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## Research Paper

# Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Mindfulness Training in Improving Sexual Satisfaction in Married Women



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### ABSTRACT

**Objective** The family is the most important element of society and therefore the health of the family depends on the relationship between husband and wife and one of the most important issues between couples is the issue of sexual satisfaction. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of mindfulness training in improving sexual satisfaction in married women.

**Methods** The present study was a quasi-experimental method with a control and experimental group. The study population was all married women aged 25 to 40 years in Sirjan. The sample size was 30 women in experimental (n = 15) and control (n = 15) groups. The sampling method was available by sampling method. The method of data collection was sexual satisfaction questionnaire and the experimental group was trained in mindfulness training in 8 sessions of 60 minutes. Data were analyzed by analysis of covariance.

**Results** The results of the research hypothesis showed that mindfulness increases sexual satisfaction among married women. (P< 0.001)

**Conclusion** As a result, mindfulness-based intervention can be used to increase sexual satisfaction in women who are not satisfied with their sexual relationship.

## 1. Introduction

Marriage, as the most important and supreme social tradition, has always been emphasized to meet the emotional needs of individuals. The main reasons for marriage are love and affection for a life partner, satisfying emotional-psychological needs, and increasing happiness and contentment. One of the main aspects of marriage that require special attention of couples and family counselors is sexual satisfaction (Rasooli et al., 2020). A large percentage of divorces are due to the inability of the quantity and quality of

sexual intercourse between couples. Sex is the most important source of pleasure, relaxation, and intimacy. If a couple can create pleasure and peace for each other in this category they will achieve mutual marital intimacy, their satisfaction with life will increase and the feeling of marital burnout between them will decrease (Farhadi, Salehin, Keramat & Talebi, 2020). Sexual satisfaction can be experienced as enjoyable moments in married life and can prevent conflict and improve the quality of married life (Mark and Jozkovsky, 2013).

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Sexual satisfaction is a key factor in the overall quality of life of individuals. In this regard, research has shown that mental health (Scott, Sandberg, Harper & Miller, 2012), general health (Dundon and Relayni, 2010), and quality of life (Davison et al., 2009) are correlated with sexual satisfaction. On the other hand, neglecting sexual intercourse in humans will leave irreparable consequences and in most cases will cause disruption in sexual relations and sexual dissatisfaction of couples and will lead to the collapse of the family foundation (Kalantari et al., 2018). If sexual relations between husband and wife are not satisfactory, it leads to feelings of deprivation, failure, insecurity, and lack of happiness (Lehane, Dammeyer, Hovaldt & Elsass, 2017).

Experts have defined sexual satisfaction as an emotional response arising from a person's mental evaluation of the positive and negative dimensions associated with having sex with another person. The concept of sexual satisfaction is twofold: satisfaction with sexual activity and emotional satisfaction. Sexual activity and gaining satisfaction from it is one of the basic dimensions of life and one of the physiological needs of human beings; For this reason, any dissatisfaction and problems in this area, cause physical and psychological stress that leads to disruption in life, dissatisfaction, and malfunction in health, and also interferes with job promotion, ability and creativity of the person. Slow sexual satisfaction is an emotional response arising from a person's mental evaluation of the positive and negative dimensions associated with sex with another person (Dehghani et al., 2020). Existing research findings show that the sexual satisfaction of couples is one of the important factors in increasing their marital commitment (Træen et al., 2019). Also, Bakhshaish and Bagheri (2018) showed that sexual satisfaction in couples with less history of extramarital affairs and personality traits including neuroticism, extraversion, and openness to experience among them was higher than normal couples.

One of the methods that can help improve sexual satisfaction is mindfulness. Mindfulness has been described as awareness through attention to the goal in the present time without judgment and prejudice. In 2000, Tizdel et al. Identification of cognitive factors and processes was a predictor of recurrence of depression (Shabani and Abdi, 2020). Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy that modulates and modifies concerning stress (Teasdale et al., 2000), the basic

hypothesis of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy is that the mind has two types of mentality through which are mental and The do-it-yourself mentality can process experience. The main goal of mindfulness-based cognitive therapy is for a person to become aware of the effects of reactivation of the mindfulness done through self-monitoring, and to stay in mind by applying and creating a state of mindfulness. Through repeated exercises, focus on purposeful orientation and awareness and attention to the object such as breathing or feelings caused by the body. In addition, there are three main points in mindfulness-based cognitive therapy such as attentional regulation, development of metacognitive awareness and decentralization, and development of acceptance of mental states and contents (Langer et al., 2017). In general, in mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, the goal is for the patient to be able to consider his thoughts only as pure thoughts and to see them as testable mental events, and to be able to respond to the occurrence of these negative mental events. The ones they usually motivate to separate and ultimately change their meaning (Lennon et al., 2010). Therefore, this study has investigated the effectiveness of mindfulness on the level of marital satisfaction of married women.

