Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

07 Nov 2026

Comparing the Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on Self-Criticism, Feelings of Inferiority, Cognitive Flexibility, and Emotion Regulation among Parents of Children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Protocol summary

Study aim

A Comparison of the Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on Self-Criticism, Feelings of Inferiority, Cognitive Flexibility, and Emotion Regulation in Parents of Children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Design

The present study employed a quasi-experimental design with a pretest–posttest control group.

Settings and conduct

Based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 60 participants will be selected using purposive non-probability sampling and randomly assigned to three groups of 20 (two experimental groups and one control group). The two experimental groups will receive Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), respectively, while the control group will receive no intervention. Following university approval, participants will be recruited from psychological clinics (Ofogh-e Omid).

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The study population includes parents of preschool and elementary-aged children with ADHD in Shiraz during the 2025–2026 academic year. Inclusion criteria are confirmed child diagnosis, Shiraz residence, parental age (20–50), and eligibility via interview and questionnaires. Exclusion criteria include simultaneous treatment initiation, more than two absences, and severe psychiatric disorders (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar, major depression, and severe anxiety).

Intervention groups

In this study, participants were assigned to two experimental groups: (1) the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) group and (2) the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) group. The control group was placed on a waiting list. All three groups completed the pre-test and post-test assessments at the same time points.

Main outcome variables

Self-criticism, feelings of inferiority, cognitive flexibility, emotion regulation, and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20260713070175N1**
Registration date: **2026-08-25, 1405/06/03**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-08-25, 1405/06/03**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2026-08-25, 1405/06/03

Registrant information

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Mehrnaz Amjadi

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

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Recruitment status

recruiting

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date
2026-10-21, 1405/07/29
Expected recruitment end date
2026-12-20, 1405/09/29
Actual recruitment start date
empty
Actual recruitment end date
empty
Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
Comparing the Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on Self-Criticism, Feelings of Inferiority, Cognitive Flexibility, and Emotion Regulation among Parents of Children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Public title
Comparing the Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) on Self-Criticism, Feelings of Inferiority, Cognitive Flexibility, and Emotion Regulation among Parents of Children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
Purpose
Education/Guidance
Inclusion/Exclusion criteria
Inclusion criteria:
1. Confirmation of Clinical Diagnosis: Parents whose children had been diagnosed with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) by clinical psychologists holding a doctoral degree (Ph.D.), based on standardized diagnostic protocols. 2. Initial Screening and Assessment: Individuals who were identified as eligible to participate in the study based on the initial interviews and completion of standardized questionnaires, and who resided within the geographical boundaries of Shiraz. 3. Age Range and Demographic Characteristics: Primary caregiver parents aged 20 to 50 years, in order to minimize the potential influence of substantial age-related differences in cognitive processing and emotion regulation on the study outcomes.
Exclusion criteria:
1. Concurrent Treatments: Individuals who initiated any form of concurrent psychological or pharmacological treatment during the study period were excluded, as the interaction of multiple interventions could confound the results and lead to misleading findings regarding the comparative effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) versus Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). 2. Non-Adherence to Treatment Attendance: Participants who missed more than two therapy sessions for any reason were excluded from the data analysis to prevent the effects of inadequate intervention exposure from influencing the final outcomes. 3. Severe Psychiatric Disorders: Parents who themselves had severe psychiatric disorders (e.g., schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, or severe anxiety disorders) were excluded from the study. This was because the presence of such disorders could have a substantial influence on variables such as self-criticism and emotion regulation, potentially making the changes observed at post-test attributable not to the therapeutic intervention but rather to fluctuations in the underlying psychiatric condition.
Age
From **20 years** old to **50 years** old
Gender
Both

Phase
N/A
Groups that have been masked
No information
Sample size
Target sample size: **60**
Randomization (investigator's opinion)
Randomized
Randomization description
Randomization Procedure: In this study, participants will be individually allocated through simple randomization using a random-number table to one of two intervention groups or one control group. The first randomly selected number will be assigned to the first intervention group, while the subsequent numbers will be assigned sequentially to the second intervention group and the 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
Islamic Azad University, Arsanjan Branch
Street address
University of Arsanjan, University Street, Arsanjan
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Fars
Postal code
۷۳۷۶۱۵۳۱۶۱
Approval date
2026-04-30, 1405/02/10
Ethics committee reference number
IR. IAU. A. REC. 1405. 006

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
ICD-10 code
F90.0
ICD-10 code description
Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, predominantly inattentive type

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Self-Criticism
Timepoint
Pre-intervention / Post-intervention / Two-month follow-up
Method of measurement
Self-Criticism / Self-Attack / Self-Reassurance Questionnaire

2

Description
Feelings of Inferiority
Timepoint
Pre-intervention / Post-intervention / Two-month follow-up
Method of measurement
Comparative Feelings of Inferiority Questionnaire (Strano & Dixon, 1990)

3

Description
Cognitive Flexibility
Timepoint
Pre-intervention / Post-intervention / Two-month follow-up
Method of measurement
Cognitive Flexibility Inventory (CFI; Dennis & Vander Wal, 2010)

4

Description
Emotion Regulation
Timepoint
Pre-intervention / Post-intervention / Two-month follow-up
Method of measurement
Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ)

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention Group: The intervention protocol will be Hayes' Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (2004). The first experimental group will attend eight 2-hour sessions over 2 months, utilizing cognitive change worksheets.boltسبک
Category
Behavior

2

Description
The cognitive behavioral therapy protocol by Muñoz et al. (2002) will be used. The second experimental group will attend eight 2-hour sessions over two months of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), utilizing the corresponding ACT worksheets.boltسبک
Category
Behavior

3

Description
Control group: No intervention was made
Category
Behavior

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center
Name of recruitment center
Ofoq Omid Center – Dr. Fili
Full name of responsible person
Mehrnaz Amjadi
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Sponsors / Funding sources

1

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Name of organization / entity

Islamic Azad University

Full name of responsible person
Research Deputy: Saeed Mohtasham

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Grant name

Grant code / Reference number

Is the source of funding the same sponsor organization/entity?
No

Title of funding source
Islamic Azad University

Proportion provided by this source
30

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
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Assistant Professor

Latest degree
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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

Some participant-related data may be shared after the individuals' information has been de-identified.

When the data will become available and for how long

The data from the present study will be available for a period of six months after the publication of the results in the form of research articles.

To whom data/document is available

The data from the present study will be available only to researchers working at academic, psychiatric, and psychological institutions.

Under which criteria data/document could be used

The statistical analysis output will be available.

From where data/document is obtainable

Applicants may contact the corresponding researcher by email at mehrnaz.amjadi@iau.ac.ir or via WhatsApp at +98 917 413 7101.

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

The data will be accessible for up to six months following the completion of the study and publication of the resulting articles

Comments

This study will be conducted with psychotherapy provided by Dr. Mehrnaz Amjadi, a child psychologist, under the supervision of Dr. Akbar Rezaeifard.