Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

08 Nov 2026

The effectiveness of Brief Dialectical Behavior Therapy on internalized shame and social comparison among female students with problematic social media use

Protocol summary

Study aim
Determining the Effectiveness of Short-Term Group Dialectical Behavior Therapy on Reducing Internalized Shame and Social Comparison in Individuals with Problematic Social Media Use

Design
A randomized, single-blind, phase 3 clinical trial with experimental and control groups, conducted on 24 participants

Settings and conduct
Twelve participants from one of the classrooms of Khorasan Institute of Higher Education will receive twelve sessions of group Dialectical Behavior Therapy training.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled who scored above 100 on the Cook Internalized Shame Scale, above 30 on the Social Comparison Orientation Scale by Gibbons and Buunk, and above 5 on the Problematic Social Media Use Questionnaire by van den Eijnden; who do not have severe psychiatric disorders or use psychotropic medications (based on self-report or an initial interview); and who have completed and submitted a written informed consent form to the researcher

Intervention groups
The experimental group underwent 12 sessions of 90 minutes each of Dialectical Behavior Therapy.

Main outcome variables
Reduction of internalized shame – reduction of social comparison tendency

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20251227068462N1**
Registration date: **2026-01-04, 1404/10/14**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-01-04, 1404/10/14**
Update count: **0**

Registration date
2026-01-04, 1404/10/14

Registrant information

Name
Akram Shariati

Name of organization / entity
KHORASAN INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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Recruitment status
Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2026-01-10, 1404/10/20

Expected recruitment end date
2026-01-20, 1404/10/30

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date
empty

Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
The effectiveness of Brief Dialectical Behavior Therapy on internalized shame and social comparison among

female students with problematic social media use

Public title
The effectiveness of brief Dialectical Behavior Therapy on internalized shame and social comparisonon Individuals with problematic social media use
Purpose
Education/Guidance
Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria:
Undergraduate and graduate students currently enrolled Individuals who scored above 100 on the Cook Internalized Shame Scale, above 30 on the Social Comparison Orientation Scale by Gibbons and Buunk, and above 5 on the Problematic Social Media Use Questionnaire by van den Eijnden Absence of severe psychiatric disorders or use of psychotropic medications (based on self-report or an initial interview) Completion and written submission of an informed consent form to the researcher Ages 20 to 30
Exclusion criteria:
During the course of the study, participants who were absent from more than two weekly Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) sessions would be excluded from the study Receiving concurrent psychological treatments
Age
From **20 years** old to **30 years** old
Gender
Female

Phase
3
Groups that have been masked

- Data analyser

Sample size
Target sample size: **24**
Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Not randomized
Randomization description
Blinding (investigator's opinion)
Single blinded
Blinding description
The data analyst was blinded to participants' group allocation
Placebo
Not used
Assignment
Parallel
Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee
Name of ethics committee
Ethics Committee for Biomedical Research of Ferdowsi University
Street address
Unit 2, No. 10, Doostkam 13, Iqbal Lahouri 9 Street, Vakilabad Boulevard
City
مشهد
Province
Razavi Khorasan
Postal code
9179733178
Approval date
2025-12-04, 1404/09/13
Ethics committee reference number
IR.UM.REC.1404.392

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Avoidant personality disorder
ICD-10 code
ICD-10 code description

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Reduction of Internalized Shame
Timepoint
Before the intervention – immediately after the intervention – one month after the end
Method of measurement
Internalized Shame Questionnaire

2

Description
Reduction of Social Comparison
Timepoint
Before the intervention – immediately after the intervention – one month after the end
Method of measurement
Social Comparison Questionnaire

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Twelve individuals who meet the study inclusion criteria will be randomly assigned to the intervention group. Prior to the commencement of the intervention, complete information regarding the objectives, procedures, and implementation of the treatment sessions will be provided to the participants in the experimental group, and written informed consent will be obtained from all research participants. Subsequently, participants will

attend twelve 90-minute Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) sessions, held twice a week. The sessions will be conducted in person in one of the classrooms at Khorasan University, and all stages of the study will be carried out in accordance with research ethical principles.The group sessions are designed based on the educational content and exercises of Linehan's Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills Training Manual (2018 Persian edition) and will be implemented as a short-term program as follows:Introduction and orientation to therapy, session rules, and introduction to mindfulness skillsPractice of mindfulness skills: observing, describing, and participatingAdvanced mindfulness skills: reasonable mind, emotional mind, and wise mindIntroduction to distress tolerance, the STOP skill, and practicing coping with crisesApplication of self-soothing skills and radical acceptanceIntroduction to emotion regulation skills: understanding emotions and reducing emotional vulnerabilityIncreasing positive emotions, identifying barriers, and enhancing emotional awarenessControlling negative impulses and maintaining calm in challenging situationsIntroduction to interpersonal effectiveness skills: assertiveness and effective requestingMaintaining relationships, saying no, and practicing mutual respectIntegration of skills and combined application of DBT skills in daily life situationsSummary, evaluation of progress, and planning for continued practice

Category
Behavior

2

Description
The control group will not receive any training.

Category
Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center
Counseling center of Khorasan institute of higher Education

Full name of responsible person
Hossein Farrokhi

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Amouzegar82 Street, Mashhad

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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity
Khorasan Institute of Higher Education

Full name of responsible person
Ali Khorrami

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Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
Yes

Title of funding source
Khorasan Institute of Higher Education

Proportion provided by this source
100

Public or private sector
Private

Domestic or foreign origin
Domestic

Category of foreign source of funding
empty

Country of origin

Type of organization providing the funding
Academic

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity
Khorasan Institute of Higher Education

Full name of responsible person
Akram Shariati

Position
Student

Latest degree
Bachelor

Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Study Protocol

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Informed Consent Form

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Analytic Code

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available

Data Dictionary

Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available