

A COMPARISON OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS AND COGNITIVE- BEHAVIORAL STRESS MANAGEMENT THE ON MARITAL SATISFACTION AND QUALITY OF LIFE OF WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Family is a community that should relieve its members stress and facilitate their growth and prosperity. One of the common problems that has attracted the attention of family therapists is marital turmoil. The aim of the study was to compare the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral stress management, and transactional analysis, two group approaches, on the marital satisfaction and quality of life in women with marital discord in Ahvaz. The present study is a experimental study with a pretest-posttest assessment and a control group. The statistical universe of the study consisted of women with marital problems referring to psychological counseling centers in Ahvaz. Using a convenience sampling procedure, forty-eight women were selected and randomly assigned to each of the two experimental groups (cognitive-behavioral stress management and transactional analysis) and one control group. Pre- and post- treatment assessments were made using the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire and the Short Form Health Survey (SF-36). Ten 90-minute sessions of transactional analysis and cognitive-behavioral stress management were held weekly. Findings indicated that both transactional analysis training and cognitive-behavioral stress management were effective in improving all components of quality of life as well as all dimensions of marital satisfaction, except financial management and religious orientation. Results suggest that transactional analysis was more effective regarding personality issues and marriage and children, while cognitive-behavioral stress management training was more effective on the physical dimension of quality of life. According to findings, to enhance the marital satisfaction and quality of life of in the two approaches transactional analysis and, cognitive - behavioral stress management can be used in counseling centers.

KEY WORDS: cognitive- behavioral stress management, marital satisfaction , transactional analysis, quality of life, women

INTRODUCTION

Family is a place which should reduce the psychological pressures from its members and smooth the way for their growth and development. One of the most prevailing difficulties which attract the consideration of family therapists is the marital distraction. This difficulty may have different features such as depression which will be shown in both wife and husband and the final part of it is divorce. Marital conflict and chaos is the most cause of wives reference to the therapists. One of the reasons for couples not going for consulting and therapy is that they think that their problem is not solvable and they can't live together and they are not happy with their life and therefore they are dissatisfied and depressed (Paterson *et al.*, 2002). One of the most powerful grounds which separate satisfied and dissatisfied couples from each other is the method of their relationship (Olson *et al.*, 2008).

Also one of the most important sides of the marital system is satisfaction which the couples experience in their marital life (Taniguchi *et al.*, 2006). And therefore the divorce which is the most important indication of marital disturbance (Hallford 2004) shows that the marital satisfaction will not be obtained very easily (Rosen Grandon *et al.*, 2004). Apart from all the marriages which ends in divorce, there are many unsuccessful marriages which the couple does not take

divorce due to many circumstances (Greef *et al.*, 2001). Therefore calming down and reducing the couple's distress because of its negative outcomes is important (Byrne *et al.*, 2004). Even though marriages are gracious, but the data obtained show that satisfaction of both sides will not be obtained easily (Rosen Grandon *et al.*, 2004). The quality of marriages effect the whole system of the family such as stability, continuity, support, children and happiness of the couple (Wilax and Nock, 2006). Marital satisfaction is a psychological condition which shows perception of a person towards another person (Stone and Stackelford, 2006). Person's satisfaction in the marriage is like his/her satisfaction in the family and therefore analysis of marital satisfaction and its different dimensions and also determination of its elements with the marital satisfaction is necessary (Azimloo, 2007).

World health organization has defined the life quality as the evaluation of person's thought from different dimensions (Cardoso *et al.*, 2005). Research in recent decades show that marital satisfaction, life quality and total welfare of people has a strong relation with job satisfaction and success, religious and financial elements, marital satisfaction is the main element in happiness and also variables which increases the marital satisfaction which not only advances the quality of life, but also reduces the amount of divorce up to 50%. Research show that men have more satisfaction in compare to women which is mainly due to increase in stress in women due to their sexual expectations (Rabeno, 2009). Transactional analysis uses a 3 sectional pattern as the "SELF" sensual mood (Widdowson, 2009). If person's behavior, thought and sensation are at the present time, and uses all its abilities as an adult, he/she in the "maturity" sensual mood. Sometimes it is possible that he/she uses the behavior, sensation and thought like when he/she was a child (Warren, 2008).

