Interactive role of psychological and demographic factors, marital satisfaction and level of education, a Communication Plan

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Abstract

Introduction: Couple education and its impact on marital satisfaction is seen as an important issue and sometimes challenging. Objective: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between level of education and marital satisfaction of Rezvanshahr city of Gilan province couples. Method: A cross-sectional study in a causal-comparative design was done on a sample of 100 people both men and women. (n=100) in 2016. For subject selection, random sampling was used. Due to the nature of research survey, as the data collection method was used. And for data gathering Enrich questionnaire (response rate = 93%) and the educational demographic index checklist was used. As well as the data were analyzed by t-test and Pearson’s correlation. Results: The data analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between educational level and marital satisfaction of couples (r= 0.34, p <0.05). The results also revealed that there are significant differences between men and women in marital satisfaction index (p <0.05). Conclusion: The findings of this study are consistent with previous researches suggest that levels of education index impacts on the variance of marital satisfaction. These findings could be helpful in effective interventional planning for future.

Keywords: Marital satisfaction, level of education, couples.
Introduction

The family is one of the main pillars of society. Achieving a healthy society obviously depends on the health of the family. And realizing healthy families depends on having good relationships with each other in the society. Among these factors, marriage has been approved as the highest and the most important social tradition for achieving emotional needs and security in adults. Marriage is the complicated human relationships, elegant and dynamic, which has special features. Also paying attention to the family, creating a healthy environment, constructive and friendly relations and interpersonal interactions can cause growth and development in people (Herbert, 2011).

Marriage as one of the most complex types of human relationships has such a potential power in release feelings that its ilk can be found in very few interpersonal relationships (Shahidi & Yoosefi, 2001). Marital satisfaction is considered one of the effective factors in the stability and durability of the family (Smith, Peterson, 2009). By definition, marital satisfaction is a state during which the wife and husband feel happy and satisfied from marrying each other being together (Sinha and Makrji, 1991, quoted by Mir Ahmadizadeh et al., 2010). Asprechir et al. (2008) believe that marital satisfaction is the conformity between the current situation and the expected status. According to this definition, marital satisfaction will be realized when the present state in the marital relationship is consistent with the individual’s anticipated status. Therefore and given the importance of the issue, the researchers are seeking to discover the secret and codes that pave the way for marital satisfaction (Fincham, 2009). On the other hand, when couples’ level of education and literacy increase the emergence of discrepancy and difference between the wife and husband is to some extent predictable and because of the reactive nature of couples’ feelings sometimes difference of view happens or some needs not to be satisfied and therefore couples feel anger, disappointment and unhappiness towards each other (Greef, 2005) Some of the common issues can lead to marital disagreements, such as: education, money, sexual relationships, kinship, friends, children, sexual infidelity, emotional problems, financial problems, communication problems (conversation), job conflicts and the like can be mentioned (Thanae and Zaker, 1999).

In this regard marital differences can have devastating consequences and as Maslow explains in his hierarchy of needs that satisfaction of the lower order needs is a prerequisite to satisfaction of the higher order needs, and couples also due to the existence of differences and because of dissatisfaction of their need to love, kindness and respect may not be able to reach self-actualization (Beirami, 2012). Education and job cause women to have higher social awareness and regarding social and intellectual dimensions will continue their development by gaining public information. In some cases it can be seen that couples’ education results in emergence of the state of competitiveness in a way that sometimes they are not willing to accept their responsibilities. It seems that when women have access to education and independent thinking, they gain more peace of mind and this factor has a significant influence on their relationship with their wives, children and other segments of society that brings about the marital satisfaction in life (Ghaemi, 1994). Alain Girard (1999) writes: ”Most of the time, couples get marry who are close to each other in terms of the level of education”. However, scientists have consensus in admitting that the vast educational difference between a husband and his/her wife in the majority of the cases has a detrimental effect on marital satisfaction. In a research it has been shown that in fact marital satisfaction results when the wife and husband have the minimal differences and confrontation regarding different dimensions, in
other words, similarities and equalities lead to agreement and in general spouse-hood equality has different indexes that some of them can be referred as the following: educational, age similarity, and occupational and social status or situation (Husseini, 1997). Therefore, with regard to the importance and role of satisfaction from social in marital relations, the present study seeks to investigate the effect of the level of couples' education on marital satisfaction in Rezvanshahr, Iran.

