



Vol. 10, Issue 1, 5-11, 2021

Academic Journal of Psychological Studies

Print ISSN: 2375-7450

Online ISSN: 2333-0821

ajps.worldofresearches.com

The Effectiveness of Communication Imaging Approach on Marital Satisfaction in Married Women with Extramarital Relationship Experience

Homa Derakhshesh^{*1}, Saeide Yazdani², Sharareh KashiPaz Tehrani³, Somayeh Ahmadi⁴

1. M.A of Guidance and Counseling, Islamic Azad University, Khomeini Shahr Branch, Iran.

2. M.A of Clinical Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Khomeini Shahr Branch, Iran.

3. Master of Family Counseling, Allameh Tabatabai University, Tehran, Iran.

4. Master of General Psychology, Hormozgan University, Bandar Abbas, Iran.

A B S T R A C T

The aim of this study was the effectiveness of communication imaging approach on marital satisfaction in married women with extramarital relationship experience. In this study, 30 married women with experience of extramarital affair were selected from among those who referred to counseling centers in District 4 of Tehran affiliated to welfare and were randomly divided into two groups of control (n=15) and experimental (n=15). They got the communication imagery approach was performed on married women in 10 one-hour sessions. Also, before and after the trainings, the communication imagery approach was used to collect data from the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire, and to analyze the test data. Analysis of covariance was used. The results of data analysis showed that communication imaging treatment had an effect on marital satisfaction of married women with extramarital relationship experience. According to the research results, the use of training and psychological therapies to increase marital satisfaction in married women is recommended.

Keywords: Communication Imaging Therapy, Extramarital Relationship, Marital Satisfaction, Married Women.

INTRODUCTION

The family is formed by the connection between a man and a woman through a bond called marriage. Marriage is an ideal bond that will legally create a new social life for men and women, the result of which is peace, love and sacrifice (Hannaford, 2017; Nanda, 2018). Today, social changes in the modern world have caused problems and tensions in the individual and social life of human beings. One of the harms that threatens the family is the tendency to extramarital affairs (infidelity). If there is no solution and this problem is not solved, other harms such as child abuse, spousal abuse and even divorce will follow (Kaschak & Tiefer, 2014; Tiefer, 2001; Yekeh fallah & Goodarzi, 2009). There are several factors involved in infidelity, such as personality, individual, marital satisfaction, such as situational and social satisfaction. Women are also more likely to seek extramarital affair and may be due to marital dissatisfaction (Cruz, 2018; Glass & Wright, 1977). Considering that marital satisfaction has a special role in the

*. Corresponding Author: Homaderakhshesh@yahoo.co.uk

DOI: [In prossing](#)

To cite this article: Derakhshesh, H., Yazdani, S., KashiPaz Tehrani, Sh., Ahmadi, S. (2021). The Effectiveness of Communication Imaging Approach on Marital Satisfaction in Married Women with Extramarital Relationship Experience. *Academic Journal of Psychological Studies*, 10 (1), 5-11.

marital relationship and women's tendency to extramarital relationships, it is necessary to study it. Marital satisfaction, which refers to the couple's mental evaluation and feelings about the marital relationship, is an objective feeling of satisfaction, satisfaction, and pleasure experienced by the spouse; When all aspects of their marriage are considered (Dattilio & Collins, 2018; O'Leary & Turkewitz, 1978). The marital relationship may continue due to pleasant and rewarding consequences, or it may end due to its unpleasant and annoying consequences, or it may be accompanied by dissatisfaction. Usually, various personal, social, emotional and psychological factors undermine the stability and cohesion of this long-standing and constructive social institution (Baikie, 2002; Onat & Beji, 2012).

Given the importance of the family as a small institution of society, therefore, improving the relationship between couples in order to prevent problems and create a satisfactory relationship seems necessary. In general, today, various models and approaches have emerged to improve and enrich the lives of couples and their relationship. These models pay more attention to improving and developing communication skills before treatment than couples face problems (Amini & Heydari, 2016; Garland, 1981; Masoumi et al., 2017). One of these treatment models is the communication illustration approach.

