



## Pelagia Research Library

European Journal of Experimental Biology, 2013, 3(6):427-431



### The effect of sex education on the marital satisfaction

Sara Tonekaboni<sup>1</sup>, Ramazan Hassanzadeh<sup>2</sup> and Sedigheh Ebrahimi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Mazandaran, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Department of Psychology, Sari Branch, Islamic Azad University, Sari, Iran

#### ABSTRACT

Since the divorce statistics are increasing in the whole world and this increasing rate is to the extent that makes some countries confront some crisis, thus in the last decade the researchers have focused on studying many effective factors on the marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction is a state during which the spouses feel happiness and satisfaction for getting married with each other and being together. One of the factors stated in some of the researches is sex education. The main aim of this research is to study the effect of sex education on the marital satisfaction. This research is an applied and experimental research. The sampling method of this study is available and 40 married woman ranging 25 to 35 among the individuals visiting health center were chosen and they were randomly put into two groups. ENRICH marital satisfaction inventory (1989) was used for measuring the variable of marital satisfaction. The questionnaire's validity and reliability were confirmed at acceptable level. In order to analyze the data, in addition to the descriptive statistics, in the inferential statistics the Kolmogorov-Smirnoff, Levine and dependent t-test were used by the use of Spss18 software. Results showed that a significant difference was observed in the marital satisfaction of the experimental group before and after sex education. The positive value of t-test shows that the marital satisfaction has increased after the sex education. Thus it could be concluded that the sex education had a significant effect on the increase of marital satisfaction. Also a few applicable research proposals are offered at the end of the article.

**Keywords:** Sex Education, Marital Satisfaction, Spouses.

#### INTRODUCTION

Nowadays all of the social regulations and institutions make efforts toward maintaining the sanctity of family, because family formation is a necessity which arises from the innate and acquired needs of men and women and due to its creation and social nature, every human being requires empathy with the person who lives with him/her and this is a necessary issue for reaching the human perfection, and marriage is considered as a conventional and dynamic phenomenon toward this issue. Marriage has always been approved as the most important and the best social customs for fulfilling the emotional needs and security requirements of adults. Marriage is a relationship between two human beings and it is delicate, dynamic and sophisticated concept. This phenomenon is considered as one of the most important events happening in the life of each human being after being born [8]. In Iran the marital discords and divorce are among the social acute damages and researchers evaluated divorce as a severe stress (1<sup>st</sup> rank from the point of severity), and they ranked it among the stressful life events [13].

Marital satisfaction is not a static and stable concept, and most of the spouses experience some changes in the amount of satisfaction during their common life [11]. According to the definition, marital satisfaction is a state

