



PEER-REVIEW REPORT

Name of journal: *World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics*

Manuscript NO: 79007

Title: Play therapy in Children with Autism: Its Role, Implications, and Limitations

Provenance and peer review: Invited Manuscript; Externally peer reviewed

Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 03199608

Position: Editorial Board

Academic degree: MD, PhD

Professional title: Chief Physician, Director, Professor

Reviewer's Country/Territory: China

Author's Country/Territory: Egypt

Manuscript submission date: 2022-07-27

Reviewer chosen by: AI Technique

Reviewer accepted review: 2022-08-11 14:04

Reviewer performed review: 2022-08-19 13:48

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 Grade E: Do not publish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 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
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	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

Play is an important activity, especially in children, which has an essential role in children's physical and mental development. Play therapy has been used for a long time to manage children's developmental diseases like autism spectrum disorder, intelligence disability and others, yet need more research and practice. The article narratively reviewed play therapy. Readers might be interested in this safe and cost-effective method.



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Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer’s code: 05688164

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: BSc, MD, PhD

Professional title: Research Fellow

Reviewer’s Country/Territory: Hungary

Author’s Country/Territory: Egypt

Manuscript submission date: 2022-07-27

Reviewer chosen by: AI Technique

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Reviewer performed review: 2022-08-30 07:30

Review time: 2 Days and 22 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
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Re-review	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Peer-reviewer	Peer-Review: <input type="checkbox"/> Anonymous <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Onymous



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

SPECIFIC COMMENTS TO AUTHORS

30 August 2022 Review report on the manuscript titled 'Play therapy in Children with Autism: Its Role, Implications, and Limitations' by Al-Beltagi M et al., submitted to World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics Manuscript ID: 78412 Dear Authors, This manuscript entitled 'Play therapy in Children with Autism: Its Role, Implications, and Limitations' explored the different applications of play therapy in helping children with autism disorder, to help them engaging in play activities of their interest and expressing themselves in the most comfortable ways. For this purpose, the authors collected the most relevant evidence in literature that showed different types of play therapy that could fit children with autism in an evidence-based way. The main strength of this manuscript is that it addresses an interesting and timely question, describing the effectiveness of play therapy in the management of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). In general, I think the idea of this manuscript is really interesting and the authors' fascinating observations on this timely topic may be of interest to the readers of World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics. However, some comments, as well as some crucial evidence that should be included to support the authors' argumentation, needed to be addressed to improve the quality of the manuscript, its adequacy, and its readability prior the publication in the present form, in particular reshaping parts of the Introduction and Discussion sections, by adding more evidence and theoretical constructs. Please consider the following comments: 1. Abstract: Please abridge the abstract to 250 words, proportionally presenting background, objectives, summary, and conclusions, according to the guidelines of the journal. I would suggest not using abbreviations in this section. 2. Keywords: Please present four to five keywords according to the guidelines and use them as many as possible in the first two sentences



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of the abstract. 3. I would ask the Authors to clarify the criteria they decided to use for studies' collection in their review: they should specify the number of studies included in the review and the requirements used to decide whether a study met the inclusion/exclusion criteria of the review; they also should provide the initials of the authors that conducted the research, and a more detailed description of all other variables for which data were sought. 4. The objectives of this study are generally clear and to the point; however, I believe that there are some ambiguous points that require clarification or refining. I suggest the authors to be explicit about regarding the role of play in ASD disorder, and on how they identified studies focusing on the effects of play therapy in children with this disorder. 5. Introduction: The 'Introduction' section is well-written and nicely presented. Nevertheless, I believe that information about pathophysiology of ASD will provide a better and more accurate background. Considering that this study's main focus is to deepen current understanding of social behavior dysfunctions in ASD children, I suggest the authors to make such effort to provide a brief overview of the pertinent published literature that offer a perspective on social impairments in ASD disorder because as it stands, there is no mention of this in the manuscript. For this reason, I would suggest some relevant evidence that will methodologically fit with the present manuscript: we know that ASD is diagnosed based on behavioral impairments in social communication, fixation in interests and repetitive behaviors (see American Psychiatric Association, 2013). These social impairments may be related to the interpretation of social signals: evidence from healthy individuals suggest that potentially threatening situations such as others' proximity can trigger a number of physiological responses that help regulate the distance between themselves and others during social interaction (<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-021-82223-2>), showing the critical role of social signal interpretation in social interaction (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00221-020-05829-4>;



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<https://doi.org/10.3390/brainsci11091203>;

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00702-022-02513-5>). Individuals with ASD have social impairments, potentially due to the lack of social signal interpretation, and therefore resulting unable to interpret these signals to guide appropriate behaviors. 6. Play Therapy For Children With Autism: I was wondering, why did not the authors take into account a description of Occupational Therapy interventions and examined which therapeutic strategies are more effective in improving play skills in children with ASD? 7.

