Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

07 Nov 2026

The Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) on Reducing Academic Fatigue, Distress, and Hopelessness in Female Secondary School Students with Test Anxiety.

Protocol summary

Study aim

The effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) on reducing academic fatigue, psychological distress, and academic hopelessness among female secondary school students with test anxiety in Ahvaz.

Design

This study is designed as a quasi-experimental clinical trial with a pre-test/post-test and control group. Thirty female secondary students in Ahvaz with test anxiety will be allocated using block randomization (block size of 4), generated via Random Allocation Software and sealed envelopes, into two groups of 15 (experimental and control). The experimental group will receive ACT intervention, while the control group will be placed on a waitlist.

Settings and conduct

This study is conducted in girls' schools in Ahvaz. Thirty students with test anxiety are randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental group receives 8 ACT sessions, and the study is conducted as single-blind.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion Criteria: Female student Secondary school level Ahvaz city resident Test anxiety (high score) Informed consent provided Exclusion Criteria: History of severe psychiatric disorders Unwillingness to cooperate Inability to understand instructions

Intervention groups

Intervention Group (Experimental): These students will receive 8 sessions of ACT, each lasting 90 minutes, over a 4-week period. Sessions involve learning ACT skills through practical exercises and group discussions. Control Group: These students will not receive any intervention during the 4-week study period. They will receive the ACT intervention after the study concludes.

Main outcome variables

Academic Fatigue Academic Distress Academic Hopelessness

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20260718070245N1**
Registration date: **2026-07-25, 1405/05/03**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-07-25, 1405/05/03**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2026-07-25, 1405/05/03

Registrant information

Name

Zahra Golgiri

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 61 3334 8420

Email address

zhalhjanky1@gmail.com

Recruitment status

recruiting

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2026-08-21, 1405/05/30

Expected recruitment end date

2027-01-20, 1405/10/30

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date

empty

Scientific title

The Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) on Reducing Academic Fatigue, Distress, and Hopelessness in Female Secondary School Students with Test Anxiety.

Public title

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Reducing Academic Fatigue, Distress, and Hopelessness

Purpose

Education/Guidance

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:

Female secondary school student in Ahvaz Having test anxiety (high score on Sarason’s Test Anxiety Inventory) Written informed consent from parents or legal guardian Ability to comprehend and respond to questionnaire items and intervention instructions

Exclusion criteria:

Age outside the secondary school range History of serious psychiatric disorders requiring immediate specialized treatment Unwillingness to cooperate throughout the intervention period

Age

From **12 years** old to **18 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

The randomization method used in this study is block randomization with a block size of 4. The allocation sequence will be generated using Random Allocation Software and placed in consecutive sealed envelopes. After final confirmation of each participant's entry conditions, the researcher will open the envelopes in order to allocate individuals to the intervention or control group.

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, Ahvaz Branch

Street address

Islamic Azad University Ahvaz Branch، Farhangshahr، Golestan Highway

City

Ahvaz

Province

Khouzestan

Postal code

3733361349

Approval date

2026-06-09, 1405/03/19

Ethics committee reference number

IR.IAU.AHVAZ.REC.1405.255

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied

Test anxiety

ICD-10 code

F41.8

ICD-10 code description

Other specified anxiety disorders

Primary outcomes

1

Description

Test anxiety

Timepoint

At the beginning of the study, before the start of the intervention (pre-test), and immediately after the completion of the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy sessions, at the end of the fourth week (post-test).

Method of measurement

Sarason Test Anxiety Questionnaire

2

Description

Academic fatigue

Timepoint

At the beginning of the study, before the start of the intervention (pre-test), and immediately after the completion of the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy sessions, at the end of the fourth week (post-test).

Method of measurement

Academic Burnout Inventory by Salmela-Aro, Kiuru, and Nurmi (2009)

3

Description
Psychological distress
Timepoint
At the beginning of the study, before the start of the intervention (pre-test), and immediately after the completion of the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy sessions, at the end of the fourth week (post-test).
Method of measurement
Kessler Psychological Distress Scale

4

Description
Hopelessness
Timepoint
At the beginning of the study, before the start of the intervention (pre-test), and immediately after the completion of the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy sessions, at the end of the fourth week (post-test).
Method of measurement
Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS)

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
First Intervention Group:Participants in the experimental group will receive group Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) based on a standardized protocol for 4 weeks (comprising 8 sessions of 90 minutes each, twice a week). The sessions include training in components of acceptance, cognitive defusion, self-as-context, contacting the present moment (mindfulness), values clarification, and committed action.
Category
Behavior

2

Description
Control Group:Participants in the control group will receive no psychological intervention during the 4-week study period and will remain on a waiting list. To comply with ethical principles, similar training sessions will be held for this group after the completion of the study and the post-test
Category
Behavior

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz Unit
Full name of responsible person
Pejman Taghipour Birgani
Street address
Islamic Azad University Ahvaz Branch، Farhangshahr، Golestan Highway
City
Ahvaz
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
3733361349
Phone
+98 61 3334 8420
Email
info@iauahvaz.ac.ir

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Pejman Taghipour Birgani
Street address
Islamic Azad University Ahvaz Branch، Farhangshahr، Golestan Highway
City
Ahvaz
Province
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Postal code
3733361349
Phone
+98 61 3334 8420
Email
info@iauahvaz.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
Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person
Mohammad Hossein Mohabi Nooraldinvand
Position
Associate professor
Latest degree
Ph.D.
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
Street address
Islamic Azad University Ahvaz Branch، Farhangshahr، Golestan Highway
City
Ahvaz
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
3733361349
Phone
+98 61 3334 8420
Email
info@iauahvaz.ac.ir

Person responsible for scientific inquiries

Contact
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Mohammad Hossein Mohabi Nooraldinvand
Position
Associate professor
Latest degree
Ph.D.
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
Street address
Islamic Azad University Ahvaz Branch، Farhangshahr، Golestan Highway
City
Ahvaz
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
3733361349
Phone
+98 61 3334 8420
Email
info@iauahvaz.ac.ir

Person responsible for updating data

Contact
Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Mohammad Hossein Mohabi Nooraldinvand
Position
Associate professor
Latest degree
Ph.D.
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
Street address
Islamic Azad University Ahvaz Branch، Farhangshahr، Golestan Highway
City
Ahvaz
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
3733361349
Phone
+98 61 3334 8420
Email
info@iauahvaz.ac.ir

Sharing plan

Deidentified Individual Participant Data Set (IPD)
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Study Protocol
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Statistical Analysis Plan
Not applicable
Informed Consent Form
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Clinical Study Report
Not applicable
Analytic Code
Not applicable
Data Dictionary
Not applicable