Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

08 Nov 2026

Comparing the Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Couple Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Couple Therapy on Cognitive Distortions, Emotion Regulation and Emotional Intimacy In Couples with Marital Burnout

Protocol summary

Study aim

One of the basic goals in psychotherapy is to use short-term treatments with empirical support. Therefore, the results of this study, in addition to determining the effects of each of the two aforementioned treatments, can be used in centers such as counseling and psychotherapy centers, premarital counseling

Design

In this study, 45 couples will be selected through a purposive and goal-oriented method and randomly assigned to Experimental group one will receive cognitive behavioral therapy, experimental group two will receive acceptance and commitment therapy, and the control group will be examined without any therapeutic intervention. Follow-up will be conducted three months later.

Settings and conduct

To collect data, after making the necessary arrangements with the authorities of the counseling and psychotherapy center in Alborz city - in one of the areas, refer to this center and first distribute the marital boredom questionnaire among the couples who refer with complaints of marital boredom.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria for the study will include being married, being able and willing to participate in designated treatment sessions, and completing the instrument questions.Exclusion criteria: Failure to attend regularly

Intervention groups

This research is an applied type and a semi-experimental research method that will be conducted with a pre-test-post-test design with a control group and a three-month follow-up.

Main outcome variables

emotional intimacy, the main outcome variables are considered as criteria for measuring the success or failure of each of these two types of therapy. By examining the changes of these variables before and after the therapeutic intervention, it is possible to answer the question that which of the two treatment methods, ACT or CBT, is more effective in these three aspects of the couple's relationship.

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20250106064290N1**
Registration date: **2025-01-22, 1403/11/03**
Registration timing: **registered_while_recruiting**

Last update: **2025-01-22, 1403/11/03**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2025-01-22, 1403/11/03

Registrant information

Name

Azin Hajiabbasi

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2024-11-27, 1403/09/07

Expected recruitment end date

2025-02-25, 1403/12/07

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title

Comparing the Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Couple Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Couple Therapy on Cognitive Distortions, Emotion Regulation and Emotional Intimacy In Couples with Marital Burnout

Public title

Comparing the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment-based couple therapy

Purpose

Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:

Inclusion criteria for the study included being married and living together in the same place at the time of study participation, achieving the required cut-off score on the self-report instruments, having a minimum level of literacy to respond to the self-report instruments, the ability and willingness to participate in the designated treatment sessions, and completing the instrument questions in full.

Exclusion criteria:

This includes the individual's unwillingness and inability to participate or regularly attend scheduled therapy sessions, participating simultaneously or within the past 6 months in a psychotherapy program, suffering from any acute psychiatric illness and using any type of drug as diagnosed by a psychiatrist, as well as the individual's suffering from any chronic or incurable medical illness (cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular problems, neurological diseases, hematology, oncology, etc.), missing more than two sessions of therapy sessions, or attempting to get divorced through the relevant authorities.

Age

From **22 years** old to **40 years** old

Gender

Both

Phase

N/A

Groups that have been masked

No information

Sample size

Target sample size: **90**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)

Randomized

Randomization description

In this study, couples with marital burnout will first be invited to one of the counseling and psychotherapy centers in Tehran through a call. Then, a marital burnout questionnaire will be distributed among the couples who refer with complaints of marital burnout. From among the couples who have a score above the average in the marital burnout construct and also meet other inclusion criteria for the study, 45 couples (90 husbands and wives) will be selected in a convenient and purposeful manner and randomly assigned to three groups (experimental group 1 = cognitive-behavioral couple therapy, 15 couples; experimental group 2 = acceptance and commitment-based couple therapy, 15 couples; and control group, 15 couples). The sample size will be selected based on statistical power, alpha level of 0.05 and effect size of 0.8, and also considering that the number of group members in the standard therapy group with different therapeutic approaches is 12 to 15 people.

Blinding (investigator's opinion)

Not blinded

Blinding description

Placebo

Not used

Assignment

Crossover

Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee

Ethics Committee of Islamic Azad University of Zahedan

Street address

University Street. Islamic Azad University Complex, Zahedan Branch

City

zahedan

Province

Sistan-va-Balouchestan

Postal code

9816743545

Approval date

2024-11-25, 1403/09/05

Ethics committee reference number

IR.IAU.ZAH.REC.1403.077

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied

Clients with marital burnout

ICD-10 code

ICD-10 code description

Primary outcomes

1

Description

Participants in the present study will respond to the following self-report instruments in three stages (pre-test, post-test, and three-month follow-up), in addition to a demographic information checklist (researcher-made form): Cognitive Distortions Questionnaire/Emotion Regulation Questionnaire/Marital Intimacy Questionnaire.

Timepoint

6 weeks after taking the questionnaire

Method of measurement

Cognitive Distortion Questionnaire/Emotion Regulation Questionnaire/Emotional Intimacy Questionnaire/Marital Burnout Questionnaire

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description

Intervention group: This research is an applied type and a semi-experimental research method that will be conducted with a pre-test-post-test design with a control group and a three-month follow-up. The general outline of the research design is in Table (1-1).Table 1-1: General outline of the research designStages Groups Choices Sample size Pre-test Application of independent variable Post-test Follow-upExperiment 1 E1 15 pairs T1 X T2 T3Experiment 2 E2 15 pairs T1 X T2 T3

Category

Treatment - Other

2

Description

Control group: This research is an applied type and a semi-experimental research method that will be conducted with a pre-test-post-test design with a control group and a three-month follow-up. The general outline of the research design is in Table (1-1).Table 1-1: General outline of the research designStages Groups Choices Sample size Pre-test Application of independent variable Post-test Follow-upExperiment 1 E1 15 pairs T1 X T2 T3Experiment 2 E2 15 pairs T1 X T2 T3Control C 15 pairs T1 - T2 T3

Category

Treatment - Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center

Dr. Seraj Consulting Center

Full name of responsible person

azin hajiabbasi

Street address

Taleghani Crossroads, Taleghani Tower, 8th floor

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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person

fatemeh soghra karbalai herofteh

Street address

خیابان دانشگاه . مجتمع دانشگاه آزاد اسلامی واحد زاهدان

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karbalaei1400@yahoo.com

Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?

No

Title of funding source

Zahedan Islamic Azad University

Proportion provided by this source

100

Public or private sector

Private

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

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person

fatemeh soghra karbalai herofteh

Position

Assistant Professor

Latest degree

Ph.D.

Other areas of specialty/work

Pediatrics

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Position
Assistant Professor

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Person responsible for updating data

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Name of organization / entity
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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
No more information available.

Study Protocol
No - There is not a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan
No - There is not a plan to make this available

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
No - There is not a plan to make this available

Data Dictionary
No - There is not a plan to make this available