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**Title:**

The efficacy of Unified Protocol and the role of transdiagnostic mediator factors in reducing students' anxiety and depression

**Back ground:** Transdiagnostic cognitive-behavioral treatment has attracted increasing attention in recent years. This treatment suggests that emotional disorders have common underlying factors that define them as transdiagnostic factors. Studies supported the effectiveness of Unified Protocol (UP), the transdiagnostic treatment, in the treatment of emotional disorders. However, the unique and interactive role of these transdiagnostic factors as a mediator of treatment outcomes, has not been studied yet. In this regard, the current study is aimed to investigate the efficacy of this protocol as well as the mediational role of transdiagnostic factors in decreasing the anxiety and depression symptom of students with emotional disorders.

**Method:** The present study is randomized clinical trial and has a control group with randomized assignment and post-test, pre-test, and two-month follow-up. The study sample formed from Zanjan university of Medical Sciences students (N=3500). A sample of this study was selected in two steps: At first, a sample of 315 people was recruited from the statistical population by convenience sampling, and Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) (and Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) depression were conducted. In the second step, based on Beck anxiety and depression inventory the sample of 26 individuals was selected. These individuals were randomly assigned to treatment and control group of 13 patients. The treatment group received 20 one-hour individual treatment sessions. Beck Depression Inventory, Beck Anxiety Inventory, Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale, Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale and Acceptance and Action Questionnaire administered in three phases of pretest, post-test and two-month follow-up.

**Results:** UP can significantly reduce anxiety and depression in the treatment group relative to control group ( $P < 0.01$ ). In addition, UP reduces anxiety and depression in patients by improving emotion regulation strategies and intolerance of uncertainty and experiential avoidance.

**Conclusion and suggestion:** UP is effective in reducing anxiety and depression in patients with emotional disorders. Furthermore, emotion regulation, intolerance of uncertainty and experiential avoidance can be considered as the potential and mediating factors in the predicting outcomes of transdiagnostic treatment based on unified protocol.

**Key words:** Unified protocol, transdiagnostic factors, anxiety, depression.

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