Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

07 Nov 2026

The effectiveness of compassion-focused therapy (CFT) on cognitive distortions, emotional processing and self-criticism in female doctors working in Isfahan health and treatment network.

Protocol summary

Study aim

The effectiveness of compassion-focused therapy (CFT) on cognitive distortions, emotional processing and self-criticism in female doctors working in Isfahan health and treatment network. 1-4-2. Specific Objectives 1. To investigate the effectiveness of Compassion-Focused Therapy on the dimensions of cognitive distortions in employed female physicians working in the health and treatment network. 2. To investigate the effectiveness of Compassion-Focused Therapy on the dimensions of emotional processing in employed female physicians working in the health and treatment network. 3. To investigate the effectiveness of Compassion-Focused Therapy on the dimensions of self-criticism in employed female physicians working in the health and treatment network.

Design

Data was collected longitudinally through the implementation of questionnaires in two stages.

Settings and conduct

Using SPSS-26 software in two descriptive and inferential sections.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: 1. Low score in research variables 2. Female doctor working in the health network 3. No drug use 4. Completed consent form 5. No history of psychiatric medication use 6. Age between 20 and 45 years Exclusion criteria: - Failure to respond to questionnaires - Failure to cooperate in the research

Intervention groups

This design, “R” indicates the random assignment of participants to the experimental and control groups. The stages of pretest and posttest are denoted by T1 and T2, respectively, while X1 represents the therapeutic intervention administered to the experimental group. According to the research design, participants were first selected purposefully based on inclusion criteria. Then, they were randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group.

Main outcome variables

Therapy focused on compassion, cognitive distortions, emotional processing, self-criticism

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20250509065664N1**
Registration date: **2025-06-01, 1404/03/11**
Registration timing: **retrospective**

Last update: **2025-06-01, 1404/03/11**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2025-06-01, 1404/03/11

Registrant information

Name

Setare Kashkouli

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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+98 31 3220 2040

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kashkoulistar@gmail.com

Recruitment status

Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2025-04-09, 1404/01/20

Expected recruitment end date

2025-05-10, 1404/02/20

Actual recruitment start date
2025-04-09, 1404/01/20
Actual recruitment end date
2025-05-08, 1404/02/18
Trial completion date
2025-05-10, 1404/02/20

Scientific title
The effectiveness of compassion-focused therapy (CFT) on cognitive distortions, emotional processing and self-criticism in female doctors working in Isfahan health and treatment network.

Public title
The effectiveness of compassion-focused therapy (CFT) on cognitive distortions, emotional processing and self-criticism in female doctors working in Isfahan health and treatment network.
Purpose
Education/Guidance
Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria:
A female physician employed in the health and treatment network of Isfahan
Exclusion criteria:
Non-response to questionnaires Lack of cooperation in the research
Age
From **20 years** old to **45 years** old
Gender
Female

Phase
N/A
Groups that have been masked
No information
Sample size
Target sample size: **34**
Actual sample size reached: **30**
Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized
Randomization description
The sample size in the present study consisted of 34 participants (considering the potential dropout of some individuals), selected through a two-stage process: initially via purposive sampling and subsequently through random selection based on inclusion criteria. The adequacy of a 30-participant sample, meaning at least 15 individuals per group, is supported by Cohen’s (200) recommendation for pilot experimental studies.
Blinding (investigator's opinion)
Not blinded
Blinding description
Placebo
Not used
Assignment
Single
Other design features

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee
Name of ethics committee
Research Ethics Committee, Islamic Azad University, Khomeini Shahr Branch
Street address
Bahonar
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Isfahan
Province
Isfehan
Postal code
8145913151
Approval date
2024-12-29, 1403/10/09
Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.KHSH.REC.1403.247

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
The effectiveness of compassion-focused therapy (CFT) on cognitive distortions, emotional processing and self-criticism in female doctors working in Isfahan health and treatment network.
ICD-10 code
ICD-10 code description

