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Comparing acceptance and commitment group therapy and twelve steps facilitation for alcohol use disorders: A randomized controlled trial

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Objective: A randomized clinical trial proposes to test the effectiveness of an Acceptance and Commitment group Therapy (ACgT) on reducing the severity of alcohol dependence in Alcohol Use Disorders, compared to the the Twelve Steps Facilitation(TSF) used in Alcoholics Anonymous and a Waitlist (WL).

Method: Participants will be included from a population aged 18-65, using convenience sampling. A minimum of 75 individuals should partake to the study, randomized into three groups based: an experimental group that will receive ACgT, an active control group that will receive TSF and a control group (Waitlist). Both ACgT and TSF interventions will consist of 12-weekly sessions. Psychological flexibility, severity of alcohol dependence and diagnostic status will be assessed before the interventions begin (pre-test), after their completion (post-test) and at a 12-month follow-up.

Findings: Two-way mixed 3x3 ANOVA with repeated measures will be used to find an interaction between the intervention used and the time of testing. It is expected that the participants in the ACgT group will have a more notable reduction in severity of dependence compared to the TSF group and the WL group, $p < 0.05$. Mediation analysis will be used to study if psychological flexibility is a mediator between the intervention used and severity of alcohol dependence. It is expected that the association between the intervention used and changes from pre-test to post test, respectively the changes from pre-test to follow-up in the severity of alcohol dependence will be mediated by the changes over time in psychological flexibility.

Conclusions: Acceptance and Commitment group Therapy could be a useful alternative form of treatment for Alcohol Use Disorders. Psychological flexibility could be a reliable mechanism of change in treatments for the severity of alcohol dependence. This approach could offer a solution to the problematic aspects underlying the growing prevalence of Alcohol Use Disorders.

Biography

Nadina Pantea has completed her BA studies at the age of 21 years from Babe-Bolyai University, Romania. She graduated with a BA degree in Psychology.

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