THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOLUTION-FOCUSED BRIEF GROUP THERAPY ON THE REDUCE MARITAL BURNOUT IN MEN

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ABSTRACT
One of the main issues in the family consult is to improve the couple relationship quality and reduce the couple damages. Therefore, this study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the solution-focused brief group therapy on the couple burnout in the married men in Deylam City. It is a quasi-experimental research, including the control and treatment groups. To this end, 30 married men were selected using the available sampling and divided into two groups of 15 persons each: the treatment group and control group. Both groups are pre-tested and the treatment group received cognitive-behavioral trainings during 8 sessions for one month, however, the control group received no training. In order to measure the couple burnout rate, the couple burnout scale that has acceptable reliability and validity was used. Finally, the test scores were analyzed using the statistical technique of covariance analysis. The results showed that solution-focused brief group therapy trainings have been effective in reducing the couple burnout in the treatment group at the statistical error level of P<0.0001. Therefore, it can be concluded that solution-focused brief group therapy trainings are effective in the quality improvement of the couple relationship and the reduction of the couple burnout rate. The implementation of these courses may be effective in reducing the family damages too.

Keywords: Solution-Focused Therapy, Couple Burnout, Couple Satisfaction

INTRODUCTION
Families are one of the main foundations of the societies. The health of a society depends on the health of its families; therefore, for having a healthy family, the family members should have the mental health and develop the favorable interpersonal relationships (Brentin, 2005). Couple relationship is the basis of the family formation and growth. Couple’s attitudes and interactions is the main prerequisite for family life improvement, stability, and durability. If the couple believe each other and if there is affection between them, then the quality and stability of their mutual life will increase (Sheibani, 2008). Couple's relationship may be the source of happiness or suffering (Young and Young, 1998). In this way, they are convinced that they should not share their needs, desires, and interests with others. When the intimate relationship stops, love is converted into the anger and soreness. Consequently, it causes many conflicts, repeated complaints, silence, lack of the emotional relationship, and unsolved problems (Bolton, 1996). From the existential psychoanalysis perspective, burnout is an experienced state of the physical, emotional, and mental fatigue (Pines and Ayala, 2002).

Pines (1996) believes that low rate of the couple satisfaction can lead to the frustration and burnout in the couple's life and degrade their life quality (Gohari-rad and Afshar, 2004). Accumulated mental pressures, which weaken the couple's love, gradual increase of the fatigue, monotonous life and accumulated small discontents, are the factors that cause the burnout (Burke, Weir and Devers, 2007; quoted Youssoufi and...
Bagheri, 2011). One of the most effective interventions for improving the quality of couple's relationship and promoting the couple satisfaction is using the solution-focused brief group therapy. Steve et al., were the pioneers of the solution-focused brief group therapy (Azari, 2004). The solution-focused brief group therapy is a non-pathologic approach to the treatment that focuses on the positive and healthy aspects of the life rather than the problems and diseases. Thus, the solution-focused therapists concentrate on potentials, resources, and abilities of the referees rather than their shortcomings and inabilitys (Kim, 2006). Unlike many clinical insight-driven approaches, solution-driven approach focuses on the main accessible, tangible, and measurable objectives. Exploration of the past events and complaints are considered as the obstacles to the therapy process in this approach (Berg and Kelly, 2000). A solution-focused brief group therapy is based on the hypothesis that it should change the understanding of the referees about the problems and possible solutions (Dejong and Berg, 2012). Solution-focused therapy considers each referent as a self-leading and ready person with the unique and internal features. These differences can help the referees to find their own solution (Wehr, 2010).

Zammerman et al., (1997) investigated the effectiveness of using the solution-focused brief group couple therapist on the increasing the compatibility and improving the couple's life; the results showed that using the solution-focused therapist couple is effective in the increasing the compatibility and improving the couple's life. Nelson and Kelly showed that the solution-focused group therapy is effective on reducing the couple's conflicts (Nelson and Kelly, 2001). Russell investigated the effectiveness of the solution-focused therapy on the couple's compatibility. The results showed that this kind of the treatment increases four components of Spinner’s couple compatibility scale, that are couple satisfaction, solidarity, agreement, and showing affection (Russel, 2006). Nazari and Goli (2007) in a study entitled the effect of the solution-focused psychotherapy on the couple satisfaction showed that psychotherapy can reduce the couple aggression and sexual problems rates and improve the time for being together and agreement about the material issue. Davoodi et al., (2012) carried out a study entitled the effect of the solution-focused brief therapist couple approach on the couple's compatibility and indicated that this approach is effective on the couple's compatibility and help the couples to develop the effective solutions in their lives and prevent the divorce.

