

## A social work study on the effect of controlling self-talk on women's life satisfaction

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### CHRONICLE

#### Article history:

Received May 12, 2013

Received in revised format

25 June 2013

Accepted 12 August 2013

Available online

August 14 2013

#### Keywords:

Self-talk

Counseling

Life satisfaction

### ABSTRACT

This paper presents an empirical investigation on measuring the effects of controlling self-talk on women's life satisfaction. The proposed study selected a sample of 34 women who visited counseling center in city of Najaf Abad, Iran. The study divided them into two groups of experiment and control where the first group were requested into eight counseling sessions of 90 minutes on controlling self-talk for a period of two months. The instrument in this study was Enrich couple satisfaction questionnaire, which measured the couple's satisfaction in twelve different categories. The data was analyzed using covariance analysis method and the test results indicated that instructing internal self-talking could increase the rate of couple's satisfaction ( $p < 0.05$ ).

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## 1. Introduction

During the past few years, there have been tremendous efforts on learning more about the effects of self-talk on human life (Hardy, 2006). A motivational self-talk seems to have positive influence on improving work skills (Boroujeni & Shahbazi, 2011). Kolovelonis et al. (2011), for instance, examined the impacts of instructional and motivational self-talk on students' motor task performance in a chest pass and a modified push-ups test in physical education. They reported that that both self-talk groups could surpass control group in both tasks. Instructional and motivational self-talk, in their survey, were equally effective in the chest pass test, but motivational self-talk was more effective compared with instructional self-talk in the modified push-ups test. Reichl et al. (2013) investigated the effect of self-talk frequency on loneliness, need to belong, and health among German adults and confirmed that need to belong and loneliness correlated with health outcomes.

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Boroujeni and Ghaheri (2011) investigated the impact of motivational self-talk (MST) on the auditory whole body, simple and choice reaction time (RT). They also examined the relationship between participants' belief in self-talk and performance. They reported that there were no significant differences between pre-test and post-test of whole body and simple reaction time. In addition, bivariate correlation demonstrated no significant correlation between belief in self-talk and performance. The results recommended that using motivational self-talk could help react relatively fast in choice reaction time tasks. Brinthaupt et al. (2012) investigated differences in self-talk frequency as a function of age, only-child, and imaginary childhood companion status.

Theodorakis et al. (2008) tried to develop an instrument assessing the functions of self-talk (ST) in sports. They conducted two studies for the development of the Functions of Self-Talk Questionnaire (FSTQ). In the first study, a prospective instrument was reported based on empirical evidence and a series of preliminary exploratory factor analysis and the results backed a five-dimensional 25-item solution. In other study, the psychometric properties of the new questionnaire were examined using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and confirmed the hypothesized factor structure of the FSTQ. In addition, reliability analyses yielded further evidence regarding the psychometric integrity of the instrument. The results of their study provided preliminary evidence regarding the multidimensionality of ST functions, recommending that ST in sports could serve to enhance attentional focus, increase confidence, regulate effort, control cognitive and emotional reactions, and trigger automatic execution. The FSTQ appeared to be a psychometrically sound instrument, which could help with enhancing our understanding regarding the implementation and effectiveness of ST.

## 2. The proposed study

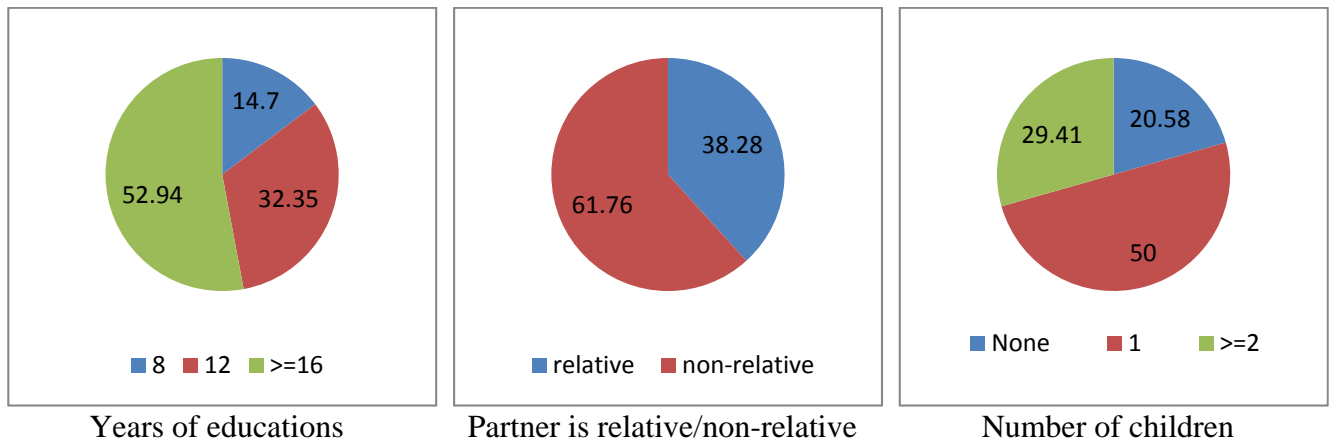
This paper presents an empirical investigation on measuring the effects of controlling self-talk on women's life satisfaction. The proposed study selected a sample of 34 women who visited counseling center in city of Najaf Abad, Iran. The study divided them into two groups of experiment and control and the first group were requested into eight counseling sessions of 90 minutes on controlling self-talk for a period of two months. The instrument in this study was Enrich couple satisfaction questionnaire (Hawley & Olson, 1995; Olson & Olson, 1999), which measured the couple's satisfaction in twelve different categories. The following summarizes all twelve hypotheses of the survey,

Main hypothesis: Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's marital life satisfaction.