Stress management program in cognitive- behavioral method is in different types such as relaxation, imagery and other technics for reduction of anxiety with cognitive- behavioral approaches such as cognitive reconstruction, copying effectiveness teaching, teaching of expressiveness and anger management, have been mixed (Antoni *et al.*, 2009). Alen (1998) believes that with teaching of analyzing method of interaction to people and use of this method the quality of life will improve. Regarding the effects of skills teaching relationship on the family action Kong's (2005) research in one year with emphasis on the importance of contact skills teaching on two couples show that the contact pattern of constructive interaction is one of the most protective elements against stress and the ground for satisfaction, positive feeling, colving conflict and marriage stability among the couples. Lorenz (2006) in his research finds that sensational self-pollination among the couples who have constructive relation pattern are more and also the couples are having less peasantry. Taschen-Caffier *et al* (1999) conducted a cognitive behavioral therapy for treating and sexual satisfaction, reduction of thought of despair and improvement of marital relation skills for 6 months on the 70 couples who were non-fertilized. Result show that improvements in the amount of sperm, reduction of frustration and reduction of non-satisfaction in marriage have been treated. Chobfroosh *et al* (2010) also conducted a research and in their research they found that cognitive- behavioral stress management increases the marital satisfaction among non-fertilized women. Jebel Amoli *et al* (2010) in their research found that cognitive- behavioral stress management causes improvement in the life quality and blood pressure. Therefore with regard to on the one hand one of the reasons for cause of conflict in marriage is non-satisfaction and at the end divorce, couple not having necessary skills in relationship and solving the problems, having emotional and cognitive skills and all the other necessary abilities for producing a safe and secure environment (Halford, 2004) and on the other side most of the considered targets in the transactional analysis (such as skill in producing safe relationship and reaching intimacy) and cognitive- behavioral stress management, anger management, right methods of expression and emotional skills. In this research comparison of transactional analysis effectiveness and cognitive behavioral stress management for improvement in the marital satisfaction and life qualithave been considered.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present research method is test method with pretest- posttest and control group. Statistical society of the research consisting of all the women who have marital difficulties due to any circumstances and they refer to consulting centers and psychological clinics of Ahvaz city. Since 15 persons were necessary for the testing subject in each group (Delavar, 2009) and considering drop out in the testing subjects, statistical sample available among the women with at least one child and have high school graduation and above, 48 people were chosen randomly in two groups of test and control.

After choosing the samples they have been notified of the reason for therapy and the aim of research and a consent form has been presented to them to fill. In the next stage which in fact was pretest a marital satisfaction questionnaire and life quality have been executed to measure the dependent variables. After this stage a contract has been signed with both test groups to participate in the therapy. The therapy sessions have been conducted in groups once a week for one and half hour in total for 10 sessions for each group. In this period no reaction was noticed in control group. At the end of therapy sessions all 3 groups have been analyzed for their changes. Finally the data obtained from pre and post tests have been analyzed.

Measuring tools

1. Evaluation & Nurturing Relation Issues Communication and happiness:

Olson has introduced 115 questions for the first time and had marked them in LIKERTY's method. High mark in this questionnaire means satisfaction and low mark means dissatisfaction. In marital relationship.

Validity of high form with the use of α has been reported 0/92 (Olson 1994. In Iran Solaimanian (1993) for the first time announced internal consistency of the test for high form 0/93 and for short form 0/95. Mahdevian (1996) had retested the Inrich test of stability with the use of Pearson coordination coefficient. (in one week distance) for men and women separately 0/94 has been obtained.

2. Short form questionnaire for life quality regarding health (SF- 36):

Form No. 36 is a frase planned by and its validity and stability in different groups will be analyzed. The aim of questionnaire is evaluation of physical and psychological health conditions which have been consisted by composition of eight areas of health. Four sub scales of physical operation, limitation in physical role play, body pain and general health totally are in the physical health group and four psychological sub scales of tiredness or happiness, social operation and limitation in social role play show total marks for psychological health (Ware 1993). Score domains (SF-36) are in the limitation of 0- 100 which in each case the higher mark shows the better condition and quality of life. Questionnaire has world standard and is useful and stable and valuable. Validity test of the convergence has desirable results and total coordination coefficients obtained is more than subjected amount of 0.4. stability of retest of the questionnaire with the time distance of two weeks in the research of Montazeri, Gushtasebi and Vahdani nia is 0.75.

