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Development and Validation of an ACT-Based Work–Family Balance Package for Work–Family Conflicts Among Female Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to develop and validate an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)-based work–family balance training package and to examine its effectiveness in reducing work–family conflict among female teachers.

Methods and Materials: A quasi-experimental pretest–posttest design with a three-month follow-up and control group was used. The population comprised all female teachers in District 5 of Isfahan in the 2023–2024 academic year. Using purposive sampling, 30 eligible teachers (35–45 years old, ≥5 years of experience) were selected and randomly assigned to ACT intervention (n=15) and control (n=15) groups. The intervention group received ten 90-minute ACT-based work–family balance sessions, while the control group received no training during the study. Work–family conflict was measured at pretest, posttest, and follow-up using Carlson’s Work–Family Conflict Questionnaire (2000). Data were analyzed with repeated-measures ANOVA.

Findings: At baseline, groups did not differ significantly in total work–family conflict or its six dimensions. Compared with the control group, the intervention group showed a significant reduction in family-related strain, family-related burnout, family-related time conflict, work-related strain, work-related burnout, and work-related time conflict at posttest, with effects maintained at follow-up (Time×Group $p < 0.01$; η^2 up to 0.66).

Conclusion: The ACT-based work–family balance package produced sustained improvements in multiple facets of work–family conflict among female teachers. This structured, empirically validated program can be applied in educational and counseling settings to support teachers’ psychological well-being and role balance.

Keywords: Work–family conflict, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, psychological flexibility, female teachers.

Introduction

Teaching is one of the most important and highly valued professions in any society. By educating the children of families and communities, teachers play a key role in shaping the future and destiny of individuals and society (Kızilkaya, 2024). Teachers not only contribute to students' learning and to their interest and motivation toward school and lessons, but also serve as influential role models in students' development (Han et al., 2023). Therefore, their performance at school, as well as their passion and commitment to their work, have long been of interest to psychologists, school counselors, and social service stakeholders. It has been recognized for years that certain personality characteristics are better suited to particular occupations, whereas others may not fit the demands of some jobs; this person-job fit can lead to improved or reduced performance (Gridwichi et al., 2020).

An important group within the teaching workforce is women. In addition to their professional responsibilities, women teachers often face major roles and duties related to motherhood, marriage, and household management. These responsibilities are significant because they can contribute to family stability and the upbringing of effective children. Nevertheless, performing multiple roles in the lives of women teachers may result in role overload, such that they experience heavy demands both at work and at home, transfer family-related stress from home to school, and bring job-related stress from school back home. When individuals are unable to maintain the necessary balance among multiple roles, they may experience work-family conflict (Christiansen et al., 2024).

Work-family conflict occurs when the demands of work and family roles are incompatible, making participation in both roles more complex and difficult (Han et al., 2023). In fact, when one person performs two or more roles, intra-role conflict may occur, and work-family conflict arises from the incompatibility between these roles (Liang et al., 2023). A core assumption is that individuals have limited time and energy for fulfilling work and family roles (Kim et al., 2022). In other words, when family demands conflict with work demands, work-family conflict emerges (Sayrafi et al., 2024). In the research literature, work-family conflict is considered a

form of negative spillover that results from the exchange of attitudes and behaviors between the work and family domains and leads to competing and conflicting demands (Christiansen et al., 2024). These demands may be direct (e.g., the need to perform two roles simultaneously) or indirect. Work-family conflict is typically conceptualized as having two main dimensions: work-to-family conflict and family-to-work conflict (Choorat et al., 2023). Work-to-family conflict occurs when job demands reduce an individual's commitment and energy and thereby diminish their ability to fulfill family roles; conversely, family-to-work conflict occurs when family demands consume these resources in a way that reduces the person's ability to perform work roles (Rastjoo & Zandvavian, 2021). Women's work-family conflict is often more strongly influenced by family factors; therefore, reducing women's conflict requires greater attention to family-related determinants (Tasew & Getahun, 2021).