The communication imagery approach founded by Harville Hendrix (1996), has entered the field of couple therapy (Rockwell, 2019). The word *imago* is a Latin word meaning image (Albert, 2015). In the dictionary, "*imago*" means "representative of a person or thing, copy, resemblance, mental image". This word was first used in psychology by Freud. Jung has also used this word in his works. His meaning of this word was "internal representative of the opposite sex" (Harville Hendrix, Hunt, Luquet, & Carlson, 2015). According to H. M. Hosseini and Movahedi (2016), *Imago* is the psychological image in the mind that is created by collecting positive and negative messages hidden in childhood experiences. This image is the result of internalizing all the people who have somehow taken care of the child. Projecting this image leads to the production of romantic love feelings (Hendrix and Hunt, 2005). Hendrix (1996) also believes that these messages are received from parents, siblings, aunts and uncles, peers and teachers and stored in the subconscious. According to Hendrix (1996), in adulthood we are attracted to those who we think will give us what we did not have as a child "*imagery matching*" (H. M. Hosseini & Movahedi, 2016).

Imaging theory provides a relationship perspective and framework for understanding couples' two-person dynamics and interactions, as well as a conversational process for the deep connection and growth necessary for couples to improve (Nazarpour, Heydarnia, Pouryahya, & Davarniya, 2020; Sadat Fatemi, Karbalai Mohammad Meygoni, & Kakavand, 2015). In fact, this approach is based on the assumption that communication is part of our nature, so that we are always present in relationships with others. We are born in a relationship, we are wounded in a relationship, and we are healed in a relationship (Charlton, Barrick, Markus, & Morris, 2009). Communication imagery therapy is a theory and method of therapy about marriage, marriage and the process of formation of marital conflicts. The main idea of this approach is that the choice of spouse is based on a mental image of the ideal parent that was formed in childhood and adaptation to the spouse also depends on this initial image (H. Hendrix & Hunt, 2013; Khalili & Afkari, 2017). Communication imagery is a process that provides couples with information and, more importantly, educates them about the subconscious aspects of their relationship and the underlying study of the root of their conflicts, and helps individuals rather than try to solve problems superficially, examine it more closely. Succeeding in this work will lead to recovery, growth and emotional security from the other. Couples learn to see their conflicts as an opportunity for deeper intimacy and contact with each other. These small changes strongly affect the happiness of couples and couples become more of a source of pleasure for each

other(Fouladi, Eghaei, Golamalipour, Barzegar Kahnamoueh, & Jalvani, 2013). Two important tools for improving the relationship between couples in the communication approach are intentional conversation and the other is to use the conversation process to help each couple make better changes in their behavior(Fruzzetti, 2006; Rietdijk, Power, Attard, Heard, & Togher, 2020).

It can also be said that communication imagery training is a process that, while providing awareness and information, teaches couples to be aware of the subconscious aspects of their relationship and instead of superficially resolving their conflicts to examine the root of the problems Pay themselves(Roediger, Zarbock, Frank-Noyon, Hinrichs, & Arntz, 2020). In this way, spouses can learn skills to heal childhood wounds and develop healthy behaviors by understanding subconscious processes about themselves and their spouses, and regain love and intimacy in the marital relationship.

Also, communication imagery has been able to create a better living situation for couples at risk. Due to the fact that due to the decrease in the appropriate emotional relationship, marital satisfaction also decreases in women and women are more likely to enter into an extramarital relationship in order to gain the emotional benefit of the relationship. Does a relationship affect the marital satisfaction of married women who have experienced extramarital affairs?

METHODOLOGY

The research design in the present study is a pre-test and post-test design with a control group, which is in the category of quasi-experimental designs. In the present study, the statistical population included married women with experience of extramarital affairs, referring to welfare counseling centers in District 4 of Tehran. Due to the prevalence of Covid-19 virus by available sampling method, 30 women were selected as the research sample and randomly divided into experimental (n = 15) and control (n = 15) groups.

Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire: This scale has 35 items and includes 3 sub-components, which are communication, conflict resolution and ideal distortion. The Enrich Marital Questionnaire was administered by David Elson and Amy Elson (2000) to 25,501 married couples. 0, 0.84, 0.83 and the validity of the retest of the questionnaire for each subtest were 0.86, 0.81, 0.90, 0.92, respectively, and the alpha coefficient of the questionnaire in Easy Research (2010) was 365 (Pairs (730) are equal to 0.68 (excluding question 24 alpha becomes 0.78), 0.78, 0.62, and 0.77, respectively. The following is the educational content in 10 one-hour and weekly sessions is summarized in the following table(B. Hosseini, 2011):

