



Vol. 10, Issue 2, 83-90, 2021

Academic Journal of Psychological Studies

Print ISSN: 2375-7450

Online ISSN: 2333-0821

ajps.worldofresearches.com

The Effectiveness of Schema Therapy on Expressing Emotion and Quality of Women's Marital Relationship (Case Study: Women with Experience of Marriage under 15 Years Old)

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A B S T R A C T

The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of schema therapy on expressing emotion and quality of women's marital relationship (Case study: women with experience of marriage under 15 years old). The research method was quasi-experimental with post-test pretest design and control group. The statistical population of the study included all women with marriage experience under the age of 15 who referred to welfare counseling clinics in Tehran, District 12 in 2020, which was available to 40 people and randomly selected in experimental and control groups (Each group (20 people) were assigned. In order to collect information, emotion expression questionnaire (King and Emmons, 1990) and relationship quality questionnaire (Fletcher et al., 2000) were used. The experimental group underwent schema therapy (8 sessions of 90 minutes); But the control group did not receive any intervention. Data were analyzed using analysis of covariance. The results showed that schema therapy was effective in increasing emotion expression and quality of marital relationship ($p < 0.05$). According to the results, this treatment can be used to increase emotion expression and quality of marital relationship in women. He benefited from the couple's psychological and communication problems and in this way helped to reduce stress for these people.

Keywords: Expression Of Emotion, Quality Of Marital Relationship, Schema Therapy.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of the almost universal foundations of humanity. The family begins with marriage. Marriage is a relationship that a person enters into by choice and lasts for almost half a century. It can also be said that men and women adapt to change. Socially they marry each other (Soudani, Karimi, Mehrabizadeh, & Neisi, 2012). Marriage is one of the important social phenomena that has a very sensitive role on all aspects of human life and it is necessary to have the necessary physical, mental and social preparation for it; for this reason, in the legal laws of many countries in the world, the minimum age is considered for it (Nour, 2006; Pienta, Hayward, & Jenkins, 2000; Soleimani, Ahmadi, & Yosefnezhad, 2017). Determining the minimum age for

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DOI: [In prossing](#)

To cite this article: Yazdani, Sh., Sadeghi, Z., Rabani, M., Barghamadi, F. S. (2021). The Effectiveness of Schema Therapy on Expressing Emotion and Quality of Women's Marital Relationship (Case Study: Women with Experience of Marriage under 15 Years Old). *Academic Journal of Psychological Studies*, 10 (2), 83-90.

marriage and emphasizing consent to marriage and the direct relationship between the two are emphasized in the case of children, and member states (UN) are required to legislate on the minimum age for marriage and to make marriage registration and criminalize and non-compliance they are. In 2010, according to the United Nations, 158 countries set the minimum age for marriage for girls without parental consent at 18 years and older, and in 29 countries under the age of 18 with parental consent or approval, and 25 countries under 15. The year has been accepted with the consent of the parents. Only four countries in the international community (Saudi Arabia, Maldives, Gambia and Sudan) did not specify the minimum age for marriage, and Iran has accepted the lowest marriage age for girls of 13 years after Guinea (12 years) (Hajihassani & Sim, 2019; Mahdaviazad, Malekmakan, Sayadi, & Tadayon, 2019). Early marriage, or in other words, child marriage, has declined over the past 30 years, but is still common in rural and disadvantaged areas. Most countries have also declared the minimum age for marriage to be 18 years, and it is estimated that more than 100 million girls will marry early before the age of 18 in the next ten years (Mangeli, Rayyani, Cheraghi, & Targari, 2017; Saadati & Bagheri, 2017). Among the problems that these women can experience are problems related to expressing emotion and the quality of the marital relationship.

Studies show that emotions affect attention, decision-making, memory, physiological responses, and social interactions at all times, and even a wide range of interpersonal and interpersonal processes. They are influenced by emotions (Brooks, 2014). Emotion expression also includes behavioral changes associated with emotion, such as changes in face, voice, gestures, and body movements. Smiling, frowning, crying, or running away are examples of emotion expression (Eison, 2010). King and Amos have identified three basic dimensions of emotional expression; these three dimensions include expressing positive emotion, expressing negative emotion, and expressing intimacy (King & Emmons, 1990; Yeung, Mak, & Cheung, 2015). Three styles have been introduced for how to express emotion. A style of emotional expression that refers to the external display of emotion regardless of positive or negative value or facial, verbal, and physical methods (Kielkopf, Bauer, & Urbatsch, 2021). Finally, the style of ambivalence is defined as the expression of emotion that tends to express emotion but is unable to express it, to express emotion without real desire, or to express and then regret expressing it (Collins et al., 2021). Ambiguity in the expression of emotion may be used as an emotional trait that, along with global tendencies or the rules of cultural representation, affects the experience of emotion (Japp et al., 2021). Some people express their emotions freely and without worrying about the consequences, but others are conservative in conveying their emotional states (Brooks, 2014). Patients with borderline personality disorder have many problems in how to express and control their emotions, and in this regard, they suffer from many behavioral problems (Linhartová et al., 2021).

