Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

08 Nov 2026

Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment-based Therapy (ACT) on Experiential Avoidance, Intolerance of Uncertainty and Meta-parenting among mothers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Protocol summary

Study aim
Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment-based Therapy (ACT) on Experiential Avoidance, Intolerance of Uncertainty and Meta-parenting among Mothers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Design
a quasi-experimental, pretest–posttest design with two parallel groups (experimental and control), single-blind procedure and randomization based on a random number table, 30 participants, two-month follow-up period

Settings and conduct
This study will be conducted at the “Darya” Autism Rehabilitation Center in Behbahan, under the supervision of the Welfare Organization. After screening participants based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria and obtaining informed consent, they will be randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group. The intervention will be implemented at the center, and data will be collected from both groups through pre-test and post-test assessments using questionnaires.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria: Being mother of a child with autism, Being in the age range of 25 to 45 years, Not suffering from specific psychiatric disorders or physical diseases that require the use of drugs or special treatment, Not being divorced or head of household. exclusion criteria: Participating in other therapy sessions at the same time, suffering from physical diseases or psychiatric disorder in a way that interferes with treatment sessions or requires hospitalization or drug therapy, Reluctance to continue cooperation

Intervention groups
Following random assignment, the experimental group will received group-based Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) across 8 to 10 ninety-minute sessions, while the control group will received no intervention. A pretest-posttest design will employed to evaluate both groups.

Main outcome variables
Experiential avoidance, Intolerance of uncertainty, Meta-parenting

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information
IRCT registration number: **IRCT20260510069331N1**
Registration date: **2026-05-24, 1405/03/03**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-05-24, 1405/03/03**
Update count: **0**

Registration date
2026-05-24, 1405/03/03

Registrant information

Name
Ladan Kasebzadeh

Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University of Behbahan

Country
Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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Recruitment status
Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2026-05-26, 1405/03/05

Expected recruitment end date

2026-07-27, 1405/05/05

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date
empty

Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment-based Therapy (ACT) on Experiential Avoidance, Intolerance of Uncertainty and Meta-parenting among mothers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Public title
Effect of ACT therapy on Well-being and Parenting in Mothers of Autistic children

Purpose
Treatment

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:
Being mother of a child with autism Being in the age range of 25 to 45 years Not suffering from specific psychiatric disorders or physical diseases that require the use of drugs or special treatment Not being divorced or head of household

Exclusion criteria:
Participating in other therapy sessions at the same time ůffering from physical diseases or psychiatric disorderس in a way that interferes with treatment sessions or requires hospitalization or drug therapy Reluctance to continue cooperation

Age
From **25 years** old to **45 years** old

Gender
Female

Phase
N/A

Groups that have been masked
No information

Sample size
Target sample size: **30**

Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized

Randomization description
Participants will be allocated to either the intervention or control group using simple randomization, generated by a computer-based random number generator. The allocation sequence will be pre-determined and concealed within sequentially numbered, opaque, and identical sealed envelopes. After confirming eligibility and obtaining informed consent, the envelopes will be opened in chronological order of enrollment for each participant. This procedure ensures allocation concealment and minimizes selection bias.

Blinding (investigator's opinion)
Not blinded

Blinding description

Placebo
Not used

Assignment
Parallel

Other design features
Participants were randomly allocated to either the experimental or the control group; the intervention was administered exclusively to the experimental group.

Secondary Ids

empty

Ethics committees

1

Ethics committee

Name of ethics committee
Ethics committee of Islamic Azad University, Behbahan Branch

Street address
Islamic Azad University, Behbahan Branch, Shahid Bayani Street, Amir Kabir Boulevard, Behbahan, Khuzestan Province, Iran

City
behbahan

Province
Khouzestan

Postal code
6361713198

Approval date
2026-04-25, 1405/02/05

Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.BEHBAHAN.REC.1405.033

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Psychological outcomes in parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)

ICD-10 code
F43.2

ICD-10 code description
Adjustment disorders

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Experiential Avoidance

Timepoint
Pretest, posttest, and 2-month follow-up

Method of measurement
Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II (AAQ-II) developed by Bond et al. (2011)

