



Diary Card Skill Use In Relation To Self-Harm Urge

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Introduction

- Weekly diary cards are an essential component of Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), an evidence-based treatment for individuals diagnosed with borderline personality disorder (BPD).
- Diary cards are filled out by clients at home and record their emotional status and DBT skills practiced throughout the week.
- Previous studies have established many advantages of diary cards, such as its higher client retention rate than that of group-based DBT sessions in treating individuals with binge-eating disorder.
- In addition, previous research in cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) has indicated that homework adherence may predict treatment outcomes. This notion raised the following questions:
 - 1. Does diary card compliance serve as an indicator of the importance of implementing diary card in DBT?
 - 2. Does diary card compliance serve as an indicator of how well the protocol has been administered?
- The present study examined the relationship between completion rates of DBT clients and their self-harm urge.
- The correlation between reported skills use and self-harm urge was also examined.

Methods

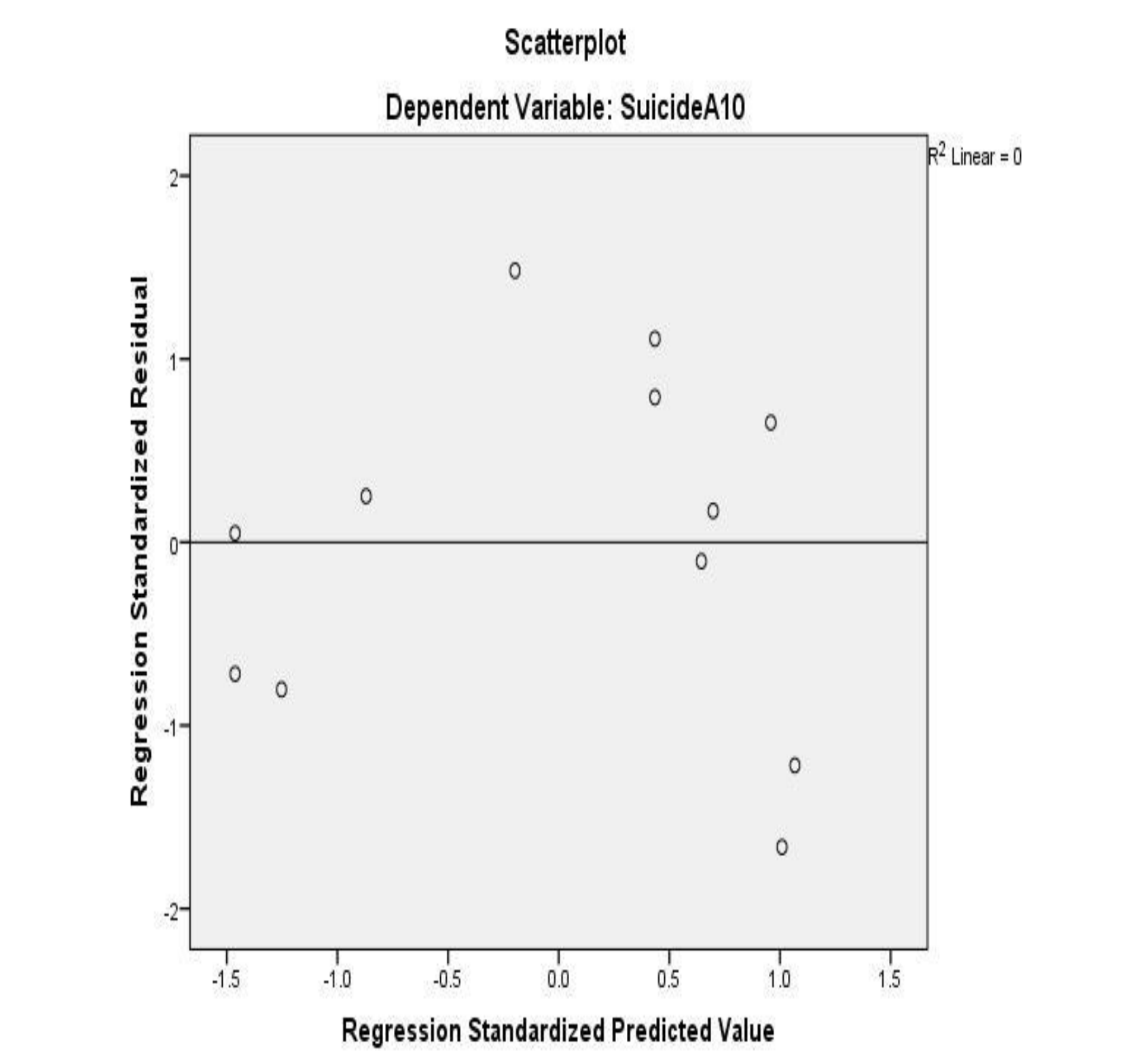
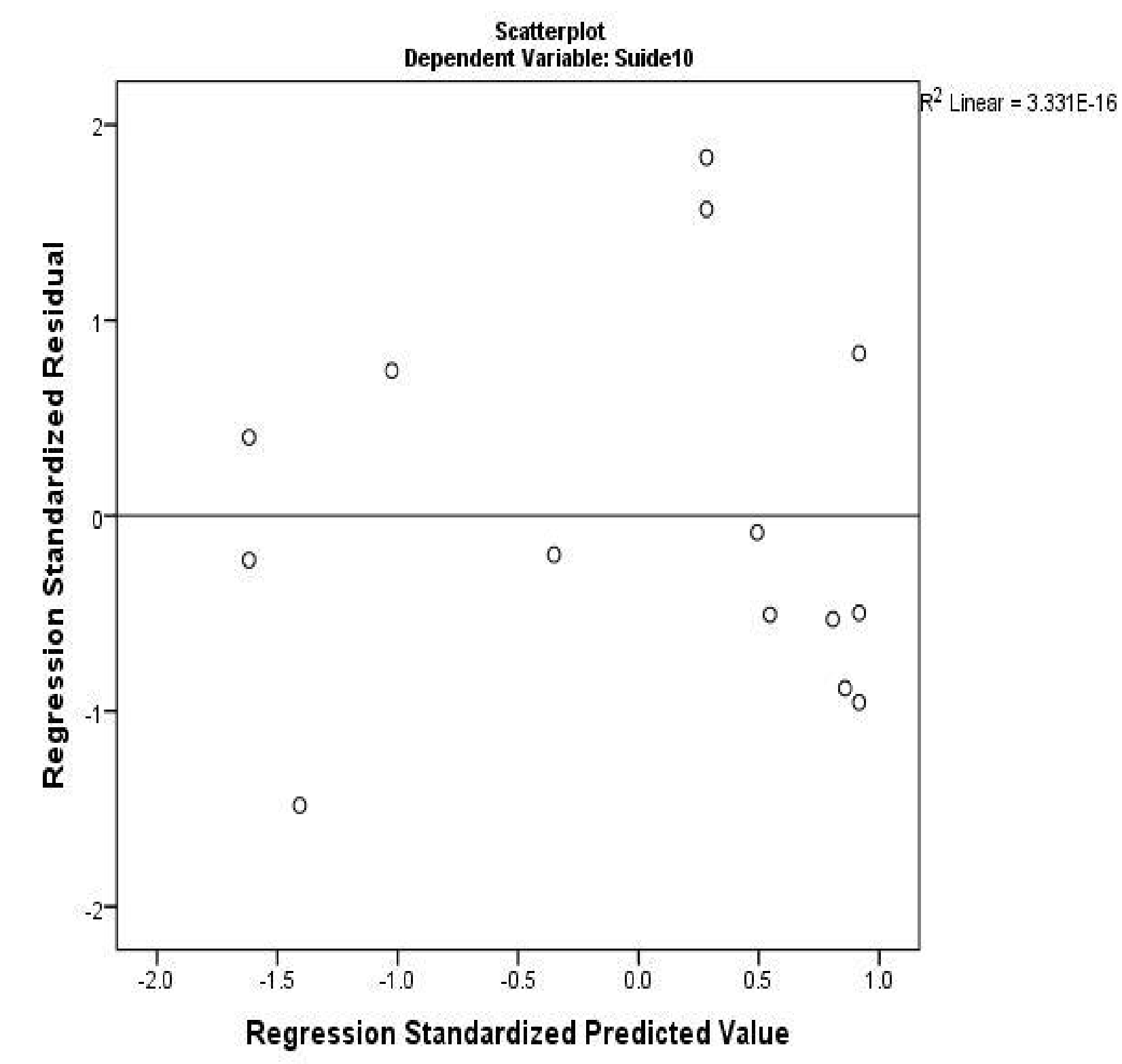
- Diary cards were collected from current or previous clients of UW Treatment Development Clinic (TDC).
- Diary cards from 14 adult clients and 12 adolescent clients were included in the study. Number of diary cards per client ranges from 1 to 83 with a mean of 24.54 and a standard deviation of 21.49.
- The completion rate and number of skill practiced each week were calculated and their correlation with self-harm urge was analyzed.
- Completion rates are defined as the percentage of diary cards where clients indicated the practice of at least one skill.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Diary Card		Week	First and Last Session	How often did you fill out the diary card?	Number of diary cards	Completion Rate																									
Day	Week	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN																									

