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The Study of the Effectiveness of Enrichment Program Training (EPT) on Increasing of Marital Satisfaction and Marital Intimacy

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The main purpose of this research was to study the effectiveness of enrichment program training on increasing marital satisfaction and marital intimacy. Research method was quasi- experimental with pre, post and follow-up tests and control group. The statistical population was parents of elementary female students. The sample comprised 30 couples who were randomly selected and randomly assigned to two groups (15 couples to the experimental group and 15 couples to the control group). The experimental group participated in 2-hr sessions for 6 weeks. The data were obtained using Marital Satisfaction Test, and Marital Intimacy Inventory (MII). Results showed that enrichment program training (EPT) was effective on marital satisfaction and its subscales (sexual relationship, conflict resolution skills, community with original family, religious values, and social recreational activities) in both post and follow-up tests ($P \leq 0.05$). Enrichment program training was not significantly effective in household management ($P \geq 0.05$). The results of this research indicate that enrichment program training could increase total marital intimacy score and some of its subscales like emotional, intellectual, psychological, communication and social recreational activities. But it could not increase sexual, religious and physical marital intimacy. It can be concluded that enrichment program training can be applied as an effective education to increase the marital satisfaction and intimacy.

Keywords: enrichment program training (EMT), marital satisfaction, marital intimacy

A successful marriage satisfies many of physical and mental needs and an unsuccessful marriage causes many mental problems. The increasing

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rate of divorce, the decreasing duration of marriage, and many cases of marital life under compelling circumstances have made researchers study marital satisfaction and the factors effecting it. Satisfaction is defined as “the pleasure made of awareness of an easy situation” (Ferasat, 2002). Since, the rate of divorce in the world is increasingly growing; many researchers have studied the effective factors of the marital satisfaction. Many factors have been examined in many studies with some overlap among most of them, so they must be categorized. Bradbury, Beach, Fincham and Nelson (2000) have divided these factors into two categories.

a) Intrapersonal processes between couples including: interactional behaviors, communication skills, conflict and problem solving styles, coping attempts, love, quality of sexual relationships, common goals, mutual agreement in religious beliefs, attachment styles, family customs, cooperation for caring of children, intimacy, commitment, cognition, emotion and behavioral patterns, social support, violence, stresses, unadjusted attributions and negative changes in spouse’s behavior.

b) Environment, including: 1) children, 2) history, features of spouses and their original family, 3) Stresses and transitions, including: trauma, economic and occupational stresses, depression, mental and chronic disorders, handicapped children or children with behavioral problems.

Intimacy, a critical process in the development of close relationships (Hinde, 1978), is now a major concern in our culture. Significant technological, cultural, socioeconomic and religious changes in our society have contributed to a shift in the primary function of marriage, from one of providing security and stability for the raising of children to one of developing love and intimacy between partners (Diskin, 1986, Mace and Mace, 1975).

Sternberg (1987) has divided love into three sections: Passion, intimacy and commitment. Intimacy is the behavior that increases emotional closeness. Emotional closeness includes reciprocal understanding and support, making relationship with another person and shared self, actions and possessions with another person. Eshelman and Clarke (1987) in

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Stanley, Markman, Peters and Leber (1995) suggested that intimacy implies to any relationship or friendship that includes warmness, openness and informal sharing. These definitions, however, are deducted subjectively and have scientific basis.