Another variable examined in this study is the quality of the marital relationship. In today's life, the presence of pressures and difficulties in life and differences and emotional challenges in married life can change the quality of marital relationship in couples. Therefore, by reducing the quality of the marital relationship, the probability of divorce increases and affects the overall quality of life of individuals (Gharibboluk & Hosseinzadeh, 2018). Dimensions of marital quality are associated with intimacy, trust, commitment, sexual excitement, and love and satisfaction. In other words, in a couple's relationship that observes these dimensions and people feel satisfied emotionally, sexually and in a marital relationship with their spouse, the quality of the marital relationship is high and couples who cannot meet each other's needs reduce the quality of their relationship. And they become their wives and gradually the relationship between them becomes cold (Shafiee & Mohammadi, 2018).

Schema therapy is one of the emerging approaches that claims effectiveness and treatment in the field of emotional issues and problems and Leahy (2002), based on the concept of emotional processing and inspired by the metacognitive model of emotions. Schemas are among the underlying variables that have high explanatory power, because many cognitive processes, coping strategies and patients' lifestyles are affected by these underlying structures. Schema therapy approach is a fundamental change in cognitive therapy. Schemas are a prominent pattern and outline of the cognitive-emotional experience of an event whose developmental history can be traced back even before the formation of infant language (Young, Klosko, & Weishaar, 2003). Schemas are deep and underlying cognitive and emotional structures that play an important role in perpetuating and exacerbating chronic psychological problems. Clinical reports show that changing or modifying maladaptive schemas in the psychotherapy process can help improve patients' status (Curley, Smout, & Denson, 2019). The inconsistent nature of schemas occurs when patients act in a way that confirms their schemas in the course of their lives and in their interactions with others. Schema therapy deals with the deepest level of cognition and targets the individual's initial maladaptive schemas and helps patients to overcome these schemas by using cognitive, empirical, behavioral and interpersonal strategies (Curley et al., 2019). The primary goal of schema therapy is to create psychological awareness and increase conscious control over schemas, and the ultimate goal is to improve schemas and coping styles (Young et al., 2003). Studies that have been done so far in the field of schema therapy indicate the effectiveness of this treatment model on reducing cognitive anxiety and difficulty in regulating emotion (Abbasi, Moradi Manesh, Naderi, & Bakhtiyarpour, 2020; Mohammadi, Sepehri Shamloo, & asghari ebrahim abad, 2019; Renner et al., 2018) and improving the quality of marital relationship Improving relationships between couples (Khatamsaz, Forouzandeh, & Ghaderi, 2017; Nameni, Saadat, Keshavarz-Afshar, & Askarabady, 2019; Nikamal, Salehi, & Bermas, 2018).

Due to various cultural and social developments based on population and health surveys (DHS) for about 60 countries, the prevalence of child marriage in these countries has decreased by 11% in the last 30 years (Nguyen & Wodon, 2017). However, in some regions and countries, there are still alarming statistics of child marriage, which has led to an increase in divorce rates and mental illnesses such as depression. Also, considering the harms that this phenomenon brings to couples, especially women, and considering the effectiveness of schema therapy in previous research, therefore, the present study seeks to answer the question: "Does schema therapy express emotion?" And the quality of women's marital relationship (Case study: women with experience of marriage under the age of 15) is effective?

METHODOLOGY

The present study was applied in terms of purpose and quasi-experimental in terms of research method with pre-test and post-test design with control group. The statistical population of the study included all women with marriage experience under the age of 15 who referred to welfare counseling clinics in Tehran, District 12 in 2020, which was available to 40 people and randomly selected in experimental and control groups (Each group (20 people) were assigned. The experimental group was treated with schema therapy for 8 sessions of 90 minutes and the control group did not receive any intervention.

