

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)

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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

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Province

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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

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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

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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity

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Full name of responsible person

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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

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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