According to marital literature, four components of intimacy are commitment, emotional intimacy, cognitional intimacy and physical intimacy. Bagarozzi(2001) have categorized components of intimacy into nine groups including: *(1) Emotional Intimacy*: Emotional Intimacy is the need for communicating and sharing with one's partner all of one's feelings both positive (e.g., happiness, joy, elation, gladness, excitement) and negative (e.g., sadness, unhappiness, frustration, fear, anger, guilt, shame, loneliness, boredom, fatigue , depression). For emotional intimacy to be achieved, there should be few prohibitions or limitations placed upon the feelings that are permitted expression in a relationship. If only positive emotions are allowed to be expressed, then an artificially positive atmosphere will exist in the relationship. If, on the other hand, only negative emotions are allowed to be expressed then the overall emotional atmosphere of the relationship will be one of doom and gloom (Cordova, Gee and Warren, 2005). *(2) Psychological intimacy:* Psychological intimacy is the need to communicate, share, and connect with another human being by disclosing deeply significant and personally meaningful material about one's true and inner self. Psychological intimacy encompasses the need to share and express one's hopes, dreams, fantasies, aspirations, and plans for the future as well as sharing one's fears, concerns, doubts, insecurities, problems, and inner conflicts with one's partner (Levin, 1991). *(3) Intellectual intimacy:* Intellectual intimacy is the need to communicate and share important ideas, thoughts, and beliefs with one's partner. A critical component of intellectual intimacy is one's role taking ability. Role taking is the ability to view the world through the eyes of one's partner. *(4) Sexual intimacy:* Sexual Intimacy is the need for communicating, sharing, and expressing with one's partner those thoughts, feelings, desires, and fantasies that are of a sensual and sexual nature. *(5) Physical (Nonsexual) Intimacy:* Physical Intimacy is the need for physical

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closeness with one's partner, physical closeness of this type should not be confused with physical intimacy that is intended to produce or accompany sexual arousal! Psychical intimacy may be expressed by a simple touch, or it may include close bodily contact such as a hug. Psychical intimacy includes such experiences as holding hands, cuddling together, dancing with one's partner and nonsexual touching. *(6) Spiritual intimacy:* Spiritual Intimacy is the need to share one's thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and experiences with one's partner that have to do with religion, the supernatural and spiritual realms of existence, moral values and beliefs, the meaning of existence, life after death, one's relationship to God or a higher power, one's relationship to nature, and one's place in the cosmos. *(7)Aesthetic Intimacy:* Aesthetic Intimacy is the need and desire to share with one's partner feelings, thoughts, perceptions, beliefs, and experiences that one considers to be personally moving, breathtaking, or awe inspiring because of their beauty. The wonders of nature, both simple (a snowflake) and complex (the cosmos) can form the basis for such experiential intimacy. Music poetry, literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, and all forms of artistic expression can serve as media for aesthetic sharing (Hickman, Protinsky and Singh, 1997). *(8)Social and Recreational Intimacy:* Social and recreational intimacy is the need to engage in playful and enjoyable activities and experiences with one's partner. *(9) Temporal Intimacy:* Temporal intimacy involves how much time each partner would like to spend with his or her mate, on a daily basis, in intimate activities. Not surprisingly, it is not uncommon to find that the amount of time one needs to spend each day with his or her partner in order to feel intimately connected differs from individual to individual (Bagarozzi, 2001).

Many factors are effective on couple’s intimacy, including: attachment, caring and sexual issues. Farogina (1998) found that attachment, caring and sexual relationships have had a unique share in intimacy. Hickman, Protinsky and Singh (1997) assessed the effectiveness of two marriage enrichment programs. One third of the sample was randomly assigned to the adventure enrichment group, and one third to the ACME (Association for Couples in Marriage Enrichment) group and, one third to a non-

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treatment control group. Participants from all three groups completed the instrument during the first hour of the treatment and the last hour of the treatment. The focus of this study was to determine if an adventure-based marriage enrichment program and an ACME program were effective in increasing intimacy in married couples. Participants' responses on the Warring Intimacy Questionnaire, the self -Rating of Intimacy scale, and the Intimacy Change Scale produced strong evidence in favor of the effectiveness of both programs. Also, solid evidence of the ACME and adventure programs was manifested by the effect size calculation.

One of the methods to increase marital satisfaction and intimacy between couples is giving instructions to them, and enrichment marital training is one of these instructions. In general, the marital enrichment program manipulates many aspects of marital life, including: couples relationships, conflict solving, financial management, marital satisfaction, leisure actions, religious beliefs, children and parent relationships, family and friends relationships, real expectations, sexual expectations, the role of relatives in their life, and other factors. For these purposes, therapists teach some skills to couples, including: communication skills, active listening, conflict control skills, problem solving skills, assertiveness training, emotions and affects control skills, increasing the awareness of self, the other one and shared life, and strengthening emotional relationships. this program emphasized the communication practices, clarifying domains of disagreement, increasing intimacy, conceptualizing expectations and their effects on relationships (Oulia, 2006).

