Impact of Transactional Analysis Group Training on Marital Satisfaction of Women's Referred to Counseling Centers and Cultural Centers of Isfahan

Raheleh Honari
Department of Clinical Psychology, Kish International Campus, Islamic Azad University,
Kish Island, Iran

Abstract: The present study examines the impact of transactional analysis training on marital satisfaction of women's referred to counseling centers and cultural centers in Isfahan. The current research is a type of quasi-experimental study with pre-test and post-test and with control group. The population consisted of 114 applicants participated in the training group were randomly selected and divided into two groups (30 women each). For both groups the ENRICH marital satisfaction test (short version) was used for the pre-test. The experimental group underwent 10 sessions of transactional analysis group training. In order to examine the data $SPSS_{15}$ was applied and the results were analyzed through multivariate covariance analysis test. the results showed that there is a difference in rate of marital satisfaction after the transactional analysis group training between the experimental and the control groups ($p<0.01$). Through training of women to get them familiarize with communicative and effective verbal and non-verbal interaction analysis many barriers to facilitation of a good relationship could be achieved.

Keywords: Marital satisfaction, married women, transactional analysis

INTRODUCTION

One of important aspects of any marital system is satisfaction couples experience in marriage (Taniguchi *et al*., 2006). but marital satisfaction is hardly accessible (Rosen-Grandon *et al*., 2005). Marital relations could be a source of happiness or a cause of sadness. As love originates from hope. Being hopeful to someday the individual's feelings will be understood or accepted and a more desired relations is made. Couples' interaction allows them to discuss or exchange their ideas, solve their problems and know their needs better. Couples who fail to make a good communication go into a suspending situation (Young and Long, 2007).

Accordingly, the marital satisfaction is a key for overall evaluation of the individual where there are almost no explicit positive or negative characteristics. However, dissatisfaction reflects the kind of assessment negative features are evident and positive characteristics absent (Bradbury *et al*., 2006). As a matter of fact, communication has a key role in marriage (Burlson and Denton, 2005). Different marital properties have shown that an effective integration among the pair is one of the most critical aspects of families with proper performance (Greeff and Malherbe, 2005). Generally speaking, a common assumption states that the cause of many problems of martial relations is inefficient interactional skills among spouses.

Considering this approach, O'Donohue and Crouch (1996) stated that communication training as an attempt for improvement of the problematic relation stands as an critical factor in most of marital therapy approaches (Burlson and Denton, 2005). Many several studies have indicated that family disputes (Gary, 2009; Flicker, 2008) as well as difficulty in making a mutual efficient communication (Christensen and Sheng, 2007) are of the chief reasons of couples' disputes. Though, increased quality of interaction and training of communicational skills maximizes marital satisfaction (Markman, 2011) lead to martial satisfaction.

Transactional analysis is a theory of personality and an organized method for psychotherapy for changing and developing the personality. This definition is presented by International Association for Behavior Analysis International Transactional Analysis (Stewart and Joines, 2009). Transactional analysis means what states of his/her "me" is more powerful and can better understands his/her behavior and others' in a social context.

In this method quality of different interrelationships of personality of "me" including (childhood me, mature me and parental me) are considered (Korseni, cited by Shafie Abadi, 2010). The "childhood me" is a series of feelings, attitudes and behavioral patterns show some residues of childhood. The "parental me", however, consists of feeling, attitudes and behavioral patterns that such similar characteristics are observable in parents. The "mature me" on the other hand is described through a set of independent feelings, attitudes and behavioral patterns accord with the present reality (Shafie Abadi, 2010).

As Burn explains one problem here is the boundary between two states of "me" and occurs when only

irrational and prejudiced attitudes of parent or old and obsolete emotions of the child contradict with logical thinking and behaviors of adulthood (Shiling, 2007). Boholst (2007) examined different states of ego among participants and their perception from other states of ego within 5 days through group therapy and transactional analysis method the aim was to maximization of "supportive parent", "mature" and "independent child" states of the participants and decrease of "criticizing parent" and "compatible child" states. The obtained results indicated that after treatment, the subjects acquired the desired states of ego.

Deal (2010) highlighted the significance of mutual understanding in marital relations and its role in marital satisfaction and happiness as well as treating behavioral disorders of children. According to Deal (2010) couples who have a good understanding are much healthier and an empathically joint relation is created, which finally brings marital satisfaction and happiness. Andromico (2009) in a study on the effect of transactional analysis in family therapy and group therapy concluded that martial satisfaction considerably increased compared with the control group.