Emotion Expression Questionnaire: This questionnaire was designed by King and Emmons (1990), to assess emotion expression. The Emotional Expression Questionnaire has 16 items and three components, which are: positive emotion expression (items 1-7), intimacy (items 8-12) and negative emotion expression (items 13-16). The range of answers in the King and Emmons emotion expression questionnaire varies from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" in

the Likert scale. The minimum possible score will be 16 and the maximum will be 80. If the scores of the questionnaire are between 16 and 32, the level of emotional expression is weak. If the scores of the questionnaire are between 32 and 48, the level of emotional expression is moderate. If the scores are above 48, the level of emotional expression is very good. The reliability of the King and Emmons emotion expression scale was reported to be 0.68 using the internal consistency method and the calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. King and Emmons (1990), obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this questionnaire of 0.70 and obtained a significant convergent validity between the Emotional Expression Questionnaire, the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire and the Positive Emotion Scale ($p < 0.05$). In Khatamsaz et al. (2017) research, alpha coefficients for subscales of positive emotion expression, intimacy expression, negative emotion expression and total were 0.76, 0.74, 0.82 and 0.78, respectively.

Relationship Dimensions Quality Questionnaire: Perceived Quality Questionnaire of Marital Dimensions, which was abbreviated as Relationship Quality Questionnaire, was developed by Fletcher, Simpson, and Thomas (2000), and has 18 items and 6 components of satisfaction, commitment, intimacy, trust, passion. And it is sexual excitement and love. The method of answering this questionnaire is based on the Likert scale of 7 degrees (absolutely = 1 to completely = 7). The minimum score is 18 and the maximum score is 126. Which is obtained from the sum of scores. Lower scores indicate lower quality and higher scores indicate better quality of marital relationship in different dimensions. This is also true of each of the six dimensions of the marital relationship. Cronbach's alpha coefficient has been reported by Fletcher et al. (2000). In the present study, the reliability of this questionnaire was 0.85. Table 1 summarizes the content of schema therapy training sessions.

Table 1. Summary of Schema Therapy Sessions Schema Therapy Instructions and Techniques (Young et al., 2003)

Meeting	Content
First and second	Performing the stage of assessing and teaching schema therapy, expressing the instructions and general rules of teamwork, explaining the schema therapy model in simple and clear language for the subjects. The purpose of these two introductory sessions was for the subjects to understand the nature of emotion expression and the quality of the marital relationship, their evolutionary roots, as well as their mechanism. At the end of the first two sessions, the nature of the couple's emotional and communication problems was formulated according to the schema therapy approach.
Third and fourth	Introduce, teach, and apply cognitive techniques to challenge schemas, such as schematic validity tests, redefine schematic confirmation evidence, establish a dialogue between the healthy and unhealthy aspects of schemas, develop training cards, and complete schema registration forms. The purpose of teaching cognitive schema therapy techniques was to enable subjects to learn to reason against schemas using cognitive techniques and to question the validity of the schema at a logical level.
Fifth and sixth	Emotional (experimental) techniques were introduced and taught so that subjects could address the roots of the evolution of schemas at the emotional level: introducing and performing imaginative dialogue techniques, depicting traumatic events, writing letters to parents, and Mental imagery for behavioral modeling was the basis of the intervention and teamwork guidelines in these sessions with the aim of helping subjects to combat schemas at the emotional level so that patients could use empirical techniques such as mental imagery and dialogue, anger, and Express their frustration with the events of their childhood and break the cycle of continuing the schema on an emotional level.
Seventh and eighth	Teaching and practicing behavioral modeling techniques, persuading subjects to abandon maladaptive coping styles, and practicing effective coping behaviors: such as behavior change, motivation, reviewing the pros and cons of continuing behavior, and practicing healthy and ready behaviors. Passing people to end the sessions.

RESULTS

In the present study, the mean age of the samples was 24.45. The mean and standard deviation of research variables in experimental and control groups in pre-test and post-test are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of research variables in experimental and control groups in pre-test and post-test

The dependent variables	Test	Examination Group		Control Group	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Express positive emotion	Pre – test	30.21	4.02	31.45	4.41
	Post- test	34.75	5.02	31.50	4.40
Intimacy	Pre – test	16.45	3.14	16.46	3.10
	Post- test	24.56	4.15	16.38	3.11
Express negative emotion	Pre – test	9.82	1.16	9.85	1.16
	Post- test	18.25	2.31	9.63	1.10
Excitement (general)	Pre – test	28.36	4.12	28.89	4.12
	Post- test	37.36	5.15	28.62	4.14
The quality of the marital relationship	Pre – test	79.16	6.61	81.74	4.65
	Post- test	99.18	6.66	81.65	4.65

As the results of Table 2 show, the level of emotion expression (positive, negative, intimacy) and the quality of marital relationship in the experimental group increased in the post-test stage compared to the pre-test stage and in the control group changed. No sensation has occurred.