Discussion: In this final section, authors described the results and their argumentation and captured the state of the art well; however, I would have liked to see some views on a way forward. Hence, I ask them to include some thoughtful as well as in-depth considerations, making an effort to explain the theoretical as well as the translational application of their research. In this regard, I believe that it could be useful to further investigate the involvement of frontal lobe in the neurobiology of ASD, specifically exploring how frontal dysfunction impact on specific cognitive functions of these patients, like memory and learning (<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-43860-w>; <https://doi.org/10.3390/cells11162607>;

<https://doi.org/10.3390/biomedicines10040849>), emotional judgement, face recognition and interpreting biological motion cues (<https://doi.org/10.3390/biomedicines10030627>; <https://doi.org/10.3390/biomedicines10010076>; doi: 10.17219/acem/139572)

respectively. 8. In my opinion, I think the 'Conclusions' paragraph would benefit from some thoughtful as well as in-depth considerations by the authors, because as it stands, it is very descriptive but not enough theoretical as a discussion should be. Authors should make an effort, trying to explain the theoretical implication as well as the translational application of their research. 9. In according to the previous comment, I would ask the authors to include a proper defined 'Limitations and future directions' section before the end of the manuscript, in which authors can describe in detail and



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report all the technical issues brought to the surface. 10. Overall, I suggest submitting your work to an English native speaker to help with some grammar mistakes that can be found in different sections of the manuscript. Overall, the manuscript contains 3 tables, 1 figure and 139 references. In my opinion, the manuscript might carry important value describing the effectiveness of play therapy in the management of children with ASD. I hope that, after these careful revisions, this paper can meet the Journal's high standards for publication. I am available for a new round of revision of this review. I declare no conflict of interest regarding this manuscript. Best regards, Reviewer



RE-REVIEW REPORT OF REVISED MANUSCRIPT

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Title: Play therapy in Children with Autism: Its Role, Implications, and Limitations

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Peer-review model: Single blind

Reviewer's code: 05688164

Position: Peer Reviewer

Academic degree: BSc, MD, PhD

Professional title: Research Fellow

Reviewer's Country/Territory: Hungary

Author's Country/Territory: Egypt

Manuscript submission date: 2022-07-27

Reviewer chosen by: Ze-Mao Gong

Reviewer accepted review: 2022-09-13 13:33

Reviewer performed review: 2022-09-14 08:49

Review time: 19 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 type="checkbox"/> Accept (General priority) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minor revision <input type="checkbox"/> Major revision <input type="checkbox"/> Rejection
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

14 September 2022 Review report on the manuscript titled 'Play therapy in Children with Autism: Its Role, Implications, and Limitations' by Al-Beltagi M et al., submitted to World Journal of Clinical Pediatrics Manuscript ID: 79007 Dear Authors, I am pleased to see that the authors did an excellent work clarifying most of the comments I have raised in the previous round of the review session. Currently, this paper is a well-written, timely piece of research and reviewing the different applications of play therapy in helping children with autism disorder. That said, I just suggest some minor points below, I believe, for the betterment of this manuscript to finalize my review session. Comment: 1. Introduction: The authors present a narrow view focusing on the main theme of this manuscript, play therapy. However, I recommend that the authors take a broader view especially on autism, describing more but concise information in general, including risk factors, pathogenesis, signs and symptoms, current treatment, and challenge, leading to the rationale and purpose of this review article. (<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00702-022-02513-5>; <https://doi.org/10.3390/cells11162607>; <https://doi.org/10.3390/biomedicines10030627>; <https://doi.org/10.3390/biomedicines10010076>) Overall, the manuscript contains two figures, two tables, and 152 references. This is a timely and needed work, thus I believe that manuscript now meets the Journal's standards for publication. I am always available for other reviews of such interesting and important articles. I look forward to seeing further study on this issue by these authors in the future. I declare no conflict of interest regarding this manuscript. Best regards, Reviewer