EFFECT OF THINKING POSITIVE TRAINING ON SEXUAL SELF-ESTEEM OF INFERTILE WOMEN

Shahriar Dargahi1,2, HosseinGhamari Givi3, Ali Azizi4*, Azim Ghasemzadeh5, Abdollah Dargahi6

1Department of Psychology, School of Health, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran.
2MA.family counseling, kharazmi of University, Tehran, Iran.
3Department of counselling, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, MohagegArdabili University, Ardabil, Iran.
4Department of Community Medicine, Medical Faculty, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran.
5Department of Psychology, Islamic Azad University, ParsabadMoghan Branch, Parsabad, Iran.
6Department of Environmental Health Engineering, School of Health, Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, Kermanshah, Iran.

Email: aliazizi@kums.ac.ir

Abstract

Infertility is defined as not conceiving after one year a pair of regular sex without using contraception. Infertility as a biological, psychological, social crisis could threaten mental health of infertile couples. The present study investigated the effect of training of positive thinking on sexual self-esteem of infertile women. The study procedure was semi experimental and was pre-test and post-test type by control group. Statistical community was whole infertile couples referring to the offices of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists in Pars Abad, Ardebil, Iran. Among them 20 infertile women, were selected as available sampling method. In order to data collection, women’s sexual self-esteem questionnaires utilized and data analysed through single variable covariance analysis (ANCOVA). Results showed that positive thinking training affects infertile women sexual self-esteem (P<0.05). In fact, results showed that individual’s capacity for positive thinking affects personal and interpersonal abilities. Having regards to impact of positive thinking training on psychological improvement and marital quality in infertile women, it is better to paying attention to especial training to these couples and preventive measures.

Keywords: Positive thinking, Sexual self-esteem, Infertility.

Introduction

Infertility is defined as not conceiving after one year a pair of regular sex without using contraception. Infertility as a biological, psychological, social crisis could threaten mental health of infertile couples (1). An infertile women experiences not just childless, but possibly loose relations with her family, wife and friends and feels loneliness and
isolation, blames from herself and others, and loses her identity as a woman. Loss of interest in his wife and tensions resulted from some of treatments leads to stress, feelings of helplessness, conflict, depression, severe loss of self-esteem and low self-esteem (2).

Among individual problems in infertile women which have an impact on matrimonial matters, can be noted as infertile women's sexual self-esteem. Sexual self-esteem is the emotional response of patients to assess their thoughts and feelings and sexual behaviour (3). Or in other words the sexual self-esteem is ability to enjoy sexual partner, belief in the attractiveness, ability to manage sexual behaviour and its compatibility with other personal goals and how to assess their sexual behaviour and feelings (4).

Studies indicate that infertility associates with wide range of psychological damages including decreasing life quality, self-esteem, sexual, emotional and social satisfaction, increasing tension level, anxiety, depression, anger, low self-feeling, feeling of inadequacy, sexual dysfunction and marital problems and totally decreasing Psychological well-being (5). Elsenbruch, Hann, Kowalsky and Offner (6) compared psychological well-being in infertile and normal women and found that these women showed low scores of positive relation with others and self-acceptance. Accordingly, infertility has relatively constant and stressful nature, and could results to decreasing self-esteem by creating tensions. Some of infertile women and also psychological problems from the infertility, In addition to the negative impact of interpersonal factors that aggravate and perpetuate infertility, affects interpersonal relations especially their marital relations (7).

Infertility encounters couples life with problems related to sexual affinity and marital relations, decreasing intimacy and sexual relations, feelings of guilt, depression and feeling of a gap. On the other hand, these psychotic and emotional problems could be a reason of infertility (7). In a study, results showed that infertile women, dominantly reported lower sexual intercourse, less participated in foreplay and lovemaking with wife, had lower arousal and sexual desire and showed negative emotional reactions to sexual relationship (8-9).

Positive thinking skills include training of thinking differently about events and positive having and also events and negative having and valuing these having. In learning being happy and positive thinking, persons encouraged to recognize their positive and well experiences and strength points of their and other lives and identify their abilities and also recognize their roles in increasing and improving self-respect and esteem and improving their lives and so acquire understanding positive aspects of others. They also learn that take an active stance and form their own lives independently rather than passively accepting whatever happens (10). In this strategy emphasizing the abilities and
talents, optimizing happiness, recognition of emotions and thoughts, and enriching communication which is foundation of positive thinking approach, could have positive impact on individual’s health (11).

Numerous studies show that positive thinking treatment had been effective for self-esteem and happiness (12-14). Also, studies showed that positive thinking couple treatment was effective on couple’s life satisfaction, marital intimacy and sexual function (15-16). Considering to problems which infertile women encountered them and also having regard to this point that there is no studies based on positive approach and finding strength points and meaning in personal and marital lives, especially in vulnerable groups in Iran, therefore the aim of present study was to determination of effectiveness of positive thinking skills training on sexual self-esteem of infertile women.

Material and Methods

Present study was experimental type and the considered model was pre-test and post-test with control group. Statistical community was total women who referred to women and Gynaecology and Infertility centres of Pars Abad, Moghan, Iran in order to receiving treatment services. Statistical samples include 20 infertile women (10 experimental group and 10 control group) which were selected after initial interview and volunteering of persons through available sampling method and randomly put on control and experiment group. A total of 10 persons in the experimental group received the educational intervention. Sample selection criteria were: 1- having a doctor diagnosis about infertility and 2- having guidance and higher education.

