

Investigation of Group Cognitive-Behavioral Education on Self-Knowledge and Marital Satisfaction in Men Who Suffer Family Problems

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ABSTRACT

The present research tries to investigate the influence of group cognitive-behavioral education on self-knowledge and marital satisfaction in men who suffer from family problems. Therefore, 30 people were selected from all men who suffered from family problems and referred to advice center of Abbas Abad city court over 4 months in a random way. They were divided into 2 groups (1 group was control group and the other was experiment group). Self-knowledge and marital satisfaction tests were conducted on the respondents (pretest). In order to conduct research experiment, cognitive-behavioral group education sessions were implemented on each of experiment groups. After re-implementation of experiments, data was gathered and statistically analyzed. The present research is an experimental research. In the present research, descriptive indices like diagram, mean and standard deviation and inferential indices like multi-variate covariance analysis (MANCOVA) and Bon Ferroni's test were used. Results showed that research hypotheses are verified and group cognitive-behavioral education method influences on marital satisfaction and self-knowledge.

KEYWORDS: group cognitive-behavioral education, marital satisfaction, self-knowledge.

INTRODUCTION

Family is one of the most important pillars of a society. Having a healthy society depends on having healthy families and having a healthy family depends on having individuals who are spiritually healthy and have good relationships with each other.

Choosing one's spouse is one of the most important selections and legal and emotional commitments of one's life. Unfortunately, many couples have problems in establishment of a good and friendly relationship with each other (Bornstein, 1981, as quoted from Delavar and Karam Nia, 2006). Many studies have been conducted to investigate the relationship between cognitive processes and marital dissatisfactions. Baldwin believes that every person forms a practical model for himself which is like a cognitive map and is used in social environment. In his opinion, this cognitive index acts like a relational schema which includes expression of oneself and others and it is a set of instructions for interacting with others (Whisman & Delinsky, 2002). Couples form schemae in their present relationship which is typical of this relationship as well as schemae they bring into their relationship. Relations schemae usually are not formed well in one's mind, but they exist as ambiguous concepts of what is there or what should be there (Beck, 1988, Epstein & Baucom, 2002). Beck's studies (1988) on dissatisfied couples showed that cognitive distortions or information process errors and negative thoughts like exaggerated generalizations, overestimation, additional explanations and negative labels which cast shadow on couples' lives cause marital dissatisfaction as well as automatic thoughts and schemae (schema) (Beck, 1984, as quoted from Gharache Daghi, 2003). Beck believes that in its widest form, "cognitive treatment is made up of all approaches which eliminate spiritual problems through adjustment of misconceptions." (Beck, 1976). Behavioral-cognitive treatment is largely dependent on this assumption that personal expression results in similar behavior in a person. Meichenbaum (1977) believes that within learning theory framework, patients' cognitions are clear behaviors which can be changed personally as clear behaviors can be observed directly (Corey, 2005, as quoted from Seyyed Mohammadi, 2009). Gordon (1999) studied the relationship between couples' familiarity with marriage and relational patterns and satisfaction. His research results showed that correlation between the variables was stronger in women who had higher relation-based criteria.

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Most therapists and advisors treat families and couples as well as individuals. Individuals' problems are not personal and often involve other members of family or relatives. In all treatment theories, techniques which are used for individuals are also used for couples and families but there are some small differences (Sharf, as quoted from Firouzbakht, 2005). Furthermore, group-therapy is more cost-effective than individual therapy because several people are treated at the same time. It also has some other advantages. Although the sizes of groups vary a lot but they usually have 6 to 10 members and 1 or 2 leaders. An advantage of group-therapy is that participants can learn effective social skills and test these new relational styles on other members of a group (Corey, 1990).

Group Psycho-therapy is mostly based upon mental dynamics principles. The main goal of this is helping group members with acquiring insight through group interaction. Therapist's role is the very role of a facilitator or interpreter of events which take place among group members. Family members can definitely learn different things from each other in group therapy (Barker, 1986, as quoted from Dehghani, 2003). As it was mentioned, self-knowledge is a variable on which cognitive-behavioral education has considerable influence. Investigation of "self" concept and its formation which usually starts from childbirth is the main topic of personality psychology and formation of "self" concept is the starting point of personality topic (Ranjbar Kohan, 2008).

"Self" concept was first introduced as a dynamic organization by Lecky. In his opinion, human behavior is an expression which aims to remain stable in unsteady situation (Jersild as quoted from Baraheni, 1964). "Self" concept is the overall evaluation of an individual of his/her personality. This evaluation is due to mental evaluations of our behaviors. Consequently, "self" concept can be positive or negative (Boreno, 1986 as quoted from Taheri and yasayee, 1991).