Method of evaluation:

Therapy of transactional analysis started with constructive analysis for the people to obtain knowledge from their previous conditions such as disturbances, pollution and rejection, then different types of self-destruction transaction and safe transaction will be taught. Then the therapy starts with self-destructing games for the subjects to be aware of unhealthy positions and scenarios. Subjects should be encouraged to decide that what they do in any determined moment and replace safe transaction on place of unsafe transaction. Therapy sessions of cognitive- behavioral stress management consisted of two parts. First part starts with the teaching of relaxation which consists of relaxation techniques (teaching of body relaxation, respiration exercise, and meditation). Second part consists of teaching of cognitive-behavioral techniques such as relation skills, method of problem solving, assertion recognition and challenge with irrational thoughts, methods of anger management, activity programming etc.

RESULTS

Since there are two groups of test and control with pre and posttest for analysis of scores, the differences obtained in the scores has been calculated which are due to multi variable dependents from variance analysis of Monva multi variables have been used. Before the test execution of Monva the variance hypothesis of equality of studied groups have been analyzed with the use of Loen test (F). Results are mentioned in the following table 1:

A you can see in table 1 meaningful levels of the tests counts the use of variance analysis permissive. Results of variance analysis of multi variable have been presented in table 2.

Variable	F	DF1	Df2	meaningful level
Personality subjects	0/804	2	42	0/454
Marital relation	1/183	2	42	0/316
Conflict solving	0/870	2	42	0/427
Financial management	1/471	2	42	0/241
Leisure time activity	1/631	2	42	0/208
Sexual relation	2/402	2	42	0/068
Marriage & children	2/944	2	42	0/064
Family & friends	1/987	2	42	0/150
Religious orientation	0/952	2	42	0/394
Marital satisfaction's total score	0/980	2	42	0/384
Physical dimensions	1/520	2	42	0/122
Psychological dimensions	1/215	2	42	0/131
Total score	2/017	2	42	0/112

Table 2. Results of multi variance analysis (Monova) on the score differences (pretest- posttest) of marital satisfaction and life quality and their components in table 3.

Test name	amount	F	degree of hypothesis	freedom	error
Pilay effect test	0/938	3/003	20/000	68/000	0/001
Lambadi Wilkes test	0/129	5/905	20/000	66/000	0/001
Hoteling test	6/264	10/022	20/000	64/000	0/001
Biggest rooting test	6/180	21/012	20/000	34/000	0/001

Meaningful level of tests show that there are meaningful differences between all three groups of transactional analysis, stress management and control group at least with one of the dependent variables (marital satisfaction, and its component and life quality. To find out the differences the results obtained from the tests in table 3 will be obtained:

Table 3 : results of test between subjects by scores' differences (pretest, posttest), marital satisfaction and its components in all 3 groups.

Variable	total squares	df	squares average	f	meaningful level
Personality subjects	15/511	2	7/756	13/802	0/001
Marital relations	10/000	2	5/000	10/938	0/001
Conflict solving	9/378	2	4/689	0/630	0/001
Financial management	1/244	2	0/622	2/085	0/137
Leisure time activities	2/311	2	1/156	3/128	0/050
Sexual relations	17/911	2	8/956	022/935	0/001
Marriage & children	3/244	2	1/622	3/135	0/054
Family & friends	9/911	2	4/956	8/920	0/001
Religious orientation	1/378	2	0/689	1/466	0/242
Marital satisfaction total score	595/600	2	297/800	081/430	0/001
Physical dimensions	1846/544	2	923/272	69/153	0/001
Psychological dimensions	1312/638	2	655/319	44/841	0/001
Total score for life quality	6272/359	2	3136/130	86/523	0/001

as can be noticed there are meaningful differences between three test groups (transactional analysis, stress

management, and control group through variables of personality subjects, marital relationship, conflict solving, leisure time activities, sexual relation, family and friends, marriage and children and total score for marital satisfaction and life quality and its components. To find out that which group by dependent variables have meaningful differences, Toki test has been used. Results are mentioned in table 4.

