Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

22 Nov 2026

The efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy of Internet addiction in problematic social network users

Protocol summary

Study aim
Determining the Efficacy of CBT-IA Therapy in Reducing Problematic Use of Social Networks in Users

Design
The clinical trial have a control group, with parallel groups, double-blind, randomized, on 30 patients. Individuals will be divided into two groups using restricted randomization method with random allocation rule.

Settings and conduct
After identifying problematic users of social networks using a standard deviation higher than the mean score in the adapted version of the Facebook Addiction Questionnaire and clinical interview, sample people are invited to the medical centers of the University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences in Tehran. The informed consent form was received from the participants and then they will be randomly treated in two groups by a clinical psychologist. All people are evaluated before and after treatment.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Entry conditions: 1. Individuals aged 18 years and above. 2. A standard deviation above the mean in the adapted version of the Bergen Facebook Addiction Questionnaire and the diagnosis of PSNU based on a clinical interview. Non-entry conditions: 1. Having suicidal thoughts 2. High cut-off score on the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21)

Intervention groups
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for internet addiction : It consists of 12 weekly sessions. The initial focus is on behavioral techniques targeting specific behaviors and situations. In the second stage, the focus is more on cognitive assumptions and distortions, and its techniques include evaluating the type of cognitive distortions, problem solving skills, and teaching coping strategies. The final stage involves addressing underlying problems and comorbid disorders, if present.

Main outcome variables
Problematic use of social networks, Depression anxiety stress, Quality of life of users

General information

Reason for update

Acronym
CBT-IA & PSNU

IRCT registration information
IRCT registration number: **IRCT20210422051043N1**
Registration date: **2024-10-02, 1403/07/11**
Registration timing: **registered_while_recruiting**

Last update: **2024-10-02, 1403/07/11**
Update count: **0**

Registration date
2024-10-02, 1403/07/11

Registrant information

Name
Afsane Yoosefi

Name of organization / entity

Country
Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone
+98 21 7708 2415

Email address
af.yoosefi@uswr.ac.ir

Recruitment status
Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2024-09-22, 1403/07/01

Expected recruitment end date
2025-03-15, 1403/12/25

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title

The efficacy of cognitive behavioral therapy of Internet addiction in problematic social network users

Public title

Effect of cognitive behavioral therapy in social network addiction

Purpose

Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:

Being over 18 years old A standard deviation above the mean in the adapted version of the Bergen Facebook Addiction Questionnaire and the diagnosis of PSNU based on a clinical interview

Exclusion criteria:

Having suicidal thoughts High cut-off score on the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21)

Age

From **18 years** old

Gender

Both

Phase

3

Groups that have been masked

- Participant
- Outcome assessor
- Data analyser

Sample size

Target sample size: **30**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)

Randomized

Randomization description

In this study, the classification of sample individuals into two treatment and control groups will be done using Restricted randomization method through random allocation rule in the following way: after selecting 30 sample,15 balls will be assigned to the control group and 15 balls to the treatment group, these balls will be placed in a lottery box and then randomly, without replacement, balls will be removed from the box and the sequence will be recorded.

Blinding (investigator's opinion)

Double blinded

Blinding description

In this study, all participants in the two treatment and control groups, the therapist who is responsible for pre-, during-, and post-treatment evaluations, and the data analyst are kept blind to the differences between the two treatment groups in terms of the type of interventions and which group each individual is assigned to.

