The Mediating Role of Cognitive Distortions in the Relationship between Decision-Making and Intimacy attitudes

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Abstract

Today, with regard to the growing rate of divorce and its consequences on society, investigating the effective factors leading to this phenomenon is of high importance. However, there have not been any studies exclusively dealing with decision-making styles and their effects on women’s intimacy attitudes. The present study aims to explain the intermediary role of cognitive distortion in relationships between the intimacy attitude and divorced women’s decision-making styles. Method: The statistical population of the present study includes all divorced women in Abadeh and Marvdasht cities who have passed at least a year after their divorce. Using the available sampling method, 81 individuals were chosen as the sample of the research from among the divorced women participating in the counseling and advising centers suggested by the Judiciary. In this study, the Cognitive Distortion Questionnaire prepared by Abdullah Zadeh (2010), intimacy attitudes of Tridol* and Comer* (1983), and Decision-Making Styles of Scott and Bruce (1995) were used. The statistical method used included descriptive statistics and inferential analysis, the Pearson correlation coefficient, and path analysis method. Findings: Decision-making styles, cognitive distortions, and the intimacy attitudes of divorced women have a positive significant relationship at p=0.001. Moreover, the cognitive distortions had an intermediary role in the relationship between the decision-making styles and intimacy attitudes in divorced women (p=0.001). Conclusion: Based on the findings of this research, the relationship between the dependency decision-making styles and the intimacy attitudes of divorced women is not a simple linear one and cognitive distortions may affect this relationship.

Keywords: Cognitive distortion, Decision-making style, Intimacy attitude.
Introduction

Marriage is the origin of family life cycle (Waring, 2013). Marriage and marital relationship are the source of support, intimacy, and joy of human. In the last decade, the question that how marriage takes place and which factors affect its success or failure has been a research interest of psychologists (Gottman and Levenson, 2000). The negative consequences of divorce in the social body and for the husband and wife in different mental, behavioral, economic, and social dimensions are of importance (Cordov and Warren, 2005). Building intimacy and maintaining it in couples’ relationships is a difficult process requiring mutual understanding and trying to accomplish these concepts (Shialinia, 2008). Psychologists define intimacy the ability to communicate (without controlling) with others and express emotions (without avoidance) and consider it as an inalienable right and a natural mood of human (Bulum, 2006). As Bagarowski* argues (2001), intimacy is a proximity, similarity, and personal romantic or exciting relationship with another which requires knowing, accepting, deep understanding and sympathy with him/her. He defines intimacy as a mental experience and relationship whose main producer is self-disclosure, safe response, and sympathy (Etemadi, 2008).

In the present study, the accepted definition of intimacy is “a multi-dimensional sense consisting of various elements indicating a kind of special relationship between two people during which they share the personal aspects of their thoughts, emotions and feelings as well as their those of their beliefs”. Intimacy attitude is also one’s knowing, feeling, and behavioral tendency in relationship to others, especially the same sex (Miller and Perlman, 2009). The intimacy attitudes between couples indicates the interaction between them and its lack represents a kind of chaos in marital relationship (Halford, translated by Tabrizi, 2005). The lack of intimacy in relationships leads to mental tensions and abnormal direct and indirect reactions such as aggressiveness and jealousy in interpersonal relationships (Hofer and Busch, 2011). Individuals have different personalities that have a significant effect on collecting information and therefore their decision-making (Lynch, 1992). Psychologists consider decision-making as a function of psychology which investigates processes and discovers the relationship between thoughts and actions (Karimian, 2012). By understanding the decision-making style, one can understand why individuals use different processes when faced with particular situations. Research has shown that having an appropriate decision-making style makes the couples make programmed decisions (Anderson, 1992). In their studies, Scott and Bruce (1995) considered individuals’ decision-making styles and the factors affecting them including internal features and personal differences and based on which they offered five global decision-making styles that include: Real-time decision-making styles: 1 Real-time decision-making style indicates the sense of urgency of the decision maker and his desire to take a final decision in the shortest and the fastest time possible (Etebarian et al., 1391). Avoidance decision making style: 2 Avoidance decision making style can be defined as efforts and desire of the individual to avoid making any decisions and to avoid the decision making situations as much as possible (Park. W and Gretzel, 2008). Dependency decision-making