The sample size

Given that the statistical method in the present study is correlational and in correlational researches the size of sample should be between 20-25 subjects and in the best state 50 subject should be considered for each variable (Homan, 2001). Therefore, by considering fifty subjects per each of the two research variables, 100 subjects were used in this study.

\[ N = 3q = 2 \times 50 = 100 \]

Ethical considerations

In this study, informed consent took place without any coercion, threat, enticement and seduction and the individuals were respected whether to refuse or accept to participate in the study. It was tried that the research method not to be in contradict with religious and cultural principles of the subjects and research participants in all stages of design, implementation and reporting of the study to be protected in terms of human dignity, respect and physical and mental integrity.

Method

The present is a kind of causative and comparative study which is in real of descriptive designs. The statistical population in this research included all married men and women living in Rezvanshahr, Iran. This data in the present study were collected using a survey method and through questionnaires and clinical interviews in 1394. For this purpose sixty (N = 100) married men and women were selected through random sampling. Data collection method was a survey approach and in order to measure the index of marital satisfaction, Enrich's questionnaire to and also check-list of educational level demographic index were used. The collected data were analyzed using Pearson correlation test and t-test. Also, the qualitative data obtained from demographic evaluation were coded and analyzed using the qualitative data analysis tool ATLAS.ti - 5.2. In the first phase by obtaining permission and informing the couples regarding the overall objectives of research, the mentioned questions were given to them. Then the couples were asked to carefully study and complete the questionnaires. After completing the questionnaires, they were accredited for participation in this research.

Instruments

Enrich's Marital Satisfaction Scale: This scale is composed of 35 Likert items that is used to evaluate the potential trouble-making areas or identify areas of strength in the marital relationship. Enrich's couple Inventory was administered by David Olson and Amy Olson on 25501 married couples in 2000. The alpha coefficient of this questionnaire for subscales of marital satisfaction, communication, conflict resolution, and idealistic distortion was reported respectively, 0.86, 0.80, 0.84, 0.83 and the test-retest reliability for each subscale 0.86, 0.81, 0.90, 0.92, respectively. In Asoideh's study (2010) the alpha coefficient of this questionnaire
with 365 couples, "n=730" was reported 0.68 (with the removal of question 24 it will be an alpha of 0.78), 0.78, 0.62 and 0.77 respectively. In Iran studies of Mirkheshti (1995), Mahdavian (1997), Moradi (2001), Sanaee (2002), Hagshenas (2004) have shown that the scale of Enrich and its Persian translation have the required validity and reliability.

**Statistical analysis**

In the present study with regard to the nature of study and review of the previous researches and with the aim of investigating the extent of relationship between the variable of marital satisfaction and educational level and given the types of both scales, the parametric test of Pearson correlation was used and the significance of relationship was investigated using t-test.

**Results**

Statistical indexes

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of the level of subjects' age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Variable of age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Woman</td>
<td>22 – 25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>%8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26 – 29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>%16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 – 33</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>%14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34 – 37</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>%8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38 – 41</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>%4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>%50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>22 – 25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>%8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26 – 29</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>%15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30 – 33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>%15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34 – 37</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>%10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38 – 41</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>%2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>%50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As it can be seen in Table 1, the highest frequency of women's age is in the age range between 29 and 26 years and the lowest frequency regarding women's age is in the age range from 41 to 38 years old. The highest frequency considering age of men is in the age range from 26 to 29 and from 30 to 33, and the lowest frequency is in the range of 41 to 38 years old.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of subjects' educational status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>%12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>%27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>%16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>%31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>%14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>%100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the Table 2 shows, the highest frequency is for subjects in academic level bachelor with 31 percent and the lowest frequency belongs for subjects in high school diploma level with 12 percent.
As it can be seen in Table 3, the highest frequency is for high satisfaction of women with 26 percent and the lowest frequency is for low satisfaction with 0 percent. The highest frequency regarding marital satisfaction is for high satisfaction with 23 percent and the lowest frequency is for low satisfaction with 0 percent.

### Pearson correlation test

As it can be seen in Table 4, the estimated $r = 0.34$ is significant at the alpha level of 0.05. With regard to the above results, it can be said that with a 95 percent certainty there is a significant relationship between couples' educational level and their marital satisfaction.

### Parametric t-test

With regard to Table 5 and the estimated $t$ index, the above difference is significant at 0.05.