In middle 1950s, James called the main core of one's personality which is the cause of unity and cohesion as "self". He defined "self" as "all things by which someone knows himself" (Ahmadi, 1996). "Self" concept is the main structural concept in Carl Roger's personality theory. In Rogers' opinion, "self" means feelings and emotions and thoughts and attempts by which human is recognized and he/she evaluates them because they belong to him/her (Siyasi, 2004). In Rogers' opinion, a growing baby gradually understands objects and events outside (except oneself). After a while, he/she will be able to differentiate between "I" and "other than me" and self-concept will gradually form in a child (Shelling as quoted from Aryan, 2003). Although "self" and organism are usually used as the same by some people but it must be said that "self" is being aware of existence or action in a more limited level (Rogers, 1951; Hart, 1970; Shertzer & Stone, 1974). In another research, relationship between self-knowledge aspects and five main factors of personality was studied. Results showed positive correlation between the variables (Tahmaseb et al, 2006). Another research results showed that Islamic couple therapy had influence on increasing self-knowledge and marital satisfaction and religious orientation (Danesh, 2005).

One of the other variables of health is marital satisfaction which influences on many dimensions of human lives and is the foundation stone of families' good performance. Halt (1969) defined marital satisfaction as : complex factors like conflict level and involvement in activities which is accompanied by happiness and success in marital life (as quoted from Fisiloglu, 1994). From cognitive-behavioral viewpoint, a satisfied person is one who has the ability to process information properly and has a realistic values system so that he/she is not hurt when affected by painful spiritual events and disagreements with others. This trend helps with having a better feeling (Beck, 1984 as quoted from Gharache Daghi, 2003). Couples who have more satisfaction can accept each other's opinions and feelings more easily than dissatisfied couples. In satisfied couples, even unfavorable feelings are stated and receive attention as much as favorable feelings. In contrast, dissatisfied couples meaningfully avoid establishing verbal relationship and do not have any desire to express their feelings (Alis, as quoted from Salehi and Amin Yazdi, 1996). Studies showed that group cognitive therapy can increase marital satisfaction. For example, results of a research showed that group psycho-therapy and cognitive analysis methods can influence on increasing satisfaction level (Bahrami, 2005). Another research showed that group education of relationship skills with cognitive-behavioral approach has positive influence on marital satisfaction (Nik Khah, 2003). Considering the above studies and because psychological health affects self-knowledge and marital satisfaction in families and increase in these two factors can result in family relationships improvement, the present research tries to answer the following question: " whether group behavioral-cognitive education influences on self-knowledge and marital satisfaction of women who suffer from family problems?"

Research hypotheses

1. Group cognitive-behavioral education has influence on marital satisfaction.
2. Group cognitive-behavioral education has influence on self-knowledge.

Research methodology

- a) Research type: the present research is an experimental research with 3 groups and pretest-posttest format.
- b) Population and sample:

Population:

Statistical population of the present research included all men who suffered from family problems who referred to Abbas Abad city court advice centers over five years in 2011-2012.

Statistical sample:

Statistical sample of the present research included 30 men who referred to Abbas Abad city court advice centers over five years in 2011-2012.

Sampling method:

Simple random sampling was used as sampling method. Statistical population included 58 men. Simple random sampling method was used to select sample members in order to have the same chance for being selected.

Data collection means

The following data collection devices were used in the present research:

1. Lock-Valas's marital satisfaction questionnaire
 2. self-knowledge questionnaire
1. marital satisfaction questionnaire: it is a 15-question questionnaire and it is one of the first short scales for measuring marital satisfaction. The first question is one of the general indices of marital satisfaction and it receives a higher numerical value. The point 100 or below that is considered as cut point and indicates dissatisfaction. Validity: internal equality estimation using Spearman-Brown formula was very good and correlation coefficient between its two halves was equal to 0.90. Validity: Lock-Valas marital satisfaction test has a high reliability for satisfied and dissatisfied couples. The points of this test have a great correlation with Lock-Valas's "marital prediction" test. This result indicates high reliability.
2. self-knowledge questionnaire: this questionnaire was developed by Zia'oddin Reza Khani used a book titled "understanding yourself". This questionnaire included 29 multi-choice questions. Answering this questionnaire yields 3 types of points (D, G, P). psychologists have found that the validity of an individual's self-concept is a function of these three basic factors and these three factors have been reflected by three letters (D, G, P).

Methods of data analysis

Statistical methods which are used to analyze data depend on the plan and methodology of the research. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data. data obtained from experiment and control groups were investigated by means of descriptive indices like graph, mean and standard deviation. In order to test research hypotheses, inferential indices like multi-variate covariance analysis and Bon Ferroni's post hoc test .