Findings obtained show that both approaches of transactional analysis and cognitive- behavioral stress management are effective in the improvement of all life quality components and marital satisfaction dimensions except for the financial management and religious orientation. Regarding personality subjects variables and marriage and children training effectiveness of transactional analysis I more than cognitive- behavioral stress management. In addition difference between physical dimension average variable which is cognitive- behavioral stress management effectiveness on the mentioned variable is more than transactional analysis.

Variable	group	average differences	meaningful level
Personality subject	TA&C	2/18	0/001
	SM&C	1/33	0/001
	TA&SM	0/85	0/047
Marital relation	TA&C	1/00	0/001
	SM&C	1/00	0/001
	TA&SM	0/00	1/00
Conflict solving	TA&C	1/00	0/001
	SM&C	0/93	0/001
	TA&SM	0/06	0/955
Financial management	TA&C	0/26	0/783
	SM&C	0/40	0/123
	TA&SM	0/13	0/783
Leisure time activities	TA&C	0/93	0/010
	SM&C	0/20	0/049
	TA&SM	0/96	0/060
Sexual relation	TA&C	1/40	0/001
	SM&C	1/26	0/001
	TA&SM	0/13	0/829
Marriage & children	TA&C	1/85	0/001
	SM&C	0/90	0/022
	TA&SM	1/05	0/001
Family & friend	TA&C	1/1333	0/001
	SM&C	0/73	0/027
	TA&SM	0/40	0/054
Religious orientation	TA&C	0/33	0/386
	SM&C	0/40	0/258
	TA&SM	0/06	0/962
Marital satisfaction total score	TA&C	8/00	0/001
	SM&C	7/40	0/001
	TA&SM	0/60	0/669
Physical dimensions	TA&C	12/3757	0/001
	SM&C	14/5417	0/001
	TA&SM	7/1660	0/047
Psychological dimension	TA&C	10/2643	0/001
	SM&C	12/3603	0/001
	TA&SM	2/0960	0/301
Total score for life quality	TA&C	22/6400	0/001
	SM&C	26/9020	0/001
	TA&SM	4/2620	0/140

RESULTS DISCUSSION

Findings obtained from the research show that two approaches of transactional analysis and cognitive-behavioral stress management are effective on the marital satisfaction improvement matches with the results of the research of Andromico (1985); Boholst (2003); Slavik *et al* (2007), and in the matter of transactional analysis effectiveness with Sevier *et al* (2008), Feld (2009) and Chobfrosh *et al* (2010) regarding the effectiveness of stress management in the form of cognitive- behavioral. In addition to both transactional analysis and cognitive- behavioral stress management approaches in life quality improvement in women have effective difficulties in marriages which have been matched with researches by Antoni, (2003), Penedo *et al* (2007), Berger *et al* (2008) Lopes *et al* (2011) regarding cognitive-behavioral stress management.

Alen (1998) in his research obtained the result that teaching of transactional analysis results in improvement in life quality. In explanation of this findings it can be said that with the use of transactional analysis the women have obtained knowledge regarding 3 conditions of "childhood, maturity and parenthood and they could differentiate between different sources of their minds and they recognize all types of their feelings and they understand that each of the feelings state their expectation, thought and behavior, which in fact in this way the interfering group can show the effects of that stage. Such as in "I am an adult" can separate her from the position of being a parent (Shafee Abadi and Naseri 2003). Analysis of studies conducted from the application of cognitive behavioral approaches show that these approaches are effective on the marital conditions and teaching of these conditions are effective on the relation conditions and increase in the marital satisfaction. Hoton and Salcovis (1989) cognitive-behavioral stress management helps people to recognize condition which cause stress for them and then learn how to fight them. Correction of cognitive evaluations and improvement of the fighting against such conditions and presented exercises for technique learned with the real life conditions can bring about reduction in perceptual stress. In intervention group the main stress condition is in the matters among people who have difficulties in their marital relationship. These people learned how to divide these conditions between control and non-control conditions. And feedback them in two ways of circuit and emotions and self- presentation skills and anger management are also among the skills which could help them in this special condition to prevent such condition and incase of facing such conditions confront them suitably. In a research by Chang (2008) it has been shown that the model of cognitive- behavioral family therapy is effective in marital satisfaction. Also the approach teachings of transactional analysis with increase in the potential subjects in relationship skills and at the same time increase in the self-thought and search, being released from inefficient and destructive patterns for causing relation such as games, non-acceptance of responsibility and disappointment is due to inefficiency and with choosing a correct and healthy interpersonal and among personal process can cause improvement in the level of life quality. Results from research show that cognitive-behavioral teaching not only improves the relationship skills of the couples but also reduces the destructive conflicts and causes positive thinking in the daily relation (Epstein, 2002; Abramson *et al.*, 1978).

