Author's response to reviews

Title: The effect of cardiac rehabilitation on anxiety and depression in patients undergoing cardiac bypass graft surgery in Iran

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Answer for reviewers

Dr Angele McGrady (first reviewer) and Dr Siegfried Kasper (second Reviewer): The requested comment and changes were made.

Dear respected reviewer (Dr Irene Lie):
We would like to thank you for the constructive comments and the time spent on reviewing our manuscript. Below please find our response to the comments. I hope that we have satisfied all your comments.

1. In the manuscript the study is described as interventional study and case control study. You have a randomized control study. Please use that description to improve the manuscript.
Response: The necessary changes were made to the methods section and underlined.

2. The word transplantation in relation to CABG is not known in international literature. Suggest using the word graft/grafting or CABG surgery.
Response: The necessary changes were made in the article and underlined.

3. References in the manuscript. When you referee to an author in the text then consistently add parentheses including the year of publication.
Response: Years were added in parentheses for all the authors. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

4. There is a need for more references to international research. Cochrane reviews on cardiac rehabilitation for example and other studies on cardiac rehabilitation to strengthen your arguments in the manuscript. Also look at the BRUM-study. You may also consider comparing your study with Dehdari T et al (2009) among others from Iran.
Response: The references regarding the BRUM study (reference 33) and Dehdari et al’s studies (2 studies) (reference 27 and 30) were added to the discussion and highlighted.

Abstract
Objectives
You may consider to change the word confront with for example experience or report.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Methods
You may delete the word convenience since you have a RCT and exclusion criteria is listed in the manuscript.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

In addition to 8 cardiac rehabilitation sessions you may insert over a 4-week period.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Before Beck Depression Inventory insert depression was measured by
Further you describe three-point measure time: on discharge from the hospital, immediately after can be misunderstand. Suggest to insert immediately after the intervention or use the word cardiac rehabilitation.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Delete the last sentence in the methods. It belongs to the manuscript part.
Response: The last sentence was deleted as suggested.

Results
Insert at all three time-points?
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Conclusion
Do you mean 2 months after surgery?
Response: Yes. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Key words
Start with CABG
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Background
1. I suggest the background start focusing on CABG is still the first choice with severe coronary artery disease (Serruys PM et al, 2009), and then you continue to describe secondary prevention, which is the aim of cardiac rehabilitation. If you want to compare developed countries and for example Britain it could be an idea to incorporate in one or more sentences to more clearly see the differences.
Response: The reference for Serruys has been added. Also, I deleted the sentence about Britain because I found it a little irrelevant to the whole paragraph and the surrounding sentences.

2. 3d section. Cardiac rehabilitation is a group….I suggest you describe different types of cardiac rehab and make the reader understand why it is important to have your kind of cardiac rehab program in Iran.
Response: Actually what I initially meant was that cardiac rehabilitation has three stages as written in the manuscript. In our study we aimed at rehabilitation after CABG. The type used in Iran is the routine rehabilitation (pamphlets and routine follow-up visits) which I have mentioned in answer to one of the comments and have incorporated it in the manuscript.

3. 4th section. You describe the method in your study. In this description it seems that the patients in your study also have some exercise training? This belong to the method section of the manuscript.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined and this part has been moved to the methods section.

Methods
Design
1. It will strengthen the randomized controlled trial and the manuscript to have Participants with inclusion and exclusion criteria, Sample size and Randomization description as separate chapters under the section Methods.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined. The Methods now has different sections with relevant headings.

2. Sample size determination. You need to refer to those other studies, and make a short description.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined. The relevant article has been cited.

3. Also there is a need of description of the randomization process. What is a goal oriented sampling method in this study?
Response: What I meant was that based on the goals of our study we chose one of the most common randomization methods for RCTs. Therefore, a simple randomization method was used, which I have stated in the manuscript. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

4. Please make a short description of the routine postoperative care at the hospital.
Response: As mentioned previously the routine care is pamphlets and routine visits to the cardiologist. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

5. I recommend you to insert a figure of the patient flow chart. Did you have any loss to follow up?
Response: The patient flowchart based on the CONSORT guidelines has been added at the end of the article and cited in the manuscript.

6. Did you use intention-to-treat principle if there were some item the patient did not answer.
Response: Since all patients answered the questions and filled the questionnaire completely, we did not use the ITT principle.

7. Did you send the questionnaire by postal mail or did you call the patients and then fill in the questionnaires?
Response: The patients filled the questionnaire when they came for their follow-up visits and the researcher gave them their questionnaires to fill. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Instruments
1-What do you mean by personal information questionnaire?
Response: The demographic data questionnaire was used. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

2. Last section. You may delete prior to the intervention and the data collection (International you are not allowed to start a study before you have approval)....and start the sentence by The study...
Response: The suggested part was deleted.

Statistical analysis
1. You need to explain more how you were using the different analyses in your data material. Then table 2 will be more understandable.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

2. First sentence using SPSS instead of with SPSS.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

3. Have you chosen you p level to be 0.05?
Response: Yes. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Results
1- Start with There were no statistical…
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

2. Unemployed instead of jobless
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

3. 4th section The mutual effect of time and group. Using multivariate repeated measures?
Response: Yes. The necessary changes were made and underlined.

4. Last sentence in results …was not significant
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Table 1
Please use a table format to get all the numbers on line and make separate heading for the P value. You need to add n=? for both groups.
Response: The table was rearranged completely based on the suggestions.

Table 2
In the text you describe anxiety before depression. Please do so in the heading of the table.
Response: The necessary changes were made to the table.

You need to work on the layout of the table. I do not recommend bold markers. Time should be the heading over the time points of the intervention, not in the
heading besides group.
What is the n=?

I suggest you have heading with p value after intervention to compare the groups from before intervention to after intervention. Then a new heading of p value after 2 months to describe the difference from baseline to 2 months. Then as a footnote you describe statistical method and that the comparison is from baseline values.
As stars *** besides for example anxiety level and then in footnote you describe statistical significance for time differences. Then delete the heading time. Also note the reader would not understand 0</?/001.

Response: The table was rearranged completely based on the suggestions. However, by consulting with a statistician I prefer to keep the P values as it is, because it shows the rate of changes over time. Since I used the repeated measurement test I do not have the separate P values for the requested times. I made as much changes as the reviewer has requested and I hope it now satisfies the respected reviewer’s comments.

Please tell me the reason for the heading and analyses of time/group?
Response: This P value shows the changes in each group over the total time period of the study. If the editor or reviewer prefer to delete this section it is OK.

Discussion
As commented earlier there is a need for more references/discussion to improve the manuscript. You have performed a cardiac rehab program with exercise and educational components. You also need to incorporate literature with the same interventional focus.
Response: In answer to one of the previous comments we have added two Iranian reference that was somewhat similar to my study in the discussion section.
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You are referring to the study of Lie et al (2007). Please let the reader know this is a study with a psychoeducative intervention.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.

Conclusion
You may mention the interdisciplinary component as well. Medical doctors developed this intervention as you have described.
Response: The necessary changes were made and underlined.
Thank you for the time you took for reviewing this manuscript.

Best regards

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