Many researchers have studied the efficacy of enrichment marital training, including:

1) Prepare/Enrich program: version 2000

a) There are six goals in the prepare /Enrich program:

- Explore couple strength and growth areas.
- Strengthen couple communication skills.
- Learn ten steps for Resolving couple conflict
- Explore family of origin issues.

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- Develop financial budget and plans.
- Develop personal couple and family goals

2) The PAIRS program: the PAIRS (Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills) program designed to enhance self-knowledge and to develop the ability to sustain a pleasurable intimate relationship. PAIRS teaches skills as well as engaging the participants in an in-depth exploration of self and relationship dynamics. Although certain skills which are necessary for success in marriage including commitment, effective communication (openness, honesty, empathy) and the ability to make creative use of conflict (mace and mace, 1986) these may not be sufficient.

3) Preparing couples for marriage (the SYMBIS model): SYMBIS session goals are:

- Establish a realistic understanding of love and its fluidity
- Teach, model, and practice effective conflict resolution skills
- Explore and bridge common gender differences while reviewing communication skills.
- Facilitate relationship with marriage mentor couple
- Inform couple of their strengths and areas for growth.

4) Marriage Encounter (ME): A positive preventive enrichment program. ME is a process designed to give couples the opportunity to examine their lives together, their weaknesses and strong points, their attitudes toward each other and toward their relationship, their hurts, desires, ambitions, disappointment, joys, and frustrations, and to do so in what he considers an open and honest , face to face, heart to heart encounter between spouses.

5) Couples Coping Enhancement Training (CCET)

CCET is about couples who have preadolescent children and who are experiencing some degree of stress in their daily life associated with the

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up-bringing of their children. Although the CCET does not target specific child rearing issues, but rather focuses on stress and coping, communication and problem solving in general. It is hypothesized that the program should be able to not only improve parents' communication and dyadic coping skills but also reduce tension and disagreement that might arise between parents regarding matters related to their children (Lederman, Bodenman and Cina, 2007).

Many researchers attempted to study the effectiveness of different marital enrichment programs on marital satisfaction. For example, Fowers and Olson (1986) studied 190 couples who participated in marital enrichment program in October 1986. They suggested that this program improved couples relationship and helped them to decide about their divorce more properly (Fowers and Olson, 1986).

Short-and long-term effects of a new marital enrichment program (MEP), based upon Sager's contractual model of couple functioning, were evaluated using both self-inventories (DAS, MCI) and behavioral scales (MICS). Couples were randomly assigned to either no–treatment control conditions or the 20-hour long MEP. Evaluations of marital functioning of both groups were repeatedly done during the experimentation, at pretest, mid-test, posttest and first follow-up (two months after completion of the program). A second follow–up on the experimental couples was done a year after the end of MEP. Significant results were obtained for five of the seven criterion variables (marital adjustment and communication and certain aspects of problem-solving behavior). Positive gains shown by the experimental couples in the subjective measures were maintained for an entire year following MEP. It was concluded that the program succeeded in meeting both its short and long-term goals, thus representing a most promising preventative strategy to modern couple living (Adam and Gingras, 1982).

In regard to these findings, and considering the importance of administration of training courses (including marital enrichment training) in order to improve the mental health, the current research was designed to study the effectiveness of marital enrichment program on marital

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satisfaction and intimacy of couples in Isfahan City. In this way these hypotheses were tested:

1- Marital enrichment training increases marital satisfaction both in post and follow-up tests.

2- Marital enrichment training increases different domains of marital satisfaction both in post and follow-up tests.

3- Marital enrichment training increases marital intimacy in post test.

4- Marital enrichment training increases different domains of marital intimacy in post test.

Method

This study is designed based on pre, post and follow-up tests with a control group. Statistical population was the primary-school girl students' parents in Isfahan city in 2005-2006.

The sampling method was multi-stage sampling. At first, the fifth district was selected randomly out of the 6 districts of Isfahan city, and then one school of that district was randomly selected. 30 couples were randomly selected and assigned into the control (n=15) and the experimental (n=15) groups. The sample completed the Marital Satisfaction and Intimacy Inventories. The age mean of sample group was 34.44, (SD=1.96) and the maximum length of their marriage was 15 years and most of the sample respondents had a high school diploma (60%).