during which the spouses feel happiness and satisfaction for getting married with each other and being together[7]. On detecting the effective factors of marital satisfaction experts have consensus that consent in marriage requires special abilities and skills in both parties, and one of them is communicational skills and the ability to solve problems. On the other hand we should pay attention that social, political, and cultural changes have created special changes in the attitude toward marriage, and expectations of both parties from the common life which reveal the necessity of research about this matter in different eras of life. Ineffective communication results in the formation of deep interpersonal distance experienced in all aspects of life and all parts of the society. Lack of use of required skills for starting, and continuing an enjoyable marriage leads to loneliness, physical illness, and stress, lack of competence, and job dissatisfaction, family problems and even death [10]. In religious societies marriage is the only social system providing the conditions for an enjoyable sexual intercourse [14], and it results in the connection between two opposite sexes based on the stable sexual relations [13]. Sexual satisfaction is one of the personal needs and interpersonal interactions which have an interconnection with the health of human beings and his/her society. One of the important aspects of marital relations is sexual relations. Sexual relation is the reason for most of the psychological problems and the marital discords [1], sexual relation dissatisfaction is one of the effective factors in marital relation failures and divorces [2], and sexual relation satisfaction is also one of the effective factors in the marital relations [3]. Several research results indicate the strong correlation between the sexual relations and marital satisfaction, for example we can name researches of Dannelly (1993), Byers (2005) and several other researches [9]. According to the statistics in Iran 10% of divorces are because of sexual incompatibility [13], due to this many researchers put their focuses of studies on this matter. The positive effect of sex education on the spouses and groups with different aims has been confirmed in different researches. For example we could refer to the researches of Rahmani and et al (2007), and Tiroudi and Alizadeh (2005). Since the rate of divorce is increasing in the whole world, and this increasing rate is to the extent that makes some countries confront some crisis, in the last decade researchers have focused on studying several effective factors on the marital satisfaction. In today's informational and communicational world which every minute advances in technology make people from different societies and cultures to get closer and closer to each other, the human beings' demands are getting more and more serious and the welfare, freedom, peace, pleasure and variety have become more important. Thus sex has become more important and it is not only considered as a physiologic need the same as thirst, hunger and need to air and sleep, but also it is considered in the field of spiritual and mystical needs such as need for beauty and perfection. But there are still uncertainties and superstitions around it [10]. Coordination and satisfaction of spouses' needs, meeting the emotional needs, having the skills related to the creation of understanding and ways of expressing love and meeting the sexual needs of spouses could result in the spouses' satisfaction from marriage and its continuity. Love, intimacy and sexual relation are the intertwined aspects of close relations and each of them could positively or negatively affect the other one. When people do their tasks while being under seizures, having low marital satisfaction, lack of energy and mindfulness and sometimes lack of motivation and losing goals, all of them act as barriers in front of their effective role playing. Thus the marital satisfaction is sometimes considered as a necessary factor for the progress of the society [8].

Sexual relation has a connection with constant relation satisfaction[6]. Satisfied spouses report a higher consistent between the sexual activities they want and the sexual activities they experience. Also both for men and women, sexual relation satisfactions are significantly correlated with the level of family functioning[12]. Trudel's research (2002) indicated that sexual satisfaction is a very important component in a loyal relation. However the initial consent from the sexual relation is a strong predicting factor of satisfaction and relation continuity in further times. According to Spence (1997) the little or undesirable sexual relation is the cause of discords among the troubled couples, and on the other hand according to Masters and Johnson (1970) sexual problems are usually due to the weak relations in marriages and thus a part of therapy for sexual problems includes: Helping couples to improve their overall relation with the opposite party [6]. Slosarz (2000) believes that sexual harmony, and not the abundant sexual activity is related to the marital satisfaction. Rahmani and et al (2007) conducted a research named marital satisfaction, sexual satisfaction and some of the related factors, and they conducted this research with the aim of determining the correlation between marital satisfaction and some of the related factors. The results of this study show that the sexual satisfaction factor and couples' age gap are the determinants in the continuity of marital satisfaction of Iranian men and women. According to the factors related to this research and recent researches it is possible to design some solutions for enhancing the health and welfare of individuals, training and consulting in the society and the health systems. Broman (2003) stated that sexual relation of husband and wife is the most important determining reason for marital life. Yet this relation is broken by the failure or anger of each of them. Most of the problems related to the sexual relations are number of sexual intercourses, time of sexual intercourse and its quality. Feelings of intimacy, being accepted, and mutual pleasure are the boosters of sexual instincts and decrease of love, intimacy and acceptance are the attenuators. In addition to the facilities, a successful marriage needs special skills and abilities and by conducting such researches effective steps could be taken in order to recognize these abilities. The future society is in the hand of individual who get married today. Tomorrow's builders and servants are the

fruits of training and education of these individuals. Thus the conducted researches about the marriage could be the key for the builders of future society. Despite the fact that each of the spouses has special treats different from another person, according to the personality traits, social base, education level, age, culture and learned behavioral patterns, but in most families the main root of problems and struggles is similar and they need the same solutions. Thus spouses who at the beginning learn the required skills for preventing and removing the possible problems, not only increase their self-esteem and satisfying marital relation but also increase their capability for other daily activities and self-actualization. Based on the proposed issues, the main research question is that whether the sex education is effective on the marital satisfaction or not?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