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Therapy focused on compassion, cognitive distortions, emotional processing, self-criticism
Timepoint
Eight sessions of compassion therapy (CFT)were conducted, starting in April, with one session being conducted each week.
Method of measurement
Cognitive Distortions:Cognitive distortions refer to the score obtained by the researcher on the Abdullahzadeh & Salar (2009) questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 20 items, scored on a Likert scale, with a minimum possible score of 20 and a maximum of 100. Higher scores indicate higher levels of cognitive distortions.Emotional Processing:Emotional processing refers to the score obtained by the researcher on the Baker (2010) questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 25 items, scored on a Likert scale, with a minimum score of 25 and a maximum score of 125.Self-Criticism:Self-criticism refers to the score obtained by the researcher on the Thompson and Zuroff (2004) questionnaire. The questionnaire contains 22 items scored on a seven-point Likert scale, with a minimum score of 22 and a maximum of 154. Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-criticism.Compassion-

Focused Therapy (CFT):In this study, compassion-focused therapy refers to an 8-session intervention based on Gilbert's compassion-focused model. Each session lasts 90 minutes and is delivered according to the standard CFT training protocol.

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description

Intervention group: This study is conducted using a quasi-experimental design with a pre-test and post-test and includes both an experimental group and a control group. The aim of this research is to examine the effects of Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT) on cognitive distortions, emotional processing, and self-criticism among employed female physicians working in the health and treatment network.From the accessible population of female physicians working in health centers, 34 volunteers will participate in the study. These participants will be randomly assigned to two groups: an experimental group (17 participants) who will receive Compassion-Focused Therapy, and a control group (17 participants) who will not receive any intervention. After selecting the sample and obtaining informed consent from the participants, the following steps will be carried out: 1. Pre-test: Initially, both the experimental and control groups will complete a pre-test. Participants will respond to the instruments measuring cognitive distortions, emotional processing, and self-criticism. 2. Therapeutic Intervention for the Experimental Group: The experimental group will undergo Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT). This therapy is typically delivered over several sessions and includes training in self-compassion, cognitive exercises to reduce self-criticism, and emotional exercises to enhance emotional processing. The intervention will consist of 8 sessions, each lasting 90 minutes. 3. No Intervention for the Control Group: The control group will not receive any therapeutic intervention but will complete the same assessment tools as the experimental group. 4. Post-test: After the completion of the therapy sessions, both groups will complete a post-test to evaluate changes in the dependent variables (cognitive distortions, emotional processing, and self-criticism).The therapy sessions will be held in a calm and quiet environment. The study will use the Cognitive Distortions Questionnaire by Abdollahzadeh and Salar (2019), the Emotional Processing Scale by Baker (2007), and the Levels of Self-Criticism Scale (LOSC) by Thompson and Zuroff (2004).

Category

Lifestyle

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center
Laplas

Full name of responsible person
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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity
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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
20

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
Setare kashkouli

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senior student

Latest degree
Bachelor

Other areas of specialty/work
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Person responsible for updating data

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Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)
Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Study Protocol
Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Statistical Analysis Plan
Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Informed Consent Form
Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Clinical Study Report
Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Analytic Code
Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Data Dictionary
Yes - There is a plan to make this available

Title and more details about the data/document
The dataset includes pre-test and post-test scores obtained from validated psychological questionnaires assessing cognitive distortions, emotional processing, and self-criticism among female physicians in the experimental group (who received Compassion-Focused Therapy) and the control group. Limited demographic data such as age, marital status, years of experience, and workplace are also included.

When the data will become available and for how long
From April 8, 2025 to May 10, 2025

To whom data/document is available
Researchers, graduate students, academic supervisors, and clinical psychologists upon request and ethical approval.

Under which criteria data/document could be used
The data may be used for academic research, meta-analysis, or comparative studies in clinical psychology, provided ethical principles are respected and participant confidentiality is maintain

From where data/document is obtainable
Principal Investigator: [star kashkouli], [khomeinishahr University], Department of Psychology – Contact: [kashkoulistar@gmailcom]

What processes are involved for a request to access data/document

The request must be submitted via email including research purpose and ethical approval. The investigator will review and respond within 14 days.

Comments