Entrance criterions were:

1) At least primary education

2) Minimum 6 and maximum 15 years of marital history.

The sample was selected from primary-school students' parents, because it was expected that they are young enough for the trainings to be more effective on them.

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Instruments

Marital Satisfaction Inventory (MSI): Marital Satisfaction Inventory was developed by Bahrami (2006) based on the Iranian culture (Oulia, 2006). This inventory includes 52 items in 7 domains that include: Sexual Relationship (6 items), Conflict Solving (5 items), Relationships (9 items), Main Family (7 items), Values and Religion (8 items), Leisure Action and Friends (9 items) and Home Management (8 items). Initially, concerning the 7 areas of marital satisfaction, 93 positive comments were provided. The content validity was obtained via 10 counseling experts from education and psychology faculty of Isfahan University. During this phase, 34 items were deleted. Items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from" a lot" to" a few". The contents of the items were investigated by several couples in order to simplify the sentences for people with low educational level such as primary , secondary school or diploma .So, after preparing the items, MSI was administered to 400 couples (200 females and 200 males) who were randomly selected from the parents of elementary girl students. In the next step, the reliability of the inventory was obtained by correlating each item to the total score. The items with insignificant correlations with the total score were deleted, so that only 52 items remained.

The concurrent validity was obtained by correlating the scores of this inventory and Enrich Marital Satisfaction Inventory (r=0.84). Also test-retest reliability was reasonable (r=0.91).The Persian form of Enrich Marital satisfaction Inventory has good internal consistency between 0.76 to 0.91 for all subscales and its correlation with Persian form of Revised Didactic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) with Persian form of Marital Happiness were, respectively, 0.21 and 0.35, and its factorial structural characteristics were confirmed(Isanejad,2009).

Marital Intimacy Inventory (MII): Marital intimacy was measured by Marital Intimacy Inventory that was developed by Bahrami (2006) based on the Iranian culture (Oulia, 2006). At first, considering 8 domains for the marital intimacy, 134 items were provided. The psychological experts at Isfahan University verified the content validity of the items, except for the

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15 items that were deleted. Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). The items that had not significant correlations ($\alpha \geq 0.05$) with the total score were deleted. Finally, the 85 items that had significant correlations ($\alpha=0.01$) with the total score were selected. These 85 items set in 8 domains including: emotional intimacy (8 items), intellectual intimacy (8 items), physical intimacy (6 items), sexual intimacy (8 items), social recreational intimacy (8 items), communication intimacy (11 items), religious intimacy (9 items), psychological intimacy (15 items). The concurrent validity was obtained by the correlation of MII with Walker and Thompson's intimacy scale (1983) that was significant ($r=0.91$, $P<0.01$). Walker and Thompson scale has good internal consistency with an alpha coefficient of 0.97 (Sanai zaker, 1996).The MII had a good internal consistency (alpha=0.985).

Procedure

After choosing the participants and assigning them to the experimental and control groups randomly, MII and MSI were administered as the pretest. The experimental group was presented with the EPT sessions. The control group received no intervention. After the sessions, both experimental and control groups completed MII and MSI again as the post test. The follow-up test was performed 6 months later. The EPT included 6 sessions in 2–hour sessions once a week, which was presented under the counseling and leading of the supervising professor. For reminding the participants, they were called, the previous day.

Education

Independent variable was the 6 weekly 2-hr group sessions. This program included: training of cognitive reframing techniques, marital intimacy, sexual relationships, conflict and problem solving, and home management. The content and aim of these sessions are summarized in figure 1.

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Figure 1

The aim and content of each session of EPT

Row	Content	aim
1	Familiarizing the members with each other, introducing the group rules, assessment of relationship	The break of ice, familiarity of the members with the general goals
2	Intimacy training	Training of some techniques to increase the sexual, physical, emotional, intellectual and behavioral intimaies.
3	Cognitive reconstruction	Reform negative attributions to make more optimistic explanations, presenting true subjects to facilitate illogical expectations, and replacing the reciprocal casualty attributions
4	Training for improving sexual relationships	Training some techniques to increase the sexual awareness and decrease the negative sexual beliefs
5	Training home management	Training some techniques to deal with main family, children, and financial management at home
6	Conflict and problem solving	Training the conflict solving processes (specially problem solving) and its inhibitive factors

Results

First hypothesis: EPT increases marital satisfaction both in post and follow-up tests of the experiment group.

