Short Communication

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Effectiveness of Quran Therapy on Increased Marital Satisfaction in Married Women

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE: In Islam, family is a sacred environment and, according to the Quran, is a real place of tranquility. What matters in a marriage is the marital satisfaction. This study aims to investigate the effect of Quran teachings and its supreme concepts on marital satisfaction in married women.

METHODS: This case-control study was conducted in Babol, northern Iran, among 50 married women who married at least one year before, divided into two groups of 25. The women in case group were trained for 10 sessions, and the sessions included Quran therapy and educational package including Quranic verses and related interpretations. Then, the two groups were evaluated by marital satisfaction index questionnaire, with a score range of 0 – 100.

FINDINGS: The mean marital satisfaction score was 41.88±25.5 in the case group and 40.96±31.54 in the control group before the intervention, while it was 46.26±30.42 in the case group and 39.76±25.5 in the control group after intervention. There was a significant difference in the case group before and after the intervention ($p<0.05$).

CONCLUSION: The results of the research showed that the use of Quran and the Quranic teachings, in the shadow of divine verses, leads to increased marital satisfaction and mental health of married women.

KEY WORDS: *Quran, Quran therapy, Marital satisfaction*.

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Introduction

In addition to variables such as satisfaction with quality of life and sexual relationship, conflict management and communication, marital satisfaction and adaptation are among the most important determinants of the optimal performance of families (1). Marriage as the main and most important factor of communication between people is considered as the most intimate relationship in responding to all needs, both physical and mental (2).

Successful marriage leads to a satisfactory response to the physical and mental needs of individuals. The assessment of marital satisfaction and the factors that lead to the survival of marital relationships are of great value (3). In recent years, the sense of security and the intimate relationships between women and men have been weakened and the foundation of family has undergone unpleasant processes. Marital satisfaction has a significant impact on the family and the mental and physical health of its members (4).

Bradbury et al. spent a decade to investigate the nature and determinants of marital satisfaction and adaptation, and found more than one hundred titles of research on marital satisfaction and adaptation (5). Research has shown that there is a relationship between marital satisfaction and demographic characteristics, including age, race, income, education, marriage duration and religiousness (6). Studies has shown that many components contribute to marital satisfaction; one can mention the feeling of companionship (7). Some experts have defined marital satisfaction as a general and subjective assessment of the nature of marriage, which includes a degree of satisfaction of the needs, expectations and desires of the individual (8). Marital satisfaction is an adaptation between the current situation and the expected situation (9).

Some researchers have defined marital satisfaction as the objective feelings of gratification, satisfaction and pleasure experienced by a woman or her husband when they consider all aspects of their marriage (10). Several studies have shown the role of religious beliefs on mental health (11, 12). There is a significant positive relationship between religious beliefs with marital satisfaction and mental health (13). Moreover, marital adaptation increases with the training of spirituality (14), and the spouses show a higher marital satisfaction (15). Religion includes guidelines for life and a system of beliefs and values that can affect marital life (16). Studies also showed that people who are at a higher level of religiousness have more marital stability than other people and are more satisfied with marriage (17, 18) compared to those with a lower level of religiousness. In another study, which examined marital adaptation of 64 couples, it was shown that religion is positively correlated with adaptation, happiness and higher satisfaction, and also concluded that religion is an important factor in preventing divorce (19).

Allport et al. believe that religion is one of the potential and important factors for mental health (20). Differences in religious attitudes in predicting mental health of people are more important than differences in religious behaviors (21). In a clinical study, it was concluded that prayer reduces anxiety, depression and increases self-esteem (22). Allemand et al. found that forgiveness affects marital satisfaction (23). The relationship between religion and mental well-being (24), the relationship between religion and marital satisfaction (25), and the relationship between religious attitudes and beliefs and reduced risk of suicide and increased mental health has been proved in various studies (26, 27).

The Holy Quran is one of the religious sources God has revealed to establish his relationship with His servants. Since God in the Holy Quran introduces Quran recitation as a source of peace of mind and mental health, (28) therefore, the scientific study of the effects and role of the Quran and the hadiths of the infallibles in the lives of individuals, especially couples in marital satisfaction, seems to be necessary. Since no research has been conducted on the subject, it is necessary to address it considering the importance and applicability.Considering the emphasis of the Holy Quran on the sacred covenant of marriage, this study was conducted to investigate the effect of the Quranic recite and interpretations of verses related to couples' emotional and sexual relationships as a method of treatment for married women whose marital satisfaction was low.

Methods

After being approved by the Ethics Committee of the University, this case-control study was conducted among 50 married women aged 25 to 45 years in Babol who married at least one year before. After obtaining the written consent, the subjects were randomly divided into two groups of case and control

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(each group including 25 subjects). The case group received ten sessions of education and the control group did not receive any education (table 1). Marital satisfaction questionnaire was used to assess marital satisfaction. The questionnaire included 25 questions with "never, very rarely, relatively low, sometimes, relatively high, most of the times, always" options. The score range was between 0 and 100, and the higher scores indicated the extent or severity of the problems. To analyze the quantitative data, descriptive statistics, covariance analysis and Cronbach's alpha were used, while $p<0.05$ was considered significant.