Table 1. Summary of the content of communication illustration training sessions

Meeting	Content of meetings
First session	Communicate and explain the method and goals of the meetings
Session 2 (Planning for Future Relationships)	<p>Targets: -Assess the possibility of progress in the relationship Familiarity with each other's opinions</p> <p>Method: Write personal opinions about intimate relationships, including current aspirations and relationships - Determining the joint list</p>

Session 3 (Increasing self-awareness)	<p>Targets: -Discover and review past memories Discover the main failures of childhood and how to react</p> <p>Method: -Return to childhood and review memories -Writing the positive and negative characteristics of parents and its effect on the individual Determining childhood needs and negative emotions Examining childhood failures and how to react</p>
Session 4 (Getting to know your spouse)	<p>Targets: - Deep knowledge of the spouse Examining the secret agenda and its effect on the current relationship</p> <p>Method: Expressing the positive and negative characteristics of the spouse -Compare the characteristics of the spouse with your mental image Examining the interaction of your mental image with the characteristics of your spouse</p>
Session 5 (Familiarity with the needs and injuries of the spouse)	<p>Targets: -Recognition of the emotional wounds of the spouse Familiarity with the problems and needs of the spouse Send effective and clear messages to your spouse</p> <p>Method: -Training and practicing the method of conscious conversation Sharing the results of the third and fourth sessions with your spouse</p>
Session 6 (Closing the exit routes)	<p>Targets: Create a common commitment and ensure that we are together -Increase the level of intimacy and satisfaction of needs</p> <p>Method: Identify your and your spouse's ways out - Planning to close exit routes and reciprocal agreement</p>
Session 7 (Refreshing romantic memories and improving the relationship)	<p>Targets: -Creating a safe area -Increase intimacy and heal emotional wounds</p> <p>Method: Browse good past behaviors and memories Determining current methods of pleasing the spouse Identify unsatisfied needs and desires Offer unexpected gifts Carrying out joint recreational activities</p>
Session 8 (Learning New Behaviors)	<p>Targets: -Increase the feeling of security and cohesion -Increase the feeling of happiness and emotional connection</p> <p>Method: Determining annoying behaviors and frustrations Determining wishes and requests -Knowing how to satisfy desires Familiarity with the deep needs of the spouse and change the behavior in order to satisfy these needs. Writing personal opinions about the intimate relationship, including wishes and current relationships. -Determining the joint list</p>
Session 9 (venting anger and excitement)	<p>Targets: Expressing and venting anger in a safe and constructive environment -Reduce and resolve past grievances Healing emotional wounds</p> <p>Method: Exercise to vent and control anger in a constructive way -Training anger management techniques -Examining the unfinished and unsolvable situations of the past</p>
The tenth session	Summarize and conclude and integrate

RESULTS

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of marital satisfaction variable in research groups

	Control Group				Examination Group			
	Pre-Exam		Post-Test		Pre-Exam		Post-Test	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Marital Satisfaction	86.61	1.63	86.75	1.75	83.65	1.68	88.75	1.73

The results of Table 2 show the mean and standard deviation of the variable of marital satisfaction in the pre-test and post-test of the two control and experimental groups. According to this table, the mean of the control group in the pre-test and post-test did not change significantly, but the mean of the experimental group in the post-test increased compared to the pre-test.

Table 3. Results of the study of the homogeneity of regression scales before performing analysis of covariance for marital satisfaction subscales

Source	Variable	Sum Square	Df	Mean Square	F	P
group	Satisfaction pre- test	21.81	1	21.81	3.60	0.75
Satisfaction test	Satisfaction pre- test	0.15	1	0.15	0.02	0.21
Group * Satisfaction pre-test	Satisfaction pre- test	9.62	3	3.22	1.01	9.65

According to Table 3, the assumption of homogeneity of regression slides is obtained because the interaction between the groups, pre-test, post-test of marital satisfaction (above the alpha level of 0.05). Therefore, the assumption of homogeneity of regression slopes is not violated. Is, so the use of analysis of covariance is unrestricted.

Table 4. Results of one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOA) to evaluate the effectiveness of communication imaging in the experimental group by eliminating the effect of pretest

Source		Sum Square	DF	Mean Square	F	P	Effect size
Pre-test Marriage	Post-test Marriage	219.79	1	219.79	321.42	0.001	0.56
Group	Post-test Marriage	81.87	2	81.87	55.81	0.001	0.49
Error	Post-test Marriage	32.41	26	0.75			
Total	Post-test Marriage	458250	30				

The results in Table 4 show that F univariate analysis of covariance is significant in the variables of marital satisfaction (F = 3221.42 and p = 0.00). To understand how these differences differ, it is sufficient to compare the mean post-test of the experimental and control groups in terms of these dependent variables. According to the results in Table 4, the mean post-test of marital satisfaction of the experimental group and the control group shows that the mean of marital satisfaction of the experimental group in the pre-test is significantly lower than the post-test. Therefore, it can be said that the communication imagery approach is effective on the marital satisfaction of married women with experienced extramarital relationship experience.