One approach that has received considerable attention in recent years is Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), and its usefulness has been supported in various studies (Frye et al., 2020). ACT conceptualizes psychopathology in terms of cognitive fusion, experiential avoidance, living in regret about the past, attachment to an inaccurate self-image, lack of clarity about values, and avoidance or impulsive behavior (Sarac & Sanberk, 2022). The goal of this therapy is to enhance cognitive flexibility, and it seeks—through improving this construct—to help individuals cultivate acceptance and mindfulness, live in the present moment, defuse from thoughts, clarify values, and commit to effective actions, thereby increasing vitality (Ma et al., 2023). Accordingly, ACT may help individuals improve their occupational conditions through acceptance and committed action (Bai et al., 2020), and it may be appropriate for developing a package aimed at increasing work-family balance and facilitating adherence to it.

Overall, the importance of the teaching profession on the one hand, and the importance of women within the family along with the multiple roles they fulfill on the other, highlight the need to reduce their stress. By doing so, their psychological well-being can improve both in the family context and in the workplace, enabling them to perform their roles more effectively. Therefore, the

present study seeks to develop ACT-based training specifically for work–family balance and to apply it to improve the target variables. At the same time, designing a work–family balance training package grounded in ACT represents a gap that can be addressed through such research. It appears that aligning this training with ACT concepts—aimed at improving cognitive flexibility and enhancing vitality—can be effective for promoting work–family balance. Given teachers’ valuable individual and occupational status and the pressures they endure, improving their psychological characteristics deserves special attention. Neglecting teachers’ psychological well-being ultimately means neglecting the future of society and its future generations. Accordingly, based on the issues discussed, this study was conducted in 2024 with the aim of developing and validating an ACT-based work–family balance package for addressing work–family conflicts among women teachers.

Methods and Materials

The present study used a quasi-experimental design with a pretest–posttest control group and a three-month follow-up. The statistical population consisted of all female teachers in District 5 of Isfahan during the 2023–2024 academic year. The study sample included 30 female teachers who were willing to participate and were selected through purposive sampling. Participants were then randomly assigned to an intervention group ($n = 15$; ACT-based work–family balance package) and a control group ($n = 15$). The two groups were homogenized in terms of age and years of service.

Inclusion criteria were: (a) female gender; (b) informed consent to participate; (c) ability to attend intervention sessions; (d) age range of 35–45 years; and (e) at least 5 years of teaching experience. Exclusion criteria were: (a) receiving psychological/mental health interventions during the study; (b) inability to attend sessions; (c) lack of motivation to continue participation; (d) simultaneous participation in other training/intervention programs; and (e) absence from more than two treatment sessions.

Instruments

Work–Family Conflict Questionnaire: Work–family conflict was assessed using the Carlson Work–Family Carlson et al., Scale (2000), which contains 18 items rated on a five-point Likert scale and includes six

subscales assessing work-to-family and family-to-work conflict. Higher scores indicate higher work–family conflict. Cronbach’s alpha reliability has been reported between 0.78 and 0.87. Afshani & Hatefirad, (2017) reported an alpha of 0.91 and confirmed the factor structure using factor analysis. In the present study, Cronbach’s alpha for the total scale was 0.87. Subscale reliabilities were reported as follows: family-related strain/pressure (0.89), family-related exhaustion (0.85), family-related time conflict (0.90), work-related strain/pressure (0.84), work-related exhaustion (0.88), and work-related time conflict (0.86).

Intervention Content: ACT-Based Work–Family Balance Package

Development and content validation process: To identify the components, structure, and content of the ACT-based work–family balance training package, the study used directed qualitative content analysis following the approach of (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). First, data were compiled from existing written sources (review and empirical texts) addressing ACT theory and its core concepts. Next, the five-step procedure proposed by Hsieh & Shannon, (2005) was applied to analyze theory-related content. After reviewing 20 articles, the main extracted ACT-based components were Acceptance, Cognitive Defusion, and Committed Action. Based on the reviewed articles, the component “Acceptance” appeared in 18 articles, “Cognitive Defusion” in 15, and “Committed Action” in 16. ACT-based work–family balance package is presented in Table 1.