Research findings

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in order to analyze data. In descriptive section, graph, mean and standard deviation were used and in inferential section, multi-variate covariance analysis was used to analyze data. SPSS 16 was used to conduct the analyses. First hypothesis: group cognitive-behavioral education has influence on marital satisfaction.

Table 1. statistical analysis of relationship between group behavioral-cognitive education and marital satisfaction in control group

Source of changes	Sum of squares	d.f	Mean of squares	F	Significance level
Satisfaction variable	2362.73	1	2362.73		26.165
error	4987.162	40	124.676		0.000

Table 2. post hoc test for relationship between group behavioral-cognitive education and marital satisfaction in control group

groups	Means difference	Standard deviations	P	significance Sig level
Cognitive-behavioral education control group	27.832	5.441	0.0005	0.000

According to the results of table 1 ($\text{sig}=0.000$, $f=26.165$), because significance level is less than Bon Ferroni's alpha (0.017) and due to the significance of F, we conclude that group cognitive-behavioral education influences on marital satisfaction. We use post hoc test to compare the two groups means difference. There is a difference of 27.832 between group behavioral-cognitive education and control group and this significance is statistically significant in 0.05 level.

Due to the significance of means difference; it can be said with 99% of certainty that the first hypothesis is verified.

Second hypothesis: group cognitive-behavioral education has influence on self-knowledge.

Table 3. statistical analysis of the influence of group cognitive-behavioral education on self-knowledge in control group

Source of changes	Sum of squares	d.f	Mean of squares	F	Significance level
self-knowledge variable	1091.214	1	3262.73		61.651 0.000
error	707.991	40	1091.214		

Table 4. post hoc test for relationship between group behavioral-cognitive education and self-knowledge in control group

groups	Means difference	Standard deviation s	P	significance Sig level
self-knowledge variable	-16.097	2.050	0.0005	0.000

According to the results of table 3 ($\text{sig}=0.000$, $f=61.651$), because significance level is less than Bon Ferroni's alpha (0.017) and F is significant, we can conclude that group cognitive-behavioral education influences on self-knowledge. We used post hoc test to compare means difference in the two groups and there was a means difference equal to (-16.097) between the two groups means and this difference is statistically significant in 0.05 level.

Due to the significance of means difference; it can be said with 99% of certainty that the second hypothesis is verified.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

As the results show, group behavioral-cognitive education influences on marital satisfaction and self-knowledge. Results of the present research match the theory of Alis which states reduction of irrational beliefs using cognitive, behavioral and emotional techniques reduce marital problems. Furthermore, the results of this research match the results of studies conducted by Ahmadi (2004), Adib Rad et al (2004) and Emami (2004).

On the other hand, results revealed that cognitive-behavioral education influences on increasing self-knowledge. Results of this research match the results of studies conducted by Nasri (2004) and Danesh (2005). In general, it can be said that group cognitive-behavioral education emphasizes on mutual recognition. The philosophy behind this perception is that changing behavior is not enough for adjustment of inefficient interactions but individuals' thinking should be adjusted. The primary principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy include: 1) changing unreal expectations in relationships, 2) correction of incorrect selections, 3) utilization of self-education methods for reducing destructive interactions (Dattilio, 1990). The main goal of cognition-therapy is elimination of biases or intellectual distortions so that human can think in a better manner. In this type of therapy, clients' information processing methodologies are considered. Cognition-therapists challenge clients' cognitive distortions and try to inspire positive thoughts and feelings in their patients (Sharf as quoted from Feerouzbakht, 2005). In a research, the influence of marriage enrichment program on couples' satisfaction based on behavioral-cognitive approach was investigated. It was concluded that experiment group posttest points significantly differ from control group posttest points. Researchers also found that marriage enrichment program has positive influence on marital satisfaction of couples (Melek Kalkan, 2008). Reduction in dissatisfaction and increase in self-knowledge can be due to adjustment of beliefs and incorrect, strict, problematic, illogical, beliefs and discovery and removal of cognitive errors in common life. In Alis's opinion, human is free and can define himself, can express his identity and live with others. He believes that human can choose what is to his/her benefit and finally human should accept some limitations in his/her life. An important point which must be considered is the psychological supportive influence of "group" which is of course natural. individuals who suffer from marital problems usually feel lonesome and consider their problem as unique and a group is a safe place to mentally and spiritually release oneself. Therefore, it can be said in a general conclusion that group

cognitive-behavioral education is effective in increasing self-knowledge and marital satisfaction. It is advised to psychologists to use this method in order to prevent negative outcomes of conflicts and marital problems.

Utilization of this method increases couples' abilities in solving family problems. This is important because many couples face conflicts in many cases and fail to solve them. Therefore, if couples or each of them or especially women learn problem-solving methodology, they can solve their problems and have a good interaction with each other.

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