Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

07 Nov 2026

The effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) counseling on rumination, internalized shame, and distress tolerance in women affected by marital infidelity.

Protocol summary

Study aim
To determine the effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) counseling in reducing rumination, reducing internalized shame, and increasing distress tolerance in women affected by marital infidelity

Design
A controlled clinical trial with parallel groups, single-blinded, randomized, on 30 patients.

Settings and conduct
Convenience sampling will be conducted among women affected by marital infidelity who refer to counseling centers and psychological clinics in Ahvaz city. They will be randomly assigned to intervention and control groups using a randomized block design. This study will be conducted in a single-blind manner and the evaluators and data analysts will be unaware of the grouping of participants (intervention or control).

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria: Gender: Female, Age: 20 to 50 years, Experience of marital infidelity, Referral to counseling centers or psychological clinics in Ahvaz due to mental or emotional problems resulting from marital infidelity, Inclusion criteria: Presence of severe psychiatric disorder, Use of stable psychiatric medications, Presence of acute family crises

Intervention groups
Intervention group (ACT): Treatment method: Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) with an emphasis on emotional acceptance, commitment to values, and reduction of rumination. Number and duration of sessions: 8 weekly sessions (90 minutes each session) individually or in groups. Content: Mindfulness exercises, self-compassion, and distress tolerance skills. Equipment: Educational handouts, questionnaires, and a quiet counseling environment. Control group: Intervention: Received usual counseling services (without ACT) or a waiting list. Assessment: Pre-test and post-test similar to the ACT group.

Main outcome variables
Rumination, internalized shame, distress tolerance

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information
IRCT registration number: **IRCT20250609066149N1**
Registration date: **2025-09-16, 1404/06/25**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2025-09-16, 1404/06/25**
Update count: **0**

Registration date
2025-09-16, 1404/06/25

Registrant information

Name
Sheyda Samomi

Name of organization / entity

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Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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Recruitment status
Recruitment complete

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2025-09-22, 1404/06/31

Expected recruitment end date
2026-02-18, 1404/11/29

Actual recruitment start date
empty

Actual recruitment end date
empty
Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
The effectiveness of acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) counseling on rumination, internalized shame, and distress tolerance in women affected by marital infidelity.

Public title
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) on rumination, internalized shame, and distress tolerance
Purpose
Education/Guidance
Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria:
Experience of marital infidelity Referral to counseling centers or psychological clinics in Ahvaz due to mental or emotional problems resulting from marital infidelity Informed consent to participate in treatment sessions and research assessments High score on rumination or internalized shame
Exclusion criteria:
Sustained psychiatric medication use The existence of acute family crises Drug addiction
Age
From **20 years** old to **50 years** old
Gender
Female

Phase
N/A
Groups that have been masked

- Outcome assessor
- Data analyser

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 fixed block size of 4. The allocation sequence will be generated using Random Allocation Software and placed in sequentially numbered, sealed, opaque envelopes. After final confirmation of each participant's eligibility, the researcher will open the envelopes in sequential order and assign individuals to either the intervention or control group.
Blinding (investigator's opinion)
Single blinded
Blinding description
Assessors and data analysts will be unaware of the grouping of participants (intervention or control) to avoid bias in the measurement of outcomes. Participants cannot be blinded to the nature of the intervention (counseling), but they will be informed that they are receiving one of the validated intervention methods. The interventionist (counselor) cannot be blinded to the nature of the ACT treatment, but the intervention protocol will be implemented in a standardized manner to reduce bias. This design is considered a single-blind design.
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
2024-12-25, 1403/10/05
Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.AHVAZ.REC.1403.419

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Women affected by marital infidelity
ICD-10 code
Z63.0
ICD-10 code description
Problems in relationship with spouse or partner

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Rumination
Timepoint
Before the start of the intervention and after the completion of the treatment sessions (two months after the start of the intervention)
Method of measurement
Rumination response questionnaire

Secondary outcomes

1

Description
Internalized Shame
Timepoint
Before the start of the intervention and after the completion of the treatment sessions (two months after the start of the intervention)
Method of measurement
Internalized Shame Questionnaire

2

Description
Distress tolerance
Timepoint
Before the intervention (pre-test), after the intervention (post-test), and follow-up (2 months after the intervention).
Method of measurement
Distress Tolerance Scale

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group (ACT):Therapeutic method: Acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT) with an emphasis on accepting emotions, committing to values, and reducing rumination.Number and duration of sessions: 8 weekly sessions (90 minutes each) individually or in groups.Content: Mindfulness exercises, self-compassion, and distress tolerance skills.Equipment: Educational handouts, questionnaires, and a quiet counseling environment
Category
Treatment - Other

2

Description
Control group: Do not receive intervention but receive usual counseling services (without ACT) or waitlist. Assessment: Pre-test and post-test similar to ACT group. (If medication or specific substances were used, details were mentioned, but this study is purely psychotherapy.)
Category
N/A

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz Unit
Full name of responsible person
Samira Seyed Asiaban
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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

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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
Islamic Azad University
Full name of responsible person
Samira Seyed Asiaban
Position
Associate professor
Latest degree
Ph.D.

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Psychology
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Person responsible for updating data

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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