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## The effectiveness of transactional analysis on emotional maturity and communication beliefs

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### Abstract

Transactional analysis is one of the theories that has paid much attention to interpersonal relationships, the process of life events, and the mutual reactions of people with each other. It has provided practical solutions for interpersonal issues. Therefore, the present study aimed to determine the effectiveness of transactional analysis on emotional maturity and communication beliefs. The research method was quasi-experimental and pre-test-post-test design with a control group. Among the women who volunteered for marriage and were referred to Golabchi Medical Center and Ravane Aram Clinic in Kashan city in the second half of 2019 for pre-marital counseling, 52 people were selected by the available sampling method. They were randomly placed in the experimental group (26 people) and control group (26 people). In the pre-test phase, women answered the emotional maturity questionnaires of Sink and Bhargava (1984) and the communication beliefs of Eidelson and Epstein (1981). The group therapy sessions for the experimental group were held for eight sessions (2 months), and again, at the end of the sessions, the control and experimental groups completed the questionnaires. The covariance analysis method was used to analyze the data. The results showed that transactional analysis training was practical on emotional stability and irrational communication beliefs of women who volunteered for marriage ( $p < 0.05$ ). According to the research findings, it is suggested to use the teachings of transactional analysis in counseling centers to equip women who volunteer for marriage with appropriate and satisfactory communication skills.

**Keywords:** *transactional analysis, emotional maturity, communication beliefs.*

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## Introduction

The theory of mutual transactional analysis is one of the practical perspectives in examining marital relations and social bonds. Transactional analysis, as a personality theory, provides us with an image of the psychological structure of humans (Murray, 2021). For this purpose, he uses a three-part model as a model of his emotional states. This personality model helps us to find out how people act and behave and how they reveal their personality in the form of their behavior. Transactional analysis can provide useful and convincing reviews in marital relationship situations as well. Because in it, more attention is paid to human relationships with each other and it is believed that if people have healthy, positive and satisfying relationships with each other, replace it with destructive, negative and humiliating relationships, they will be able to reduce the psychological pressure of themselves and others and enjoy their lives more (Dortaj et al., 2021; Murray, 2021).

Marital relationships are strongly influenced by the thoughts and communication beliefs of each couple. The beliefs of people in early marriage and cohabitation are very sweet. Most of the couples think that they will achieve all their dreams by getting married, but with the passage of time, the differences become apparent. People with their irrational beliefs think that they have failed in their marriage because their needs are not met and, in their own words, this life is not the life they believed (Shams and Wolfard, 2015). Therefore, communication beliefs are among the factors that affect the relationship of couples (Johanson et al., 2020). According to Gutman and Notaris (2020), communication beliefs are opinions or mindsets that husband and wife have about their marital relationship

and accept it as reality. Inefficient communication beliefs are those irrational beliefs and thoughts that are specific to the marital relationship. As a result of excessive use, it has created a problem that can be expected to prevent the main causes of marital conflicts by making positive changes in the communication beliefs of couples (Imanizad et al., 2021).

Emotional maturity is defined as the ability of people to manage their emotions as well as evaluate the emotional states of others in interpersonal relationships, in order to make appropriate decisions and actions (Rafidali, 2017). Emotional maturity in married life is manifested in the form of the ability to bear tension, the ability to give love and receive love, the ability to face the realities of life and analyze the details of those events, the ability to have a positive interpretation of unfortunate experiences, the ability to accept failure, and the ability to control anger. Therefore, emotional maturity can greatly contribute to the lives of married people and their success in life (Safaei & Sedaghat, 2020).

The present study seeks to answer the following question: Is transactional analysis training effective on the emotional maturity and communication beliefs of women seeking marriage.

## Method

This research was quasi-experimental and pre-test-post-test design with a control group. The statistical population included all women who volunteered for marriage and referred to Golabchi Medical Center and Ravane Aram Clinic in Kashan in the second half of 2019 to participate in pre-marriage classes to receive specialized help in marital issues. Among the prepared list of women volunteering for marriage and applying for psychological services, 52 people were

selected by available sampling method and were randomly assigned to the experimental group (26 people) and control group (26 people).