Table 1. Operative treatment protocols of Quran therapy sessions

Session	Description
1st	Establishing a sincere relationship, group members' acquaintance with each other, creating hope and sympathy, understanding the problem and facilitating the expression of emotions, introducing and explaining the treatment method, and expressing the goals of the educational sessions, are to change the beliefs of the individual towards the divine book and the words of the Lord, and they help the person to strengthen his spiritual and religious beliefs and to focus on the existence of the absolute power of the Lord and divine mercy in relation to the healing and treatment of mental and physical illnesses by seeking help from the divine verses. Expression of rules for training sessions, post-test implementation.
2nd	Creating a connection with the previous session, and establishing an empathic and intimate atmosphere. The recitation of the verse, “And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me" (29), as the subject of discussion (What is the purpose of life?). The theme of the issue is that the purpose of the creation of human is to serve the Lord, and if any of the men and women in their marital life are in servitude God, the attitudes toward many problems will change.
3rd	Review of the assignments of the previous session. The recitation of the verse, "He created for you wives from among yourselves, that you may find repose in them, and He has put between you affection and mercy" (30) The subject of discussion; (spouses as a source of peace of life and Exploring the factors of successful marriage).
4th	Review of the previous session. The recitation of the verse, "Those who disbelieved can never be helped by their money or their children" (31), the subject of discussion; (having a fixed standard in life).
5th	Review of the assignments of the previous session. The recitation of the verse, “If you are thankful I will add more (favors) unto you; but if you show ingratitude truly My punishment is terrible indeed” (32), (the topic of discussion; being grateful for the blessings, especially having a wife).
6th	Review of the assignments of the previous session. The recitation of the verse, “It has been made permissible for you the night preceding fasting to go to your wives [for sexual relations]. They are clothing for you and you are clothing for them" (33), the subject of discussion; (the recognition of the wife's morale and feelings).
7th	Review of the assignments of the previous session. The recitation of the verse, “And speak to him with gentle speech that perhaps he may be reminded or fear” (34), the subject of the discussion; (having a conversation and creating an atmosphere for conversation between couples).
8th	Review of the assignments of the previous session. The recitation of the verse, "O all you who believe, seek you help in patience and prayer" (35), (the subject of discussion; patience, the wealth of life for couples).
9th	Review the process of the previous sessions and determine the agenda of the session. The recitation of the verse "recite you of the Quran as much as may be easy for you” (36), the subject of discussion; (filling the house space with spirituality).
10th	An overview of the process of the previous sessions and recitation of the verse, “And We send down of the Quran that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe" (37) The subject of discussion; (Quran is the cure for mental and physical pain).

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Results

The mean marital satisfaction score before and after the intervention in the case group was 46.16±30.42 and in the control group was 39.76±25.55 ($p<0.05$). In addition, the mean score of the case group increased after the intervention compared to the control group (table 2). The mean marital satisfaction score of women in Babol after intervention was significantly higher in the case group (46.16±30.44) compared to the control group (39.76±25.5) ($p<0.05$). The Quran therapy had a positive and significant effect on marital satisfaction among married women in Babol (table 3). Results of the study show that there is no significant difference between marital satisfactions of married women in Babol based on the duration of marriage.

Table 2. The mean and standard deviation of pretest and posttest of marital satisfaction in the case and control groups (N=25)

intervention Group	After Mean±SD	Before Mean±SD	P-value**
Case	46.16±30.42	41. 88±25.5	<0.05
Control	39.76±25.5	40.96±31.54	0.88
P-value*	0.42	0.91	

Table 3. The results of covariance analysis regarding the effect of Quranic therapy on marital satisfaction

Source of influence	Level of freedom	F	P-value
Corrected pattern	2	24.122	0.000
Constant	1	4.587	0.037
Pretest	1	42.137	0.000
Group	1	5.592	0.022

Discussion

The results of this study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between the Quran therapy and marital satisfaction among married women. There is no significant difference between the marital satisfaction of married women in Babol based on the duration of marriage. This means that duration of marriage has no effect on marital satisfaction. According to the Quran, spouses comfort each other. Being grateful for God's blessings, especially the blessing of spouse, the recognition of the spouse's morale and the sensitivity of each other, the intimate relationship and the healthy conversation between the couples, being patient in regard with the problems and, most importantly, creating a spiritual atmosphere at home will increase marital satisfaction. What the human needs in the path of guidance is found in Quran. If man is exposed to the divine verses and listens to the verses and does not intend to receive spiritual excellence, faith and comfort will increase in him (38). A review of the studies confirms the effect of Quranic teachings on increasing marital satisfaction and adaptability. In his research, Kazemi Shoa concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between intimacy with Quran and marital satisfaction and adaptability; the more students are intimate with Quran, the higher the marital satisfaction and adaptability will be in them (39). Bafrani Arab et al. concluded that "marital adaptability" was enhanced by the "training of spirituality" (14).

In addition, the use of cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy based on religion has increased marital adaptability and mental health of couples (4). Ahmadi nodeh et al. found that marital adaptability among people with strong religious beliefs was significantly higher than those with little religious attachment (40). Intimacy with Quran and religious activities will lead to happiness in pregnancy and its positive effects in this period (41). Many studies have shown that the Quranic verses, intimacy with Quran, and Quran recitation reduce depression, increase happiness and mental health of depressed and anxious people, and reduce anxiety, mental disorders, and mental health of individuals (42-46).

In today's complex world where the pressure of this complexity affects humans, it is a very valuable and remarkable solution to rely on the authentic and indispensable sources of spirituality, and at the head of them, the Holy Quran. Since religion is compatible with human nature and the Holy Quran on this basis is the right guide for mankind, not only all of these things are delicately expressed, but are also advised to be prevented by Quran. Overall, the results of this study showed that the use of the Quran, the teachings of the Quran and intimacy with the Quran, in case of practicing the divine verses, increased marital satisfaction and the mental health of married women. Certainly, the generalizability of these results requires further research in this regard.

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