DBT Skills Cluster	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN																							

- Number of skill practiced is divided into 4 clusters as indicated by the diary card, and each cluster has a number for the week.
- Due to high incompleteness and missing data, only 2 adult and 2 adolescent clients were used for Urge versus Skills Cluster Analysis.

Results



Group	Number of Clients	Average Number of Diary Cards	Range of Number of Diary Cards
Adult	14	21.79	1 to 48
Adolescent	12	27.75	3 to 83

Discussion

Pearson correlation coefficient was applied to observed correlation between compliance level and Suicide urge and NSSI. The results of our study suggest a weak positive correlation. We found that the higher self-harm urge of previous BPD patients in the TDC in relation to higher completion rates of the Diary Cards can be due to some extent to the treatment intensity for patients with serious condition.

On the skills practiced part, however, only rare, weak, and unrepresentative correlations were found, and overall there is no significant correlation between skill practiced and urge, but it might be the result of low completion rates leaving very few clients available for analysis.

The study is limited by small sample sizes with less than 20 samples in both Adult and Adolescent group. Outcomes were also collected and assessed at different time points through the TDC treatment program.

Moving Forward

The study did reveal the suboptimal low completion rate of diary cards, and in turn, in speculation, low homework adherence in TDC clients treating with DBT. Clients often neglected the skills practiced section of diary cards, though from this result alone it is not clear whether the clients practiced the skills but didn't fill out the diary card, or they simply ignored both tasks. Different therapists with different assignment procedures may also account for this low completion rate.

As previous ventures in diary card functionalities suggested that diary cards, when completed with high compliance, can profoundly improve the prognosis of clients, it is important to improve the administration of diary cards in TDC in order to better the overall treatment qualities and abate the difficulties in analyzing such data.

Future studies tackling the issue of urges and skills practiced as reported in diary cards should utilize a larger sample pool, ideally one with high diary card compliance.

References

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