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A COMPARATIVE EFFICACY OF HOLISTIC MULTIDIMENSIONAL TREATMENT MODEL (HMTM) AND APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS (ABA) IN THE TREATMENT OF CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

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Introduction: Several approaches have been presented for treatment of children with ASD. The aim of the present study was to compare the efficacy of Holistic Multidimensional Treatment Model (HMTM) with Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) in the improvement of clinical symptoms of children with ASD.

Method: The present study was an experimental pre and post test research. The statistical population included the 3 to 8 year old children with ASD who were referred to the child psychiatry clinics in two academic Hospitals- Mashhad, Iran. The sample included 20 children who were selected with convenience sampling and randomly divided to 2 groups of ABA (8 boys and 2 girls) and HMTM (7 boys and 3 girls). The diagnosis was made by a child psychiatrist based on DSM-IV-TR criteria and using Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADIR) and Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS). Then the children were referred to Noore Hedayat center for the treatment. Childhood Autism Rating Scale (CARS), Bender Gestalt Test, Draw-A-Man Test Good enough, Raven's Colored Progressive Matrices Test for children, Vineland Social Maturity Scale (VSMS) and performance charts of children based on their videotaped behaviors. Data analysis was done using ANCOVA test. **Results:** Findings showed that in spite of more efficacy of HMTM compared to ABA, the differences of standard tests except Bender Gestalt Test and performance charts did not reach to the significant level ($p > 0.05$).

Conclusion: In conclusion, HMTM at least had the equal efficacy to ABA in the treatment of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Further researches are needed to compare the efficacy of these 2 methods.