Dehghani (2011) analyzed the effectiveness of the dialogue communication analysis training on the couple burnout and couple life quality. He realized that this kind of training causes the reduction in the couple burnout rate and increase in the quality of the couple's life. Rahnavard (2009) discussed the effectiveness of communication skills on the couple burnout reduction using the couple communication program. He discovered that the communication skills using the couple communication program is effective in reducing the couple burnout rate. Pirfalak et al., (2014) in a study entitled the effectiveness of the cognitive-behavioral group therapist couple on the couple burnout found that this kind of treatment can be used for reducing the couple burnout and its components and finally the family stability. Couple burnout is followed by the couple love decrease and increase in the hostile behaviors of the couple. This may lead to the couple dissatisfaction and weaken the family foundation (Huston, 2009). Johnsons and Lebow (2000) selected a number of couples in order to increase the communication satisfaction rate and improve the communication quality and problem-solving methods. They used the solution-focused therapy approach for this study. The results showed that the solution-focused therapy approach improves the couple's relationship. Stuart (2011) in his study indicated that solution-focused therapist couple approach is effective on increasing the couple satisfaction, improving the communication skills and individual performances of the couples.

Oladi (2011) in a study entitled the effectiveness of the reality-therapy based therapy group on the burnout decrease and couple satisfaction increase of the married women showed that the effectiveness of the reality-therapy based therapy group approach lead to the decrease in the burnout rate and increase in the couple satisfaction rate. Hosseini (2011) in his research entitled the comparison of the effectiveness of the excitement-based and solution-based therapies on the improvement of the intimacy and couple satisfaction found that couple therapy using the excitement-based and solution-based therapies is effective on the increase in the couple compatibility and lead to the couple intimacy.
Research Article

Dejbakhsh (2010) in his research entitled the effectiveness of the solution-focused group consult training on the satisfaction change of the couple’ life and the self-efficiency feeling of the couples realized that solution-focused approach increases the understanding and awareness of the couples about their abilities and potentials and leads to the couple satisfaction. Rezaei (2010) in his study entitled the effectiveness of the solution-focused consulting on the couple life quality of the women with the symptoms of the borderline personality disorder showed that solution-focused consult could increase the quality mutual life of the women with the borderline personality disorder. Marriage can be a source of pleasant feelings and love for the couple. If the couple do not talk about their needs, desires, and cannot find the effective solutions to meet their needs, it may cause stress, failure, frustration, anger, and finally burnout (Jackson et al., 1980).

Due to the increase in the divorce rate in the past two decades in the country, the solution-focused therapy can decrease the burnout rate with the help of the people for the development of the effective solutions and in this way prevent the divorce.

As stated before, couple dissatisfaction and incompatibility can have undesirable effects on the mutual life of the couples and cause the troubled relationships. It decreases the satisfaction rate and finally leads to the couple burnout. Therefore, this study aims to explain the effectiveness of the solution-focused brief group therapy on the couple burnout improvements in the men.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is a classic quasi-experimental design with the control group. In order to carry out the research, 30 married men from Deylam city were selected using the available sampling in 2014 by notice. After conducting the pretest and analyzing the average homogeneity in the scores of each scale, they were divided into two groups of 15 persons each: the treatment group and control group. The treatment group received solution-focused trainings during a course of 60 days in 8 sessions of 90 minutes by two senior experts of the family consult and clinical psychology. However, the control group received no training. After the end of the sessions, both groups post-tested. The qualification for the people who participate in this study were: age group of 20-50 years-old, informed consent of the person to participate in this research, the minimum level of reading and writing literacy, commitment for taking part in the tanning sessions in the work process.

The content of the training sessions is as follows: first session: acquaintance and introducing the people; second session: explaining the problem and inviting the referent to define the problem just in one word and then change it into a sentence; changing the problem into an accessible goals and discussion about the problem; third session: checking the last week assignments, goal setting, analysis of the solutions for the complaints, formulation of the solution circles for the problems, a summary of the previous session and problem analysis and talking about the future; fourth session: using the technique of the exceptions and miracle questions, finding a positive story and checking the assignments and a summary of the previous session; fifth session: explaining and using the master key technique and, using the technique of scale questions, checking the previous week assignments; sixth session: using the solution-focused questions, using the Reductio ad Absurdum Argumen and inconsistent wager; seventh session: using the grade question; eighth session: conclusion and summarize the all sessions (Shakarami et al., 2014).

