

AN APP TO CHALLENGE OBSESSIONAL BELIEFS IN ADOLESCENTS: PRE-POST INTERVENTION EFFICACY AND A ONE-AND SIX-MONTH FOLLOW-UP STUDY.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a high-risk period for the development of psychological disorders such as obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Cognitive explanatory models posit that dysfunctional beliefs have an essential role in the etiology and maintenance of obsessive-compulsive disorder. In this sense, it could be of interest to address **OCD-related dysfunctional beliefs in adolescents** to improve their mental health through a widely accessible and tailored intervention such as the app GGOC-AD. It is an adaptation for the adolescent population of GGOC, an app specifically developed to challenge OCD-related beliefs.

AIM

This study aims to examine the **efficacy of the use of the app GGOC-AD** on OCD-related beliefs and symptoms. Additionally, we sought to assess if the changes produced after de use of the app (i.e., post-treatment) are maintained **at one- and six-month follow-ups**.

METHOD

Study Design

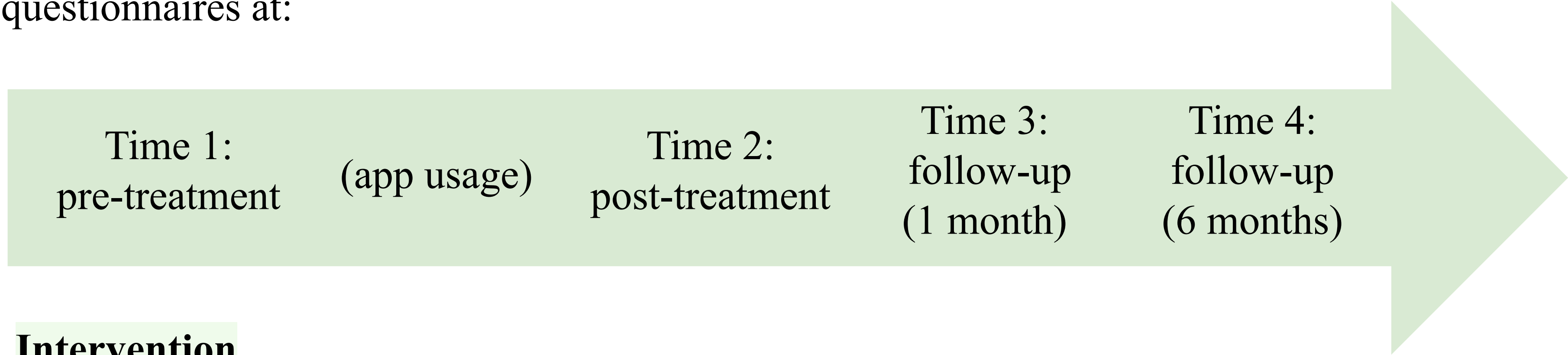
A parallel two-armed randomized controlled trial was conducted.

Participants

A group of 67 students (*M*= 15 years; *SD*= 0.60; 68.7 % women) were recruited from a public school in the Valencian Community (Spain) and were randomly allocated to either:

- Experimental group (usage of **GGOC-AD**).
- Control group (usage of GGN-AD; an app with **neutral content**).

Participants were required to use their respective app for 14 days and complete a set of questionnaires at:



Intervention

The app GGOC-AD consists of game-like interactions that are intended to help users increase their accessibility to self-statements that facilitate more adaptive appraisals of thoughts, emotions, and coping strategies. Participants will be instructed to respond to these statements by either accepting them or rejecting them.

Measures

Data was collected on:

- Obsessive-compulsive symptomatology (OCI-R-CV).
- OCD-related dysfunctional beliefs (OBQ-CV).

Analysis

- A 2 (group: experimental vs. control) x 2 (time: T1 vs. T2) mixed model repeated measures analysis (ANOVA) was conducted to assess the pre-post intervention effect.
- Paired *t*-tests were performed to analyze the maintenance of the results (T2 vs. T3; T2 vs. T4).

RESULTS

- Pre/post:** The ANOVA revealed a significant interaction effect for OCI-R-CV ($F_{1,65} = 10.41; p = .002; \eta^2_p = .14$) and OBQ-CV ($F_{1,65} = 13.61; p < .001; \eta^2_p = .17$).
- Long term effects:** Paired *t*-tests for the experimental group showed no significant changes in OCI-R-CV between T2 and T3 ($t_{29} = 0.57; p = .285$) or between T2 and T4 ($t_{29} = -1.26; p = .11$). Likewise, there were no significant changes in OBQ-CV between T2 and T3 ($t_{29} = 0.42; p = .341$), nor T2 and T4 ($t_{29} = -0.05; p = .481$).

