

# Clinical Trial Protocol

## Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

29 Jun 2026

### Efficiency of Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy (IBCT) on communication patterns and marital adjustment and analysis of effective factors on the outcomes of this intervention

#### Protocol summary

##### Study aim

This study is designed to determine the effectiveness of integrative behavioral couple therapy on communication patterns and marital adjustment, and analysis of effective factors on the outcomes of this intervention.

##### Design

Clinical trial with experimental and control group, with parallel groups, randomized, on 76 patients. A simple method was used for randomization.

##### Settings and conduct

The study is in the field of couple therapy and the place of the intervention is Tehran. Discordant couples receive 90 minutes of Integrative Behavioral Couples Therapy weekly at the Ava Ravan Psychological Clinic located in Vanek Square.

##### Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The main inclusion criteria: having destructive communication patterns and the presence of incompatibility in the relationship. Exclusion criteria: psychotic or other severe mental disorders.

##### Intervention groups

Intervention group: Interventions include an 11-session protocol of integrative behavioral couple therapy. Control group: No treatment

##### Main outcome variables

communication patterns and marital adjustment

#### General information

##### Reason for update

##### Acronym

##### IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20151107024923N2**

Registration date: **2023-01-18, 1401/10/28**

Registration timing: **retrospective**

Last update: **2023-01-18, 1401/10/28**

Update count: **0**

##### Registration date

2023-01-18, 1401/10/28

##### Registrant information

##### Name

Chiman Salimi

##### Name of organization / entity

University of Science and Culture

##### Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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##### Recruitment status

**Recruitment complete**

##### Funding source

##### Expected recruitment start date

2022-09-06, 1401/06/15

##### Expected recruitment end date

2022-10-12, 1401/07/20

##### Actual recruitment start date

empty

##### Actual recruitment end date

empty

##### Trial completion date

empty

##### Scientific title

Efficiency of Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy (IBCT) on communication patterns and marital adjustment and analysis of effective factors on the outcomes of this intervention

##### Public title

Efficiency of Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy (IBCT) on communication patterns and marital

adjustment and analysis of effective factors on the outcomes of this intervention

### **Purpose**

Supportive

### **Inclusion/Exclusion criteria**

#### **Inclusion criteria:**

The presence of compatibility problems in couples based on interviews and scores less than 109 in the Spanier Marital Compatibility Questionnaire (extremely severe incompatibilities that the couple is in the process of legal divorce will not be included in). Diploma and higher education level Age range between 20 and 45 At least 1 and at most 7 years of living together Having enough time to participate in meetings

#### **Exclusion criteria:**

suffering from severe psychiatric disorders (according to the initial interview) currently receiving other psychological or psychiatric treatment (due to interference with treatment outcomes) abusing drugs, alcohol and gambling (currently or in the last three months) experiencing another relationship at the same time (current experience of betrayal) severe domestic violence (currently)

### **Age**

From **20 years** old to **45 years** old

### **Gender**

Both

### **Phase**

3

### **Groups that have been masked**

*No information*

### **Sample size**

Target sample size: **76**

### **Randomization (investigator's opinion)**

Randomized

### **Randomization description**

Simple randomization has been done using a table of random numbers. First, a code was assigned to each of the participants, and to select the people of the test group, it was done randomly from the table of random numbers by closing the eyes and putting a finger on the table.

### **Blinding (investigator's opinion)**

Not blinded

### **Blinding description**

### **Placebo**

Not used

### **Assignment**

Parallel

### **Other design features**

## **Secondary Ids**

empty

## **Ethics committees**

### 1

#### **Ethics committee**

##### **Name of ethics committee**

Royan Institute, research ethics committee

### **Street address**

No. 12, Royan Alley., Hafez St., Banihashem St., Qasem Soleimani Expressway (Resalat Ave)., Tehran, Iran