Pines’ Couple Burnout Questionnaire

Couple burnout scale that is invented by Pines is one of the self-measurement tools that have been designed for the measurement of the couple burnout degree. It is based on another self-measurement tool that is used for measuring the burnout (Pines and Nans, 2003). This questionnaire includes 21 item in three parts: physical exhaustion (feelings such as fatigue, weakness and sleep disorders), emotional exhaustion (feelings such as depression, despair and stuck in the trap) and mental exhaustion (inferiority feeling, frustration, and to be angry with spouse). All these cases are answered based on the seven-point scale. The level 1 shows the lack of the experience and the level 7 shows the high rate of experience such feeling (always). Ebadatpoor et al., (2013) calculated the internal consistency of this test using the alpha Cronbach as 0.77.
**SPSS-22** was used for data analysis and the results were reported as the descriptive and referential statistics. For obtaining the normal data, one-sample *Kalmogorov-Smiranov* Test was used for the use of the parametric tests. In order to compare the pretest and posttest averages of the control and treatment groups, dependent *t*-test was used and finally, the covariance test was applied for comparing the significant difference in treatment group.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results**
The age range of the treatment group was 35.25±2.15 and that of the control group was 37.65±2.88. The highest and the lowest age of the participators were 48 and 29, respectively. In order to obtain the normal data, one-sample *Kalmogorov-Smiranov* Test was used. The results showed that the research variables were not significant at *P*≥0.05. Therefore, the distribution of the research variables is normal and the parametric tests can be carried out. The results of the *Levene’s* test in table 1 shows that research groups can be compared with each other.

**Table 1: The results of Levin test to evaluate the equality of the variances of the two groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital burnout</td>
<td>3.439</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>.074</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2: Statistical Properties for Variables in the Pretest, Posttest on the Studied Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test Pre-test</td>
<td>Marital burnout</td>
<td>42.4000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.93777</td>
<td>9.138</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Marital burnout</td>
<td>22.4000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8.39898</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Pre-test</td>
<td>Marital burnout</td>
<td>34.8000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.10854</td>
<td>-0.365</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>Marital burnout</td>
<td>35.3333</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.13809</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the dependent *T* test between the control and treatment groups have been reported in order to compare averages in table 2. The results show that the average of the treatment groups is significant in pretest and posttest in a couple burnout variables. However, there is no significant difference between the averages of the control group in pretest and posttest. The results of dependent *T* showed that the research groups can be compared with each other, based on this, the covariance analysis is used for analyzing the effectiveness of the solution-focused brief group therapy on the couple burnout improvements.

**Table 3: The effectiveness of the trainings on variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Type III Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Partial Eta Squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Model</td>
<td>1647.170</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>823.585</td>
<td>16.997</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>15.819</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15.819</td>
<td>.326</td>
<td>.572</td>
<td>.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test Group</td>
<td>392.636</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>392.636</td>
<td>8.103</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
<td>1639.475</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1639.475</td>
<td>33.835</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error</td>
<td>1308.297</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>48.455</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>27954.000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrected Total</td>
<td>2955.467</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the covariance analysis showed that there is a significant difference between the treatment group and control group based on the couple burnout scale. Therefore, due to the significant differences of the averages of the research variables in the treatment group, couple burnout variable compared to the control group in table 2, and the significant difference in the covariance test in table 3, it can be concluded that training interferences and the effect of the independent variable causes the new changes. In addition,
2\(\eta\) shows the impact factor of the solution-focused brief group therapy on the couple burnout in the treatment group.