Means and standard deviations of MSI and its domains in pre- post and follow-up tests are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1
Mean and standard divisions of marital satisfaction and its domains in pre, post and follow-up tests

Subscale	Group	Mean (Std.)		
Marital Satisfaction	Experimental	pre test	post test	Follow up
		117.30(34.24)	127.73(26.73)	129.90(20.04)
	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		125.20(30.96)	120.03(27.12)	115.60(115.60)
Sexual	Experiment	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		11.35(4.77)	14.60(4.43)	18(4.14)
	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		13.86(3.59)	13.53(5.75)	13.80(4.63)
Conflict solving skills	Experiment	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		9.46(4.11)	11.13(3.10)	18.30(4.07)
	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		11.74(4.83)	12.43(4.95)	12.10(4.79)
Relation with main family	Experiment	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		25.45(5.79)	22.97(7.50)	22.27(6.06)
	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		21.54(6.73)	20.8(7.38)	19.5(7.17)
Religious values	Experiment	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		16.35(1.46)	18.96(0.64)	19.34(0.99)
	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		16.93(1.03)	16.1(0.64)	18.02(1)
Social recreations	Experiment	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		19.12(5.05)	22.20(5.73)	20.77(5.93)
	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		18.23(6.54)	20.07(6.45)	20(7.34)
Home	Experiment	Pre test	Post test	Follow up

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		18.37(5.17)	19.70(4.56)	20.07(4.46)
Couples relationships	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		19.55(4.89)	21.03(4.84)	20.47(7.24)
	Experiment	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		15.27(4.32)	17.03(4.10)	17.97(3.05)
	Control	Pre test	Post test	Follow up
		16.95(4.85)	16.17(5.66)	15.90(4.62)

Box's test showed that covariance within groups was equal (F= 7.02, p= 0.06), and Leven's test showed that variances between groups were equal (F= 9.16, p= 0.69). So MANOVA analysis can be used. The results of MANOVA analysis for MSI are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2
The results of the multivariate covariance (Wilk's lambda) with controlling pretest scores of MSI in posttest

Source	Value	F	df 1	df 2	P	Eta^2	Observed power
Group	0.511	5.27	8	44	0.001	0.489	0.997

The results of the analysis of multivariate covariance (Wilk's lambda) with controlling variables of pretest's scores are given showing that group membership (Enrichment program) have a significant multiple effects on posttest total score of **MSI** and its components ($p<0.01$). The Eta square of 0.49 shows that the effect size is desirable and the observed power of 0.99 shows the efficacy the of sample size.

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Table 3

The results of Manova analysis of MSI and its domains in the post and follow-up tests

source	Dependent Variable	Sum Of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Effect Size	Observed Power
Marital satisfaction	posttest	2702.77	1	2702.78	18.18	0.001	0.24	0.98
	follow-up	3883.30	1	3883.30	7.5	0.008	0.17	0.78
Sexual satisfaction	posttest	76.44	1	76.44	8.48	0.005	0.129	0.82
	follow-up	307.66	1	307.66	17.18	0.001	0.23	0.98
Conflict solving skills	posttest	55.19	1	55.19	4.023	0.04	0.11	0.33
	follow-up	609.51	1	609.51	31.21	0.001	0.35	0.99
Relation with main family	posttest	209.66	1	209.67	17.35	0.001	0.23	0.98
	follow-up	179.84	1	179.84	5.02	0.029	0.081	0.56
Religious values	posttest	115.10	1	115.10	9.72	0.003	0.13	0.54
	follow-up	24.28	1	24.28	0.84	0.36	0.13	0.55
Social recreations	posttest	110.89	1	110.89	8.98	0.004	0.14	0.84
	follow-up	18.57	1	18.57	0.51	0.48	0.009	0.11
Home management	posttest	5.08	1	5.08	0.39	0.54	0.007	0.094
	follow-up	11.97	1	11.97	0.37	0.55	0.007	0.092
Couples relationships	posttest	36.07	1	36.07	2.59	0.11	0.043	0.35
	follow-up	83.46	1	83.47	6.2	0.016	0.098	0.69

Using pretests scores as the covariate variable, the results of ANCOVA analysis showed that this program significantly increased the mean of marital satisfaction in the experimental group both in post and follow- up tests (F= 18.18, p= 0.001, F= 7.5, p= 0.008, respectively). The effect size in post and follow- up tests were 0.24 and 0.17, respectively.

