

Effectiveness of Short-Term Dynamic Psychotherapy on Identity and Self-Esteem in Families with Exceptional Children

Ali. Nazari¹, Shahin. Alipanah², Yeganeh. Zare³, Somayeh. Izadi Pahnekolaei⁴, Mohammadreza. Javedani^{5*}

¹ Addiction and Behavioral Sciences Research Center, North Khorasan University of Medical Sciences, Bojnurd, Iran

² Department of Psychology, General Psychology, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran

³ Department of General Psychology, SR.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

⁴ Department of Educational Psychology, Saroyeh Institute of Higher Education, Sari, Iran

⁵ PhD in Psychology, Department of Psychology, SR.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: M.javedani96@gmail.com

Editor

Fereidoun Yaryari¹
Associate Professor, Department of
General Psychology, Kharazmi
University, Tehran, Iran
yaryari@khu.ac.ir

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Farhad Namjoo¹
Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond
Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: farhadnamjoo@kmanresce.ca

Reviewer 2: Roodabeh Hooshmandi¹
Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond
Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: roodhooshmandi@kmanresce.ca

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The opening paragraph provides a strong rationale but would benefit from quantitative data to contextualize the problem. For example, include prevalence rates or psychological distress indices among Iranian parents of exceptional children to localize the study's significance.

The mention of Iranian studies (Nakhaei Moghadam et al., 2024; Sarlaki et al., 2024) is valuable. However, this paragraph could be strengthened by explicitly stating how cultural variables (e.g., collectivism, stigma) may interact with psychodynamic mechanisms. A bridging sentence linking ISTDP theory to Iranian sociocultural emotional norms would enhance conceptual depth.

The aim statement "Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness..." should specify dependent variables ("identity and self-esteem") and the intervention type ("fifteen sessions of ISTDP") for methodological transparency.

The Marcia Identity Status Questionnaire (64 items) evaluates four statuses but not necessarily "identity coherence." Consider explaining how "identity coherence" scores were derived—was it a composite or specific subscale?

The identical posttest and follow-up mean scores (e.g., 75.40 ± 3.70) suggest data entry or rounding errors. It is statistically improbable that means and SDs would not vary across two measurements. Please recheck these values.

The sentence “ISTDP’s structured process of exploring internal resistance and uncovering repressed affect is therefore particularly relevant...” would benefit from empirical or clinical citations on cross-cultural psychodynamic psychotherapy in Middle Eastern populations to substantiate this cultural claim.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sentence “Shame and guilt emerge as pervasive emotional responses that can deeply affect how parents perceive their own value...” is theoretically rich but lacks citation from psychodynamic parenting research beyond Dearing & Tangney (2011). Add one or two recent empirical sources (e.g., 2023–2025) to demonstrate contemporary relevance.

The description of ISTDP is well-written but could be more operationalized for readers unfamiliar with the method. Define briefly what “pressure,” “challenge,” and “transference resistance” entail, as these are technical Davanloo concepts that require minimal contextualization.

The text interprets $\eta^2 = .77$ for self-esteem, though Table 2 reports .67. Verify whether this discrepancy stems from total variance vs. partial effect size computation.

The claim “Through ISTDP, participants were able to access and experience repressed emotions such as grief...” may overinterpret self-report data. Since no process or qualitative data were collected, rephrase to “It is plausible that the observed gains reflect emotional processing consistent with ISTDP theory.”

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.