

# Clinical Trial Protocol

## Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

18 Jun 2026

### Comparison of the Effectiveness of Emotion-focused Therapy and Cognitive-behavioral Therapy on Improving Attachment Styles, Emotion Regulation, Satisfaction and Marital Intimacy in Couples with Conflicts with Early Maladaptive Schemas in the Two Areas of Separation-rejection and Alertness-inhibition.

#### Protocol summary

##### Study aim

Investigating and comparing the effectiveness of emotion-based therapy and cognitive psychotherapy on improving attachment styles, emotional regulation, satisfaction, and marital intimacy in couples with primary incompatible schemas in the two areas of detachment and rejection and overinhibition.

##### Design

The current study is a three-arm clinical trial with parallel groups, which includes two experimental groups and one control group, pre-test and post-test. This study is a blinded and designed for 90 patients.

##### Settings and conduct

The statistical population will include all marital conflict clients who referred to Mehrpaya clinic in Mashhad in 1402, who have active primary incompatible schemas. The sample will consist of 90 people who will be selected by available sampling method and will be placed in three groups of 30 people. Each group will have 15 people with the schema of detachment and rejection and 15 people in the domain of excessive ringing and inhibition of both sexes. It should be mentioned that if the target volume is not reached for the sample group, the previous clients will be contacted and they will be invited to participate in the research.

##### Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: Being in the age range of 25-55. Obtaining a score higher than the cut-off line in Young's Schema Questionnaire at least in one of the schemas in the field of cutting-rejecting or excessive ringing-inhibition. Exclusion criteria: participation in other interventions. Verification of drug and stimulant addiction.

##### Intervention groups

According to Greenberg and Watson's eight-session protocol, the first experimental group will undergo emotional therapy, and the second experimental group will undergo cognitive behavioral psychotherapy, and the control group will not receive any intervention.

##### Main outcome variables

Marital Satisfaction

#### General information

##### Reason for update

##### Acronym

##### IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20230618058511N2**

Registration date: **2023-12-30, 1402/10/09**

Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2023-12-30, 1402/10/09**

Update count: **0**

##### Registration date

2023-12-30, 1402/10/09

##### Registrant information

##### Name

Elahe Moshtaghi

##### Name of organization / entity

##### Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

##### Phone

+98 915 340 7077

##### Email address

elahe.moshtaghi@iau.ac.ir

##### Recruitment status

**Recruitment complete**

##### Funding source

**Expected recruitment start date**

2024-01-21, 1402/11/01

**Expected recruitment end date**

2024-04-18, 1403/01/30

**Actual recruitment start date**

empty

**Actual recruitment end date**

empty

**Trial completion date**

empty

**Scientific title**

Comparison of the Effectiveness of Emotion-focused Therapy and Cognitive-behavioral Therapy on Improving Attachment Styles, Emotion Regulation, Satisfaction and Marital Intimacy in Couples with Conflicts with Early Maladaptive Schemas in the Two Areas of Separation-rejection and Alertness-inhibition.

**Public title**

A Comparison of CBT and EFT for Relationship Improvement in Couples with Early Maladaptive Schemas

**Purpose**

Treatment

**Inclusion/Exclusion criteria****Inclusion criteria:**

Referral due to marital conflicts Obtaining a score higher than the cut-off line in the Young Schema Questionnaire in one of the two areas of cutting-rejection or excessive tinnitus-inhibition. Being in the desired age range

**Exclusion criteria:**

Participation in other interventions

**Age**

From **25 years** old to **55 years** old

**Gender**

Both

**Phase**

N/A

**Groups that have been masked**

*No information*

**Sample size**

Target sample size: **90**

**Randomization (investigator's opinion)**

N/A

**Randomization description****Blinding (investigator's opinion)**

Not blinded

**Blinding description****Placebo**

Not used

**Assignment**

Parallel

**Other design features****Secondary Ids**

empty

**Ethics committees****1****Ethics committee****Name of ethics committee**

Ethics Committee of Islamic Azad University - Zahedan Branch

**Street address**

Sistan and Baluchestan . Zahedan . university street  
Islamic Azad University complex, Zahedan branch

**City**

Zahedan

**Province**

Sistan-va-Balouchestan

**Postal code**

9816743545

**Approval date**

2023-06-24, 1402/04/03

**Ethics committee reference number**

IR.IAU.ZAH.REC.1402.025

**Health conditions studied****1****Description of health condition studied**

marital conflicts; Early maladaptive schemas

**ICD-10 code****ICD-10 code description****Primary outcomes****1****Description**

Marital Satisfaction

**Timepoint**

before the intervention (pre-test) and immediately after the intervention (post-test)

**Method of measurement**

Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire

**Secondary outcomes****1****Description**

Marital intimacy

**Timepoint**

before the intervention (pre-test) and immediately after the intervention (post-test)

