

PO103 Effects of Positive Psychology Interventions on Loneliness: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials

Daria Sintoma

"Evidence-Based Assessment and Psychological Interventions" Doctoral School, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Romania

Claudiu Negosanu

"Evidence-Based Assessment and Psychological Interventions" Doctoral School, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Romania

Aurora Szentagotai-Tatar

Department of Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy; The International Institute for the Advanced Studies of Psychotherapy and Applied Mental Health, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Abstract

Objective: Loneliness is a widespread phenomenon associated with both mental and physical health concerns. Positive psychology interventions (PPIs), which are interventions designed to enhance well-being through methods consistent with positive psychology principles, have been proposed as a means to mitigate loneliness. While previous systematic reviews and meta-analyses have demonstrated the effectiveness of PPIs for various psychiatric and somatic conditions, none have investigated their impact on loneliness. Therefore, this systematic review and meta-analysis aim to assess the efficacy of PPIs in alleviating loneliness across diverse populations by synthesizing evidence from randomized controlled trials (RCTs).

Methods: This study, pre-registered in PROSPERO (CRD42024540283), adhered to Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. A systematic search was conducted across four major databases (PubMed, PsycINFO, Web of Science, and Scopus) for RCTs comparing PPIs aimed at reducing loneliness to any kind of control group. We found 1467 articles. Inclusion criteria encompassed RCTs of PPIs conducted on healthy or clinical populations of any age, published in peer-reviewed English-language journals, utilizing validated measures of well-being and loneliness. Two independent reviewers will conduct the screening, data extraction, and quality assessment of the included studies, resolving disagreements through consultation with a senior researcher. The primary outcome will be the changes in loneliness score post-PPI and/or follow-up, while the secondary outcomes will be changes in well-being scores. The study quality will be assessed based on the Cochrane collaboration tool for assessing risk of bias (RoB 2) in randomized controlled trials (Sterne et al. 2019). For data processing, Comprehensive Meta-Analysis software (Borenstein et al., 2013) will be used, employing a random-effects model and Hedges' adjusted g as an effect size indicator. Heterogeneity is anticipated due to the broad definition of PPIs, and it will be quantified using Q and I^2 statistics. Publication bias will be assessed via funnel plots and Egger's test. Moderator analyses will examine PPI characteristics, control group types, and participant characteristics, employing meta-regression for continuous variables such as study quality, age, and percentage of females.

Results: Building upon prior meta-analyses (e.g. Carr et al., 2021; Bolier et al., 2013; Chakhssi et al., 2018), we expect small to medium post-intervention effects on reducing loneliness and improving positive outcomes (e.g., well-being, quality of life). We anticipate some maintenance of these gains at follow-up. Drawing from Carr et al.'s mega-analysis (2024) we foresee three key moderators: longer and face-to-face PPIs may be more effective, studies with inactive controls and lower methodological quality may show larger effects, and PPIs may benefit individuals with mental or physical health issues.

Conclusions: This meta-analysis will shed light on the impact of PPIs on loneliness. Future research should delve into the mechanisms underlying their effectiveness and optimize delivery methods for greater impact.

Keywords

Positive Psychology Interventions, Loneliness, Systematic Review, Meta-Analysis, Randomized Controlled Trials

PO104 Exploring the interplay of difficulties in emotion regulation, repetitive negative thinking, and distress: A two-wave longitudinal mediation study using a transdiagnostic approach

Catarina Raposo

Center for Psychology at the University of Porto, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Porto, Portugal

Pedro Nobre

Center for Psychology at the University of Porto, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of

Porto, Portugal

Pedro Rosa

Lusófona University, HEI-Lab: Digital Human-Environment Interaction Labs, Lisbon, Portugal

Patrícia M. Pascoal

Lusófona University, HEI-Lab: Digital Human-Environment Interaction Labs, Lisbon, Portugal

Abstract

Sexual distress is a critical factor in diagnosing sexual dysfunction, with recent cross-sectional research supporting a transdiagnostic approach for its understanding. This exploratory study aimed to investigate the mediating role of repetitive negative thinking between difficulties in emotional regulation and both sexual and psychological distress within a community sample. Utilizing a quantitative longitudinal design, the study surveyed 64 partnered individuals. The survey included a sociodemographic questionnaire, the Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale – Short Form, the Persistent and Intrusive Negative Thoughts Scale and, as interrelated outcomes, the Sexual Distress Scale-Revised and the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale. Correlational analysis over time showed significant associations between difficulties in emotion regulation, repetitive negative thinking, psychological distress, and sexual distress. Controlling for sexual activity frequency, a positive total effect of difficulties in emotion regulation on sexual distress was observed. Longitudinal mediation analysis revealed a significant negative indirect effect of difficulties in emotion regulation on sexual distress through repetitive negative thinking, which acts as a buffer, but this effect was not observed for psychological distress. These findings underscore the importance of recognizing difficulties in emotion regulation and repetitive negative thinking as coping strategies when examining sexual distress. They emphasize the necessity to explore the efficacy of therapeutic interventions that address these cognitive processes to reduce adverse sexual outcomes. The results suggest that repetitive negative thinking might have adaptive effects, highlighting a nuanced role for these cognitive processes in coping strategies within the study's context.

Keywords

difficulties in emotion regulation; repetitive negative thinking; sexual distress; psychological distress; longitudinal study; transdiagnostic approach

PO105 Cognitive behavioral therapy for anxiety disorders in children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders

Amalie Nielsen, Aarhus University, Denmark

Abstract

Background: Approximately 1-2% of all children and adolescents have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ASD is characterized as a pervasive developmental disorder marked by deviations and delays in the development of social interaction and communication patterns, as well as limited, stereotyped, and repetitive behaviors. Children and adolescents with ASD often experience an elevated risk of comorbid conditions such as ADHD, conduct disorders, anxiety, and OCD. Studies have found that 44-60% of children and adolescents with ASD also have an anxiety disorder. This number is much higher compared to the 3-5% prevalence of anxiety in children without an ASD diagnosis. The combination of ASD and comorbid conditions has been shown to have an even greater impact on the behavior and well-being of the child than the ASD diagnosis alone. Therefore, treating these comorbid conditions is crucial for improving the child's well-being and overall functional level.

Purpose: To present experiences with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for anxiety disorders in children and adolescents with ASD using the Cool Kids autism spectrum adaptation. This is a 10-session program aimed at helping autistic children and adolescents manage anxiety. Another purpose is to present and discuss some of the common difficulties in treating this population, such as inclusion criteria, differential diagnosis, treatment format (group vs. individual), manualized treatment, parental involvement, and challenges related to autism spectrum disorder such as cognitive inflexibility, insistence on sameness, and sensory sensitivity. This poster will primarily have a clinical perspective and be case-based.

Keywords

Autism spectrum disorders, ASD, anxiety disorders, cognitive behavioral therapy, CBT, children, adolescents