Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

22 Nov 2026

The effectiveness of media literacy training in reducing dependence on media and virtual networks and improving mental health among girls and boys in first-year high schools

Protocol summary

Study aim

The effectiveness of media literacy training in reducing dependence on media and virtual networks and promoting mental health among junior high school girls and boys

Design

A randomized, parallel-group, open-label, controlled clinical trial, conducted on 60 patients. Randomization will be performed using the 'RAND' function in Microsoft Excel software.

Settings and conduct

Junior high schools in District 2, Ahvaz. After randomization, pretest is done. Experimental group gets six 90-minute media literacy sessions. Post-test immediately, follow-up after 2 months. Ethical principles and consent observed.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: First-year students, scoring above a certain threshold on a standard media addiction questionnaire indicating suboptimal media use or addiction, having access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer. Exclusion criteria: unwillingness to participate in the study, participation in other psychotherapy sessions in the 3 months prior to the study.

Intervention groups

Intervention Group: Participants assigned to this group will receive the media literacy educational intervention. The media literacy educational package will be delivered to the experimental group over 8 sessions, each lasting 60 minutes, twice a week, for a total duration of one month. Control Group: Participants in this group will receive no intervention .

Main outcome variables

Media and Social Media Addiction, Mental Health

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20260329069017N1**
Registration date: **2026-07-16, 1405/04/25**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-07-16, 1405/04/25**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2026-07-16, 1405/04/25

Registrant information

Name

Shirin Valipour chahardah cherik

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 61 3443 9610

Email address

shyrynwlypwr@gmail.com

Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2026-08-01, 1405/05/10

Expected recruitment end date

2026-08-16, 1405/05/25

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title
The effectiveness of media literacy training in reducing dependence on media and virtual networks and improving mental health among girls and boys in first-year high schools

Public title
The effectiveness of media literacy training on mental health and media consumption patterns in students

Purpose
Education/Guidance

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:
Junior high school students Students between the ages of 12 and 15 Having access to a smartphone, tablet, or computer Scoring above a certain threshold on a standardized media addiction questionnaire indicating suboptimal media use or addiction

Exclusion criteria:
Unwillingness to participate in research Participation in other psychotherapy sessions within 3 months prior to the study

Age
From **12 years** old to **15 years** old

Gender
Both

Phase
N/A

Groups that have been masked
No information

Sample size
Target sample size: **60**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized

Randomization description
The statistical population of the study will include all male and female students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades of public day schools during the specified time period for the study. Initially, a multi-stage cluster sampling method will be used to select schools, so that one or two districts are randomly selected from among the education districts. Several schools (to cover both sexes) are randomly selected from the junior high schools in those districts. Then, one or two classes will be randomly selected from each selected school. In the sample selection stage, a convenience sampling method will be used. After selecting samples of 60 people based on the study's entry and exit criteria, participants will be randomly assigned to two groups: "media literacy education" (intervention group) and "waiting list" (control group). Randomization will be performed using random blocks with variable sizes (4 and 6 people) by an independent statistician who is not involved in the implementation process. The random assignment list is generated using the RAND function in Excel and then placed in opaque, sealed, numbered envelopes so that the researcher and participants are not aware of the sequence of allocation (allocation concealment). The envelope will be opened and the allocation group will be informed only at the time of each participant's entry into the study. To ensure equality of baseline variables (e.g., dependency level, age), their distribution in the two groups will be examined during the statistical analysis phase.

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
Ethics Committee of Islamic Azad University of Yasooj Branch

Street address
4th km of Si Sakht Road

City
Yasooj

Province
Khouzestan

Postal code
7591493686

Approval date
2026-04-19, 1405/01/30

Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.YASOOJ.REC.1405.001

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Media and Social Media Dependency

ICD-10 code
Z55

ICD-10 code description
Problems related to education and literacy

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Dependence on media and virtual networks

Timepoint
1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention) 2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period) 3. One-month follow-up after the intervention

Method of measurement
The measurement method will be Young's (1998) Internet Addiction Scale.

2

Description
Health promotion
Timepoint
1. Pre-test (before the start of the intervention) 2. Post-test (immediately after the end of the intervention period) 3. One-month follow-up after the intervention
Method of measurement
The measurement method will be by Goldberg's (1972) General Health Questionnaire.

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group: Intervention group: Duration of each session: 90 minutes; Total number of sessions: 8 sessions; Sequence of sessions: twice a week; Educational tools used: This intervention relies heavily on improving cognitive abilities and self-regulation skills in the digital space. The main educational tools include: guided group discussions; content analysis exercises; critical thinking exercises; time management exercises and digital self-monitoring. The content of the different sessions is based on the following: Session 1: Administering a pre-test, explaining the basic concepts of media literacy, and understanding the relationship between media consumption and mental health; Session 2: Participants are asked to try to identify behavioral patterns and their level of dependence on social networks; Session 3: Using the skill of analyzing media messages and using techniques to detect fake news and the credibility of sources; Session 4: Using critical thinking techniques to analyze ideal images in the media and how to deal with harmful social comparisons; Fifth session: This session will cover time management techniques and the use of self-monitoring tools to reduce the hours spent using cyberspace; Sixth session: This session will examine the pathology of factors that cause dependence, anxiety, and addictive behaviors in cyberspace; Seventh session: Teaching methods for dealing with digital stressors (such as cyberbullying) and using relaxation and self-care techniques; Eighth session: Summarizing the sessions, providing final suggestions for maintaining healthy behaviors in the media space, and finally administering the post-test and setting a specific time for administering the follow-up test.
Category
Treatment - Other

2

Description
Control group: The control group will not receive any intervention during the research, but will receive the intervention after data collection to prevent factors that threaten the internal validity of the research, such as compensatory competition from the control group or demoralization.
Category
Treatment - Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Ahvaz Education Department Consulting Center
Full name of responsible person
Shirin Valipour Chahardah Cherik
Street address
next to Shohada High School, Fatemi Boulevard, Saat Square
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6133332414
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Email
Shyrynwlypwr@gmail.com

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Sirus Salehnasab
Street address
Shahid Motahari Boulevard
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Yasooj
Province
Kohgilouyeh-va-Boyrahmad
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7433346078
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+98 74 3334 6078
Email
salehnasab@yums.ac.ir
Grant name
Grant code / Reference number
Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
Yes
Title of funding source
Islamic Azad University
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
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Shirin Valipour Chahardah Cherik
Position
Master's student
Latest degree
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Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
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Person responsible for updating data

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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
Not applicable
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