Sub-hypotheses:

1. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's conventionality.
2. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's marital satisfaction.
3. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's personality issues.
4. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's marital communication.
5. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's conflict resolution.
6. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's financial management.
7. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's pleasure activities.
8. Learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's marriage and children.

As we can observe, there is one main hypothesis and eight sub-hypotheses with the proposed study of this paper. Fig. 1 demonstrates some personal characteristics of the participants.



**Fig. 1.** Personal characteristics of the participants

As we can observe from Fig. 1, more than half of the participants maintain, at least, a bachelor degree, over two-third of the participants married to non-relative partners and finally, most participants had, at least, one child. In addition, Table 1 demonstrates the average age as well as the number of years they married in two groups of experiment and control.

**Table 1**

The results of some basic statistics

Variable	Years	
	Experiment	Control
Age	32.4	31.9
Marriage time	9.5	10.1

The results of Table 1 indicate that most women who participated in our survey were middle age and they had about 10 years of common life with their partners. Before, we examine the hypotheses of this survey, we need to make sure that they are normally distributed. This could be accomplished using Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test and the results are summarized in Table 2 as follows,

**Table 2**

The summary of performing normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov

		Kolmogorov-Smirnov	P-value
Pre-test	Control	0.916	0.37
	Experiment	0.687	0.73
Post-test	Control	0.95	0.31
	Experiment	0.79	0.61

The results of Table 2 clearly indicate that the data for both groups, pre-test and post-test, are normally distributed when the level of significance is five percent. We have also examined the normality test on components of the survey and Table 3 demonstrates the results of our survey. The results of Table 3 clearly specify that all components of the survey follow normal distribution. One of primary assumption on using analysis of variance is to have homogeneity of variance and this could be verified using Levin test.

**Table 3**

The summary of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of different scales

Scale	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	P-value
Conventionality	0.67	0.73
Marital satisfaction	0.98	0.28
Personality issues	0.69	0.72
Marital communication	0.55	0.92
Conflict resolution	0.78	0.56
Financial management	0.73	0.65
Pleasure activities	0.65	0.73
Marriage and children	0.74	0.64

The results of test for two groups of experiment and control yields (F-value=2.49, P-value=0.06), which means that the assumption of homogeneity of variance holds (P-value>0.05) for the main hypothesis of the survey. In addition, Table 4 summarizes the results of our findings on testing retail scales.

**Table 3**

The summary of Levin test of different scales

Scale	F-value	df	P-value
Conventionality	1.42	3, 64	0.21
Marital satisfaction	0.19	3, 64	0.90
Personality issues	1.24	3, 64	0.41
Marital communication	1.93	3, 64	0.14
Conflict resolution	2.11	3, 64	0.08
Financial management	2.09	3, 64	0.11
Pleasure activities	0.29	3, 64	0.71
Marriage and children	0.21	3, 64	0.82

Again, the results of Table 3 demonstrate that all homogeneity of variance holds.

### 3. The results

In this section, we present details of our findings on testing the main as well as 8 sub-hypotheses of the survey. The main hypothesis of the survey examine whether learning more about how to control self-talk increases women's marital life satisfaction or not. Table 4 shows details of analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the effect of self-talk on post-test group.

**Table 4**

The results of ANOVA test

	Sum of Square	df	Mean of square	F	P-value	Effect	Statistical power
Pre-test	169986.23	1	169986.23	319.87	0.000	0.79	1
Group	10123.42	1	10123.42	18.16	0.001	0.25	0.98

The result of ANOVA test shows that there is a meaningful difference between pre-test and group when the level of significance is one percent. Next, we apply ANOVA test on retail scales and the results are summarized on Table 5 as follows,

**Table 5**  
The results of ANOVA test

	Sum of Square	df	Mean of square	F	P-value	Effect	Statistical power	Hypothesis
Conventionality	6.41	1	6.41	2.19	0.16>0.05	0.04	0.31	Not-confirmed
Marital satisfaction	23.1	1	23.1	2.91	0.02<0.05	0.05	0.76	Confirmed
Personality issues	53.72	1	53.72	6.11	0.02<0.05	0.02	0.13	Confirmed
Marital communication	78.96	1	78.06	8.15	0.008<0.05	0.19	0.78	Confirmed
Conflict resolution	155.12	1	155.12	13.41	0.001<0.05	0.25	0.91	Confirmed
Financial management	66.09	1	66.09	4.01	0.03<0.05	0.10	0.81	Confirmed
Pleasure activities	85.07	1	85.07	12.18	0.001<0.05	0.19	0.82	Confirmed
Marriage and children	39.14	1	39.14	4.11	0.03<0.05	0.10	0.84	Confirmed

The results of Table 5 clearly demonstrate that except the first case, all other components are meaningful when the level of significance is five percent. In other words, training programs influence positively on marital satisfaction, personality issues, marital communication, conflict resolution, financial management, pleasure activities as marriage and children but it did not have any positive impact on conventionality.

#### 4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have presented an empirical investigation to find the effects of taking part in training programs on having better control on self-talk issues. The survey has been accomplished among women who participated in a 2-month training program to learn how to cope with their self-talk behavior. The results of the survey have confirmed that taking part in training programs could help patients have better control on their marital satisfaction, personality issues, marital communication, conflict resolution, financial management, pleasure activities as marriage and children but it did not have any positive impact on conventionality.

#### Acknowledgment

The authors would like to thank the anonymous referees for construction comments on earlier version of this paper, which have significantly contributed to the quality of the survey.

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