Shaafi Abadi *et al.* (2010) in their research investigated on effectiveness of two transactional analysis and solution-focused in change of marital satisfaction of married women working in Tehran concluded that transactional analysis is an efficient way for increase of marital satisfaction and has some advantages over the solution-focused approach. Salamat *et al.* (2007) studied the effect of training of interactional skills (T.A.) through transactional analysis method on decrease of marital conflicts. In this study 24 couples were divided into two control and experimental groups. The results indicated that this training causes increase of agreement on how to spend spare time, increase of satisfaction and intimacy, improvement of dialogue and criticism methods, improvement of better conclusion of dialogues and decrease of marital disputes in the couples.

In other investigation Torkan *et al.* (2006) examined the effectiveness of group therapy with transactional method on marital satisfaction. The findings showed the efficiency of this method in maximization of martial satisfaction and generally the experimental group pairs compared with the control group.

Danesh (2006) explored the impact of transactional analysis of verbal communication on martial adaptation of incompatible couples. Fourteen incompatible couples were randomly divided into two control and experimental groups. The data analysis of "pairs adaptation scale" of two groups after the test showed that this method increased martial adaptation of the experimental group compared to before therapy.

In other investigation aimed to examine the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral, Islamic couple's

therapy and transactional analysis on pairs' adaptation of incompatible couples, the experimental groups received 10-12 training sessions with cognitive-behavioral, Islamic couple's therapy and transactional analysis methods and the control group received no training. The obtained results indicated that the training of cognitive-behavioral, Islamic couple's therapy and transactional analysis maximized adaptation of incompatible pairs and accordingly cognitive-behavioral couples therapy is more effective compared with Islamic couples therapy and transactional analysis (Fotouhi Bonab *et al.*, 2009).

Salari (2007) carried out a research to assess effectiveness of group-therapy with transactional analysis method on increase of emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction of pairs is living in Mashhad. After classifying participants in control and experimental groups and attendance at 12 training sessions, the results of post-test showed that emotional intelligence of the experimental group couples meaningfully increased compared with the control group. Though, no meaningful change was observed in martial satisfaction. Also, emotional intelligence meaningfully and directly correlated with marital satisfaction.

Maverdi and Ghargh (2009) realized that training of communicative skills leads to increase of martial satisfaction and improvement of relationship beliefs of couples.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is a type of semi-empirical using pre-test and post-test with control group. The independent variable includes group training of transactional analysis and the dependent variable is marital satisfaction and its components. In order to analyze the obtained data, besides descriptive statistics, the inferential statistics like multivariate variance analysis was applied.

Population, sampling method and sample size: The population consisted of all married women referred to counseling centers and cultural centers of Isfahan city. The random sampling method was used and 60 participants were selected. Then the subjects were randomly divided into two 30 participant groups. The experimental group received 10 training sessions of transactional analysis.

Instrument: The Enriching and Nurturing Relationship Issues, Communicating and Happiness (ENRICH) marital satisfaction test, short form: Elson *et al.* (2010) used this test to examine martial satisfaction since they assumed that this test relates to changes happen during man's life. The instrument is graded in a Likert scale and each item is scored one to five. Mahdian research reported the Pearson's correlation coefficient test in

test-retest method (one week interval) 0.937 for men's group, 0.944 for women's group and 0.94 for either men or women's group.

The Pearson's correlation coefficient value of ENRICH questionnaire were obtained 0.41-0.60 for family satisfaction and 0.32-0.41 for life satisfaction scales. This showed the acceptable degree of the instrument reliability. The Chronbach's alpha value for 48 item version was calculated 0.92 in Mir Kheshti (1996) research and 0.95 for 47 item version of Soleymanian (1994) study. The ENRICH questionnaire is normalized by Soleymanian (1994) in Iran and a 47 item version was finally presented. However, the alpha value for the original 115 item version was computed 0.92. The alpha value for the short version was calculated 0.95.

RESULT ANALYSIS

As Table 1 shows, the post-test mean scores of marital satisfaction for women in experimental group equal 3.4 and 2.5 for the control group. The mean scores of post-test for personal issues in the experimental group in the experimental group equal 4.4 and 1.5 for the control group. The mean scores of post-test of marital communication in the experimental group are equal to 4.5 and 1.5 for the control group. Also, the mean scores of post-test for conflict resolving in the experimental group are equal to 4.5 and 1.5 for the control group. The mean scores for post-test of financial management in the experimental group are achieved 2.9 and 2.67 for the control group.