In the present research we have tried through negative self-recognition thoughts of relationship among persons, challenge with these thoughts and use of cognitive-behavioral stress techniques such as anger management, replacement methods of logical thoughts and evaluation process, self-teaching meditation and softening techniques cause improvement in the relationship and at the same time cause improvement in the quality of life of the members. Regarding meaningful effectiveness of two approaches of transactional analysis and financial management it can be said that possibly these components will be less affected by changes caused in these two approaches. In the other words the matters mentioned in two approaches of transactional analysis and cognitive- behavioral stress management is more effective on human communication, internal condition recognition and reduction and control of conflicts. Considering that the concentration of both the methods in the present research is on the marital difficulties of women who have difficulties in their marital life, in the techniques these matters not being mentioned enough such as regarding the religious orientation and financial programming and mainly the matters such as relationship and conflicts of the couple in the marriage have been mentioned. In addition according to analysis of findings there isn't a meaningful difference between effectiveness of transactional analysis and cognitive-behavioral stress management. It may be because both approaches are consisting of powerful techniques which can in total improve the marital relationship and compatibility and reduce and control conflicts and difficulties in marriage. Therefore both the approaches cause improvement in the marital satisfaction and there aren't meaningful differences between them.

Regarding the more effectiveness of transactional analysis approach compare to cognitive-behavioral stress management approach on the improvement of women's personality subjects who have marital difficulties this can be said that since determining items of personality subjects are mainly consisting of self-personality recognition and its acceptance and even sometime it is about ego and feelings and thoughts at the time of difficulties, may be transactional analysis can become more powerful. In the other words transactional analysis in comparison to cognitive behavioral stress management is more deciding regarding Ego and personality and awareness about these matters which can cause improvement in personality subjects?

Regarding effectiveness of transactional analysis in comparison to cognitive-behavioral stress management in improvement in relationship with children it can be said that women in the training group of transactional analysis with emphasis on the kind of concentration, shows adult behavior and avoiding from parenthood domination (scolding and controlling) and they could improve their relation with their children. In addition the group's awareness regarding decrees and orders (parenthood) which they give to their children causes improvement in relationship with children. Therefore effectiveness of transactional analysis is more logical. Effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral stress management in comparison to transactional analysis is mainly on the physical dimensions of life quality and therefore this approach ends in physical dimension of life which is due to special technical training such as gradual muscular relaxation, diaphragm breading, mental and physical analysis, method of meditation, in addition to cognitive-behavioral techniques.

The research is mainly conducted on the women and those who are high school completed and above. Also in the present research more research on the other groups increases the results which are due to shortage of time after therapy. In addition to later researches the type of special difficulties in the marriages (such as addiction, anger, cultural differences) is identified and with regard to the type of difficulties the approach therapy's effectiveness will be analyzed. Considering the research findings in both approaches of transactional analysis and cognitive-behavioral stress management are effective on the marital satisfaction and life quality. Placing of training centers regarding transactional analysis and cognitive behavior stress management in the universities and teaching centers for the youth and inclusion of both approaches in the consulting program before marriage can cause improvement in the future relationships of couples and an effective step in avoiding conflicts and difficulties in marriages.

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