



A Study of Effects of Teaching Resiliency to Spouses of the War-Disabled on Marital Adjustment and Intimacy

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Abstract: Resiliency is defined as one's flexibility against the neighboring injuries and the ability of patience and adjustment to the problems of life and victory over them. Therefore, it is expected to play a considerable role in the couples' adjustment and intimacy in family relations. The purpose of this research is to study the effects of teaching resiliency to the spouses of 8-year Iran Iraq war disabled on marital intimacy and resiliency. The current research was quasi-experimental with pretest-posttest design and a control group. The sample consisted of 30 of Bandar Abbas spouses of disable Affiliated with Markyrs and Self-Sacrifiers Foundation in Bandar Abbas, selected through simple random sampling and then divided into an experimental and a control group. The experimental group was trained resiliency in 9 sessions. For data collection, Locke - Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (LWMAT) and Walker & Thompson Intimacy Scale were used. Data analysis, using covariance analysis, demonstrated that training resiliency is able to increase marital adjustment ($P=0.02$, $F=5.65$) and intimacy ($P=0.03$, 4.86) in the experimental group, compared to the control group. The findings of this research develops the current knowledge in terms of the effects of resiliency in marital relationships and includes some operational implies to the development of some training programs suitable for marital relationship improvement in the families of the war-disabled.

Key Words: Resiliency, Marital Adjustment, Intimacy

INTRODUCTION

War injuries have been considered an important issue for all nations since long before. These include body injuries occurred during the war and the mental injuries during or after it. Iranian 8-year war-disabled suffer from many physical and mental injuries. The person's injury, for sure, effects different aspects of family health and that of spouse's specially, and causes disorders in behavioral, occupational and social functions ¹.

Since family is where the moral, logical and physical needs are to be met, it is an undeniable necessity to be aware of the mental and biology needs and identification of how to meet them and empowering with identification of biology and mental techniques. A person's satisfaction from his/her marital life is considered as satisfaction from the family; and the latter is defined as satisfaction from life and will, therefore, facilitate moral and physical development and progress in the society ².

What matters in a marriage, is marital adjustment and marriage satisfaction. Marital adjustment is a process created during the marital life and requires coincidence of the styles, understanding of characteristics, and having intercourse patterns between the two partners. Marital adjustment effects on many aspects of personal and social life. In fact, it is the base for a family's good function and facilitates parental role³, increases life satisfaction⁴, and creates better challenge management⁵ and better communication abilities of problem solving⁵.

Many factors have been identified to be effective on marital adjustment. One of these factors is "intimacy" of the couples⁷.

Intimacy is implicated by a crucial behavioral pattern with powerful social, emotional and moral aspects and based on acceptance (positive experience of equality and coincidence satisfaction (positive experience of partnership) and love⁸. Psychologists define intimacy as the ability of communicating (without controlling) others and expression (without inhibition) of the feelings and believe that it is a person's certain right and of natural moods⁹.

In the lines of increasing intimacy among the couples and confronting the related problems, numerous researches have studied the effects of different approaches and any approach has presented some certain educational and therapeutic methods based on its special declarations. Meanwhile, resiliency has gained a special place in the field of family psychology and mental hygiene, recently. Resiliency is described to be the ability or effects of successful adjustment to the threatening circumstances. In other words, resiliency is a successful adjustment to the unpleasant circumstances¹⁰.

According to the previous researches, those with more resiliency use effective methods of contrasting harmful events¹¹. Furthermore, high resiliency has relations with lower emotional amazement after facing a damaging event¹². Since nursing a war-disabled has often special problems, the resiliency level of the spouses is expected to affect their emotional problems and adjustment to the circumstances. On the other hand, there are personal differences in the level of resiliency in people due to the functions of genetics, and aging, neuro-biology and psychological factors¹³, however, resiliency is generally considered as a dynamic process revisable through proper intermediaries¹⁴.

Given the special situation of families of war-disabled, markyrs and self-sacrifices and their important role in cultural improvement, and since they are confronting many problems and in a vulnerable situation, it is essential to conduct useful researches and present and implement solutions.

Since intermediary approaches based on resiliency improvement have been rarely used in Iran, this research is trying to study the effects of teaching resiliency on the levels of marital adjustment and intimacy among spouses of the war-disabled and using them in order to help people in their marital life and consequently, the relation stability and people's mental health security, and to

conclude whether or not this trainings have any influences on marital adjustment and intimacy in the spouses.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this research, the quasi-experimental method with pretest-posttest design with a control group. The population consisted of the spouses of all war-disabled affiliated with markyrs and self-sacrifices foundation in 2011. The sample included 30 of the war-disabled spouses selected through the simple random sampling and divided into an experimental and a control group .