**Discussion**

This study aimed to investigate the solution-focused brief group therapy on the couple burnout improvements in men. The results indicated that using the solution-focused brief group therapy is effective in reducing the couple burnout rate. The previous studies have confirmed the effectiveness of the solution-focused brief group therapy in the reducing the divorce tendency rate. The results demonstrated that solution-focused brief group therapy has been effective in reducing the divorce tendency rate. Davarnia (2013), in his study, concluded that using the solution-focused brief group therapist couple approach has reduced the couple exhaustion rate and its dimensions on the couples. Attari et al., (2009) stated that the solution-focused therapy approach increases the couple compatibility. Izadi (2010) showed that the solution-focused training approach reduces the couple burnout rate of the treatment group compared with the control group and it causes the reduction in the physical fatigue, mental and emotional fatigue rate of the treatment group. Zimmerman and Prest (1997) analyzed the effectiveness of the solution-focused group therapist couple solution-focused approach on increasing the couple compatibility and marital status. The results showed that the solution-focused therapist couple approach is effective on increasing the couple compatibility and improving their conditions. Nelson and Kelly (2001) concluded that the solution-focused therapy is effective in reducing the couple's conflicts. Russell (2006) discussed the effectiveness of the solution-focused therapy on the couple's compatibility. The results showed that this kind of treatment increases four components of Spinner’s couple compatibility scale, that is, couple satisfaction, solidarity, agreement, and showing affection. Davoodi et al., (2012) carried out a study entitled the effect of the solution-focused brief group therapist couple approach on the couple compatibility and showed that this approach is effective on the couple compatibility and to develop the effective solutions in their lives and prevent the divorce. Dehghani (2011) analyzed the effectiveness of the dialogue communication analysis training on the couple burnout and couple life quality. He realized that this kind of training causes the decrease in the couple burnout rate and increase in the couple life quality. Attari et al., (2009) discussed the effectiveness of communication skills on the couple burnout decrease using the couple communication program. They discovered that the communication skills using the couple communication program are effective on the couple burnout decrease. Stewart (2011) in his study indicated that solution-focused therapist couple approach is effective on increasing the couple satisfaction, improving the communication skills and individual performances of the couples. Mudd (2000) concluded that solution-focused therapy increases the communication skills of the couples. Eakes et al., (1997) showed that using the solution-focused therapy approach changes the couple’s attitudes on complicated situations and can help the couple to have positive thinking and improve their potentials to solve the problems. Rahnavard (2004) discussed the effectiveness of communication skills on the couple burnout reduction using the couple communication program. He discovered that the communication skills using the couple communication program is effective on the couple burnout decrease. Pirfalak et al., (2014) discussed the effectiveness of the cognitive-behavioral group therapist couple on the couple burnout and found that this kind of treatment can be used for reducing the couple burnout and its components and finally the family stability. Johnsons and Lebow selected a number of couples in order to increase the communication satisfaction rate and improve the communication quality and problem-solving methods. They used the solution-focused therapy approach for this study. The results showed that the solution-focused therapy approach improves the couple relationships. Oladi (2011) in a study entitled the effectiveness of the reality-therapy based therapy group on the burnout decrease and couple satisfaction increase of the married women showed that the effectiveness of the reality-therapy based therapy group approach lead to the decrease in the burnout rate and increase in the couple satisfaction. Hosseini (2011) in his research entitled the comparison of the effectiveness of the excitement-based and solution-based therapies on the improvement of the intimacy and couple satisfaction found that couple
therapy using the excitement-based and solution-based therapies is effective on the couple's compatibility and lead to the couple intimacy.

The results of this study showed that solution-focused trainings can improve the couple life quality and reduce the couple burnout rate. Spouses usually respond to each other with no thinking and insist on their own beliefs until they obtain their desirable responses. Solution-focused therapists help the couples to stop that kind of behavior in which they accuse each other, to emphasize on the recognition, change the useless patterns, and achieve the balance. Couples can remember the problem-solving skills when necessary and can solve the problems and develop the long-time solution using the solution-focused therapy approach (Jenny, 1997). Solution-focused therapeutic model consider the referees as the worthy and strong specialists that can solve their own problems and considers the treatment as the process by which referees and therapists can restructure the desirable realities. During the treatment process, the therapist should establish the participatory relationships using the correct language and behaviors and use the change-based language and questions (Kim, 2006).

Solution-focused brief group therapy approach considers the referees as the people who can recognize their goals and find the effective solutions for the complicated situations. It mainly emphasizes on strengthening the referees by finding the solutions and previous exceptions for the issues and encourages them to repeat the effective behaviors that are the basis of the solutions for achieving the goals (McKeel, 2004). The results show that solution-focused therapy uses the potentials and abilities of the referees in the change process and gives them hope. Solution-focused therapists improve the self-efficiency of the referees by encouraging them to find and restructure the solutions (Corcoran and Pillai, 2009).

REFERENCES


