Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

07 Nov 2026

Comparing The Effectiveness of Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP) with Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) on Psychological Distress, Experiential Avoidance and Depressive Symptoms in University Students

Protocol summary

Study aim

An assessment of the treatment outcomes and the efficacy of short-term dynamic psychotherapy compared to short-term solution-oriented therapy in diminishing psychological distress, experiential avoidance, and symptoms of depression among students.

Design

The present study will adopt a practical approach and utilize quantitative data through a semi-experimental clinical trial with a pre-test-post-test design and a control group. Data collection will involve questionnaires administered before and after the test. The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-Second Edition (AAQ-II), Kessler's Psychological Distress Questionnaire (K-10), and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) will be employed to assess psychological distress. Participants will be recruited from Gonabad city students on a voluntary basis and assigned to groups of short-term dynamic psychotherapy (18 individuals), solution-focused therapy (18 individuals), and control (18 individuals) using a simple random method (lottery). Should the treatment methods prove effective, control group participants will have the opportunity to receive any of the therapies post-research. Evaluations using the specified questionnaires will occur at two points: before and after the intervention.

Settings and conduct

The statistical population encompasses all students in Gonabad city. The sample size was calculated using various parameters, including the anticipated dropout rate. Consequently, each of the three groups—two experimental and one control—will consist of 18 participants, totaling 54 individuals for the study.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Participants: Gonabad universities students At least 18 years old They must have symptoms of depression

Intervention groups

Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP) Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)

Main outcome variables

Psychological Distress; Experiential Avoidance; Depressive Symptoms

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20240602061984N1**
Registration date: **2024-06-30, 1403/04/10**
Registration timing: **registered_while_recruiting**

Last update: **2024-06-30, 1403/04/10**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2024-06-30, 1403/04/10

Registrant information

Name

Maryam Nabili Noghabi

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 51 5726 0058

Email address

marynabili100@gmail.com

Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2024-06-12, 1403/03/23

Expected recruitment end date
2024-07-13, 1403/04/23

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date
empty

Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
Comparing The Effectiveness of Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP) with Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) on Psychological Distress, Experiential Avoidance and Depressive Symptoms in University Students

Public title
The Effectiveness of Intensive Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy (ISTDP) with Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)

Purpose
Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria:
University students Manifesting Depression symptoms
Exclusion criteria:

Age
From **18 years** old

Gender
Both

Phase
N/A

Groups that have been masked
No information

Sample size
Target sample size: **54**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized

Randomization description
Individual randomization with assigning a unique number to each participant and then allocating them to either the experimental or control groups.

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
Research Ethics Committees of Islamic Azad University- Bojnourd Branch
Street address
University Street, Defense Square -
City
Bojnourd
Province
North Khorasan
Postal code
9417697796

Approval date
2024-06-11, 1403/03/22

Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.BOJNOURD.REC.1403.002

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Depressive symptoms

ICD-10 code

ICD-10 code description

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Depression score in Beck questionnaire

Timepoint
Before starting the intervention

Method of measurement
Beck depression questionnaire

Secondary outcomes

1

Description
Psychological Distress

Timepoint
Before starting the intervention

Method of measurement
Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K-10)

2

Description
Experiential avoidance

Timepoint
Before starting the intervention

Method of measurement
Acceptance and Action Questionnaire (AAQ-II)

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group: Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy

(ISTDP)

Category

Treatment - Other

2

Description

Intervention group: Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT)

Category

Treatment - Other

3

Description

Control group: No intervention

Category

N/A

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center

Islamic Azad University, Gonabad branch

Full name of responsible person

Maryam Rahmanian Shahri

Street address

University Blvd, Basij Square

City

Gonabad

Province

Razavi Khorasan

Postal code

9691664791

Phone

+98 51 5725 5000

Email

test@test.com

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person

ابوالفضل بخشی پور

Street address

University Street, Defense Square, Bojnord, North Khorasan -

City

بجنورد

Province

North Khorasan

Postal code

9417697796

Phone

+98 58 3229 6985

Email

vahed@bojnourdiau.ac.ir

Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

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

No

Title of funding source

Independent - doctoral thesis

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

Other

Person responsible for general inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person

Maryam Nabili Noghabi

Position

PhD Student

Latest degree

Master

Other areas of specialty/work

Psychology

Street address

No 10, Taleghani 5 Ave

City

Gonabad

Province

Razavi Khorasan

Postal code

9691649748

Phone

+98 51 5726 0058

Email

marynabili100@gmail.com

Person responsible for scientific inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person

Maryam Nabili Noghabi

Position

PhD Student

Latest degree

Master

Other areas of specialty/work

Psychology

Street address

No 10, Taleghani 5 Ave

City
Gonabad
Province
Razavi Khorasan
Postal code
9691649748
Phone
+98 51 5726 0058
Email
marynabili100@gmail.com

Person responsible for updating data

Contact
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Maryam Nabili Noghabi
Position
PhD Student
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Psychology
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No 10, Taleghani 5 Ave
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Phone
+98 51 5726 0058
Email
marynabili100@gmail.com

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
Not applicable
Informed Consent Form
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Clinical Study Report
Not applicable
Analytic Code
Not applicable
Data Dictionary
Not applicable