**P49: Measuring the Unspoken: Development of Two Instruments to Assess Nursing Home Caregivers' Implicit Associations with Behaviors to Improve Residents' Mood**

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**Background:** Within nursing home care, the role of professional caregivers is paramount. While certain caregiver behaviors, such as personal attention, can positively affect residents' mood, limited attention has been given to the automatic cognitive processes guiding these behaviors. Automatic cognitive processes refer to mental operations that occur rapidly and effortlessly, often beyond conscious awareness. These processes can impact habits and preferences, thereby influencing behavior.

**Objective:** This study aimed to develop and evaluate two pictorial Implicit Association Tasks(IATs) to measure nursing home caregivers' implicit associations with mood-improving behaviors for residents, focusing on implicit valence (liking) and motivation (wanting) regarding these behaviors.

**Methods:** Study 1 (N = 41) involved developing the Valence towards Behaviors to improve residents' Mood IAT (VBM-IAT) and the Motivation for Behaviors to improve residents' Mood IAT (MBM-IAT), and evaluating the content validity of target stimuli representing mood-improving behaviors. Study 2 (N = 230) examined stimulus classification ease (accuracy and speed) for both target and attribute stimuli (representing positive or negative valence, and motivation or demotivation). Additionally, the IATs' internal consistency was examined. A sub-sample (N = 111) examined test-retest reliability, convergent validity (with self-reported attitude towards depression, altruism, and mood-improving behaviors), and divergent validity (against social desirability).

**Results:** Content validity was satisfactory (CVI: ≥ .85). Error rates were acceptable for attribute stimuli (4.0%), but above the accepted limit of 10% for target stimuli (12.4%). All stimuli exhibited prolonged response times exceeding the desirable 800 ms threshold. The VBM-IAT and MBM-IAT demonstrated good internal consistency (rsb: .81; .85, respectively) but poor test-retest reliability (ICC: .29; .25). Mixed model analysis showed that both IATs correlated with altruism (estimated effect: .28, 95% CI [.11, .45]; .24 [.07, .42]). The VBM-IAT related to self-reported mood-improving behaviors (.20 [.03,.36]), while the MBM-IAT associated with the behavioral subscale of attitude towards depression (.21 [.03, .39]). The IATs did not significantly correlate with other scales.

**Conclusions:** The IATs show potential in measuring caregivers' implicit valence and motivation regarding behaviors to improve residents' mood, offering an innovative pathway for investigating automatic cognitive processes in caregiving. However, some limitations in psychometric properties were identified, aligning with challenges in similar IATs.