From the point of aim the current research is considered as an applied research. The research methodology in experimental and it studies the effect of sex education on the marital satisfaction. The current research design is semi-experimental. The pre-test, post-test designs and control group were used for conducting this research. The current research sampling is available and 40 married women ranging 25 to 35 among the individuals visiting health center were chosen and they were randomly put into two groups. 20 of them received sex education courses (experimental group) and 20 of them did not receive any education (control group). The sex education classes have been held in 8 sessions of 2 hours for 8 weeks. ENRICH marital satisfaction inventory (1989) was used for measuring the variable of marital satisfaction. The reliability of Cronbach's alpha in the marital satisfaction inventory before the education was reported as 0.927 and after the education 0.881 which shows a good condition of reliability. In order to analyze the data, in addition to the descriptive statistics, in the inferential statistics the Kolmogorov-Smirnoff, Levine and dependent t-test were used by the use of Spss18 software. In order to maintain the moral considerations the examinees of this research were chosen voluntarily.

## RESULTS

Among the 40 examinees all ranging from 25 to 35, 33% of them had bachelor degree. The marriage history of 28% of the examinees was between 10 to 15 years, and 45% of them were single child. In this research two groups were studied. In the experimental group the sex education has been conducted and the control group did not receive any educations. The central and distribution indicators of pre-test and post-test of marital satisfaction are shown in table 1 and 2:

**Table 1- Central and distribution indicators of pre-test (Before training)**

Group	Mean		SD	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Free time activities	16.65	17.44	3.42	3.50
Personality subjects	16.75	17	4.38	4.57
Marital relations	17.05	17.31	4.97	4.89
Dimensions				
Solving Conflicts	15.50	16.44	4.16	4.18
Of marital				
Financial Monitoring	19.40	19.31	3.96	4.21
Satisfaction				
Sexual Relations	18.10	17.95	3.63	3.61
Raising a child	18.70	18.79	2.39	2.29
Relationships with family & friends	17.75	17.79	2.61	2.85
Religious orientation	20.55	19.85	2.91	3.20
Variable of marital satisfaction	143.70	96	19.66	70.7

**Table 2- Central and distribution indicators of post-test (after training)**

Group	Mean		SD	
	Experimental	Control	Experimental	Control
Free time activities	17.44	<b>17.50</b>	3.02	<b>3.74</b>
Personality subjects	17	<b>16.67</b>	3.84	<b>4.55</b>
Marital relations	17.31	<b>17.35</b>	4.29	<b>4.33</b>
Dimensions				
Solving Conflicts	16.44	<b>16.45</b>	4.05	<b>4.22</b>
Of marital				
Financial Monitoring	19.31	<b>18.85</b>	2.65	<b>3.43</b>
Satisfaction				
Sexual Relations	17.95	<b>17.93</b>	3.71	<b>3.82</b>
Raising a child	18.79	<b>18.87</b>	1.79	<b>2.43</b>
Relationships with family & friends	17.79	<b>18.22</b>	2.52	<b>2.72</b>
Religious orientation	19.85	<b>20.33</b>	1.97	<b>2.96</b>
Variable of marital satisfaction	<b>170.20</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>18.14</b>	<b>24.28</b>

A simple and superficial comparison of table 1 and 2 data shows that sex education has been effective and the pre-test and post-test data are different from each other. Results of tests of Kolmogorov-Smirnoff, and Levin showed that data have a normal distribution and also the groups have homogeneity of variance; thus the parametric statistical tests could be used.