Second hypothesis: EPT increases different domains of marital satisfaction both in post and follow-up tests.

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a) Sexual satisfaction: the results of ANCOVA analysis, presented in Table 4, show that the mean of sexual satisfaction in the experimental group both in post and follow- up tests are significantly increased (F= 8.48, p= 0.005, F= 17.18, p= 0.001, respectively). The effect size in post and follow- up tests were 0.13 and 0.23, respectively.

b) Conflict solving skill: also the results of ANCOVA analysis show that the mean of conflict solving skill in the experimental group both in post and follow-up tests are significantly increased (F= 4.02, p= 0.04, F= 31.21, p= 0.001, respectively). The effect size in post and follow- up tests were 0.001 and 0.35, respectively.

c) Relationships with main family: furthermore, the results of ANCOVA analysis show that the mean of relationships with main family scores in the experimental group both in post and follow- up tests are significantly increased (F= 17.35, p= 0.001, F= 5.02, p= 0.029, respectively). The effect size in post and follow- up tests were 0.23 and 0.08, respectively.

d) Religious values: the results of ANCOVA analysis show that the mean of religious values scores in the experimental group only in post test is significantly increased (F= 9.72, p= 0.003) and the effect size was 0.13.

e) Social recreational actions: the results of ANCOVA analysis show that the mean of Social recreational action scores in the experimental group only in post test is significantly increased (F= 8.98, p= 0.004) and the effect size was 0.14.

f) Home management: the results of ANCOVA analysis show that the mean of home management scores in the experimental group is not significantly increased.

g) Couple relationships: the results of ANCOVA analysis show that the mean of couple relationships scores in the experimental group only in the follow-up test is significantly increased (F= 6.2, p= 0.016) and the effect size is 0.098.

Third hypothesis: EPT increases marital intimacy in post test.

Mean and standard divisions of MII and its domains in pre and post tests are presented in Table 4.

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Table 4
Mean and standard divisions of MII and its domains in pre and post tests.

Subscale	Group	Mean (Std.)	
		Pre test	Post test
Marital intimacy	Experiment	282.40(86.16)	307.30(72.12)
	Control	290.63(54.32)	272.73(45.66)
		Pre test	Post test
Emotional intimacy	Experiment	30.37(10.77)	33.57(9.06)
	Control	30.83(10.24)	29.13(11.14)
		Pre test	Post test
Intellectual intimacy	Experiment	38.73(12.81)	42.50(11.23)
	Control	40.13(9.41)	38.07(7.90)
		Pre test	Post test
Communication intimacy	Experiment	37.63(15.51)	43.60(13.54)
	Control	40.03(12.05)	37.67(10.65)
		Pre test	Post test
Psychological intimacy	Experiment	22.40(10.01)	24.90(8.60)
	Control	24.03(5.69)	22.37(6.13)
		Pre test	Post test
Social and recreational intimacy	Experiment	20.87(7.33)	24.10(5.06)
	Control	22.60(5.59)	20.70(5.94)
		Pre test	Post test
Total intimacy	Experiment	24.40(7.98)	26.10(6.17)
	Control	24.57(5.15)	22.87(5.09)

1

The results of MANCOVA analysis for MII are detailed in Table 5.