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1- Spontaneous
2- Avoidant
style: 1 This style indicates mental and practical dependency of the decision maker and relying on others’ supports and guides when making decisions (Etebarian et al. 2012). Intuitive decision-making style: 2 In this decision making style, the decision maker does not have a clear rationale of in relation to the appropriateness of his/her decision, but by relying on his/her inner expression does what s/he thinks is right (Tat et al., 2015). Rational decision-making style: 3 This style indicates the tendency of the decision maker to identify all the possible solutions, evaluate the consequences of each solution from different aspects and finally choosing the optimum and desirable solution by the decision maker when facing the decision-making situation (Oliveira, 2007). Research on satisfied and dissatisfied decision making styles showed that the satisfied couples were fair in their decisions and this led to satisfaction in their marital life (Houlihan et al., 1990). In a study conducted to identify the differences in decision making styles based on age, gender, race, and expertise of individuals, Tate et al (2015) found that people who make speculative decisions without information (Real-time decision-making style) take a high risk. Also, regardless of individuals’ actual skills in detecting lies, their attitude towards lies can affect the decision-making process. A suspicious attitude can lead to a wrong judgment from a partner. The partners’ decision-making styles become even more important when parents’ incompatible decision-making styles are along with negative methods of children’s education (Davids et al, 2015). As mentioned above, these decision-making styles are a kind of individual pattern of interpretation and response to decision-making tasks (Driver, Harn**, 1997, quoted by Karimiyan, 1391). Therefore, having a cognitive and logical and compatible thinking style leads to an efficient and productive decision-making process (Lynch, 1992). The reason is that people who have a balanced and rational thinking style make rational decisions too (Groves et al, 2008). Similarity and homogeneity of needs, cognitive distortions, irrational expectations of marriage and irrational beliefs from one another are effective factors in marriage (LotfiKashani & Vaziri, 2011).

The way of understanding prevailing in the minds of husbands and wives is one of the spouses’ problematic factors so that the husband and wife always judge and evaluate their behaviors and those of others based on particular patterns (Yunesi, 2009). Alice argues that many of these dissatisfaction cases having psychological origins are consequences of an irrational and illogical thinking. These irrational thoughts are the wrong, illusory and imaginative ideas which lead to behavioral and marital conflicts (Shafiabadi, Naser, 2007). Because sometimes people have wrong interpretations of reality in their thinking way which is due to unfamiliarity with rational and right thinking and this is called cognitive distortion (Beck, 1979; translated by Mohammad khani 2013). Lack of knowledge of these cognitive distortions is very dangerous, and perhaps many of people’s hardships occur because their thoughts are affected by these types of errors (Beck, translated by Gharachedaghi, 2011). Different types of these cognitive errors, in Beck’s opinion, include: 1) All-or-nothing thinking (bi-polar thinking); 4 This error indicates that if the person does not achieve the highest and the most perfect desirable level, s/he has not achieved any success. 2)
Overgeneralization; 1 People who have this type of cognitive error overgeneralize based on a special event or exaggerate about a special event. 3) Mental filter; 2 Mental filter makes the person not see part of reality and pay attention to some limited realities. 4) Disqualifying the positive; 3The error of disqualifying the positive shows that the person is only pessimistic and does not pay attention to positive things. 5) Hasty conclusion (predicting); 4The person makes negative conclusion about the events and incidents around himself/herself without any reasons. Sometimes the person’s thoughts are towards future, but more of the thoughts he/she predicts about future are negative. 6) Magnification-minimization error; occurs when the importance of an event, a situation or a feeling is over- or underestimated. 5 7) Emotional reasoning; 6 indicates conclusions that it does not approve their evidence. 8) Dos error (shoulding); 7 occurs when people use many dos or donts for themselves or offer many recommendations or guidelines to others. 9) Labeling; 8 is describing one’s identity based on defects and mistakes occurred in the past and allowing them to determine the individual’s real identity. 10) Personalization:9 occurs when people tend to relate outer events to themselves, even when there is no basis for this relationship (Cory,* 2007, Translated by Seyyed Mohammadi, 2013).

When there is emotion and love among individuals, this emotion will affect on their attitudes and interpretations of each other’s behavior, and they consider these when making decisions on their behavioral priorities. When decision-making occurs based on negative emotional reactions, factors such as regret and concern increase which in turn, they will have a negative effect on the individual’s behavioral and self-assessment intentions (van der Pligt et al,1998). Thoughts and moods play a more important role in intimate relationships in a way that in a positive mood, individuals disclose more personal, more various, and more abstract information about themselves. On the other hand, individuals who have a negative mood are more careful about others’ behavior and acts in a more conservative way against disclosing information by others (Forgas,2010). Since cognitive distortions mostly arise from indefinite guesses, one who has these distortions constantly wants to guess other people’s behaviors which leads to dissatisfaction in their marital life (Hosseinzadeh, 2011). Also, research has shown that irrational beliefs lead to marital boredom (Bakhtiarpour & Ameri, 2009). Therefore, the primary question of the present study is that if cognitive distortions have a significant mediating role in the relationship between decision-making styles and intimate attitude.