From the research texts, 86 coded meanings, 6 categories, and 3 themes were extracted based on the ACT framework. Internal content validity of the skill-enhancement training program was assessed by 10 experts with sufficient knowledge and experience in the relevant field. They reviewed the package and provided feedback regarding approval or rejection. To calculate the Content Validity Index (CVI) and Content Validity Ratio (CVR), expert judgments were used after explaining the program goals and presenting operational definitions of the content. CVR was calculated using (Lawshe, 1985) method. Results showed that the minimum and maximum values for CVI and CVR across program items ranged from 0.80 to 0.98. Based on the criteria reported by (Hyrkäs, 2005), items above 0.79 are

appropriate, those between 0.70–0.79 require revision, and those below 0.70 are unacceptable and should be removed. Overall, the program demonstrated satisfactory content validity, indicating that the developed intervention package has acceptable credibility for educational and clinical use. External validity was also examined by implementing the package with a sample of 30 teachers, and the results are reported in the subsequent sections. Session content and assignments were refined based on expert feedback.

Ethics

Ethical considerations included: (1) confidentiality and protection of participants' information; (2) avoiding any financial burden or harm during the study; (3) informing participants of study results at the end and providing access to beneficial interventions or methods supported by the findings; (4) respecting participants' right to refuse participation or withdraw at any time; (5) coding all data; (6) providing educational handouts/materials to the control group after completion; and (7) delivering a condensed four-session work–family conflict training to the control group after the study.

Table 1

Researcher-Developed ACT-Based Work–Family Balance Training Package

Session	Objective(s)	Content	Techniques	Homework
1	Establish therapeutic alliance; introduce session structure; initial assessment of work–family conflict, job attachment, burnout, and marital conflicts; ACT orientation	Welcome and creating a safe space; discussion of participants' expectations; introduction to ACT and its six core processes; initial assessment of work/family challenges (questionnaire or clinical interview)	Review life roles (parent, spouse, employee, etc.); ACT hexaflex model; brief present-moment awareness exercise (breathing focus)	List main life roles and prioritize them; record emotions, conflicts, or anxieties related to these roles during the week
2	Recognize difficult emotional experiences (anxiety, guilt, helplessness) and learn acceptance without avoidance	Explain experiential avoidance; review maladaptive coping with role-related anxiety (e.g., withdrawing from one role or neglecting personal needs); teach acceptance of unpleasant emotions	Gradual exposure to thoughts and feelings; acceptance practice: breathing with anxiety; metaphors (guesthouse; "man in the swamp")	Record situations involving guilt/anxiety and attempts to accept them; practice mindful breathing with acceptance in the moment
3	Identify and distance from maladaptive thoughts (e.g., "I'm not a good mother," "I must always be perfect at work")	Explain fusion and defusion; introduce thoughts as "words" not "facts"; review common dysfunctional thoughts in work–family conflict and marital relationships	Thought-labeling ("This is just a thought"); repeating thoughts aloud/singing; "Leaves on a stream" metaphor	Record dysfunctional thoughts when they occur and practice distancing; practice "Leaves on a stream" during intrusive thoughts
4	Increase awareness of stressful situations and improve focus in family and work interactions	Introduce mindfulness as nonjudgmental presence; applying mindfulness in conflict situations (e.g., tense meetings or family tensions); somatic practice to reduce stress and enhance focus	Body scan; mindfulness in daily activities (eating, driving, playing with child); five-senses grounding exercise	Practice mindfulness while eating or interacting with family; record mindful experiences during the week
5	Identify core values in work, family, and marital life to guide behavior	Differentiate values vs. goals; values clarification across four domains (self, family, work, relationships); discuss value conflicts and decision-making under pressure	Values cards; imagined interview with future self; compass metaphor	Write a personal values statement; record situations where actions were/weren't aligned with values
6	Plan practical, values-based actions and goal setting in work and family roles	Review values; teach SMART goal setting (specific, measurable, realistic, etc.); address barriers to committed action (fear of failure, others' judgment)	ACT matrix; step-by-step behavioral planning; mountain-climb/path metaphor	Set one values-based goal in each domain (e.g., scheduled family time); complete at least one meaningful action aligned with values
7	Reduce burnout symptoms through acceptance, cognitive defusion, and energy regulation	Burnout signs (emotional exhaustion, reduced efficacy, depersonalization); link between burnout, avoidance, and perceived lack of value; self-care within ACT	Mindful self-care practice; restructuring the workday based on values; "pause" practice for exhausting thoughts	Identify workplace stressors; perform one daily self-care activity
8	Enhance intimacy and marital relationship quality through values and acceptance of negative emotions	Review conflict styles; role of emotional avoidance in escalating conflict; mindful and values-based communication skills	Mindfulness in verbal communication; nonjudgmental active listening; emotion/need-based dialogue	Conduct one mindful conversation with spouse; practice mindfulness during verbal conflicts
9	Rebalance roles and reduce excessive perfectionism or self-neglect	Analyze maladaptive role patterns (e.g., perfect mother, self-sacrificing employee); examine dysfunctional beliefs about success/failure; flexible role choice based on context	Role-balance practice; restructuring inner dialogue about roles; redefining success through values	Record maladaptive vs. corrected role-based behaviors; practice "I am enough" while accepting human limitations
10	Consolidate learning; design a long-term maintenance plan; sustain values-based action	Review six ACT processes; reflect on personal achievements; create a maintenance plan for upcoming weeks/months		

