

Abstract

The present study examined the effectiveness of internet based transdiagnostic intervention (Unified Protocol) as compared to transdiagnostic intervention in group format. It also explored the outcome trajectories and investigated the baseline predictors of outcomes of internet based transdiagnostic intervention.

Given the high comorbidity rates and the rising evidence on the similarities underlying the common mental disorders, the Unified Protocol has been developed to address these shared underlying factors. Researchers and practitioners are gradually attempting to deliver this transdiagnostic intervention in various formats and modalities. The Unified Protocol for Transdiagnostic Treatment of Emotional Disorders was adapted into an internet based treatment for Hong Kong Chinese adults with common mental disorders, yet its effectiveness has yet to be examined. In addition to that, outcome trajectories and relevant predictors of internet based transdiagnostic intervention remained unexplored.

A total of 47 and 93 Chinese adults with heterogenous depressive and anxiety disorders received UP in group format and internet based UP from a local non-governmental organization respectively. Group UP comprised of 14 group sessions and 1 individual session, while internet based UP lasted 14 sessions with self-learning online modules and weekly real-life video meeting with therapist. Outcome measures included Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) and Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7), which were monitored weekly throughout the interventions.

Significant improvement on both outcome measures were exhibited. Results from both interventions were comparable with each other. Internet based UP yielded moderate to large within-group effect sizes. Growth mixture modeling selected a 3-class model as the most parsimonious model for both depressive and anxiety symptoms. Predictor analyses showed that