2

Description
Intolerance of Uncertainty

Timepoint
Pretest, Posttest, and 2-month follow-up

Method of measurement
Intolerance of Uncertainty Scale (IUS) developed by Freeston et al. (1994)

3

Description
Meta-parenting
Timepoint
Pretest, Posttest, and 2-month follow-up
Method of measurement
meta-parenting questionnaire developed by Hawk & Holden (2006)

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group: Intervention Description: The intervention group will receive Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). The intervention will consist of 8 to 10 weekly sessions, each lasting 90 minutes, and will be delivered by a trained psychologist. The protocol is based on the standard ACT model and focuses on the six core processes: acceptance, cognitive defusion, present-moment awareness, self-as-context, values, and committed action. Session content is as follows: Session 1: Group introductions, explanation of the therapy goals and structure, setting session rules, establishing therapeutic rapport, and pre-test administration. Sessions 2–3: Introduction to ACT, experiential avoidance, creative hopelessness, and maladaptive coping patterns. Sessions 4–5: Training and practice of cognitive defusion and self-as-context. Sessions 6–7: Acceptance, mindfulness, and present-moment awareness. Sessions 8–9: Identifying personal values, goal setting, and committed action. Final session: Review and consolidation of learned skills, reinforcement of their application in daily life, and post-test administration. A two-month follow-up will be conducted after the end of the intervention period to assess the sustainability of the treatment effects. All sessions will be delivered in a structured group format, and no pharmacological agents or medical equipment will be used in this intervention.
Category
Treatment - Other

2

Description
Control group: The control group will be assigned to a ‘wait-list’ control condition. During the study period, participants in this group will not receive any psychological or educational interventions similar to the experimental group. In accordance with ethical standards, after the completion of the study, if the intervention proves effective, the educational protocol will be offered to the control group participants. Participants in the control group will complete the pre-test, post-test, and two-month follow-up assessments at the same time intervals as the intervention group.
Category
N/A

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Darya Autism Educational and Rehabilitation Center, Behbahan
Full name of responsible person
Niloofar Tarahomnejad
Street address
Shahid Shiroudi Alley, Mohammad Jafari Street, Behbahan, Khuzestan Province, Iran
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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Majid Sina
Street address
Islamic Azad University, Behbahan Branch, Shahid Bayani Street, Amir Kabir Boulevard, Behbahan, Khuzestan Province, Iran.
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behbahan@cms.iau.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
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Leila Bakhshi Sooreshjani
Position
Assistant Professor
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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
This dataset includes deidentified individual participant data, including demographic variables and outcome measures collected before and after the intervention. All personal identifiers will be removed before sharing. Only

anonymized data related to the study outcomes will be made available to researchers upon reasonable request for scientific use.

When the data will become available and for how long

Data will become available 6 months after publication of the study results and will remain available for at least 5 years. Access will be provided upon reasonable request to the principal investigator for academic and research purposes.

To whom data/document is available

Access is available to qualified researchers and students affiliated with academic or scientific institutions. Data will be shared for scientific and research purposes only, subject to the approval of the principal investigator.

Under which criteria data/document could be used

Data usage is restricted to: Scientific and academic research purposes only. Analysis outlined in the submitted research proposal. No commercial, insurance, or legal use. No redistribution to third parties. Signed Data Sharing Agreement required, ensuring confidentiality and no re-identification attempts. Appropriate acknowledgement of the original study in any resulting publications. Approval by the principal investigator and, if needed, institutional ethics committee.

From where data/document is obtainable

Data and related documents can be obtained through the following contact: Primary contact: Principal Investigator: Ladan Kasebzadeh M.A. Student in General Psychology Email: Ladan.kasebzadeh@iau.ir

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

The process for requesting access to the data is as follows: The applicant must submit a formal written request to the principal investigator, including a brief research proposal outlining the objectives and planned analyses. The request will be reviewed within 2–4 weeks based on scientific merit and ethical considerations. If approved, the applicant must sign a Data Sharing Agreement confirming confidentiality and appropriate data use. If required, proof of institutional ethics approval must be provided. The deidentified dataset will be shared electronically within 2 weeks after completion of the required documentation. The total expected time from submission to data access is approximately 4–6 weeks, depending on the completeness of the request.

Comments