Analysis

To conduct the study, an orientation session was held, and consent forms and a demographic questionnaire were distributed. To ensure anonymity and protect

privacy, each participant was assigned a unique code. After selection and group assignment and prior to the intervention, both groups completed the Work–Family Conflict questionnaire as the pretest. The intervention

group then received the developed training package in 10 sessions, each 90 minutes, held twice per week. The control group received no intervention. Immediately after completion, both groups were re-assessed using the study instrument for the posttest. A follow-up assessment was conducted 120 days later. Data were analyzed using repeated-measures ANOVA in SPSS (version 26).

Findings and Results

Demographic data showed that all participants were female and within the age range of 35–45 years. The

mean ($\pm$ SD) age was 38.90 ± 3.23 years in the experimental group and 38.57 ± 2.81 years in the control group. The mean ($\pm$ SD) teaching experience was 10.40 ± 2.28 years in the experimental group and 9.47 ± 2.56 years in the control group. In the experimental group, 31.47% of teachers were married and 68.3% were single; in the control group, 26.8% were married and 73.2% were single. Descriptive findings are reported below.

Table 2

Means and standard deviations of study variables by group (pretest, posttest, follow-up)

Group	Variable	Pretest		Posttest		Follow-up	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Control	Family-related strain	8.33	0.63	7.20	2.62	8.00	2.88
	Family-related burnout	10.00	2.54	9.80	3.69	10.67	3.74
	Family-related time conflict	10.13	2.29	9.40	3.52	9.60	2.85
	Work-related strain	9.47	1.60	9.27	1.49	9.40	1.18
	Work-related burnout	10.67	2.19	9.93	3.22	10.87	3.89
	Work-related time conflict	10.27	2.12	9.67	2.89	10.13	2.97
	Work-family conflict (total)	58.86	6.08	55.26	8.02	58.66	8.67
Experimental	Family-related strain	19.47	2.50	13.80	2.27	13.53	1.77
	Family-related burnout	19.47	2.33	14.27	2.58	13.67	2.61
	Family-related time conflict	21.00	2.59	12.93	2.19	12.93	2.63
	Work-related strain	19.27	2.40	12.53	1.77	13.00	1.51
	Work-related burnout	21.47	2.70	13.93	1.94	14.07	1.58
	Work-related time conflict	20.47	2.70	12.93	2.05	12.93	2.22
	Work-family conflict (total)	61.13	8.56	80.40	6.98	80.13	7.13

As shown in Table 2, the mean scores of work-family conflict and its components (family-related strain, family-related burnout, family-related time conflict, work-related strain, work-related burnout, work-related time conflict) were approximately similar in the pretest across the experimental and control groups, indicating baseline homogeneity. However, after the intervention, the experimental group showed a noticeable change compared with the control group, and this pattern was also observed at the three-month follow-up, suggesting the effectiveness of the intervention.

Prior to conducting repeated-measures ANOVA, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to examine the normality of score distributions for work-family conflict and its components across the three measurement points, indicating normal distributions ($p > 0.05$). Boxplots were examined to detect outliers, and no

outliers were identified. Homogeneity of variances was tested using Levene's test, which was not significant, indicating that this assumption was met ($p > 0.05$). In addition, independent-samples t-tests showed that pretest mean differences between the experimental and control groups on the dependent variables were not significant ($p > 0.05$). Mauchly's test indicated that the sphericity assumption was satisfied for work-family conflict and its components ($p > 0.05$).

