

# A Review of the Use of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy in Supporting People With Disabilities

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**Background:** Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) have accrued a growing evidence-base for a wide variety of psychological difficulties. Currently, few studies have examined interventions or therapeutic processes that may help people of disabilities including ASD, PDD, ADHD or physical disabilities. The use of ACT-informed interventions for people with disabilities offers another alternative to solely behavioral approaches but it remains relatively understudied and in need of further exploration. This study reviewed the use of ACT in supporting people with disabilities in current 30 years.

**Methods:** The current systematic review, which searched three databases, PsychInfo, PsychArticles, Google Scholar, to November 2020, aimed to collate all ACT interventions that included therapeutic components in the treatment of various people with both mentally and physically disabilities. Currently including 5 Inclusion Criteria and 3 exclusion criteria. Each study was reviewed using the Quality Assessment Tool for Studies with Diverse Deigns (QATSDD).

Search strategy terms are Children with disabilities & ACT; Children with disabilities & mindfulness; People with disabilities & ACT; People with disabilities & mindfulness; children with autism & ACT; children with autism & mindfulness. Reporting follows PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols) guidelines.

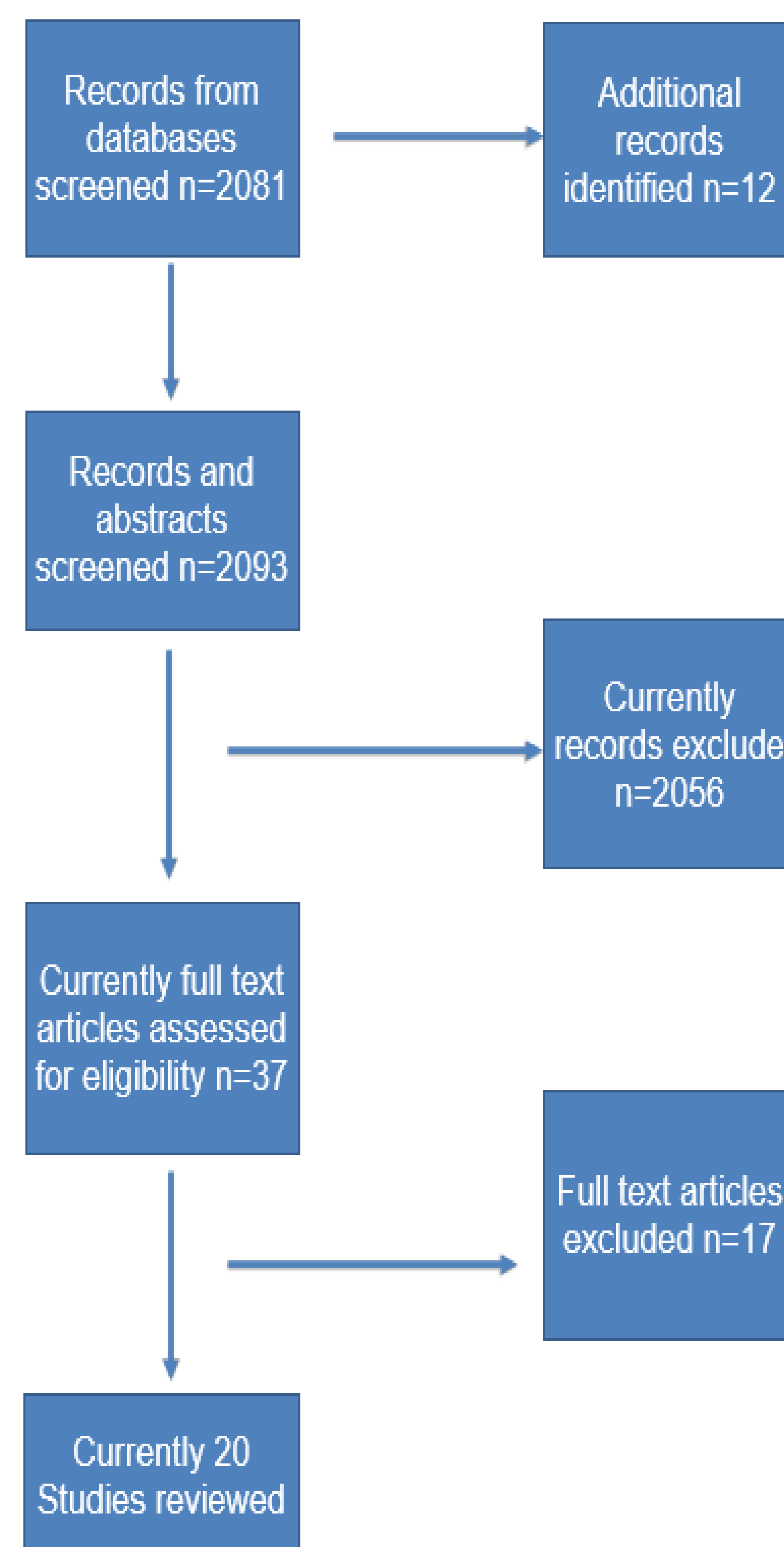
Currently Inclusion criteria were:

1. Published intervention studies that used ACT or a combination of ACT and other therapies
2. Studies that specifically focused on a disabilities-led intervention. The intervention had to include at least two focused sessions either alone or with people with disabilities
3. Studies that included at least one controlled group compared with trail group.
4. Studies that included at least one psychometrically sound, standardized outcome measure that was completed pre- and post-intervention by the people with disabilities.
5. Studies completed in English.

## result:

20 individual studies covering a broad spectrum of presenting problems were included, comprising of 855 participants. Overall 10 studies demonstrated the effectiveness of the program, 4 of these using quasi-experimental research designs and 6 studies through pre-experimental research designs. A large proportion of studies were within-group designs with a smaller number using randomized controlled trials. A large proportion of studies were within-group designs with a smaller number using randomized controlled trials. QATSDD was used as quality ratings. Ten studies fell in the high(over 74%) or good range (50%-74%) of methodological range. Ten studies were rated as poor (under 50%).

Fig.1 Data Extraction Flow



## Discussion:

The current review suggests ACT is effective in the treatment of children across a multitude of presenting problems. ACT may be a viable alternative treatment option for clinicians working with young people.

The current review highlights the potential utility of ACT in Supporting People With Disabilities. Although with many limitations, ACT is a trans-diagnostic intervention that can help with the parenting of children with a range of psychological and physical difficulties.

## References:

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- Moher D, Liberati A, Tetzlaff J, Altman DG. Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: the PRISMA statement. *BMJ*. 2009;339:b2535.