Tools and Materials

Locke – Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (LWMAT): Developed by Locke and Wallace, the scale is a self-report short questionnaire for measuring the quality of marriage activities and includes 15 clauses in 3 parts. The first part (question No. 1) refers to happiness, demonstrated on a 7-level Likert scale (rating from very unhappy to perfectly happy). Second part (questions No. 2-9) includes a 5-level rating scale (always agree, almost always agree, occasionally disagree, frequently disagree, almost always disagree, always disagree), and the third (Questions No. 10-15) includes multiple choice questions. This material seeks for the imaginations pertaining to the satisfaction level. Applying the split half method, the test has shown very high reliability of 0.90. The studies on the validity and reliability of the test were all positive.

Walker and Thompson intimacy questionnaire: Designed by Walker and Thompson in 1983, the scale includes 17 questions measuring the level of intimacy of the couples. This scale is a part of a bigger material including many aspects of intimacy; however, it was presented as an independent scale by its developers. The points ranged from 1 to 7, the higher points show more intimacy. The intimacy scale enjoys excellent internal consistency, showing %91 to % 97 alphas. Translated by Sanayee, the scale indicated % 96 reliability coefficients via Cronbach's coefficient alpha. Although no information has been provided about validity of the scale, its correlation with mothers' report from far and close helps to them and daughters' report from close help to mothers has been admitted.

Given a thought to the research literature and the needs of war-disabled families, a training program including an introductory to the concept of resiliency, characteristics of a resilient person, using internal and external support elements, and providing solutions to increase resiliency was held. Before and immediately after the intermediations, all examinees completed the adjustment and intimacy questionnaires. After the questionnaires were completed in the pretest stage, a resiliency training program was held within 9 two-hour sessions for the experimental group. The program was held by the researcher twice a week. The homework of the examinees was checked at the beginning of each session and there was a conclusion of the subjects at the end.

The contents included :

1st Session :

- Giving the pretest
- Acknowledgements to the participants
- Introduction to the researcher and other members
- Declarations about the goals of the program
- The expectations and how the examinees take part in the program, do the homework and its importance
- Information about the time and place the sessions would be held

2nd Session :

- A discussion and conclusion of the examinees' opinions
- Declarations on resiliency definition
- Information and about characteristics of a resilient person

3rd Session :

- support elements, such as optimism, self-esteem and control source, characteristics of optimistic and pessimistic people, and cycle of thoughts

4th Session :

- Some external supportive elements including social support system, personal responsibility and acceptance of meaningful roles
- The effects of being supported by others on decreasing the stressful events of live and decreasing the depression and loneliness
- The effects of accountability, such as identification and improvement of the abilities, motivation, commitment and perseverance
- Preparing for improvement of personality, thoughts, and other life skills

5th Session :

- The methods of gaining resiliency, including communication and having stable relations with others, framing the stressful items, and acceptance of changes

6th Session :

- Ways of gaining resiliency, including meaningfulness and hope to the future and making them come true

7th Session :

- Other ways of gaining resiliency, such as self-awareness and self-confidence improvement

8th Session :

- Improvement of optimism and self-care

9th Session :

- Conclusion
- Deduction

After the intermediation and at the end of the last session, the examinees immediately answered the intimacy and adjustment questionnaires .

The control group did not have any intermediations during the research. They also were reassessed in terms of their points in intimacy and adjustment

questionnaires. A free resiliency workshop was held for these examinees for participating in the research.

RESULTS

Table 1 indicates the descriptive statistical indexes of the studied variables in control and experimental examinees, in both pretest and posttest.

Table 1. Summary of descriptive statistics of variable of the research in control and experimental group in pretest and posttest

Group	Variable		Quantity	Maximum	Minimum	Average	Standard deviation
Experimental	Marital Adjustment	Pretest	15	127	73	121.95	12.30
		Posttest	15	142	79	139.50	11.32
	Marital Intimacy	Pretest	15	6	2	4.21	1.22
		Posttest	15	7	2	5.93	1.44
Control	Marital Adjustment	Pretest	15	129	73	124.52	14.84
		Posttest	15	131	71	128.30	12.82
	Marital Intimacy	Pretest	15	6	3	5.20	1.13
		Posttest	15	6	2	4.83	1.28

First Hypothesis: Being trained resiliency leads to increase of marital adjustment in the war-disabled spouses.