## 2. Materials and Methods:

The research method in this study was a quasi-experimental method with a control and experimental group. The study population was all married women aged 25 to 40 years in Sirjan. The sample size was 30 women in experimental ( $n = 15$ ) and control ( $n = 15$ ) groups. The sampling method was available by sampling method in which the sample was selected from these married women referring to counseling and psychology clinics who were somewhat dissatisfied with sex and were eligible to have at least 5 years of living together. The second condition was not to be in divorce or divorce counseling to be able to continue practicing at home, and another condition was to be interested in participating in research, to be present regularly, and to practice. A sexual satisfaction questionnaire was used to collect data.

The Larson Sexual Satisfaction Questionnaire was developed by Larson et al. In 1998. The questionnaire has 25 questions. This questionnaire consists of 25 items and its answers are 5 options based on the Likert scale from 1 to 5.

In expressions 1, 2, and.... Options never, rarely, sometimes, most often, and always receive scores from 1 to 5, respectively. According to this curriculum, the score is generally between 25 and 125, and the classification of sexual satisfaction into levels of sexual dissatisfaction ( Score less than 50), low satisfaction (score between 51 to 75), moderate

satisfaction (score between 76 to 100) and high satisfaction (score above 101 and above). The reliability of this questionnaire in Bahrami et al. (2016) was obtained by Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93. Also in Shabani and Abdi's research in 2020 by Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 89% was obtained.

Mindfulness sessions	
<b>First session</b>	Familiarity and communication, setting goals, group rules and regulations, basic raisin eating practice, conscious breathing, and body examination
<b>Second session</b>	A review of the previous session exercises and breathing exercises, sitting meditation, paying attention to the interpretation of the mind as the beginning of personal responsibility for thoughts and feelings
<b>Third session</b>	An overview of breathing exercises and a sitting meditation In the continuation of the session, doing conscious seeing and listening exercises, discussing the present moment, and observing and paying attention to thoughts only as thoughts and not as facts and events.
<b>Fourth session</b>	Review previous sessions, practice seeing and hearing, do a meditation, practice breathing, practice sitting meditation with an emphasis on the perception of body sensation, introduction of conscious walking
<b>Fifth session</b>	Performing sitting meditation practice, awareness of breathing, paying attention to thoughts as facts, awareness of breathing, sounds, and practice
<b>Sixth session</b>	Doing meditation according to thoughts, seeing and hearing, being aware of emotions and naming them, and reading poetry and allegory
<b>Seventh session</b>	Perform meditation with a focus on proper breathing, and awareness of emotions and watch nature documentaries and record pleasant and unpleasant events
<b>Eight session</b>	Do meditation, identify pleasant facts, practice focusing on emotion and recognizing thoughts, summarizing, and reviewing.

### 3. Results

In this section first, the assumptions of analysis of covariance are examined, and then the results of the hypotheses are presented.

A) Examining the assumptions of analysis of covariance

In this study, a one-way analysis of covariance (ANCO) has been used for the inferential analysis of the results. Therefore, at first, preliminary studies were performed to ensure that the assumptions of these

statistical methods were not violated, and the results of these studies are as follows.

#### 1- Assuming normalcy

One of the presuppositions related to parametric tests is the assumption of the normal distribution of groups' scores in the community. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to test this hypothesis. Table 1 shows the results of this test. Non-significant results (significant value greater than 0.05) indicate that the distribution of scores in the groups is normal.

**Table 1. Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test**

Variable	Group	Kolmogorov Smirnov	
		Statistics	Significance
Sexual satisfaction	Pre-test	0.64	0.80
	Post-test	0.73	0.65

As the results of Table 1 show, all significance levels are higher than the assumed value (0.05). Therefore, these results indicate that the distribution of scores in the groups is not normal.