The mean scores of leisure activities post-test in the experimental group equals to 1.4 and 4.07 for the control group. The mean scores of post test for sexual relation are computed 4.3 for the experimental group and 1.37 for the control group. The mean scores of post-test for children test in the experimental group equal 3.25 and 2.63 for the control group. The mean scores of post-test for family and friends test in the experimental group are equal to 4.43 and 1.5 for the control group. For the egalitarian roles test, the mean scores of post-test are computed 3.73 for the experimental group and 2.08 for the control group.

The post-test mean scores of religious orientation are obtained 4.27 for the experimental group and 1.83 for the control group. Mean scores of overall marital satisfaction post-test in the experimental group are equal to 3.74 and 2.11 for the control group. The results of multivariate co-variance analysis on post-test of happiness and its components after the pre-test screening are presented in Table 2.

Considering Table 2, there is a meaningful variance between women in both groups in terms of martial satisfaction ($p < 0.01$ and $F = 84.43$). The Eta share square equals 0.84 that means 84% of variance of both groups belongs to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for marital satisfaction is equal to 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of personal issues ($p < 0.01$, $F = 137.87$).

The Eta share square equals 0.9 that means 90% of variance of both groups in personal issues belongs to training of transactional analysis. The power of test for personal issues is equal to 1 which indicates the

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of martial satisfaction and its forms among married women

Marital satisfaction and its components	Test	Women in experimental group		Women in control group	
		M	S.D.	M	S.D.
Marital satisfaction	Pre-test	2.45	0.15	2.60	0.18
	Post-test	3.40	0.16	2.50	0.14
Personal issues	Pre-test	1.44	0.20	1.42	0.32
	Post-test	4.40	0.38	1.50	0.37
Marital relationship	Pre-test	1.45	0.17	1.45	0.21
	Post-test	4.50	0.19	1.50	0.25
Resolving conflict	Post-test	1.58	0.20	1.60	0.37
	Pre-test	4.50	0.16	1.50	0.32
Financial management	Pre-test	2.77	0.30	2.78	0.26
	Post-test	2.90	0.28	2.67	0.28
Leisure activities	Pre-test	4.33	0.33	4.42	0.32
	Post-test	1.40	0.42	4.07	0.44
Having sex	Pre-test	1.52	0.30	1.38	0.18
	Post-test	4.30	0.37	1.37	0.21
Children	Pre-test	2.58	0.24	2.63	0.25
	Post-test	3.25	0.30	2.63	0.28
Family and friends	Pre-test	1.62	0.32	1.30	0.21
	Post-test	4.43	0.22	1.50	0.21
Egalitarian roles	Pre-test	2.13	0.18	2.12	0.16
	Post-test	3.73	0.29	2.08	0.18
Religious orientation	Pre-test	1.50	0.32	1.53	0.40
	Post-test	4.27	0.32	1.83	0.41
Overall marital satisfaction	Pre-test	2.12	0.07	2.11	0.10
	Post-test	3.74	0.09	2.11	0.07

S.D.: Standard deviation

Table 2: Results of multivariate co-variance analysis on martial satisfaction and its components post-test after controlling pre-test

Marital satisfaction and its components	S.S.	df	M.S.	F	Sig.	Eta share square	Test power
Marital satisfaction	33.40	2	2.16	84.43	0.000	0.84	1.00
Personal issues	64.38	2	19.32	137.87	0.000	0.90	1.00
Marital relation	61.37	2	18.81	285.10	0.000	0.95	1.00
Resolving conflict	43.07	2	21.53	282.43	0.000	0.95	1.00
Financial management	0.44	2	0.22	2.53	0.100	0.14	0.47
Leisure activities	29.75	2	14.87	129.82	0.000	0.89	1.00
Having sex	40.38	2	20.19	211.22	0.000	0.93	1.00
Children	2.39	2	1.20	12.98	0.000	0.46	0.99
Family and friends	40.73	2	20.36	20.36	0.000	0.97	1.00
Egalitarian roles	12.11	2	6.05	6.05	0.000	0.84	1.00
Religious orientation	26.94	2	13.47	13.47	0.000	0.83	1.00
Overall martial satisfaction	12.45	2	6.23	6.23	0.000	0.99	1.00

S.S.: Sum of square; M.S.: Mean square

multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of marital relationship (p<0.01, F = 2845.1).

The Eta share square is equal to 0.95 that mean 95% of variance of both groups belong in martial relationship to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for marital relationship equals 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of conflict resolving (p<0.01, F = 137.87).