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Table 5
The results of the multivariate covariance (Wilk's lambda) with controlling pretest MII scores of in posttest

Source	Value	F	df 1	df 2	P	Eta^2	Observed power
Group	1.25	7.31	8	44	0.001	0.35	0.956

The results of the analysis of multivariate covariance (Wilk's lambda) with controlling variables of pretest's scores show that group membership (Enrichment program) have a significant multiple effects on all of post-test scores of intimacy and its components ($p<0.01$). The Eta square was 0.35 and show that the effect size is desirable and the observed power of 0.96 show the efficacy of the sample size

Table 6
The results of Manova analysis of MII and its domains in pre and post test

source	Sum of	df	Mean	F	sig	Effect	Observed
Marital	24015.12	1	24015.12	16.36	000	0.22	0.97
Emotional	347.18	1	347.18	10.25	0.002	0.15	0.88
Intellectual	425.67	1	425.67	9.10	0.004	0.14	0.84
Communication	846.62	1	846.62	12.97	0.001	0.191	0.943
Intimacy	193.79	1	193.79	6.83	0.011	0.11	0.72
Social	254.709	1	254.709	11.069	0.02	0.168	0.905
Total intimacy	166.15	1	166.15	9.19	0.004	0.14	0.84

MANOVA show that intimacy ($F= 16.36$, $p< 0.01$) is significantly increased in the experimental group.

Forth hypothesis: EPT increases different domains of marital intimacy in post test.

MANOVA showed that emotional intimacy ($F= 10.25$, $p< 0.01$), intellectual intimacy ($F= 9.10$, $p< 0.01$), Communication intimacy ($F=$

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12.97, p< 0.01), social recreational intimacy (F= 11.06, p< 0.01), general intimacy (F=9.19, p< 0.01), and psychological intimacy (F= 6.83, p< 0.05) are significantly increased in the experimental group.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that EPT increased marital satisfaction. This program increased sexual satisfaction, conflict solving skills and relationships with main family domains both in post and follow-up tests. Although the effects on social recreational actions and religious values domains were significant only in posttest, and in the case of couple relationships domain, in the follow-up test, this program did not significantly affect the home management domain.

The findings of this study are congruent with other studies. Markman, Blumberg, Stanley, (1999) Guerney and Moxon (1981), and |Logan, Kern, Curlette and Trad, (1999), Lee Cole and Lee Cole, (1999) showed that marital enrichment training increased marital satisfaction. Markman, Blumberg, Stanley, 1990, 1994) found that if the program is longer and emphasizes the forming of the skills, its effects on marital satisfaction will be higher and more permanent. Logan, Kern, Curlette and Trad, (1993) found that a short program (10 hr) for training empathy skills, increased marital satisfaction and its effects were remained for 6 month (Lee Cole and Lee Cole, 1999). Carson, Carson, Gil and Bacuom (2004) have administrated a study about effectiveness of relationship enhancement on marital relationship dimensions. The results showed that relationship enhancement caused increasing marital satisfactions, independency, intimacy and acceptance in couples. Also, the follow-up results showed that effectiveness of intervention could persist after 3 months.

Considering these findings, it is concluded that as a useful method of intervention, marital enrichment training can be applied for increasing marital satisfaction in couples. And also it can be used as a preventive program to decrease conflicts between couples. So, it is offered to establish some institutes to teach these kinds of programs

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Also, the findings of this study showed that marital enrichment training increased emotional, intellectual, communication, psychological, social recreational and general intimacy. However, it did not affect on sexual, religious and physical intimacy. These findings are congruent with at least one other similar study. Etemadi (2005) showed that cognitive-behavioral techniques increase emotional intimacy, and relation-therapy techniques increase emotional, intellectual, psychological, social recreational and religious intimacies.

Providing some training to improve family relationships and specially enrichment couples relationships is necessary to preserve mental health in couples and consequently the whole society. Therefore, doing research to identify effective factors on marital disagreements and enrichment relationships seems to be essential. Training skills facilitates finding new and effective methods to control life. In these programs, couples learn to satisfy their needs and notice other’s needs. They also learn to be a good companion for each other and to strengthen their close relationships.

What should not be forgotten is the effect of counselor personality on respondents and the final results. Also, the time of education was short and it was not possible to have careful focus on contents of the sessions. Respondents' attitude to the applied inventory, amount of their participation with the researcher, amount of their honesty and their interests in using education and answering the inventory are the elements which were out of the researcher determination and control, and can influence the research results. This research was done in 5 different areas in Isfahan.

Counseling and leading centers and pre-marriage consulting centers can use this educational program for guiding people in choosing suitable spouses. Marital enrichment training sessions will be useful for improving the quality of marriages and increasing the mental health .Family counseling centers could provide courses for marital enrichment training in order to help new couples to manage their marital life.

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