To examine the effect of the ACT-based work-family balance package on work-family conflict among female teachers, repeated-measures ANOVA was conducted with Time (pretest, posttest, follow-up) as the within-subject factor and Group (experimental vs. control) as the between-subject factor. Overall results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3*Repeated-measures ANOVA results for experimental and control groups (summary)*

Variable	Effect	F	p	Effect size (η^2)
Family-related strain	Time	11.06	0.001	0.28
	Time $\times$ Group	22.77	0.001	0.45
	Group	3.55	0.041	0.11
Family-related burnout	Time	20.51	0.001	0.42
	Time $\times$ Group	18.10	0.001	0.39
	Group	5.12	0.007	0.13
Family-related time conflict	Time	4.07	0.040	0.11
	Time $\times$ Group	7.97	0.001	0.22
	Group	7.44	0.005	0.17
Work-related strain	Time	47.47	0.001	0.63
	Time $\times$ Group	54.35	0.001	0.66
	Group	12.37	0.001	0.19
Work-related burnout	Time	6.43	0.010	0.19
	Time $\times$ Group	8.93	0.001	0.24
	Group	6.45	0.006	0.12
Work-related time conflict	Time	5.58	0.020	0.17
	Time $\times$ Group	9.99	0.001	0.26
	Group	8.06	0.003	0.15
Work-family conflict (total)	Time	33.19	0.001	0.54
	Time $\times$ Group	49.34	0.001	0.64
	Group	8.91	0.001	0.21

Table 3 shows that the effect of Time was significant for work-family conflict and all its components ($p < 0.01$), indicating differences across the three assessment points (pretest, posttest, follow-up). Moreover, the significant Time $\times$ Group interactions ($p < 0.01$) indicate that changes over time differed between the experimental and control groups across all seven dependent variables. In addition,

all four multivariate test statistics (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root) were significant ($p < 0.01$), leading to rejection of the null hypothesis and indicating overall differences across measurement points and groups. To compare time points within each group, pairwise comparisons were conducted; results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4*Pairwise mean comparisons across measurement points within experimental groups*

Dependent variable	Comparison	Mean difference	SE	p
Family-related strain	Pre-Post	1.13	0.36	0.053
	Pre-Follow-up	0.33	0.44	1.000
	Post-Follow-up	-0.80	0.31	0.097
Family-related burnout	Pre-Post	0.20	0.37	1.000
	Pre-Follow-up	-0.67	0.42	0.409
	Post-Follow-up	-0.87	0.32	0.093
Family-related time conflict	Pre-Post	0.73	0.38	0.230
	Pre-Follow-up	0.53	0.36	0.493
	Post-Follow-up	-0.20	0.34	1.000
Work-related strain	Pre-Post	0.20	0.22	1.000
	Pre-Follow-up	0.07	0.23	1.000
	Post-Follow-up	-0.13	0.13	1.000
Work-related burnout	Pre-Post	0.73	0.36	0.179
	Pre-Follow-up	-0.20	0.53	1.000
	Post-Follow-up	-0.93	0.35	0.066
Work-related time conflict	Pre-Post	0.60	0.34	0.285
	Pre-Follow-up	0.13	0.39	1.000
	Post-Follow-up	-0.47	0.27	0.071
Work-family conflict (total)	Pre-Post	3.60	1.99	0.070
	Pre-Follow-up	0.20	1.14	1.000
	Post-Follow-up	-3.40	1.67	0.080

Table 5*Pairwise mean comparisons across measurement points within control and experimental groups*