### **City**

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2356200000

### **Approval date**

2022-09-03, 1401/06/12

### **Ethics committee reference number**

IR.ACECR.ROYAN.REC.1401.062

## **Health conditions studied**

### 1

#### **Description of health condition studied**

Marital adjustment

#### **ICD-10 code**

#### **ICD-10 code description**

## **Primary outcomes**

### 1

#### **Description**

Marital adjustment

#### **Timepoint**

11 weeks

#### **Method of measurement**

depth interview, Spanier Dyadic Adjustment Scale

### 2

#### **Description**

communication patterns

#### **Timepoint**

One week before the start of treatment and one week after the end of treatment

#### **Method of measurement**

communication pattern questionnaire

## **Secondary outcomes**

empty

## **Intervention groups**

### 1

#### **Description**

Intervention group: Participants in the intervention group: attended eleven 90-minute sessions of IBCT. An overview of the IBCT-based intervention: 1.Greeting (the therapist and couples identified themselves); the principles of the intervention sessions were explained; the eligibility of couples for entering the intervention was reassessed; the current problems and development history of couples were reviewed; the relationship

strengths were explained through behavioral examples; the intervention goals were set; the perspectives of couples therapy were outlined. 2. Couples participated in individual sessions; couples were briefed on the principles of confidentiality; couples were asked to go beyond the current problems based on the initial assessment and interviews; violence-related issues were addressed; couples were asked to express their commitment to the intervention; extramarital affairs were discussed; the history of their relationship was reviewed; the family conflict pattern and its origin were explained; emotional sensitivities and external tension were discussed. 3. Previous sessions were reviewed; previous content was summarized; the therapist provided feedback to couples; couples were encouraged to engage in the formulation of their problems; problematic areas were identified; the strengths of the spousal relationships were identified; the therapist provided his/her formulation and compared it with that of couples. 4. Previous sessions were reviewed, communication patterns were discussed; couples were asked to create a safe environment for each other to express their discomforts and frustrations; couples were trained in interventions to stop; limit or redirect problematic patterns of communication; spouses were assigned tasks based on a mutual alliance. 5. Previous sessions were reviewed; couples were trained in talking about problems without blaming; couples were trained in emotion-based interventions (empathic connection and united neutrality); communication patterns leading to marriage failure were discussed; spouses were asked to engage in a situation of persistent conflict; problems of couples were reformulated case by case based on the main themes identified in the feedback session. 6. Previous sessions were reviewed; previous content was summarized; couples were encouraged to use acceptance-based techniques to somewhat distance themselves from their problems emotionally; couples were asked to reduce their sensitivity to negative behaviors because some negative behaviors might produce positive results. 7. Couples' completed assignments were reviewed; couples were trained in interventions for increasing tolerance such as identifying negative behaviors and pretending to negative behaviors at home, and then the spouses' feedback was analyzed; couples were asked to increase their tolerance through self-monitoring and listing self-care practices. 8. Previous sessions were reviewed; previous content was summarized; spousal needs were identified; couples were motivated to choose activities that would suit their needs; spouses were encouraged to respect each other's independence and autonomy. 9. Previous sessions were reviewed, couples were trained in change-based interventions such as practicing communication patterns and skills in the intervention sessions, identifying the behaviors that spouses could show to each other to improve relationship satisfaction, behavioral exchange, and recognition of positive behaviors in a retrospective manner. 10. Couples were trained in holding conversations without destructive methods, speaking and listening skills, constructive conversation for solving problems, problem diagnosis skills, and problem-solving

skills. 11. Previous content was summarized and concluded; couples were provided with necessary support and assistance to cope with stressors; the intervention achievements and couples' decisions about the future were discussed; the follow-up session was planned and scheduled.

#### **Category**

Behavior

#### **2**

#### **Description**

Control group: whereas those in the control group received no interventions in this period.

#### **Category**

Behavior

### **Recruitment centers**

#### **1**

#### **Recruitment center**

##### **Name of recruitment center**

Science and culture university counselling center

##### **Full name of responsible person**

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### **Sponsors / Funding sources**

#### **1**

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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**

The University of Science and Culture

**Proportion provided by this source**

100

**Public or private sector**

Public

**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**

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The University of science and Culture

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Mohsen Kachooei

**Position**

Associate professor

**Latest degree**

Ph.D.

**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**

Not applicable

**Data Dictionary**

Not applicable