The Eta share square equals 0.95 that means 95% of variance of both groups in conflict resolving belongs to training of transactional analysis. The power of test for conflict resolving is equal to 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is not observable between women in two groups on the basis of financial management (p>0.05, F = 129.82).

The Eta share square equals 0.89 that means 89% of variance of both groups in leisure activities belongs to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for leisure activities is equal to 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of having sex (p<0.01, F = 211.22).

The Eta share square equals 0.93 that means 93% of variance of both groups in having sex belongs to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for having sex is equal to 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of children (p<0.01, F = 12.98).

The Eta share square is equal to 0.46 that means 46% of variance of both groups children belong to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for children equals 0.99 which indicates the multivariate

covariance analysis with 99% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of family and friends (p<0.01, F = 461.84).

The Eta share square equals 0.97 that means 97% of variance of both groups family and friends belongs to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for family and friends is equal to 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of egalitarian roles (p<0.01, F = 95.78).

The Eta share square is equal to 0.84 that means 84% of variance of both groups' egalitarian roles belongs to training of transactional analysis. The power of test for egalitarian roles equals 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of their religious orientation (p<0.01, F = 77.88).

The Eta share square is equal to 0.83 that means 83% of variance of both groups in religious orientation belongs to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for religious orientation equals 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group). Also, a meaningful variance is observable between women in two groups on the basis of overall martial satisfaction (p<0.01, F = 1084.87).

The Eta share square equals 0.99 that means 99% of variance of both groups in overall martial satisfaction belongs to training of transactional analysis. the power of test for overall marital satisfaction equals 1 which indicates the multivariate covariance analysis with 100% power confirms the groups variance based on number of samples (15 each group).

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study accord with Gary (2009), Flicker (2008), Christensen and Sheng (2007),

Markman (2011), Boholst (2007), Deal (2010) Andromico (2009), Torkan *et al*. (2006), Danesh (2006), Fotouhi Bonab *et al*. (2009), Salari (2007), Maverdi and Ghargh (2009) and Shafie Abadi *et al*. (2010) results.

Torkan *et al*. (2006) in their study realized that transactional analysis group therapy method was effective on increase of men and women martial satisfaction, or generally on pairs in the experimental group compared with the control group. Moreover, training of communication skills (TA) was effective on increase of the couples' agreement on how to spend their leisure time (p = 0.004) (Salamat *et al*., 2007). Probably such trainings cause the experimental group know more about their own and spouse's personality characteristics and understand that any coming dispute on the way to spend leisure time relates to conflict of what" me's " of both parties and so, use the provided solutions to resolve the problem.

This study also showed that TA leaves no impact on increase of women's agreement in religious affairs (Salamat *et al*., 2007). To explain, the reason could be since in religious affairs, the individuals' values conflict with each other (parent me) of both sides contradicts with each other. Values are a set of beliefs and traditions any person shapes it within according to his/her childhood to adulthood educations s/he receives, family culture and the environment. Usually, individuals suppose that what they know as value is an about reality, though it may not be true. Therefore, in martial disputes, spouses resists against other party values.

Other investigation indicated that the experimental and control group did not display a considerable variance in financial affairs (Salamat *et al*., 2007).

Salamat *et al*. (2007) understood that TA has no effect on decrease of verbal and non-verbal violence of women. it seems training of communicative skills to the experimental group lead to reduction of women's conflict with their mate (Shafie Abadi *et al*., 2010).

This result could be explained that participants in these classes learn that when "the parent" of one side or the "parent me" of one mate conflicts with "mature me" of the other side, disputes are initiated. Consequently, when dispute happens, they spouses do attempt to no to enter these parts of the personality characteristics of theirs and their mates. So, frequency of disputes decreases and the pairs less interfere with these personality aspects and could find strategies to suppress "parent me" or "spouse me".

Also, the results of Salamat *et al*. (2007) indicated that TA was not effective on increase of spouses' agreement about interaction with friends and relatives. They also showed that TA was effective on increase of spouses' intimacy. It could be for this reason that TA enables spouses to find their "child me" under the "mature me" control and become much closer to each other.

Finally, the role of transactional analysis training in reduction of family conflicts and increase of women's marital satisfaction confirms the present study results.

REFERENCES

Andromico, M.P., 2009. The chronological elevator: A redecision model for Roth the TA therapist, western institute for group and family therapy. J. Fam. Psychol., 32: 731-802.

