

PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: *World Journal of Clinical Cases*

Manuscript NO: 76305

Title: Application of Unified Protocol as a Transdiagnostic Treatment for Emotional Disorders during COVID-19: An Internet-Delivered Randomized Controlled Trial

Provenance and peer review: Invited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 06265249

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Doctor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Portugal

Author's Country/Territory: Iran

Manuscript submission date: 2022-03-11

Reviewer chosen by: AI Technique

Reviewer accepted review: 2022-03-15 08:57

Reviewer performed review: 2022-03-17 12:04

Review time: 2 Days and 3 Hours

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 Grade E: Do not publish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 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



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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
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SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

I would like to congratulate the authors for their good work: a very relevant topic and a well-written article. Nevertheless, I consider that some additions should be made, which I send in the attached document. Thank you and I hope my suggestions are helpful!

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Reviewer's code: 06267151

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MD

Professional title: Doctor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Spain

Author's Country/Territory: Iran

Manuscript submission date: 2022-03-11

Reviewer chosen by: AI Technique

Reviewer accepted review: 2022-03-11 12:12

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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
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**Peer-reviewer
statements**

Peer-Review: ☒ Anonymous ☐ Onymous

Conflicts-of-Interest: ☐ Yes ☒ No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The manuscript "Application of an Internet-Delivered Transdiagnostic Treatment for Emotional Disorders during COVID-19: A Randomized Controlled Trial" investigated the differential effects of the Unified Protocol and a psychoeducational intervention on symptoms of depression, anxiety, affectivity, emotion dysregulation, and healthy emotionality in university population. The findings suggest that the online Unified Protocol improves the symptoms of emotional disorders, compared to the psychoeducational intervention. One of the strengths of the study is the transdiagnostic approach to emotional symptoms and its online implementation. However, I consider that there are several aspects that must be overcome before the manuscript is published:

1. The recruitment process should be better specified Did all subjects who wanted to participate have emotional symptoms? Figure 1 does not indicate participants who did not meet the diagnoses of anxiety or depression. However, the text indicates that "only consented subjects diagnosed with depression or anxiety disorders in SCID and obtained a high self-report score on the Beck Anxiety Inventory > 15 were selected for randomization". In addition, it is indicated that 38 subjects declined to participate. This should be clearly explained, since according to what is understood from the manuscript, the participants were recruited through advertisements and signed up voluntarily.
2. Explain why an effect size of $f = 0.35$ is assumed to calculate the required sample size. Also, why is a 20% dropout rate expected? These two issues must be clearly explained in the text.
3. I am not sure that psychoeducational intervention can be considered TAU. Is it usual to intervene with this population with a 12-week psychoeducational protocol?
4. The data should be analyzed following both intention-to-treat (ITT) and per protocol



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approaches. 5. In the ITT analysis, incomplete or missing data should be considered using the maximum likelihood estimation method. 6. The dropout rate was much higher than the expected rate assumed to calculate the sample size. This should be discussed in the manuscript or at least recognized as a limitation of the work. 7. The intragroup (pre-post) and between-group (differences between standardized mean changes [pre-post] of the respective groups) effect size should appear in the tables. 8. Minor issue: On page 6 the following sentence appears "Of these, thirty-eight clients declined to participate in the study". I do not think that the word "clients" is the most appropriate in this context.

RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT

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Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: MD

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Reviewer's Country/Territory: Spain

Author's Country/Territory: Iran

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Reviewer performed review: 2022-05-30 07:45

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade A: Priority publishing <input 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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Peer-reviewer	Peer-Review: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input type="checkbox"/> Onymous



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statements

Conflicts-of-Interest: [] Yes [Y] No

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

The authors have made all recommended changes and the manuscript is now ready for acceptance.