**Table 3- Results of dependent t-test analysis in order to compare the scores before and after sex education**

Scale	Mean Difference	SD	Error or T	% of Significance	df	Mean standard
Free time activities	1.25	3.62	0.81	1.54	0.140	19
Personality subjects	1.20	3.96	0.88	1.35	0.192	19
Marital relations	1.20	3.31	0.74	1.61	0.122	19
Solving conflicts	1.60	2.87	0.64	2.49	<b>0.022</b>	19
Dimensions Financial monitoring	0.65	2.89	0.65	1.006	0.327	19
Of Marital Sexual relations	0.40	2.50	0.56	0.715	0.483	19
Satisfaction Raising a child	1.15	1.69	0.37	3.035	<b>0.007</b>	19
Relationship with family & friends	0.95	2.64	0.59	1.606	0.125	19
Religious orientation	1.35	3.01	0.67	2.003	0.060	19
Variable of marital satisfaction	26.50	15.33	3.42	7.73	<b>0.001</b>	19

The analysis results of studying the difference between scales of marital satisfaction before and after sex education are completely provided in table 3. Results show that the achieved significance percentage in scales of free time activities (0.140), personality subjects (0.192), marital relations (0.122), financial monitoring (0.327), sexual relations (0.483), relationships with family and friends (0.125) and religious orientation (0.060) are far more than the critical level for this study ( $\alpha= 0.05$ ); thus it is not possible to reject the null hypothesis, thus it could be concluded that no significant difference was observed in the marital variable scales of free time activities, personality subjects, marital relations, financial monitoring, sexual relations, relations with family and friends, and religious orientation before and after sex education, and the differences are not meaningful.

Only the achieved significance percentage in scales of solving conflict (0.022), and raising a child (0.007) were far lower than the critical level for this study ( $\alpha= 0.05$ ); thus it could be concluded that a significant difference has been observed between the marital satisfaction variable scales, scales of solving conflict, and raising a child before and after sex education, and the differences are meaningful. Also the results of analyzing the table 3 information showed that the achieved significance percentage of marital satisfaction variable (0.001) is lower than the critical level for this study ( $\alpha= 0.05$ ); thus it is possible to reject the null hypothesis; thus the current analysis results show that a significant difference has been observed in the amount of marital satisfaction between the experimental group (learning sex education) and the control group, before and after sex education. The positive value of t-test shows that the amount of marital satisfaction has increased after the sex education. Thus it could be concluded that the sex education has had a significant effect on the increase of marital satisfaction.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Marital satisfaction is the exact feeling of happiness, satisfaction and pleasure experienced by the husband or wife when they consider all aspects of their marriage. Several researchers tried to detect the different factors which are effective on the marital satisfaction. This research surveyed the texts related to the sexual relations and related trainings and it surveyed the relation of this matter with the marital satisfaction in order to clarify that whether with the sex education, the marital satisfaction increases or not? Results showed that a significant difference has been observed between the marital satisfaction of experimental group before and after the sex education. The positive value of t-test shows that the marital satisfaction has increased after the sex education. Thus it could be concluded that the sex education had a significant effect on the increase of marital satisfaction. The results of this study are completely consistent with the study results of Homaei and et al (2008), Schumacher and et al (2005), Broman (2003), Tiroudi and Alizadeh (2005), Hassanzadeh (2011), Rahmani and et al (2007), Shahsiah and et al (2008) and they are not consistent with the study results of Breznsnyak and et al (2004). Also Mir Ahmadizadeh and et al (2012) showed that sex education has a positive effect on the women's satisfaction from sexual relation and it increases their satisfaction of sex relations in pregnancy. The study results of Rahmani and et al (2007) showed that marital satisfaction is significantly related to the sexual satisfaction and age gap of spouses. The results of this study show that the factor of sexual satisfaction and age gap of spouses are determinants of continuity of marital satisfaction in Iranian men and women. Undoubtedly, the sexual activity and sex is an important part of a marriage, the sexual activity in a family is a pleasurable and peaceful process, and most of the spouses will have pleasant feelings after that and psychologically they find the adequate satisfaction and in stressful times the sexual activity helps them to properly cope with the pressures and remove them or to reduce their destructive effects [7,17]. Nowadays paying