Table 1. Mean **OCI-R-CV** scores at T1, T2, T3 and T4.

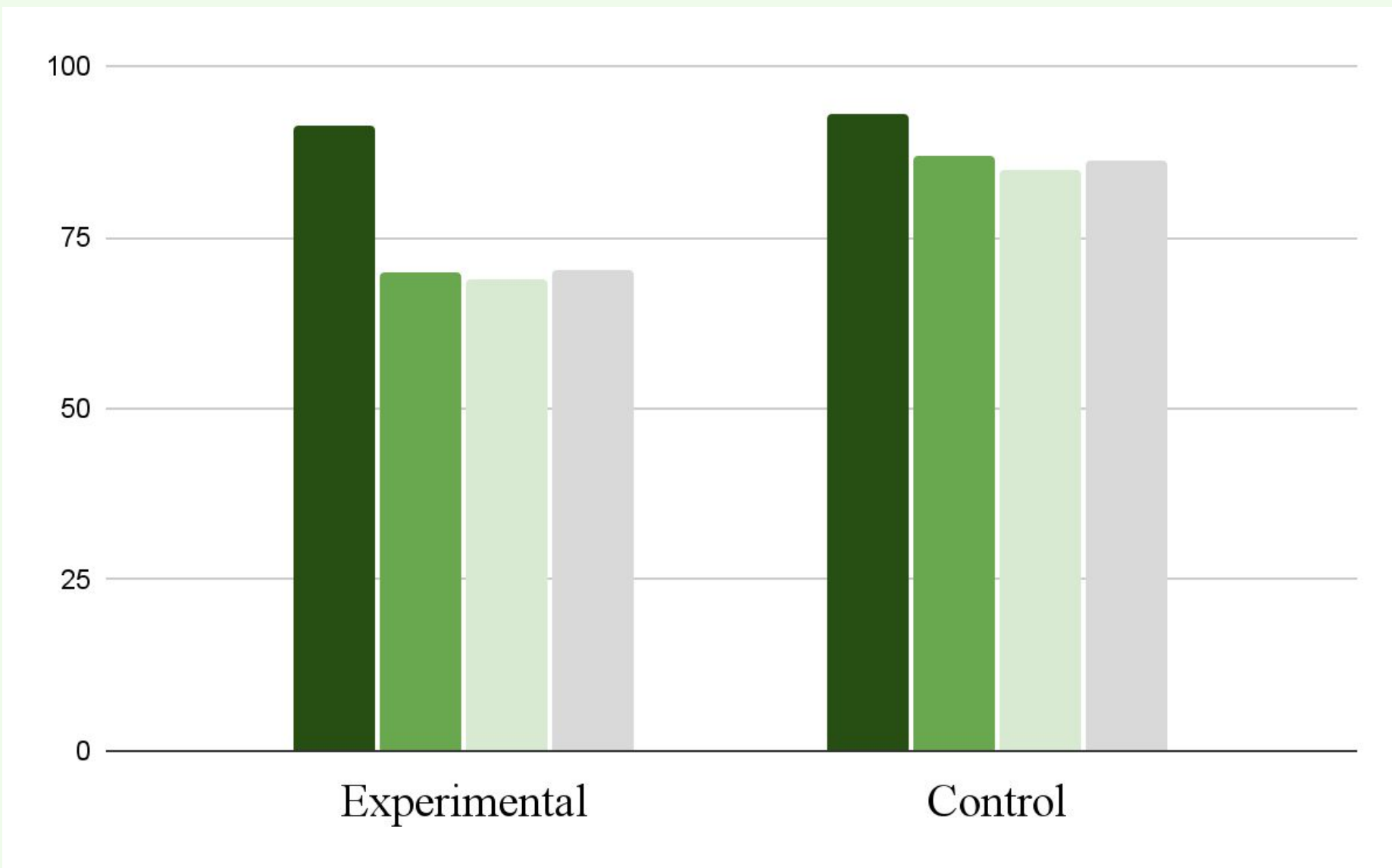
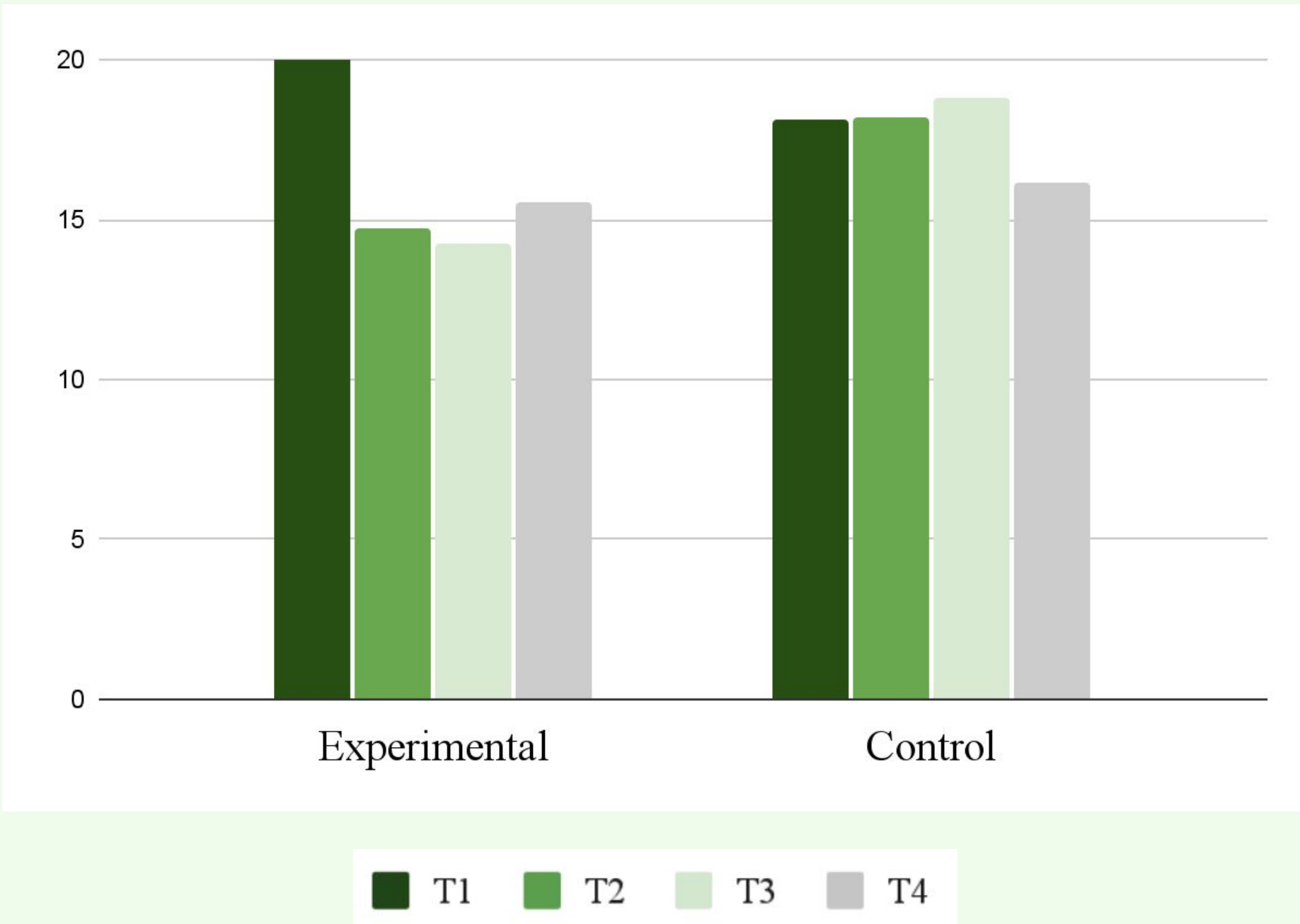


Table 2. Mean **OBQ-CV** scores at T1, T2, T3 and T4.



DISCUSSION

After the intervention with GGOC-AD, **OCD-related beliefs and symptoms decreased significantly**, and this improvement was **maintained even six months** after having finished the intervention. Thus, this app is a promising tool for enhancing the mental well-being of the adolescent population by reducing risk factors such as obsessional beliefs. Future studies should aim to study its effectiveness on clinical adolescent samples.

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