Author’s response to reviews

Title: Older adults with lower autobiographical memory abilities report less age-related decline in everyday cognitive function

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Author’s response to reviews:

August 17, 2020

Dear BMC Geriatrics Editorial Office:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a revised manuscript entitled Older adults with lower autobiographical memory abilities report less age-related decline in everyday cognitive function (BGTC-D-19-00608).

We have addressed the issues from the editor; our responses to each specific point are below.

Thank you once again for your time and effort in reviewing our manuscript. We look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,

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Responses to comments from the editor

1. We note that the Figures and Tables from the supplementary file are not cited in the text of your manuscript. Please ensure that all figures, tables and supplementary/additional files are cited within the text. Any items which are not cited may be deleted by our production department upon publication.
We have ensured that every supplementary figure and table is now cited in the main text.

p.16, paragraph 1
…older participants reported better function. As seen in the supplemental material (Table S9 and Figure S1), this finding was not altered by the inclusion of gender in the model.

p.16, paragraph 3
To confirm that episodic, but not semantic, memory capacities moderated the relationship between aging and function, we ran a regression with SAM-semantic scores instead of SAM-episodic as the moderating variable in the relationship between age and the CFQ (see supplemental material, Table S1, for full regression results). There was a direct relationship between SAM-semantic scores and the CFQ such that higher semantic memory abilities were associated with better everyday function, but there was no interaction between age and SAM-semantic scores, suggesting that the relationship between age and function did not depend on individual differences in semantic memory abilities. Similar results were obtained when we tested SAM-spatial and SAM-future scores as moderators (see supplemental material, Tables S2 and S3).

p.19, paragraph 1
…we explored whether individuals reporting low episodic AM performed worse relative to high-episodic AM individuals on our objective measures of memory and cognitive performance (i.e., face-name and CBS tasks). These analyses (see supplemental material, Tables S4, S5, S6, S7, and S8, for full regression results) revealed that SAM-episodic scores did not directly relate to cognitive performance, nor did they interact with age, indicating that low trait episodic AM as measured by the SAM was not reflective of cognitive impairment that might lead to a lack of awareness of deficits.

2. In your “ethical approval and consent to participate” section, please confirm whether informed consent, written or verbal, was obtained from all participants and clearly state this in your manuscript. If verbal, please state the reason and whether the ethics committee approved this procedure. If the need for consent was waived by an IRB or is deemed unnecessary according to national regulations, please clearly state this, including the name of the IRB or a reference to the relevant legislation.

We have clarified in this section that written informed consent was obtained, and we have added this information to the main text of the manuscript.

p.7, paragraph 2
Participants were recruited online through the Canadian Association of Retired Persons (CARP). Members of CARP were invited via email to participate and compensated with a $10 gift card. All participants gave written informed consent at the start of the survey. The study procedure was approved by the Baycrest Research Ethics Board.

3. At this stage, please upload your manuscript as a single, final, clean version that does not contain any tracked changes, comments, highlights, strikethroughs or text in different colours. All relevant tables/figures/additional files should also be clean versions. Additional files should
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