Clinical Trial Protocol
Iranian Registry of Clinical Trials

07 Nov 2026

The Effectiveness of Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT) in Reducing Self-Blame and Repairing the Schema of Imperfection and Shame in Women Affected by Marital Infidelity in Ahvaz City

Protocol summary

Study aim

To determine the effectiveness of Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT) in reducing self-blame and improving defectiveness/shame schemas among women affected by marital infidelity in Ahvaz.

Design

A randomized, parallel-group, quasi-experimental study with a pre-test, post-test, and follow-up design, involving 30 participants (15 per group). Participants will be randomly allocated to experimental and control groups using a computer-generated randomization sequence.

Settings and conduct

The study will be conducted in counseling and psychological centers in Ahvaz, Iran. Thirty eligible participants will be randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental group will receive eight weekly 90-minute CFT sessions, while the control group will receive no intervention. Assessments will be conducted at pre-test, post-test, and two-month follow-up. No blinding will be used.

Participants/Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Iclusion criteria: Participants aged 20–50 years, residing in Ahvaz, with 6 months to 2 years elapsed since disclosure or experience of spousal infidelity, scoring above the mean on self-blame and defectiveness/shame schema measures, holding at least a high school diploma, and having received no similar psychotherapy during the previous 6 months.

Intervention groups

Intervention group: Participants will receive eight weekly 90-minute sessions of compassion-focused therapy targeting self-blame, shame, and defectiveness schemas. Control group: Participants will receive no intervention during the study and will complete the same assessments. After follow-up, they will receive compassion-focused therapy training.

Main outcome variables

Self-blame, defectiveness and shame schema

General information

Reason for update

Acronym

IRCT registration information

IRCT registration number: **IRCT20251129068145N6**
Registration date: **2026-10-02, 1405/07/10**
Registration timing: **prospective**

Last update: **2026-10-02, 1405/07/10**
Update count: **0**

Registration date

2026-10-02, 1405/07/10

Registrant information

Name

Mohammadreza Gorji Azghandi

Name of organization / entity

Country

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Phone

+98 51 3872 0567

Email address

gorji@article-lab.com

Recruitment status

recruiting

Funding source

Expected recruitment start date

2026-10-22, 1405/07/30

Expected recruitment end date

2026-12-06, 1405/09/15

Actual recruitment start date

empty

Actual recruitment end date

empty

Trial completion date
empty

Scientific title
The Effectiveness of Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT) in Reducing Self-Blame and Repairing the Schema of Imperfection and Shame in Women Affected by Marital Infidelity in Ahvaz City

Public title
The Effectiveness of Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT) in Reducing Self-Blame and Repairing the Schema of Imperfection and Shame in Women Affected by Marital Infidelity in Ahvaz City

Purpose
Supportive

Inclusion/Exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria:
A minimum of 6 months and a maximum of 2 years having elapsed since the disclosure or experience of spousal infidelity (to ensure the acute crisis phase has passed). Scoring above the mean on the self-blame and defectiveness/shame schema questionnaires. Possessing at least a high school diploma to ensure comprehension of therapeutic concepts and questionnaire items. No receipt of similar psychotherapy services within the past 6 months. Residency in the city of Ahvaz. Age range of 20 to 50 years.

Exclusion criteria:

Age
From **20 years** old to **50 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
Eligible participants (n=30) will be randomly allocated in a 1:1 ratio to either the experimental group (n=15) or the control group (n=15) using a simple randomization method. A computer-generated random allocation sequence will be used to determine group assignment after eligibility assessment and baseline measurements.

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
Research Ethics Committees of Islamic Azad University - Ahvaz Branch

Street address
Islamic Azad University-Ahvaz Branch, Farhang Shahr, Golestan Highway, Ahvaz.

City
Ahvaz

Province
Khouzestan

Postal code
۶۱۳۴۹۳۷۳۳۳

Approval date
2026-07-21, 1405/04/30

Ethics committee reference number
IR.IAU.AHVAZ.REC.1405.431

Health conditions studied

1

Description of health condition studied
Psychological distress following marital infidelity

ICD-10 code
Z63.0

ICD-10 code description
Problems in relationship with spouse or partner

Primary outcomes

1

Description
Self-blame

Timepoint
The outcome will be assessed at baseline (pre-test), immediately after the intervention (post-test), and 2 months after the intervention (follow-up).

