

## The Effectiveness of Emotion Regulation Training on Depression Symptoms in Caregiver's Mothers of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in the COVID-19 Outbreak

Saeed Ariapooran\*

Elham Rastgoo\*\*

Mahdi Abdolazade Rafi\*\*\*

### Introduction

Mothers who are caregivers of children with severe and profound intellectual disabilities may experience psychological problems during the COVID-19 outbreak. These mothers report more stress and psychological problems than mothers of normal children. One of the major problems these caregivers face is depression. Emotional training is an effective way to help mothers of children with intellectual disabilities deal with depression. However, no research has been done on the effectiveness of emotion regulation training on depression in caregiver mothers of children with intellectual disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aimed to explore the effectiveness of emotion regulation training on depression symptoms in caregiver mothers of children with intellectual disabilities during the COVID-19 outbreak.

### Method

The study used a quasi-experimental method with experimental and control groups. The study population consisted of all caregiver mothers of children with severe and profound intellectual disabilities in Razan City, Iran. The study randomly selected 22 mothers with severe depression symptoms for the experimental and control groups. The experimental group received emotional regulation training in 8 weekly sessions (90 hours), while the control group did not receive any training during the sessions. The data

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\* Associate Professor, Malayer University, Malayer, Iran. *Corresponding Author:*

[s.ariapooran@malayeru.ac.ir](mailto:s.ariapooran@malayeru.ac.ir)

\*\* M. A in General Psychology, Malayer University, Malayer, Iran.

\*\*\* Assistant Professor, Malayer University, Malayer, Iran.

was collected using a short form of the depression inventory, and analysis of covariance with repeated measures was used to analyze the data.

### Results

The results showed that 42.86% of mothers had symptoms of severe depression. The study found that emotional regulation training was effective in reducing depression in caregiver mothers of children with severe and profound mental disabilities ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### Discussion

Based on the study, it is recommended that parents of children with ADHD be educated about the negative consequences of screen time (SB). Parents should be encouraged to engage in physical activities with their children, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Strengthening home sports activities can be beneficial for both parents and children with ADHD. Workshops on managing screen time can be held online or face-to-face for mothers. Psychological strategies to reduce caregiver distress can also be effective in managing the screen time of children with ADHD. Mothers who are caregivers of children with severe and profound intellectual disabilities may experience psychological problems during the COVID-19 outbreak. These mothers report more stress and psychological problems than mothers of normal children. One of the major problems these caregivers face is depression. Emotional training is an effective way to help mothers of children with intellectual disabilities deal with depression. However, no research has been done on the effectiveness of emotion regulation training on depression in caregiver mothers of children with intellectual disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aimed to explore the effectiveness of emotion regulation training on depression symptoms in caregiver mothers of children with intellectual disabilities during the COVID-19 outbreak.

**Keywords:** caregiver mothers, COVID-19, depression, emotion regulation, intellectual disability

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**Author Contributions:** S. Ariapoorn was responsible for leading the overall research process, wrote and reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript. E. Rastgoo was responsible for research plan design, data collection. M. Abdolazade Rafi responsible for data analysis.

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