Placebo

Not used

Assignment

Parallel

Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee

Research Ethics Committee of University of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences

Street address

No. 5, Unit 5, Amin Complex, Second Central Corner, 20 meters from the mosque, Ghanat Kosar

City

Tehran

Province

Tehran

Postal code

1689917466

Approval date

2021-08-25, 1400/06/03

Ethics committee reference number

IR.USWR.REC.1400.138

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied

Problematic use of social networks

ICD-10 code

ICD-10 code description

Primary outcomes

1

Description

Reducing the total score in the adapted version of the Bergen Facebook Addiction Questionnaire to less than one standard deviation below the mean score

Timepoint

Before the start of therapeutic interventions and after the end of therapeutic interventions

Method of measurement

Bergen Facebook Addiction Scale

2

Description

Increase the quality of life above the cutoff point

Timepoint

Before starting therapeutic interventions and after the end of therapeutic interventions

Method of measurement

The World Health Organization quality of Life (WHOQOL-BREF) questionnaire

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group: This group will undergo cognitive behavioral therapy for Internet addiction (CBT-IA). CBT-IA treatment introduced by Young et al. (2011) includes elements of traditional Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and internet-related interventions to address internet addiction. This treatment is conducted over 12 weekly sessions, consisting of three phases: 1) behavioral modification 2) cognitive restructuring 3) harm reduction.
Category
Treatment - Other

2

Description
Control group: Control group: without therapeutic intervention. However, after completing the assessments, CBT-IA will be administered to the control group at 12 weeks.
Category
Treatment - Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
University of Social welfare and rehabilitation science
Full name of responsible person
Afsane Yoosefi
Street address
No. 5, Unit 5, Amin Complex, Second Central Corner, 20 meters from the mosque, Ghanat Kosar
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yoosefi.afsan@gmail.com

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Cognitive Sciences and Technologies Council
Full name of responsible person
Majid Nili Ahmadabadi
Street address
No. 3, third floor, Ostad Daryabandari Street (Armaghan Gharbi), above Niayesh Intersection, Vali Asr Street
City
Tehran
Province
Tehran
Postal code
۱۹۶۷۸۷۵۳۱۹
Phone
+98 21 6622 0770
Email
yoosefi.afsan@gmail.com
Grant name
Grant code / Reference number
Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
No
Title of funding source
Cognitive Sciences and Technologies Council
Proportion provided by this source
50
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
Other

2

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
University of social welfare and rehabilitation sciences
Full name of responsible person
Ghonche Raheb
Street address
Research Center for Substance Abuse and Dependency, third floor, Farabi Building, University of Rehabilitation Sciences and Social Health., Koodakiar Ave., Daneshju Boulevard., Evin
City
Tehran
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Postal code
1985713871
Phone
+98 21 7173 2853
Email
sadrc@uswr.ac.ir
Grant name
Grant code / Reference number
Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
No
Title of funding source
University of social welfare and rehabilitation sciences

Proportion provided by this source
50
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
University of social welfare and rehabilitation sciences
Full name of responsible person
Afsane Yoosefi
Position
PhD Student
Latest degree
Master
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
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Person responsible for scientific inquiries

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Person responsible for updating data

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)
Yes - There is a plan to make this available
Study Protocol
Yes - There is a plan to make this available
Statistical Analysis Plan
Yes - There is a plan to make this available
Informed Consent Form
Yes - There is a plan to make this available
Clinical Study Report
Yes - There is a plan to make this available
Analytic Code
Not applicable
Data Dictionary
Not applicable
Title and more details about the data/document
The data is presented in the form of individuals' scores in pre- and post-treatment assessments in both groups in a way that individuals' identities are unidentifiable, and it is provided in an Excel file.
When the data will become available and for how long
Access period begins 6 months after the publication of results and lasts for one year.
To whom data/document is available
Information is available for professionals, researchers, and therapists in the fields of psychology, psychiatry and cognitive sciences.
Under which criteria data/document could be used

Researchers in the field of addictive behavior under the following conditions: Keeping the data confidential and not disclosing it; Not using the data for writing scientific research articles or participating in scientific conferences

From where data/document is obtainable

Afsane Yoosefi. Email address: yoosefi.afsan@gmail.com

What processes are involved for a request to access data/document

درخواست هایی که از طریق ایمیل دریافت شده اند، توسط تیم پژوهشی مورد بررسی قرار می گیرند و درصورت تایید درخواست در مدت زمان 1تا2 هفته ارسال داده ها انجام خواهد شد.

Comments