## **Materials**

### **1. Communication beliefs questionnaire.**

This 40-question questionnaire was developed by Eidelson and Epstein (1981) to measure irrational beliefs about marital relationships. 5 subscales are belief in destructiveness, immutability of spouse, expectation of mind reading, gender perfectionism, belief about gender differences. Each question is scored on a 6-point Likert scale from 0 (completely false) to 5 (completely true).

### **2. Emotional Maturity Questionnaire of Yashvir Sink and Bhargava.**

This questionnaire was created by Yashomiring and Mahish Bhargava in 1984. This questionnaire contains 48 questions, the first 10 questions measure emotional instability, the second 10 questions measure emotional return, the third 10 questions measure social incompatibility, the fourth 10 questions measure personality collapse, and the last 8 questions measure lack of independence. The Emotional Maturity Questionnaire is a five-item self-report scale (very much, a lot, uncertain, probably, and never).

## **Findings**

The mean and standard deviation of the research variables are reported in the pre-test and post-test stages. Before presenting the results of covariance analysis, the presuppositions of parametric tests were measured. The results of the Mbox test showed the establishment of the default equality of covariances in the dependent variables of the research ( $P < 0.05$ ). The results of Levin's test to check the equality of variance of the groups in the dependent variables of the research showed that the

level of significance obtained is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the condition of homogeneity of variances has been established.

The F value was significant ( $df=47$  and  $p<0.001$ ) and it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the two transactional analysis treatment groups and the control group in terms of one of the dependent variables (communication beliefs and emotional maturity).

The value of F between the two experimental and control groups, keeping the pre-test effect constant, is equal to 205.98 and its significance level is 0.001. Therefore, the method of transactional analysis has influenced the emotional maturity of women volunteering for marriage and has increased the stability of emotional maturity.

The value of F between the two experimental and control groups, keeping the pre-test effect constant, is equal to 171.59 and its significance level is 0.001. Therefore, the method of transactional analysis has influenced the irrational communication beliefs of women volunteering for marriage and has caused them to adjust their irrational communication beliefs.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of the present study was to determine the effectiveness of transactional analysis on emotional maturity and communication beliefs. The results of the present study showed that transactional analysis training has increased the emotional stability of women volunteering for marriage.

Women who are about to get married in the present study showed a lack of emotional stability in the pre-test stage. Holding training sessions, communication skills such as listening, speaking, communication styles, language control skills, body, etc. provided

the basis for reducing the behaviors related to emotional instability. This improvement of communication can remove the psychological pressure and worry that originates from within people. Also, to increase abilities such as patience, tolerance, tolerance when angry, and understanding in order to evaluate thoughts and mood and adjust them in a way that leads to growth and excellence (Mansoorjad et al., 2013). This ultimately leads to the emotional maturity of women.

As a result of transactional analysis training, people realize their illogical beliefs and their unhelpfulness and try to change them. Therefore, as a result of education, people become aware of the problem of their beliefs in interpersonal relationships. Based on the principles they learn, they try to first change their expectations from their spouses based on the above-mentioned beliefs in interpersonal relationships, especially marital relationships, and have realistic opinions of them. Secondly, change those behaviors that are based on illogical beliefs and behave rationally with your spouse (Rezai Fard et al., 2019). Since factors such as belief in the destructiveness of opposition, belief in the immutability of the spouse, sexual perfectionism, irrational communication beliefs in marital relationships have an effect on the entire relationship. Therefore, in this regard, it can be said that people who participated in transactional analysis sessions by focusing on their interpersonal relationships, beliefs and emotions, using emotion-oriented techniques, were able to reduce their dependence, marital conflicts and irrational thoughts (Shokohi, 2020).

### **Ethics**

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

### **Acknowledgement**

The cooperation of all participants in the research is thanked and appreciated.

### **Conflict of Interest**

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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