Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

08 Nov 2026

The Effectiveness of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Interventions in Reducing Toxic Shame and Symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder in Clients of Counseling Centers

Protocol summary

Study aim

To determine the effectiveness of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) in reducing toxic shame and symptoms of borderline personality disorder in clients of counseling centers.

Design

Single-arm quasi-experimental pretest-posttest study evaluating the effect of DBT on toxic shame and borderline personality disorder symptoms in counseling center clients.

Settings and conduct

Eligible participants will receive group DBT including mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness skills, with assessments before and after treatment.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: Being of at least the legal age; having symptoms of borderline personality disorder based on valid diagnostic criteria; ability to complete the study questionnaires; and providing informed consent to participate. Exclusion criteria: Concurrent participation in similar therapeutic interventions and diagnosis of severe comorbid disorders.

Intervention groups

Participants will receive a structured group Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) intervention based on a standard therapeutic protocol. The intervention will include training in core DBT skills, including mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness. Sessions will be conducted regularly over a specified period by a trained and professionally qualified therapist under standardized conditions.

Main outcome variables

1.Change in toxic shame score from pretest to posttest.
2. Change in borderline personality disorder symptom severity from pretest to posttest.

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

DBT

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20260920071122N1**
Registration date: **2026-09-26, 1405/07/04**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-09-26, 1405/07/04**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2026-09-26, 1405/07/04

Registrant information

Name

Asma Ebrahimi

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 922 715 5640

Email address

asmaebrahimi342@gmail.com

Recruitment status

recruiting

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2026-09-27, 1405/07/05

Expected recruitment end date

2026-12-21, 1405/09/30

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title
The Effectiveness of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Interventions in Reducing Toxic Shame and Symptoms of Borderline Personality Disorder in Clients of Counseling Centers

Public title
Effectiveness of Dialectical Behavior Therapy in Reducing Toxic Shame and Borderline Personality Disorder Symptoms

Purpose
Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:
Being of at least the legal age. Being a client of the participating counseling centers and having symptoms of borderline personality disorder based on valid diagnostic criteria. Having the ability to complete the study questionnaires. Providing informed consent to participate in the study.

Exclusion criteria:
Concurrent participation in similar therapeutic interventions. Diagnosis of severe comorbid disorders.

Age
From **18 years** old

Gender
Both

Phase
N/A

Groups that have been masked
No information

Sample size
Target sample size: **30**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Not randomized

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

Approval date
empty

Ethics committee reference number

2

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee
Research Ethics Committee of Bushehr University of Medical Sciences

Street address
Ghadir Street, Khosro Bekter's House

City
Delvar

Province
Boushehr

Postal code
7547117991

Approval date
2026-09-13, 1405/06/22

Ethics committee reference number
IR.BPUMS.REC.1405.184

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Clients of counseling centers diagnosed with borderline personality disorder based on diagnostic criteria and meeting the study eligibility criteria.

ICD-10 code
F60.3

ICD-10 code description
Borderline personality disorder

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Change in toxic shame following dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), measured by the total score of the standardized toxic shame questionnaire at pre-test and post-test.

Timepoint
Pre-test and post-test

Method of measurement
Total score of the standardized toxic shame questionnaire

2

Description
Change in borderline personality disorder symptoms following dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), measured by total and subscale scores of a valid borderline personality disorder symptom assessment scale at pre-test and post-test.

Timepoint
Pre-test and post-test

Method of measurement
Total and subscale scores of a valid borderline personality disorder symptom assessment scale

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group:Group-based Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) delivered according to the standard treatment protocol, including training in mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness skills.
Category
Behavior

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Mehr Iran Counseling and Psychology Center
Full name of responsible person
Ebrahim Soleimani
Street address
Ashouri Street, opposite Mellat Bank
City
Boushehr
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Postal code
7547117991
Phone
+98 917 016 6844
Email
asmaebrahimi342@gmail.com

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Abdolrahim Pazira
Street address
Municipality Square, at the beginning of Shahid Raisali Delvari Boulevard, Velayat Building, Islamic Azad University, Bushehr Branch
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Province
Boushehr
Postal code
۷۹۱۵۸۹۵۴۹۶
Phone
+98 77 3335 0172
Email
info@bushehr.iau.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
Asma Ebrahimi
Position
Master's student
Latest degree
Bachelor
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
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Person responsible for scientific inquiries

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Person responsible for updating data

Contact
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Asma Ebrahimi
Position
Master's student
Latest degree
Bachelor
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
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Postal code
7547117991
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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