The study that presented here was conducted with the aim of investigating the correlation between level of education and the index of couples' marital satisfaction in Rezvanshahr, Iran. With regard to the research background and investigating the above-mentioned literature, the majority of the conducted studies support the findings of the present study. As an example,
Olson's (1997) study showed that the correlation coefficient between satisfaction from life and family satisfaction is about 70 percent. Nikooee (2009) in his study concluded that there was a significant relationship between couples' marital satisfaction and their educational level. Results of Rouhani and Manaviyours' (2007) research showed that there was a significant positive correlation between being literate and marital satisfaction, and age religiosity are useful predictors of marital satisfaction and happiness. Nazari and Soleimanian (2007) also concluded in their study that marital satisfaction among couples both of whom were educated couples were that of couples who one of them was educated. In other measures of marital satisfaction, i.e. emotional relation, oriented connection, aggression, financial issues, sexual issues significant difference was not observed. Norouzian (2006) in his study reported that literacy and illiteracy of women did not have an effect on couples' marital satisfaction. There wasn't significant correlation between educational level (educational groups) and the number of children with marital satisfaction was found. Also based on the duration of marriage, the marital satisfaction among women was different. Khojastemehr, Attari and Amanollahifard (2006) in their study entitled comparing marital satisfaction and neurosis in individuals on the basis of the level of education of spouse and the type of marriage concluded that women's education leads to decline of marital satisfaction and rise of their spouses' neurosis and those who had educated spouses had higher marital life. Sedgamiz (2007) in his study investigated the effective factors on marital satisfaction Shiraz among the 577 individuals. In this study, there was a significant relationship between age of the couples, age of marriage, number of children, age difference between spouses, husband's education and wife's education, occupational status of husband, employment of wife, remarriage of couples, the way familiarity with spouse, kinship with marital satisfaction. In another study Bakhtiari (2008) noted that married couples whose children have been married and have left their family have the highest level of satisfaction from their marital life and the literate couples with children or teenagers have the lowest satisfaction from their married life. Results of Frast (2010) research showed that literate women were more satisfied with their marital life. The study that conducted by Maton et al. (2009), showed that there was a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and employment and education of couples. Siarochi et al. (2001) also showed that highly educated people show a close and sympathetic relationship and experience more marital satisfaction in their life. Engelberg (2004) has conducted a research entitled couples' educational level of marital satisfaction on 282 subjects. In this study, higher level of education is one of the effective factors on marital satisfaction. Cooper and Alen (2002) showed the relationship between marital satisfaction and couples education. This study shows the relationship between variables of number of children, education of spouse, age and marital satisfaction. A study that was conducted by Koenig and Kvale (2000) came to the conclusion that education of spouses has a positive relationship with a sense of satisfaction and adjustment in the couple's life. The studies that are mentioned are in line with the findings of the present research. On the other hand, heterogeneous and sometimes contradictory findings, the research results of Vageii and colleagues (2009) showed that there is not a significant difference between the mean of marital satisfaction in university employees. The interesting thing is that employees with bachelor degree less marital satisfaction with their lives than employees with their degree or high school diploma. The results Attar et al. (2005) showed that there was not a significant difference between age of marriage, age difference between spouses and education with marital satisfaction. The rate of income had a positive relationship with marital satisfaction, and the number of children and the period of marriage had a negative relationship with marital satisfaction. She'rba (2000) in a study entitled "comparing personality traits of literate and illiterate married women in Mashhad and the
relationship of these characteristics with marital satisfaction" concluded there was a positive correlation between a number of personality characteristics and satisfaction of literate and illiterate women, but there was no difference between marital satisfaction of literate and illiterate women. Axelson (1963) in his primary study about couples who both were literate have shown that change in family structure by the educational level of both members have resulted in more difference and less happiness in life and creates ambiguity in sexual roles. Other studies have shown that in educated couples’ relationships, there are marital problems (interpersonal and intrapersonal), which is related to the division of labor and taking care of children (Thomas, Albert and White, 194; Yogi, 1983). Nazari (2007) in a study that he had done about men's view showed that women's education means playing non-traditional roles and obligations. This lifestyle has a negative effect on marital relations because in these kinds of marriages there is not much interaction between the wife and woman in power and decision making.

**Limitations of the study**

This study like other social studies was associated with limitations such as the following: 1) The present study was conducted only among couples in Rezvanshahr, 2) The cross-sectional design of the study may endanger generalization of results, and 3) Inability to control other variables effecting marital satisfaction can also counted as one of the limitations of the present study.

**Research suggestions**

In the following several suggestions has been provided in order to be used in future studies: 1) It a suggestion that the findings of the present study to be used in couples counseling centers and 2) it is a suggestion that the relationship between thinking style and marital satisfaction in employed women and men to be studied.
References