Methodology:

The statistical population of the research includes all of the divorced women of Abadeh and Marvdasht cities, who have spent more than a year from their divorce time and have been referred by the Judiciary to the counseling and advising centers in these cities. Using the

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1- Disregarding the positive
2-Hasty conclusion
3-Magnification-minimization
4-Assessment
5- Dos error
6- Labeling
7- Personalization

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4-Over generalization
-Mental filter 5
available sampling method, 81 individuals were chosen as the sample of the research from among them. Then, the significance, goals, and method of conducting the research as well as confidentiality of the answers were explained to them. They were asked to announce their written consent. They were always informed that the results will be only used in academic and scientific ways. Then, in order to investigate the intermediary role of cognitive distortions in the relationship between the decision-making styles and intimacy attitude, Baron and Kenny’s path analysis methods was used.

**Research Instruments**

1. Scott and Bruce scale for decision-making general styles: In 1995, Scott and Bruce designed and verified the decision-making styles questionnaire in order to investigate individuals’ decision-making styles. This questionnaire has 25 questions that measures five decision-making styles which are rational, intuitive, avoidance, dependent, and real-time. The validity of this questionnaire has been reported to be between 68% to 94%, obtained by Cronbach’s alpha. The questions are based on a five-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” with the ranking of one to five (Abdullah Zadeh, 2012). The validity of this questionnaire for the styles has been reported in another research conducted on 400 students in England, with the Cronbach’s alpha being from 67% to 87% (Speaker and Smith, 2005). In Iran, in a research, the questionnaire has been turned normal based on its original version. The content validity of the translated questionnaire has been approved by some professors, and in order to assess the construct validity, the correlation between the decision-making styles and also the correlation between each one of the scores of this questionnaire as well as the related scores of each style has been investigated. The validity of this questionnaire has been reported 71% for managers society, achieved through the Cronbach’s alpha (Hadizadeh & Moghaddam Tehrani, 2005). In another research conducted on 940 students throughout the country, the validity coefficients for the styles has been reported to be 63% to 89% by Cronbach’s alpha (Abdullahzadeh, 2012).

2. Intimacy attitude scale: This questionnaire has been conducted in 1983 by Tridol* and Comer* in 1983 (Amidon*; Cromer, Treadwell, 1983). It includes 50 items (26 negative items) which are assessed on a 5-point scale (strongly disagree, somehow disagree, neutral, somehow agree, and strongly agree). Four factors under assessment in this questionnaire are tendency to intimacy, avoiding intimacy, interest to, and fear of intimacy. The questionnaire has been normalized in Iran by Ghalami (2012) on 500 students in Tehran. In this study, the Cronbach’s alpha for tool component and retesting coefficient was respectively 84% and 83% (Ghalami, 2012).

3. Cognitive distortion questionnaire: This questionnaire has been prepared by Abdullahzadeh in 2010. It aims to evaluate the cognitive errors introduced by Albert Ellis*. The questionnaire has 20 items and 10 cognitive errors: 1) All-or-nothing thinking; 2) overgeneralization; 3) mental filter; 4) disqualifying the positive; 5) hasty conclusion; 6) magnification; 7) emotional reasoning; -8) dos (shoulding); 9) labeling; and 10)
personalization. Each irrational thinking has 2 expressions. The scoring method for each sub-scale is based on Likert scale with 1 being completely agree to 5 being completely disagree. Only question 1 is scored reversely from 5 to 1. Based on this scoring system, anyone who gets higher scores has more appropriate thinking and anyone who gets lower scores has more cognitive errors. The Cronbach’s alpha test was used to determine the internal uniformity of the cognitive distortions questionnaire. The standard achieved alpha coefficient is 80%. Therefore, it can be concluded that the test has a good internal consistency.

Findings

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of decision-making styles, cognitive distortions and sincere attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51/0</td>
<td>85/2</td>
<td>Rational Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/0</td>
<td>35/3</td>
<td>Intuitive Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52/0</td>
<td>56/2</td>
<td>Avoidance Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63/0</td>
<td>79/2</td>
<td>Dependent Style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66/0</td>
<td>63/2</td>
<td>Real-time style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/0</td>
<td>85/2</td>
<td>Intimate attitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/0</td>
<td>00/3</td>
<td>Cognitive distortion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in Table 1, the highest and the lowest averages belong to the intuitive decision-making style and avoidance decision-making style, respectively.

