Author’s response to reviews

Title: Attentional Avoidance in Peer Victimized Individuals with and without Psychiatric Disorders

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Author’s response to reviews:

Dear Dr. Navarro,

Thank you very much for your evaluation of our manuscript and for sending the comments. We have edited the manuscript accordingly. The changes are marked as bold text in the revised manuscript.

We hope that the changes meet your expectations.

Yours sincerely, on behalf of the authors,

Benjamin Iffland

Editor Comments:

The present study provides interesting results about the relation between attentional avoidance and peer victimization in individuals with and without Psychiatric disorders. The results of this study highlight the relevance of peer victimization in the attentional processes, and these results highlight how peer victimization during childhood and adolescence can interfere in adults' life and could be related with the development of psychopathology.

Authors have adequately addressed all the concerns expressed by reviewers. However, minor corrections are needed regarding the description of the sample, as I detail below.
Introduction

Authors provide sufficient background about attentional bias, and links between psychiatric disorders, attentional processes and peer victimization. The references used by the authors are appropriate and the objective of the research is established clearly by the authors.

Methods

The research design is appropriate. Authors adequately explain the analyzes performed, which are relevant to the objectives of this study. However, the sample is not described adequately. Although the clinical sample is well described, no information is offer regarding the control sample. Please, include more information about how the 31 individuals were approach. For example, how many people responded to the online advertisements; what information was included in the advertisements; explain if any compensation was given in exchange for participation; where all the participants students from the university?; explain if some of the control individual were excluded.

Results

The results are clearly presented by the authors.

Discussion

The authors highlight the relevance of peer victimization in attributional processes. The implications of this results are discussed by the authors. Also, the strengths and limitations of this study are adequately exposed. The main conclusions of this study are correctly indicated.

In conclusion, I think the paper will be ready for publication once the authors include the minor suggestions in the sample description.

→ Again, thank you for your evaluation of our manuscript. We added some more information about the healthy control group to the manuscript and we hope that this meets your expectations.

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“Participants

Due to the study’s aims, recruitment of participants was two-pronged. The clinical sample was recruited through the Hans-Peter-Kitzig-Institut (Gütersloh, Germany), a regional rehabilitation hospital for patients with psychiatric disorders. The healthy control sample was recruited through online advertisements in student newsgroups and bulletins at the campus of Bielefeld University.
Advertisements informed that the study examined the association of personality traits, life experiences, and attentional processes.

The total sample consisted of 61 participants, (26 females, 42.6%). Out of the whole sample, 30 individuals (49.2%) represented the clinical sample. Exclusion criteria for the clinical sample included (a) evidence of a current substance abuse or dependence, (b) evidence of current psychosis, and (c) evidence of acute suicide intention or ideation. Number and types of diagnoses of the clinical sample are presented in table 1. For the healthy control group, 32 individuals were screened for participation initially. One individual was excluded because criteria for a current mental disorder were fulfilled. Accordingly, the 31 individuals (50.8%) comprising the control sample reported no current mental or neurological disorders, no current use of prescriptive medication except oral contraceptives, and no current alcohol or drug dependence. Out of the control sample, 30 individuals were students at university and one reported to be working full time. Eligible participants of both groups read and signed an informed consent form that was approved by the Ethics Committee of Bielefeld University. Participants of the healthy control sample either received course credit or a compensation for their time of 6€/hour. The demographic characteristics of the two groups and diagnoses of the clinical sample are presented in table 1.”