



# Investigating the Components of Effective Management of Attention Seeking among Married Women from the Perspective of Family Counselors: Presenting a Treatment Model in a Qualitative Study

Sare. Khodaei<sup>1</sup>  
Zahra. Yousefi<sup>2</sup>  
Floor. Khayatan<sup>3</sup>

1. Phd Student of counseling department, Isfahan branch (Khorasgan), Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
2. \*Corresponding author: Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan Branch (Khorasgan), Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan Branch (Khorasgan), Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

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### Abstract

**Aim:** The aim of this research was the effectiveness of positive psychology on self-compassion and gratitude among couples with marital conflicts. **Method:** This research was practical in terms of purpose, and in terms of data collection, it was semi-experimental with a pre-test-post-test design with a control group. The statistical population of the research included couples with marital problems in Tehran who had referred to Tehran counseling centers (Tara Clinic Branches 1 and 2 and Behjo Clinic) in 2022 (184 couples), among them 30 couples with the condition of having the conditions of the research. and willingness to participate in the research were selected and randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group and 15 couples in each group. Rashid and Seligman's protocol including 10 sessions of 90 minutes (2013) was used for positive psychology therapeutic interventions. The research tools included the Neff Self-Deprecation Questionnaire (2003) and the McCliffe Appreciation Questionnaire (2002). The data was analyzed using analysis of covariance using SPSS-V26 software. **Results:** The findings showed that in the post-test stage, there is a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group ( $P < 0.001$ ) and the intervention method can be effective on the self-compassion ( $F = 32.14, P < 0.001$ ) and gratitude ( $F = 7.64, P < 0.001$ ) of the couples involved. **Conclusion:** According to the results of the research, it can be stated that positive psychology as an effective treatment method can be used to improve, self-compassion and gratitude and consequently reduce the marital problems of couples, and it is recommended to psychologists and couple therapy specialists to use this treatment method for Use to improve relationships between couples.

**Keywords:** Attention seeking, Family, Married women, Thematic analysis, Therapeutic model

## Introduction

The importance of the family and its preservation for the survival of the society, the growth of humanity and the peace of human beings is not hidden from any human being. Maintaining this effective institution in today's society has become more difficult for various reasons and has caused the divorce rate to increase even more (Yousfi & Karimnejad, 2018). One of the factors that has been able to play an important role in family conflicts in recent years is attention seeking. In the meantime, the existence of virtual space and sharing of personal and family pictures and gathering fans among some married women with the help of everyday family issues fuel this problem. It is a stimulus for a section of women to directly enter this context or indirectly model it (Halpen et al., 2017). Therefore, even women who do not have dramatic features, due to the popularization and spread of such behaviors, consider this kind of behavior as normal and seek it to attract the attention of others more than before and their mental health is damaged. (Kaur & Vig, 2016). Using spouses, routines, children, and topics can be a completely personal decision by one or both of the couples to attract more fans (Ridgway & Clayton, 2016). Attention-seeking concerns can prevent the family from its developmental tasks and increase family conflicts.

Regardless of the role of social media in fueling attention seeking, one of the family members may suffer from attention seeking due to neurosis. During that, the person wants to seek personal credibility and trust in the approval of others and lose his sense of agency. Enjoying the attention of others can be seen as a source of encouragement and support. However, the need for the approval of others and gaining credit through others can lead to an increase in interpersonal and individual problems and in this way pre-existing problems in addition to current problems intensify conflicts (Blago & Fuller, 2007). This feature is also observed in some personality disorders such as narcissism, borderline, dramatic and antisocial personality (Milen et al., 2012).

Undoubtedly, a healthy and satisfying couple's life requires multiple couple and individual characteristics, which are considered to be personality traits among related individual characteristics. In this regard, attention-seeking is a characteristic that is considered among the symptoms of some personality disorders, and teaching its management and control to individuals and couples suffering from such a problem is considered an important necessity. Therefore, the necessity and educational need for families, individuals and family therapists in this field is felt. Therefore, it is necessary to take advantage of the valuable experiences of clinical psychologists and family counselors who have a wealth of experience in this field. Therefore, the present research aimed to answer the question of what are the components of the effective management of attention seeking among married women from the point of view of skilled family counselors?

## Method

This research was practical in terms of purpose, and in terms of data collection, it was semi-experimental with a pre-test-post-test design with a control group. The statistical population of the research included couples with marital problems in Tehran who had referred to Tehran counseling centers (Tara Clinic Branches 1 and 2 and Behjo Clinic) in 2022 (184 couples), among them 30 couples with the condition of having the conditions of the research. and willingness to participate in

the research were selected and randomly assigned to an experimental group and a control group and 15 couples in each group. Rashid and Seligman's protocol including 10 sessions of 90 minutes (2013) was used for positive psychology therapeutic interventions. The research tools included the Neff Self-Deprecation Questionnaire (2003) and the McCliffe Appreciation Questionnaire (2002). The data was analyzed using analysis of covariance using SPSS-V26 software.

### **Results**

In short, in order to analyze the data and considering that the research method was thematic analysis, the six-step method of Brown and Clark (2019) was used as follows: 1) getting to know the data, 2) generating primary codes, 3) searching for categories, 4) examining categories, 5) defining and naming categories and 6) preparing the report.

This study was an inductive analysis. That is, it focused on the experiences of the respondents and the study was based on the principles of inductive research. In addition, the analysis adopted a semantic approach, that is, the themes were identified from the "obvious or superficial meanings of the data".

### **Conclusion**

This study dealt with the management of attention seeking among married women from the perspective of counselors. The results of this research showed that attention seeking management consists of the following three main categories: Assessment (with three organizing categories of self-report assessment, symptom assessment with the help of interviews and assessment of individual and couple effects of attention seeking); individual therapy (with the categories of organizing insight, correcting cognitions that trigger attention seeking, correcting attention-seeking behaviors and correcting emotions); Couple therapy with organizing categories (improving attachment, improving self-differentiation and improving life story).

Overall, the results of this research showed that counselors have policies for managing and adjusting attention seeking among married women, from which a model for therapeutic orientation can be extracted. This model is multi-dimensional due to the complexity of this phenomenon and they believe that its symptoms should be managed from various aspects.

However, this research, like other researches, has some limitations, such as the opinion of these women about the recovery of attention seeking was not investigated, and this model of attention seeking management extracted from data is not based on the self-solicited needs of attention seeking clients and is prepared based on the perception of family counselors.

In general, it is suggested that family counselors and family therapy professors and those interested in treatment pay attention to this attention-seeking management model.

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