Boholst, F.A., 2007. Effects of transactional analysis group therapy on ego states and ego state perception. J. Transactional Anal., 33(3): 254-261.

Bradbury, T.N., S.R.H. Beach, F.D. Fincham and G. Nelson, 2006. Attributions and behavior in functional dysfunctional marriage. J. Couns. Clin. Psychol., 64: 569-576.

Burlson, B. and W.H. Denton, 2005. The relationship between communication skills and marital satisfaction: Some moderating effects. J. Marriage Fam., 59(4): 884-902.

Christensen, A. and I. Sheng, 2007. Communication conflict and psychological distance. J. Clin. Psychol., 17(1): 342-354.

Danesh, A., 2006. Impact of interactive analysis on marital adaptation of unadjusted couples. Proceeding of the 2nd Congress on Family Pathology. Shahid Beheshti University, Iran, pp: 169.

Deal, J.E., 2010. Marital conflict and differential treatment of sibling. J. Fam. Process, 35(3): 335-346.

Elson, D.K., N. Dames and K.R. McKeown, 2010. Extracting social networks from literary fiction. Proceeding of the 48th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics. Uppsala, Sweden, pp: 138-147.

Flicker, S., 2008. Pathways between Marital Adjustment and Adolescent Adjustment. Retrieved form: www.findarticles.com.

Fotouhi Bonab, S., S. Husseini Nasab and T. Hashemi, 2009. Examination of the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral, Islamic couple therapy and transactional analysis on martial adjustment of unadjusted couples. News and Studies of Counseling, winter 2009, pp: 109-127.

Gary, L.N., 2009. The Intergenerational Transmission of Marital Conflict: Testing a Processes Model. Retrieved form: WWW.Stanford.edu./group/apq/.

Greeff, A.P. and H.L. Malherbe, 2005. Intimacy and marital satisfaction in spouses. J. Sex Marital Ther., 272: 247-257.

Markman, H., 2011. Preventing marital distress through communication and conflict-management training: A4 year and 5 year follow-up. J. Consult. Clin. Psych., 1(5): 70-77.

Maverdi, J. and M. Ghargh, 2009. Exploration of effectiveness of training of communicative skills on martial satisfaction: Communicative skills and beliefs of blind men and their blind spouses. M.A. Thesis, Psychology, School of Educational Sciences, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran.

Mir Kheshti, F., 1996. Examination of relationship between marital satisfaction and mental health. M.A. Thesis, IAU, Rohdehen Branch Tehran, Iran.

O'Donohue, W. and J.L. Crouch, 1996. Marital therapy and gender-linked factors in communication. J. Marital Fam. Ther., 22(1): 87-101.

Rosen-Grandon, J.R., J.E. Myers and J.A. Hattie, 2005. The relationship between marital characteristics, marital interaction processes and marital satisfaction. J. Couns. Dev., 82(1): 58-68.

Salamat, M., A. Zamani and T. Alahyari, 2007. Impact of training of communicative skills using transactional analysis method on decrease of marital conflict. Appl. Psychol., 3: 29-42.

Salari, M., 2007. The impact of transactional analysis group therapy on increase of EQ and martial satisfaction of couples in Mashhad. M.A. Thesis, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran.

Shafie Abadi, A., 2010. Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy. Daneshgahi Publication Center, Tehran.

Shafie Abadi, A., L. Moein and M. Vaghef, 2010. Comparison of effectiveness of two interactional and solution-focused approaches in change of marital satisfaction of married employed women in Tehran. J. Woman Soc., 3: 21-40.

Shiling, L., 2007. Theories of Counseling. Translated by Khadijeh Arian. 5th Edn., Etelaat Publication, Tehran.

Soleymanian, A., 1994. Examination of the effect of illogical thought (based on the cognitive approach) on marital dissatisfaction. M.A. Thesis, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

Stewart, V. and Y. Jones, 2009. New Methods on Psychology of Transactional Analysis. Translated by Bahman Dadgostar, Dayereh Publication, Tehran.

Taniguchi, S.T., P.A. Freeman, S. Taylor and B. Malcarne, 2006. A study of married couples perceptions of marital satisfaction in outdoor recreation. J. Exp. Educ., 28(3): 253-256.

Torkan, H., M. Kalantari and H. Molavi, 2006. Examination of effectiveness of transactional analysis group therapy on martial satisfaction. J. Fam. Res., 8: 354-384.

Young, M.E. and L.L. Long, 2007. Counseling and Therapy for Couples. Brook/Cole Publishing Co., New York.