

Clinical Trial Protocol

Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

22 Jul 2026

The mediating role of object representation transformation for improvement of depression in short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy

Protocol summary

Study aim

Determining the effectiveness of psychodynamic psychotherapy of depression on the severity of symptoms, disability, and object representation

Design

A clinical trial with a single-case design, multiple baselines (different people), without a control group, without randomization and without blinding, on five purposefully selected patients.

Settings and conduct

intervention is performed for patients with major depressive disorder at Shahid Dr. Beheshti Hospital in Zanjan city on an individual basis and in 24 sessions. Also, patients will be evaluated by at least two people.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

inclusion: patients aged 18 to 40 who have received a diagnosis of major depressive disorder; If he receives medicine, the dose of medicine should be fixed; Not participating in other psychotherapy in the last month and during treatment. exclusion: existence of bipolar, psychotic, personality and substance abuse disorders; suicidal tendencies; Physical illness

Intervention groups

The intervention group consists of five patients with major depressive disorder. The logic of the design is that every patient in the baseline and follow-up phase who does not receive intervention is compared with himself; In other words, each person is his own control group. The intervention consists of short-term psychodynamic treatment for 24 sessions according to the treatment manual of Bush et al. This treatment is performed twice a week, each session lasts 45 minutes. In this treatment, the main focus is on the narcissistic vulnerability. The unconscious substrates of vulnerabilities are interpreted in treatment sessions. Depression symptoms are assessed for comparison with the intervention phase one month before the treatment (baseline phase) and one month after the termination of the treatment (follow-up phase).

Main outcome variables

Severity of major depressive disorder symptoms

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20230228057566N1**

Registration date: **2023-09-02, 1402/06/11**

Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2023-09-02, 1402/06/11**

Update count: **0**

Registration date

2023-09-02, 1402/06/11

Registrant information

Name

Mazaher Rezaei

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 24 3354 4001

Email address

mazrez@zums.ac.ir

Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2023-09-23, 1402/07/01

Expected recruitment end date

2023-10-07, 1402/07/15

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title

The mediating role of object representation transformation for improvement of depression in short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy

Public title

The effectiveness of short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy in major depression

Purpose

Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria**Inclusion criteria:**

Patients aged 18 to 40 who have been diagnosed with depression Proficiency in Persian language If they receive medication, the dose of medication should be fixed Willingness to treat with a psychodynamic approach Not receiving other psychotherapy in the last month and during treatment Ability to fully attend 20 to 40 treatment sessions Patients' satisfaction and interest in participating in the study

Exclusion criteria:

Existence of bipolar, psychotic, personality and substance abuse disorders Suicidal tendencies Physical illness

Age

From **18 years** old to **40 years** old

Gender

Both

Phase

N/A

Groups that have been masked

No information

Sample size

Target sample size: **5**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)

N/A

Randomization description**Blinding (investigator's opinion)**

Not blinded

Blinding description**Placebo**

Not used

Assignment

Single

Other design features**Secondary Ids**

empty

Ethics committees**1****Ethics committee****Name of ethics committee**

Ethics committee of Zanjan University of Medical Sciences

Street address

Shahid Dr. Beheshti Educational, Therapeutic and Psychiatric Center, Ark Square, Zanjan

City

Zanjan

Province

Zanjan

Postal code

45136-15788

Approval date

2023-02-14, 1401/11/25

Ethics committee reference number

IR.ZUMS.REC.1401.345

Health conditions studied**1****Description of health condition studied**

Major Depressive Disorder

ICD-10 code

F32

ICD-10 code description

Major depressive disorder, single episode

Primary outcomes**1****Description**

Severity of major depressive disorder symptoms

Timepoint

Depression symptoms during the treatment phase and also for comparison with the intervention phase, one month before the treatment (baseline phase) and one month after the end of the treatment (follow-up phase) are evaluated once a week.

Method of measurement

beck depression scale, hamilton depression scale

Secondary outcomes**1****Description**

Disability due to major depressive disorder

Timepoint

Disability due to major depressive disorder during the treatment phase and also for comparison with the intervention phase is assessed once a month one month before the treatment (baseline phase) and one month after the end of the treatment (follow-up phase).

Method of measurement

Sheehan Disability Scale

2**Description**

object relation

Timepoint

Object relations during the treatment phase and also for comparison with the intervention phase is assessed once a month one month before the treatment (baseline

phase) and one month after the end of the treatment (follow-up phase).

Method of measurement

Bell Object Relations and Reality Testing Inventory (BORRTI)

Intervention groups

1

Description

The intervention group consists of five patients with major depressive disorder. The logic of the design is that every patient in the baseline and follow-up phase who does not receive intervention is compared with himself; In other words, each person is his own control group. The intervention consists of short-term psychodynamic treatment for 24 sessions according to the treatment manual of Bush et al. This treatment is performed twice a week, each session lasts 45 minutes. In this treatment, the main focus is on the narcissistic vulnerability. The unconscious substrates of vulnerabilities are interpreted in treatment sessions. Depression symptoms are assessed for comparison with the intervention phase one month before the treatment (baseline phase) and one month after the termination of the treatment (follow-up phase).

Category

Treatment - Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center

Shahid Dr. Beheshti Hospital

Full name of responsible person

Dr Mazaher Rezaei

Street address

Shahid Dr Beheshti Educational, Therapeutic and Psychiatric Center, Ark Square, Zanjan

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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity

Zanjan University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Dr Samad Nadri

Street address

Zanjan University of Medical Sciences , Dr.Sobouti Blvd. Zanjan,Iran

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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

Zanjan University of Medical Sciences

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

Zanjan University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Dr Mazaher Rezaei

Position

Assistant Professor

Latest degree

Ph.D.

Other areas of specialty/work

Psychology

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Person responsible for scientific inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity

Zanjan University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Dr Mazaher Rezaei

Position

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Other areas of specialty/work

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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

Person responsible for updating data

Contact

Name of organization / entity

Zanjan University of Medical Sciences

Full name of responsible person

Dr Mazaher Rezaei

Position

Assistant Professor

Latest degree

Ph.D.