Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

17 Sep 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

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Chiman Salimi

Name of organization / entity
University of Science and Culture

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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

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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

Name of organization / entity

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Full name of responsible person

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