Dependent variable	Comparison	Mean difference	SE	p
Family-related strain	Pre-Post	-4.33	0.94	0.010
	Pre-Follow-up	-4.07	0.85	0.001
	Post-Follow-up	0.27	0.42	1.000
Family-related burnout	Pre-Post	-4.80	0.95	0.001
	Pre-Follow-up	-4.20	0.94	0.002
	Post-Follow-up	0.60	0.16	0.088
Family-related time conflict	Pre-Post	-1.93	0.73	0.036
	Pre-Follow-up	-1.93	0.79	0.044
	Post-Follow-up	0.00	0.34	1.000
Work-related strain	Pre-Post	-3.27	0.40	0.001
	Pre-Follow-up	-3.73	0.44	0.001
	Post-Follow-up	-0.47	0.23	0.111
Work-related burnout	Pre-Post	-2.47	0.78	0.021
	Pre-Follow-up	-2.60	0.81	0.019
	Post-Follow-up	-0.13	0.36	1.000
Work-related time conflict	Pre-Post	-2.47	0.82	0.027
	Pre-Follow-up	-2.47	0.77	0.020
	Post-Follow-up	0.00	0.29	1.000
Work-family conflict (total)	Pre-Post	-19.27	2.72	0.001
	Pre-Follow-up	-19.00	2.80	0.001
	Post-Follow-up	0.27	0.61	1.000

Based on Table 4 and 5, there were no significant differences between groups at the pretest on any of the work-family conflict components ($p > 0.05$). However, significant differences emerged at posttest and follow-up

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aimed to develop and validate an Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)-based work-family balance package for reducing work-family conflict among female teachers. The results of the data analyses indicated that the ACT-based work-family balance intervention produced a significant reduction in work-family conflict components in the experimental group compared with the control group. In addition, the intervention effects were maintained over time, as evidenced by the three-month follow-up findings. These results are consistent with previous research (Aghili & Amiri, 2023; Fattah Moghaddam et al., 2024; Ifelunni et al., 2023; Majeed, 2025; Safdar, 2024; Shujaat et al., 2019; Watanabe & Falci, 2016; Wei et al., 2025).

This finding can be explained by the nature of work-family balance interventions, which are often designed around approaches such as ACT, values-based role regulation, problem-solving skills, time management, and cognitive restructuring. Unlike broad, non-specific approaches, these interventions directly target the

($p < 0.01$), supporting the effectiveness of the ACT-based work-family balance package for improving work-family conflict dimensions among female teachers.

conflict-generating tensions between occupational and family domains and help participants redefine their roles, identify and prioritize core life values, and make meaning- and values-based decisions when facing competing demands (Hayes et al., 2012). Accordingly, training strategies such as differentiating role domains, developing psychological flexibility, and accepting existing pressures without avoidance or denial can reduce individuals' perceptions of "conflict" between work and family (Greenhaus et al., 2012).

Moreover, work-family balance interventions typically include components aimed at managing work- or family-related guilt, reducing role-based perfectionism, and strengthening self-efficacy in performing multiple roles—factors that collectively decrease inter-role friction (Frone, 2003). In the present intervention, which was grounded in ACT principles, participants learned how to accept difficult conditions (including simultaneous work and family pressures) while staying committed to deeply held values, thereby reducing inter-role conflicts (Hayes et al., 2012). Prior research also suggests that imbalance between work and family roles may undermine marital relationship quality,

contributing to perceived neglect by one's spouse, extreme fatigue, dissatisfaction with the division of responsibilities, and reduced emotional intimacy (Frone, 2003; Greenhaus et al., 2012). In this program, skills such as increasing awareness of maladaptive thoughts (e.g., "Either I must be successful at work or I must be a good spouse") and enhancing psychological flexibility can help individuals regulate emotional reactions to such dichotomies and make values-based choices (Bond et al., 2008). This process may enable participants to create a healthier balance between family and job responsibilities without suppression or avoidance, ultimately reducing interpersonal conflicts within marital relationships (Tkach & Lyubomirsky, 2006).

From the perspective of role boundary theory, individuals who manage boundaries between work and family more effectively experience lower work-family conflict (Afshani & Hatefird, 2017). Work-family balance interventions can improve this capability by teaching psychological and behavioral boundary-setting between the two domains. In addition, based on the Job Demands-Resources model, when demands arising from multiple work and family roles exceed personal resources (e.g., coping skills, flexibility, social support), work-family conflict increases (Bakker et al., 2007). By strengthening individuals' psychological resources, work-family balance interventions may correct this imbalance. Overall, the findings indicate that the effectiveness of psychological interventions is strongly dependent on the fit between the intervention and the target problem.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

The study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration, which provides guidelines for ethical research involving human participants. Ethical considerations in this study were that participation was entirely optional.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contribute to this study.

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