Method of measurement
Self-blame will be assessed using the Janoff-Bulman Self-Blame Scale, a 15-item questionnaire covering behavioral and personality self-blame, rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Higher scores indicate greater self-blame.

2

Description
Defectiveness/Shame Schema

Timepoint
The outcome will be assessed at baseline (pre-test), immediately after the intervention (post-test), and 2 months after the intervention (follow-up).

Method of measurement
The Defectiveness/Shame subscale of the Young Schema Questionnaire (YSQ-SF) will be used. The subscale consists of 5 items rated on a 6-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater severity of the schema.

Secondary outcomes

empty

Intervention groups

1

Description
Intervention group: Participants will receive eight weekly 90-minute sessions of compassion-focused therapy based on Paul Gilbert’s model, including psychoeducation, mindfulness and soothing-rhythm breathing, compassionate imagery, cognitive restructuring, and exercises targeting self-blame, shame, and defectiveness schemas.

Category
Treatment - Other

2

Description
Control group: Participants will receive no psychological intervention during the study period and will undergo the same pre-test, post-test, and two-month follow-up assessments. After completion of the follow-up assessment, the control group will receive an intensive compassion-focused therapy training course for ethical considerations.

Category
Treatment - Other

Recruitment centers

1

Recruitment center

Name of recruitment center
Aramis Kianpars Clinic

Full name of responsible person
Dr. Ali Khalafi

Street address
Aramis Kianpars Clinic, Farvardin Street, between Esfand and Eghbal Streets, Golestan Boulevard, Ahvaz.

City
Ahvaz

Province
Khouzestan

Postal code
6138674691

Phone
+98 937 260 9797

Fax

Email
info@aramisclinic

Sponsors / Funding sources

1

Sponsor

Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University - Ahvaz Branch

Full name of responsible person
Dr. Aslan Agdernejad

Street address
Industry and Community Relations Office, 2nd Floor, Office Building, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz Branch, Farhangshahr, Golestan Highway, Ahvaz, Iran.

City
Ahvaz

Province
Khouzestan

Postal code
۶۱۳۴۹-۳۷۳۳۳

Phone
+98 61 3334 8361

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 - Ahvaz Branch

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 - Ahvaz Branch

Full name of responsible person
Dr. Parvez Askari

Position
Associate Professor

Latest degree
Ph.D.

Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology

Street address
Islamic Azad University-Ahvaz Branch, Farhang Shahr, Golestan Highway, Ahvaz.

City
Ahvaz

Province
Khouzestan

Postal code
۶۱۳۴۹۳۷۳۳۳

Phone
+98

Email
askary47@yahoo.com

Person responsible for scientific inquiries

Contact

Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University - Ahvaz Branch
Full name of responsible person
Dr. Parvez Askari
Position
Associate Professor
Latest degree
Ph.D.
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
Street address
Islamic Azad University-Ahvaz Branch, Farhang Shahr, Golestan Highway, Ahvaz.
City
Ahvaz
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
۶۱۳۴۹۳۷۳۳۳
Phone
+98
Email
askary47@yahoo.com

Person responsible for updating data

Contact

Name of organization / entity
Islamic Azad University - Ahvaz Branch
Full name of responsible person
Shahnaz Karam Pour Farhad Abad
Position
Student
Latest degree
Bachelor
Other areas of specialty/work
Psychology
Street address
2nd Floor, No. 3, Sa'i 7, Amniyat 3 St., Farhang-e Shahr, Ahvaz.
City
Ahvaz
Province
Khouzestan
Postal code
6134987769
Phone
+98 938 975 1050
Email
karampoorshahnaz@gmail.com

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
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Informed Consent Form
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Clinical Study Report
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Analytic Code
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available
Data Dictionary
Undecided - It is not yet known if there will be a plan to make this available