Table 2: Correlation matrix of decision making styles, different cognitive distortions and intimate attitude

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Rational Scale</th>
<th>Intuitive Style</th>
<th>Avoidance Style</th>
<th>Dependent Style</th>
<th>Real-time style</th>
<th>Intimate attitude</th>
<th>Cognitive distortion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rational Scale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intuitive Style</td>
<td>44/0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance Style</td>
<td>59/0</td>
<td>49/0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Style</td>
<td>37/0</td>
<td>61/0</td>
<td>84/0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real-time style</td>
<td>70/0</td>
<td>32/0</td>
<td>56/0</td>
<td>52/0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As seen in Table 2, there is a significant direct relationship between all decision-making styles and intimate attitude except with the dependent style which has a negative relationship with the intimate attitude. There is a significant inverse relationship between the intuitive and dependent styles and cognitive distortion.

Primary research question: Does cognitive distortion have a significant mediating role in the relationship between decision-making styles and intimate attitude.

Then, in order to investigate the intermediary role of cognitive distortions in the relationship between the decision-making styles and intimacy attitude, Baron and Kenny’s path analysis methods was used.

First, the predictor variables of decision-making styles and the variable of decision-making criterion were entered into the equation. Then, the variable of decision making styles and cognitive distortions were entered into the equation as predictor variables, and the sincere attitude was entered into the equation as the criterion variable and the results are shown in table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order (intimate attitude criterion)</th>
<th>Entered variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>²R</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Rational Scale</td>
<td>10/0</td>
<td>57/0</td>
<td>57/0</td>
<td>72/0</td>
<td>52/0</td>
<td>35/12</td>
<td>001/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intuitive Style</td>
<td>61/0</td>
<td>56/4</td>
<td>001/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidance Style</td>
<td>28/0</td>
<td>24/1</td>
<td>21/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependent Style</td>
<td>-60/0</td>
<td>-48/2</td>
<td>01/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real-time style</td>
<td>36/0</td>
<td>41/2</td>
<td>01/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Rational Scale</td>
<td>12/0</td>
<td>77/0</td>
<td>44/0</td>
<td>79/0</td>
<td>63/0</td>
<td>59/15</td>
<td>001/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intuitive Style</td>
<td>54/0</td>
<td>5/4</td>
<td>001/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidance Style</td>
<td>34/0</td>
<td>69/1</td>
<td>09/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependent Style</td>
<td>-77/0</td>
<td>-53/3</td>
<td>001/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real-time style</td>
<td>41/0</td>
<td>06/3</td>
<td>003/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>-36/0</td>
<td>-95/3</td>
<td>001/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3: Results of Baron and Kenny path analysis method to determine the mediating role of Cognitive distortions.

As seen in table 3, in the first order, the intuitive, dependent, and real-time decision-making styles are able to predict the intimate attitude. At this stage, the coefficient of variables determination is 52/0, that is, the dependent, intuitive, and real-time styles predict 52 percent of the variability change of the sincere attitude.

In the second order, decision-making styles and cognitive distortion have been entered to the equation as predictive variables and intimate attitude has been entered as the criterion variable. In this stage, the intuitive, dependent, and real-time decision-making styles and the cognitive distortion variable can predict the intimate attitude variable and the determination coefficient changes from 52% in the first stage to 63% in the second stage. In other words, after the cognitive distortion is entered, the predictive power of the predictive variables increases by 11%, indicating the significant mediating role of the cognitive distortion in the relationship between the decision-making styles variables and intimate attitude.

Table 4: Predicting the cognitive distortion based on decision-making styles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion variable</th>
<th>Predicting variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive distortion</td>
<td>Rational Scale</td>
<td>14/0</td>
<td>14/1</td>
<td>25/0</td>
<td>36/0</td>
<td>13/0</td>
<td>39/9</td>
<td>003/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intuitive Style</td>
<td>-17/0</td>
<td>-15/1</td>
<td>25/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Avoidance Style</td>
<td>29/0</td>
<td>32/1</td>
<td>19/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dependent Style</td>
<td>36/0</td>
<td>06/3</td>
<td>003/0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Real-time style</td>
<td>20/0</td>
<td>47/1</td>
<td>14/0</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on table 4, it can be noted that the proportion of F and its significance level indicate the significant effect of the dependent decision-making style in the regression equation. The regression effect is $F=39/9$ which is significant at 003/0, and the calculated determination coefficient based on this variable is 13/0 which means that the dependent decision-making style predicts 12% of the cognitive distortion variable.