- Sexual self-esteem inventory for women (SSEI-W):

This questionnaire designed by Zeanah and Schwarz in 1996(17) and includes 81 questions and 5 subscales which are skill and experience, attractiveness, control, moral judgment and adaptiveness The questionnaire assessed subjective emotional reactions of women to their thoughts and feelings about sexual behavior. Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient of questionnaire is reported 0.85 to 0.94 by creator of the inventory. The correlation of this inventory with Rosenberg self-esteem questionnaire has been calculated and the value of attractiveness 0.56, control 0.45, adaptiveness 0.45, moral judgment 0.38 and skill & experience 0.44 reported. In this research Cronbach’s alpha calculated and gained between 0.75 to 0.95 for subscales(17).

Results

According to results of the study, mean age of experimental group was 34.08 with 7.75 standard deviation and mean age of control group was 34.10 with 5.21 standard deviation. Also, based on results, 55 percent of infertile women had guidance education, 25 percent had diploma and 20 percent were graduate. Also, marriage duration of 40 percent
on infertile women was between 5 to 10, 45 percent between 10 to 15 years and just 15 percent between 15 to 20 years. (Table 1).

**Table-1: The average and standard deviation of pre-test and post-test for sexual self-esteem in two groups.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test of sexual self-esteem</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>109.65</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>105.22</td>
<td>4.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test of sexual self-esteem</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>186.76</td>
<td>6.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>104.45</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table-2: The results of covariance analysis of sexual self-esteem experimental and control groups.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig</th>
<th>Eta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>sexual self-esteem</td>
<td>5030.69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5030.69</td>
<td>85.35</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be observed in Table 2, difference between mean scores of sexual self-esteem at post-test step after scores control of pre-test at both control and experiment groups was significant (P<0.05). This means that training positive thinking was effective in increasing sexual self-esteem of infertile women. Also, results of univariate covariance analysis indicates the impact amount by 82 present.

**Discussion**

Obtained results showed that positive thinking approach in a group way was effective in increasing sexual self-esteem of infertile women. Results are in consistent with other studies (13-16) which showed that persons who experienced negative events in their life, but focused on their own positive aspects, reported higher self-esteem and life satisfaction. In order to illustrating obtained results, it can be noted that educating skills and techniques of positive thinking was conducted for improving and increasing positive relation with persons own self and other and the world as well as increasing happiness so that people better known themselves and recognize their positive experiences and the role of positive experiences in promoting respect for themselves. Attention to themselves positive points, shared life and good past experiences, promotes possibility of having more positive understandings from own and others and this cause that persons be able to accepting more responsibilities against to their values and achieve more complete recognition from themselves. Positive thinking approach assists group’s members for recognition of their own and others abilities, capabilities and positive aspects and others which its consequence is to correcting approach to others and reorienting the eyes to the realities of life. In this approach, by emphasizing abilities...
and talents, optimizing happiness, more attention and focusing on positive issues and feeling and inhibiting negative feelings from entry to personal limit and increasing positive relation which is one of foundation of positive thinking approach, could affect people’s health positively (13). Picktet et al. (12) stated the interesting cycle of effect of negative and positive emotions on negative and positive feelings in order to determination of effectiveness of this approach for pursuing how to create happiness and depression in persons. They indicate that anxiety persons by creating negative emotions, lead to increasing boredom and eventually end up in tunnel cycle. It is rational that in the present study infertile women surrounded themselves in a difficult tunnel which included in as tunnel process and exiting from this tunnel lonely was not possible. Therefore, by changing the vision to the world and their own abilities, and attempted to recognizing their own positive abilities and capabilities, attention to positive points of the life, their own abilities for making relationship and changing the vision to the life’s negative points leading to decreasing boredom, depression and increasing happiness and self-esteem. Positive thinking approach assists group’s members for recognition of their own and others abilities, capabilities and positive aspects of themselves and others which its consequence is to correcting approach to themselves and others and make infertile women to believe that the potential and actual Starter ability to meet their counterparts of sex and their sexual satisfaction and this could result to promoting sexual self-esteem. Women who experience high levels of sexual self-esteem and self-concept and knew their own capabilities and beside their own negative points, focus on positive having and attempts to introduce them to others, are more successful in making effective relations with others and especially with their own wife. In positive thinking approach by focusing on positive points and their own positive capabilities for making sexual relation, infertile women will found ability and motivation for increasing relation along with enthusiasm and the changes that are indicative of satisfaction (18).

Encouraging group members for making changes for improving marital relation and feed backing of members to each other through automotive and illogical challenging and fighting in marital relations, has significant role for initiation of these changes. Encouraging and enabling group members with required trainings for making efficient relations with wife and serving household tasks and converting this ability to positive points in shared life of infertile couples are one of the most prominent programs of the approach which results to promotion of sexual self-valuing.

Enhancing the skills of empathy, skills of enriching sexual relations and recognition thoughts and negative self-talk of each couple which could satisfy emotional needs and calling each transparent reactions and sincere and create a satisfying sexual relationship between couples, could be of the changes which cause couples sexual self-esteem of
infertile couples. Therefore, by focusing of self-reporting and facilitating expression of emotions could affective on intimacy, correlation, and expressing sexual and psychological needs of infertile couples and facilitates discussion and negotiation skills of these couples. On the other hand, this approach was successful for couples who want to recreate their relations according to close relationships.

Conclusion

Therefore, having regard to importance and contribution of women in marital relation and various conditions which infertile women had, findings of present study showed that positive thinking treatment intervention was effective in promoting sexual self-esteem. Present study due to being self-reporting of measuring tools and lack of neutral meetings for removing the impact of treatment group waiting for control group due to limitations in time and possibilities, was limited and cautions must be made when generalizing the results.

References


9. Abbasi M, Dargahi S, Jobaneh RG, Mehrjardi AA. Effective of emotional regulation on psychological wellbeing and marital satisfaction of Iranian infertile couples


**Corresponding Author:**

Ali Azizi∗

*Email: aliazi@kums.ac.ir*