Table 5. Results of analysis of covariance to compare the post-test of marital satisfaction in the control and experimental groups by removing the effect of the pre-test

Source		Sum Square	DF	Mean Square	F	P	Effect size
Pre-test Marriage	Post-test Marriage	18.40	1	18.40	5.78	0.02	0.09
Group	Post-test Marriage	240.09	2	120.04	37.69	0.00	0.58
Error	Post-test Marriage	168.78	23	3.18			
Total	Post-test Marriage	50451	30				

The results in Table 5 show that the F of analysis of covariance are significant in marital satisfaction (F = 37.69 and p = 0.00). To understand how this difference is, it is sufficient to compare the mean post-test of the control groups and the training group in terms of these

dependent variables. According to the mean post-test results of marital satisfaction in the experimental and control groups, in the post-test stage in the experimental group is more than the control group. Therefore, the results emphasize the effectiveness of communication imaging training on marital satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

The results of analysis of covariance showed that communication imaging treatment has a significant effect on marital satisfaction of married women with experience of extramarital relationship. Considering the importance of couples' relationship and their satisfaction with their life and marital relations in order to maintain the family center, dissatisfaction with the relationship with the spouse leads to increased tensions, differences and as a result of extramarital relationship and disintegration of this important institution of society. It becomes. For this reason, the communication imagery approach, as the results have shown, can effectively improve the relationship between couples, resolve marital conflicts and reduce distortions in individuals. Communication imagery therapy in the component of marital satisfaction has shown progress, which in itself indicates that clients have gained a better sense of the quality and quantity of their marital relationships. We can benefit from the experience of paying attention to ourselves and feeling separated. Feelings of isolation arise when we recognize that we cannot depend on others for our approval; That is, we alone must give meaning to life, and we must decide for ourselves how we want to live. Before we can have a relationship with others, we must have a relationship with ourselves. Clients have moved from being realistic to being unrealistic and occasionally delaying and rejecting problems and limitations. Although this may seem negative at first glance, it can indicate that clients tend to be more flexible due to the absorption of the principles and concepts of communication imaging therapy, less insignificant problems, pure focus on problems and limitations. They have moved in relationships, and in accepting existing obstacles and realities.

REFERENCES

- Albert, Susan Carol. (2015). Sandplay therapy with couples within the framework of analytical psychology. *Journal of analytical psychology*, 60(1), 32-53 .
- Amini, Mahsa, & Heydari, Hassan. (2016). Effectiveness of relationships enrichment education on improvement of life quality and marital satisfaction in married female students. *J Educ Community Health*, 3(2), 23-31 .
- Baikie, Elizabeth. (2002). The impact of dementia on marital relationships. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 17(3), 289-299 .
- Charlton, Rebecca A, Barrick, Thomas R, Markus, Hugh S, & Morris, Robin G. (2009). Theory of mind associations with other cognitive functions and brain imaging in normal aging. *Psychology and aging*, 24(2), 338 .
- Cruz, Germano Vera. (2018). Would Mozambican women really “tolerate” their husbands’ extramarital sexual relationships as socially recommended? *Sexuality & Culture*, 22(4), 1263-1278 .
- Dattilio, Frank M, & Collins, Michelle Hanna. (2018). *Cognitive-behavioral family therapy*: Guilford Press.
- Fouladi, Faezeh, Eghaei, Javad, Golamalipour, Masoud, Barzegar Kahnamoueh, Sanaz, & Jalvani, Raziye. (2013). Effectiveness of Teaching Communication Skills on Married Women Quality of Life. *Journal of Instruction and Evaluation*, 6(21), 127-141 .

The Effectiveness of Communication Imaging Approach on Marital...