Covariance analysis was used in order to examine the first hypothesis of the research. Table 2 demonstrates that the data did not question the assumption of variance tolerance equality; therefore, covariance analysis could be applied.

Table 2. Results of Levin test for studying the variance equality in the groups in marital adjustment

F	1df	2df	Significance level
0.83	1	28	0.37

Table 3. Results of covariance Analysis on Pretest and Posttest Average Points of the two Groups in Marital Adjustment

Source of Changes	Average of Squares	Rate of Freeness	F	P
Pretest	233.78	1	21.54	0.000
Group	0.72	1	5.65	0.02

As indicated by table 3, there is a meaningful difference between the points of the examinees (P=0.02, F=5.65) in terms of marital adjustment level. In other

words, training resiliency to the spouses of the war-disabled has been able to meaningfully increase marital adjustment in the experimental group women.

Second Hypothesis: Training resiliency leads to the increase of marital intimacy in spouses of the war disabled.

For the above hypothesis, also, covariance analysis was applied (tables 4 & 5). Results showed that there was a meaningful difference between the two groups ($P= 0.03$, $F= 4.86$), declaring that teaching resiliency to the spouses of the war-disabled has meaningfully improved marital intimacy in the experimental group examinees, compared to the control group.

Table 4. Results of Levin Test for Studying the Variance Equality in the Groups in Marital Intimacy

F	₁ df	₂ df	Significance Level
2.41	1	28	0.13

Table5. Results of covariance Analysis on Pretest and Posttest Average Points of the two Groups in Marital Intimacy

Source of Changes	Average of Squares	Rate of Freeness	F	P
Pretest	6.43	1	3.45	0.04
Group	9.05	1	4.86	0.03

DISCUSSION

The research was conducted with study of efficiency of teaching resiliency for increasing marital adjustment and intimacy among Bandar Abbas war-disabled's spouses. Two hypotheses were discussed anticipating the increase of marital adjustment and intimacy in the experimental group compared to the control group

The results of the research showed that training resiliency to spouses increased marital adjustment in a meaningful pattern in the women in experimental group. This result is consistent with those of the following researches: Mehrabizadeh et al., ¹⁴, Nejat ¹⁵, Ziyaae and Dadfar ¹⁶ and Jalali and Jalalvand ¹⁷.

Yalcin and Karahan have studied the efficiency of training communication skills to the couples for marital adjustment level, concluding that intra-personal communication improvement has a positive effect on marital adjustment .

The consistency proves that implementation of training programs, proportionate to the needs of some certain groups of society, is one of the most efficient ways to increase society marital satisfaction and adjustment. In other words, using resiliency factors such, as problem solving skill, accountability, and framing the pressures, helps the person to have a better reaction confronting the life problems and do not feel as if in an indispensable circumstance. The resilient skills internally direct the person's control source .

On the other hand, ideal intrapersonal communications, as an external control source, effects life satisfaction and adjustment; influences emotional, sentimental and cognitive factors (such as self-efficacy and positive mood). The Reality therapy school psychologists believe that having mental health and life satisfaction requires proper human communications .

The research results confirmed the second hypothesis as well. AS the results showed, resiliency in spouses of the war-disabled could improve marital intimacy in the experimental examinees, compared to those in the control group. This is consistent with the findings of different researches including :

- Ahmadi ¹⁹: effects of problem solving on marital adjustment and intimate relations

- Etemadi ²⁰: efficiency of behavioral-cognitive methods on sexual, moral and general intimacy

- Olya ²¹: efficiency of enrichment for recreation-social, psychological, rational, moral, and general intimacy

The resiliency training program seems to increases intimacy through creation of self-awareness, self-control, sympathy, and sedating each other in the women. These moral competences empower the couples in getting closer and communicating more intimately. Arce et al., show that people with good resiliency are more reluctant to express positive emotions confronting emotional events with neutral or ambiguous nature, especially the circumstances with intrapersonal nature⁸ .

Results of the research include important theoretical and practical hints. Theoretically, the relation between marital adjustment, resiliency, and intimacy develops the knowledge of resiliency effects. The findings of this research are in lines of the new path of the researches focusing on people's positive characteristics and aspects. Therefore, based on the findings of this research, training resiliency, as a positive-thinking intermediary, can be implied for family stability. Also, being trained resiliency, the spouses, providing rich and calm environments, will be able to develop resilient skills in their children and consequently prepare confronting complicated circumstances in a problem-based manner and inhibit many family and psychological damages. The sample of the research were disabled's spouses, however the findings are not to be generalized to the whole society. Also, since the research lacks the follow up period, there is no conclusion about long term effects of resiliency and their stability.

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