Table 3. Results of multivariate analysis of covariance on post-test scores of emotion expression and quality of marital relationship in experimental and control groups

Effect	Value	F	DF hypothesis	DF error	P	Eta
Effect of piling	0.575	13.304	4	110	0.003	0.515
Wilks Lambda	0.163	29.106	4	108	0.000	0.486
Effect of Hoteling	3.383	35.812	4	106	0.001	0.602
The biggest rooting	1.248	71.101	2	55	0.0001	0.710

As can be seen in Table 3, the multivariate analysis of covariance statistical tests in the schema therapy and control groups show that these groups are significantly different from each other in at least one of the dependent variables. In the following, Tables 4 and 5 show the results of univariate analysis of covariance for post-test scores in dependent variables.

Table 4. Results of univariate analysis of covariance on the mean of post-test scores of emotion expression in experimental and control groups

Variable	Sources	Sum squares	DF	Mean squares	F	P	Effect size	Eta
Expressing excitement	Pre - test	2.08	1	2.08	0.01	0.41	0.05	0.41
	group	10.36	1	10.36	0.08	0.002	0.52	0.85
	Error	296.818	34	123.617				

Table 5. Results of univariate analysis of covariance on the mean of post-test scores of marital relationship quality in experimental and control group

Variable	Source	Sum squares	DF	Mean squares	F	P	Effect size	Eta
The quality of the marital relationship	Pre - test	7.08	1	7.08	1.54	0.22	0.06	0.22
	group	67.80	1	67.80	15.70	0.001	0.38	0.95
	error	110.66	34	4.61				

As can be seen in Tables 4 and 5, the F ratio of univariate analysis of covariance for dependent variables shows that there is a significant difference in the variables of emotion

expression and quality of marital relationship between schema therapy and control groups.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the "effectiveness of schema therapy on expressing emotion and quality of women's marital relationship (Case study: women with experience of marriage under the age of 15)". According to the results of this study, it can be said that schema therapy it has been effective in improving the expression of emotion and the quality of marital relationship in women.

The findings of this study are consistent with the research findings of Mohammadi et al. (2019), Renner et al. (2018), and Yeung et al. (2015), based on the effectiveness of therapeutic schema on emotion expression. Also, the results of this study are consistent with the research findings of Nameni et al. (2019), Nikamal et al. (2018), and Khatamsaz et al. (2017), based on the effectiveness of therapeutic schema on the quality of marital relationship.

In explaining these findings, it can be said that due to the fact that people who are forced to form a family and certain family and social responsibilities in parallel with this marriage in childhood have uncontrolled and disturbed emotions and from this \neg They also have many problems in their marital relationships, so it is possible to reduce this psychological problem to some extent by using the treatment scheme of disorders. It can be said that therapeutic schema causes changes in emotional, behavioral, cognitive, emotional and experiential fields. By challenging inefficient responses and inconsistent schemas, it has been shown to be effective in replacing it with more appropriate thoughts and responses. In this approach, with the ability to improve some basic and destructive components such as negative spontaneous thoughts, anxiety and depression and personality disorders, a person can achieve the improvement of quality of life and mental health components. In this treatment, relying on changing maladaptive schemas formed in childhood and maladaptive coping styles, as well as describing how they affect coping and processing life events, instead of ineffective coping strategies, to the patient provides an opportunity to move away from negative and negative evaluations and to adopt adaptive strategies. Because these adaptive strategies lead to improving the mental capacity of individuals, regulating emotions and problem-solving power of individuals and cause the perception and acceptance of disease (Mohammadi et al., 2019). On the other hand, schema therapy is effective in correcting and changing their thoughts and beliefs by working on psychological themes or the same initial maladaptive schemas in patients who have a negative view of their abilities, emotions and feelings. . In expressing emotions and the emotional dimension, the therapeutic scheme challenges the cognitive beliefs that are tied to emotional beliefs according to empirical strategies, and these conditions cause the person to satisfy the unmet emotional needs that lead to the formation of Inconsistent schemas and maladaptation become emotional, recognizing, and inclined to seek appropriate solutions. Thus, the problems related to emotions in people are reduced and the expression of emotion is created in the right way. This factor also improves the marital relations of individuals in order, and they deal with the control of people's emotions in a more appropriate and appropriate way in their marital relations. It is considered as a kind of remedy for emotional problems in marital relations and thus increases the quality of marital relationship in people.

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