- Fruzzetti, Alan. (2006). *The high-conflict couple: A dialectical behavior therapy guide to finding peace, intimacy, and validation*: New Harbinger Publications.
- Garland, Diana R. (1981). Training married couples in listening skills: Effects on behavior, perceptual accuracy and marital adjustment. *Family Relations*, 30(2), 297-306 .
- Glass, Shirley P, & Wright, Thomas L. (1977). The relationship of extramarital sex, length of marriage, and sex differences on marital satisfaction and romanticism: Athanasiou's data reanalyzed. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 39(4), 691-703 .
- Hannaford, Dinah. (2017). *Marriage without borders: Transnational spouses in neoliberal Senegal*: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Hendrix, H, & Hunt, H. (2013). *Getting the love you want workshop manual*: New York ,NY: Imago Relationships International.
- Hendrix, Harville. (1996). The evolution of imago relationship therapy: A personal and professional journey. *Journal of Imago Relationship Therapy*, 1(1), 1-17 .
- Hendrix, Harville, Hunt, Helen LaKelly, Luquet, Wade & ,Carlson, Jon. (2015). Using the Imago dialogue to deepen couples therapy. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, 71(3), 253-272 .
- Hosseini, Bita. (2011). *Analytical couple therapy*. Tehran, Iran: Jangal Publications [In Persian].
- Hosseini, Hassan Mirza & ,Movahedi, Azam. (2016). Imago therapy: a strategy to improve couples lovemaking. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 7(4 S1), 242 .
- Kaschak, Ellyn, & Tiefer, Leonore. (2014). *A new view of women's sexual problems* (Vol. 24): Routledge.
- Khalili, Neda Javid, & Afkari, Fereshteh. (2017). The impact of imago therapy on couples' intimacy, burnout and love styles. *QUID: Investigación, Ciencia y Tecnología*(1), 108-116 .
- Masoumi, Seyedeh Zahra, Khani, Somayeh, Kazemi, Farideh, Kalhori, Fatemeh, Ebrahimi ,Reyhaneh, & Roshanaei, Ghodrattollah. (2017). Effect of marital relationship enrichment program on marital satisfaction, marital intimacy, and sexual satisfaction of infertile couples. *International journal of fertility & sterility*, 11(3), 197 .
- Nanda, Serena. (2018). *Love and marriage: Cultural diversity in a changing world*: Waveland Press.
- Nazarpour, Davood, Heydarnia, Ahmad, Pouryahya, Seyed Mostafa, & Davarniya, Reza. (2020). The effect of group couple therapy based on the imago relationship therapy on improving marital relationship quality among couples. *Razi Journal of Medical Sciences*, 27(4), 3-14 [In Persian]
- O'Leary, K. Daniel, & Turkewitz, Hillary. (1978). Marital therapy from a behavioral perspective *Marriage and marital therapy: Psychoanalytic ,behavioral and systems theory perspectives*. (pp. 240-297). Oxford, England: Brunner/Mazel.
- Onat, Güliz, & Beji, Nezihe Kizilkaya. (2012). Marital relationship and quality of life among couples with infertility. *Sexuality and Disability*, 30(1), 39-52 .
- Rietdijk, Rachael, Power, Emma, Attard, Michelle, Heard, Robert, & Togher, Leanne. (2020). Improved conversation outcomes after social communication skills training for people with traumatic brain injury and their communication partners: a clinical trial investigating in-person and telehealth delivery. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 63(2), 615-632 .
- Rockwell, Donna. (2019). Mindfulness in psychotherapy and love as the healing balm. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 47(4), 339-343. doi: 10.1037/hum0000127
- Roediger, Eckhard, Zarbock, Gerhard, Frank-Noyon, Eva, Hinrichs, Julia, & Arntz, Arnoud. (2020). The effectiveness of imagery work in schema therapy with couples: a clinical experiment comparing the effects of imagery rescripting and cognitive interventions in brief schema couples therapy. *Sexual and Relationship Therapy*, 35(3), 320-337 .
- Sadat Fatemi, Marjan., Karbalai Mohammad Meygoni, Ahmad., & kakavand, Alireza. . (2015). The Effect of Imago Therapy on Marital Intimacy among Couples. *Knowledge & Research in Applied Psychology*, 9(1), 37-53 [In Persian]
- Tiefer, Leonore. (2001). A new view of women's sexual problems: Why new? Why now? *The Journal of Sex Research*, 38(2), 89-96. doi: 10.1080/00224490109552075
- Yekeh fallah, L., & Goodarzi, M .(2009). Prevalence of sexual dysfunction and related factors among married couples in Qazvin. *Journal of Inflammatory Diseases*, 13(1), 49-55 .