-12-21 14:01

Review time: 7 Days and 23 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No



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Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: [<input checked="" type="radio"/>] Anonymous [<input type="radio"/>] Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: [<input type="radio"/>] Yes [<input checked="" type="radio"/>] No
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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This manuscript presents data from a randomized clinical trial exploring the effect of hypnotherapy and progressive muscle relaxation on test anxiety and attentional bias in medical students. In my view the design seems to be appropriate given the goal of the study. The results confirm efficacy of both methods. However the paper may benefit from more clear distinction between the compared groups, specifically the active condition, active control and baseline (that might be interpreted as control group per se). This structure might be outlined in the abstract/core tip as well.

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Title: Randomized trial estimating effects of hypnosis versus progressive muscle relaxation on medical students' test anxiety and attentional bias

Provenance and peer review: Unsolicited manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 04075103

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: PhD

Professional title: Associate Professor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Brazil

Author's Country/Territory: China

Manuscript submission date: 2021-09-24

Reviewer chosen by: Xin Liu (Online Science Editor)

Reviewer accepted review: 2021-12-21 13:23

Reviewer performed review: 2021-12-21 15:15

Review time: 1 Hour

Scientific quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: [<input type="checkbox"/>] Anonymous [<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>] Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: [<input type="checkbox"/>] Yes [<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>] No
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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

World Journal of Psychiatry Manuscript Number: 71829 Title: The effects of hypnotherapy vs. progressive muscle relaxation on reducing test anxiety and attentional bias in medical college students: A randomized controlled trial The manuscript describes results from a comparative evaluation of hypnotherapy and progressive muscle relaxation to control of anxiety and attention level during tests in a group of medical college students. It is a well-structured study, and the adopted method is very well described, being of great importance the fact that the authors did not forget to mention that all the participants underwent psychiatric evaluation, and a semi-structured interview was used to ensure that any participant did not have a history of psychiatric or neurological disease or a current major psychiatric disorder. This is critical in the case of treatment using hypnosis. I consider this article suitable for publication in WJP. However, I'd like to draw the authors' attention to the fact that the term "hypnotherapy" for the behavioral treatment performed is not appropriate, as hypnotherapy is psychotherapy under hypnosis, being a treatment that uses memory recall in search of the origin of the problem under treatment, and then re-signify it. In the present research, effectively the technique used was hypnosis with positive suggestions, to enable the participant to perform tests, but the origin of anxiety in each participant was not addressed. The treatment with hypnosis performed was of deconditioning and reconditioning for a specific situation, not psychotherapy under hypnosis. Authors could revise the terminology to improve the text.

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Title: Randomized trial estimating effects of hypnosis versus progressive muscle relaxation on medical students' test anxiety and attentional bias

Provenance and peer review: Unsolicited manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 05786962

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MBBS, MSc, PhD

Professional title: Doctor, Medical Assistant, Research Associate

Reviewer's Country/Territory: United States

Author's Country/Territory: China

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Reviewer chosen by: Xin Liu (Online Science Editor)

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Reviewer performed review: 2021-12-27 07:27

Review time: 11 Days and 1 Hour

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> Accept (High priority) <input type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: [<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>] Anonymous [<input type="checkbox"/>] Onymous
	Conflicts-of-Interest: [<input type="checkbox"/>] Yes [<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>] No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This manuscript has a potential impact on the World Journal of psychiatry to introduce the hypnotherapy as a treatment modality of anxiety, this is an interesting paper that presents the benefit of hypnotherapy over the muscle relaxation in aspects of reducing anxiety among medical students. The work appears to have been well done, and statistical analysis has resulted in interesting outcomes. However, there are a few clarifications that would help with the understanding of their findings. 1. There are lacking information on the material and method section to describe the demography of participants. The authors did not explain briefly about exclusion and inclusion criteria for participants selection in this study. This is not clear, is there any other factors that may have an impact on TAS score, such as history of taking any medication, chronic illness, and age. 2. References should have to be selective and stringent; author should have to be careful of using the citation of this manuscript. It is difficult to track the cited work, for instance, in the introduction section, author discuss about attention theory but the claim is not properly cited. A short presentation of visual memory associated with attentional bias approach may be of help, as well as some instances on how attention deficits nowadays envisaged and tackled in current research. Author may cite (DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/joc.58>, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcohol.2021.12.001>) 3. Author used “/” couple of time instead of “or, and” in introduction. 4. Discussion section is incomplete, authors should need to defend each part of their results like why there is no difference in pretest but they have got a significant difference in their posttest results between treatment and control.

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Provenance and peer review: Unsolicited manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 06208328

Position: Editorial Board

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Assistant Professor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: United States

Author's Country/Territory: China

Manuscript submission date: 2021-09-24

Reviewer chosen by: Xin Liu (Online Science Editor)

Reviewer accepted review: 2021-12-17 12:50

Reviewer performed review: 2021-12-27 22:13

Review time: 10 Days and 9 Hours

Scientific quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: Good <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Grade E: Do not publish
Language quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade B: Minor language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade C: A great deal of language polishing <input type="checkbox"/> Grade D: Rejection
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Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Peer-reviewer statements	Peer-Review: [<input checked="" type="radio"/>] Anonymous [<input type="radio"/>] Onymous Conflicts-of-Interest: [<input type="radio"/>] Yes [<input checked="" type="radio"/>] No
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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

This is an interesting and relevant trial studying the effects of hypnotherapy vs. PMR on text anxiety and one of its specific component, attentional bias. The authors hypothesized that hypnosis would fair better over PMR in both regards due to its cognitive components that PMR lacks. This proved to be true in this study. The authors also appropriately commented on state and trait anxiety. The study was well designed and results were clearly presented. The manuscript is very well written, except the abstract section needs some improvement as indicated in comments attached in the manuscript. Discussion section is well thought out and presented. However, one of the conclusions ' Attentional bias may be considered an essential target in treatment of test anxiety or other anxiety disorders, cannot be drawn from this study. The study only shows that hypnotherapy is superior to PMR in addressing attentional bias. However, the overall improvement in posttest state anxiety between the 2 groups could also be due to other factors that cause test anxiety, and not solely due to improvement in attentional bias. Limitations are duly noted, but it should be mentioned more specifically that lack of physiological measures also makes it difficult to differentiate whether hypnotherapy did better than PMR due to better physical relaxation or attentional bias, or maybe some other factor.