attention to the appropriate sexual relations among spouses is one of the ways of achieving peace and personal psychological security which results in having a goal in life and it provides the context for having positive feelings toward life, as a matter of fact growth and improvement of sexual self-concept of individuals could have a serious effect on the self-confidence of each of the spouses toward reaching their mutual or personal goals, because this appropriate relation and somehow the language of emotional and mental communication of them for reaching a mutual feeling is along with personal differences at the same time, and this is the real epiphany of peace. Study results show that sex education results in the marital satisfaction. Sexual satisfaction is considered as a personal and interpersonal interactional need which is closely related to the health of human being and society. Sexual relation is one of the important aspects of marital relation. Sexual relation is the reason for most of the psychological turmoil and problems of marriage [8], sexual dissatisfaction is one of the effective factors of failure in marriage and divorce of spouses [9], and sexual satisfaction is one of the effective factors on the marital relation. Considering the results of the current research it is suggested to use mass communication tools such as media and highlighting the marriage counseling classes in order to make the spouses aware of their marital rights and methods of solving the family problems through planning an operational program at the levels of related institutions such as ministry of health and welfare, as the effective preventive action. Nowadays one of the methods for achieving peace and personal psychological security is paying attention to the appropriate sexual relation among the spouses, which results in having goals in life and it provides the context for reaching a positive feeling in life, as a matter of fact growth and improvement of sexual self-concept of individuals could have a serious effect on the self-confidence of each of the spouses in reaching their mutual and personal goals, because this appropriate relation and somehow the language of emotional and mental communication of them for reaching a mutual feeling is along with personal differences at the same time, and this is the real epiphany of peace. As some study suggestion it is recommended to train men and women with each other in communicational skill trainings and sex educations in organized and systematic programs. Also it is recommended to teach the communicational skill training and sex education for preventing before happening of behavioral problems and also teaching appropriate social communications to the younger men and women.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Bradbury TN, Fincham FD, Beach SRH, *J Marriage Fam*, **2000**, 62(4), 964-80.
- [2] Breznsnyak M, Whisman MA, *J Sex Marital Therapy*, **2004**, 30(3), 199-217.
- [3] Broman C L, *Journal of SexResearch*, **2003**, 40(2), 351-357.
- [4] Byers ES, *J Sex Res*, **2005**, 42(2), 113-8.
- [5] Dannelly DA, *J Sex Research*, **1993**, 30(2), 171-176.
- [6] Halford DK, *Short-term couple's therapy*, Tehran, Fararavan pub, **2005**.
- [7] Hassanzadeh R, *Family psychology, love and marriage*, Tehran, Savalan pub, **2011**.
- [8] Homaei R, Khayyatan F, Salimi M, Review articles of 3<sup>rd</sup> congress of family pathology, Shahidbeheshti, **2008**, 402-403.
- [9] Huston TL, Caughlin JP, Houts RM, Smith SE, George LJ, *J Pers Soc Psychol*, **2001**, 80(2), 237-52.
- [10] Mir Ahmadizadeh AR, Nakhaei A, Tabatabaei SHR, Shafieian R, *Thought beh J*, **2003**, 8(4), 56-63.
- [11] Rahmani MA, Gheysaripour S, Review articles of 2<sup>nd</sup> congress of family pathology on Iran, Tehran, Shahid Beheshti University, **2007**, 184.
- [12] Safdarkhany F, MA thesis, , University of Yazd, (Yazd, Iran, **2008**).
- [13] Sarokhani B, *Divorce, a study about recognizing its reality and factors related to it*, Tehran, Tehran University pub, 2002.
- [14] Schumacher JA, Leonard KE, *J Consult Clin Psychol*, **2005**, 73(1), 28-37.
- [15] Shahsiah M, Bahrami F, Etemadi A, Mohebbi S, *Health System J*, **2008**, 6(4), 690-694.
- [16] Slosarz WJ, *Sexual Relationship Therapy J*, **2000**, 15(4), 367 - 80.
- [17] Tiroudi M, Alizadeh Z, 2<sup>nd</sup> congress of family and sexual problems, Tehran, **2005**.
- [18] Trudel G, *Sex Research J*, **2002**, 28(3), 229-240.