#### 2- Assuming homogeneity of regression slopes

While it is assumed that the variables in the analysis of covariance in the whole data should show linearity, it should also be assumed that the regression lines should be the same for each group in the study. If

regression is heterogeneous then covariance will not be a good analysis. The assumption of regression homogeneity is a key issue in covariance (Giles, 2002). This assumption is shown using the same slopes in the regression line for each group. Uneven slopes indicate that there is an interaction between the pretest and the intervener. This assumption is statistically examined through a significant test of the interaction between the intervention and pre-tests.

What will be considered is a meaningless interaction between the intervention and the pre-tests. As can be seen in Table 2, the F value of the interaction

is insignificant for all research variables. Therefore, the assumption of regression slope homogeneity is also confirmed.

**Table 2. Test results of the default homogeneity of variable regression slopes of the two groups in the community**

Variable	Source of changes	F	Significance
Sexual satisfaction	Pre-test * Group	0.428	0.52

### 3- Assuming homogeneity of variances

The basis of this assumption is that it is assumed that the variance of the scores of the two groups in society are equal and are not statistically different. To test this hypothesis, the results of the Leven test were

referred to. A significance level higher than 0.05 indicates no violation of this assumption. According to Table 3, the significance value is greater than 0.05. Therefore, this level of significance shows that the same assumption of variance has not been violated

**Table 3. Leven test results for variance homogeneity**

Variable	Df1	Df2	F	Significance
Sexual satisfaction	1	28	0.602	0.44

#### B) Results of hypothesis analysis

After ensuring that the assumptions of analysis of covariance are not violated, the research hypothesis was tested using one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA).

Hypothesis: Mindfulness training affects improving sexual satisfaction in married women. To investigate this hypothesis of mindfulness training in improving sexual satisfaction in married women in Sirjan, a one-way analysis of covariance has been used, the results of this analysis are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4. Results of one-way analysis of covariance in ANCOVA text on the mean scores of sexual satisfaction of the experimental and control groups with pre-test control**

Variable	Source of change	Total squares	Df	MS	F	Sig	Squared eta
Sexual satisfaction	Pre-exam	381.59	1	381.59	224.61	0.001	0.89
	Group	1498.99	1	1498.99	882.33	0.001	0.71
	Error	45.87	27	1.69			

As shown in Table 4, by controlling the effect of the auxiliary variable (pre-test) on the dependent variable, there is a significant difference between the two groups in terms of sexual satisfaction (significant value less than 0.05) or in other words mindfulness training on Improving sexual satisfaction has an effect on married women in Sirjan. The table of mean post-test and pre-test values of sexual satisfaction in the control and experimental groups is shown. This indicates that mindfulness training has been able to improve sexual satisfaction and has significantly increased the sexual satisfaction of these people in the experimental group. On the other hand, because the value of Eta squared for the group is equal to 0.71, it can be said that 71% of the total variance and dispersion of the variable of sexual satisfaction is explained by the effects of the group.

### 4. Discussion and Conclusion:

The results of data analysis showed that mindfulness training has an effect on sexual satisfaction in married women in Sirjan. These findings are consistent with the results of research by Shabani and Abdi (2020), Sheikhi Soghanloo et al. (2017), Villarino (2017), Babu et al. (2008).

Explaining these findings, it can be said that sexual satisfaction, in short, a person's satisfaction with the evaluation of sexual relations in general and affects the general health of the person in various ways. Sexual satisfaction is especially important in the degree of satisfaction and stability of close relationships. Mindfulness is a property defined as the ability to observe, describe, or be aware of instantaneous experiences without judgment. Mindfulness is better associated with psychological health due to increased attention and emotional regulation and increased awareness of self.

It can also be said that the mindfulness training package includes emotional, social, and cognitive components and gives psychologists this option. Which focuses on the needs of women and how to increase the mindfulness of learners in the desired state. Mindfulness is the inner and outer adaptation of a person under challenging conditions in which the person fights or adapts to challenging conditions without much vulnerability, so mindfulness is a component that helped women by training them to Adapt to a world that is constantly changing.

## 5. Ethical Considerations

### Compliance with ethical guidelines

All ethical principles are considered in this article. The participants were informed about the purpose of the research and its implementation stages. They were also assured about the confidentiality of their information and were free to leave the study whenever they wished, and if desired, the research results would be available to them.

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### Authors' contributions

The author himself has been present in designing, executing and writing all parts of the research.

### Conflicts of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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