**Method of measurement**

Bagarazi Marital Intimacy Questionnaire

**Intervention groups****1****Description**

The first intervention group: will receive cognitive behavioral therapy. The protocol used has 9 sessions of 60 to 90 minutes. The summary of the content of the sessions is as follows: First session: Establishing

communication: In this session, the therapist and the members introduce themselves, and after a brief introduction, the therapist explains the cognitive behavioral therapy model and the goals of the therapy sessions. Second session: Skills Behavioral skills: In the second session, the members present their problems, then the therapist examines the behavioral skills of the couples. Exercises such as role reversal are used to clarify and resolve the ambiguity of problems. Third session: communication and behavioral skills: In this session, communication skills are taught to couples. The couples learn and practice different strategies for the speaker and the listener. Fourth session: Communication and behavioral skills: In this session, the therapist teaches the group members concepts such as empathy, validation, and the pencil and paper technique. Fifth session: Factors Cognitive: In this session, the therapist teaches the members thoughts, feelings, and behavior as well as their differences. Sixth session: Cognitive factors: In this session, mental schemas are discussed and the therapist examines schemas and creates a positive schema. Seventh: Cognitive factors: In the seventh session, cognitive errors, their types, and their relationship with automatic thoughts are discussed by the group leader. Eighth session: Impulsivity, self-control, and raising mood: In this session, the group leader explains the concept of impulse, its management, and It teaches ways to raise mood and regulate it, as well as self-control strategies. 9th session: problem solving skills: In this session, stress and various types of stressors are discussed and a relaxation technique is taught to the members. to be Also, the therapist corrects the types of coping behaviors for the members.

**Category**  
N/A

## 2

### **Description**

The second intervention group: this group will receive emotion-based therapy. The prepared protocol has 8 2-hour sessions, the description of the sessions is as follows: First session: This session is related to the introduction of the therapist and clients. After getting acquainted, the therapist tells the goals of the treatment to the members and then evaluates the clients. Also, the therapist explains about the types of emotions to the group members. The second session: In this session, anger, depression and other emotional skills and problem solving skills are explained. The third session: In the third session, the clients will learn They understand what the consequences of anger and bullying are. Fourth session: The therapist tries to increase the clients' awareness of the consequences of delaying their forgiveness process. Fifth session: In the fifth session, which is a continuation of the mindfulness session, the therapist tells the clients It helps to express their values and move in line with them. Sixth session: In this session, the client, accompanied by the therapist, expresses his regret from bullying and learns to have healthier methods for his needs. Seventh session: In the seventh session, Darmajo learns to replace his negative emotions with positive ones. Also, the therapist asks the

clients to check their progress towards the goals. Eighth session: In the final session, the group members learn to check their progress and move in the same direction. They also try to promote forgiveness in their lives. take

**Category**  
N/A

## 3

### **Description**

Control group: this group doesn't receive any intervention

**Category**  
N/A

## **Recruitment centers**

### 1

#### **Recruitment center**

##### **Name of recruitment center**

Mehrepaya clinic

##### **Full name of responsible person**

Hossein Askarian Kalat

##### **Street address**

No. 38, between Hashemiye 38 and 40

##### **City**

Mashhad

##### **Province**

Razavi Khorasan

##### **Postal code**

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##### **Phone**

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##### **Email**

hoseinasgarian@gmail.com

## **Sponsors / Funding sources**

### 1

#### **Sponsor**

##### **Name of organization / entity**

Islamic Azad University

##### **Full name of responsible person**

Hamidreza Ganjali

##### **Street address**

Sistan and Baluchestan . Zahedan . university street  
Islamic Azad University complex, Zahedan branch

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##### **Phone**

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##### **Email**

university@iauzah.ac.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**

Ferdowsi University of Mashhad

**Full name of responsible person**

Hossein Askarian Kalat

**Position**

Consultant

**Latest degree**

Master

**Other areas of specialty/work**

Psychology

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Azadi Square, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad

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**Person responsible for scientific inquiries****Contact****Name of organization / entity**

Ferdowsi University of Mashhad

**Full name of responsible person**

Hossein Askarian Kalat

**Position**

Consultant

**Latest degree**

Master

**Other areas of specialty/work**

Psychology

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**Person responsible for updating data****Contact****Name of organization / entity**

Islamic Azad University

**Full name of responsible person**

Elahe Moshtaghi

**Position**

Instructor

**Latest degree**

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**Other areas of specialty/work**

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**Phone**

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**Fax****Email**

elahe.moshtaghi@iau.ac.ir

**Sharing plan****Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)**

No - There is not a plan to make this available

**Justification/reason for indecision/not sharing IPD**

There is no further information

**Study Protocol**

No - There is not a plan to make this available

**Statistical Analysis Plan**

Not applicable

**Informed Consent Form**

No - There is not a plan to make this available

**Clinical Study Report**

No - There is not a plan to make this available

**Analytic Code**

Not applicable

**Data Dictionary**

No - There is not a plan to make this available