Regarding the results of table 3 and 4, the path diagram is as follows:
The Mediating Role of Cognitive Distortions in the Relationship between Decision-Making and Intimacy attitudes.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present research was conducted aiming to investigate the mediating role of cognitive distortions in the relationship between decision-making styles and intimacy attitudes. The suggested pattern of the research was based on the presupposition that the decision-making styles lead to change in the amount of intimate attitude via cognitive distortions.

The findings showed that there is a significant direct relationship between all decision-making styles and intimate attitude except with the dependent style which has a negative relationship with the intimate attitude. Also, as observed in the findings of the research, in the first order, the intuitive, dependent, and real-time decision-making styles are able to predict the intimate attitude. At this stage, the coefficient of variables determination is 52/0, that is, the dependent, intuitive, and real-time styles predict 52 percent of the variability change of the sincere attitude. Deborah et al (1989) showed in their research that cooperative decision making, not individual decisions made by spouses, have codependency affect the intimacy of both partners. The dependent decision-making style does not allow a decision making dependent from inside and outside pressures, and because of the negative pressures from the environment, it can make trouble for the intimate attitude. In general public, most of the conflicts in a marriage are supposed to arise from families or other relatives intervening in the marriage and imposing their opinions. Others, when giving advice, usually suggest negative.
experiences and intentions such as taking revenge of men, and if the advice is tried out, it leads to damage to intimacy. Along with the results of the present study, Anthony et al (2014) showed in their research that making decisions based on false and wrong ideas of other people can endanger the individual’s decision-making process and instigate his/her feelings and lead to anxiety, anger, and hatred in the person. Although other cognitive decision making styles look negative in some cases such as avoidance style, they had a positive relationship with the intimate attitude. The possible explanation could be the dependent intimate attitude depends on positive and negative emotional experiences in life, therefore, the intuitive, avoidance, rational, and real-time decision-making depend on the other person’s response, and what we see in the present research is that apparently, the possible coordination of the research sample in terms of behavior with their spouses makes their intimacy less dependent upon the decision-making style.

Also, the findings showed that although the decision-making styles have a negative relationship in correlation with the cognitive distortions, the results in the regression equation showed that only one style, which is the dependent decision-making style, predicts 13% of the variance of the cognitive distortion variable. The possible explanation is that although all decision making styles had almost a negative relationship with the cognitive distortions, the negative factor which makes trouble in decision-making is still the dependent style. The results also show that is has a positive relationship with the cognitive distortions. It means that people with the dependent style have more cognitive distortions. They possibly have more of distortions such as all-or-nothing thinking, disqualifying the positive, and dos error, and this shoulding stops them from making right decisions based on personal information. Also, they have less respect to their personal abilities and consider failure in one area as the end of acting in that area and the fear makes them listen to others’ advice. Another finding was that the cognitive distortion had a negative relationship with the intimate attitude and could negatively predict the intimate attitude. The cognitive factors have a lot of importance in understanding the marital issues and changing the relationship. The couples enter a set of expectations, beliefs, and imaginations related to intimacy into their marital relationship which is generally irrational and lead to a decrease in intimacy and satisfaction. The cognitive attitude towards the marital problems, considers the distorted understanding and irrational thinking as the main reason of conflicts and problems in couples. Based on the cognitive models, cognitive distortions have a role in making problems. It is supposed that each of the couples have their own particular irrational beliefs about themselves and intimate relationships which they bring to the marital life, and these beliefs contribute to a decrease in intimate attitudes (Epstein and Baucom, 2002). Therefore, increasing the cognitive distortions more probably decreases the intimate attitudes in couples.

In terms of the mediating role of cognitive distortions, it was found that this variable acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between the decision-making styles and intimate attitude. In this stage, the amount of the determination coefficient changes from 52% to 63% in the second order. In other words, entering the cognitive distortion variable increases the predictive ability of the predictive variables by 11%, and this shows the mediating role of the cognitive distortion in the relationship between the decision making variables and intimate attitude. The results showed that the dependent decision making style has a negative impact
on the intimate attitude through mediating the cognitive distortions. The cognitive distortions, as seen, generally have a negative effect on the intimacy, but in the present research, their mediation was only through the channel of dependent decision-making. Indeed, whenever the information analysis faces errors in our mind, or we have irrational interpretations of events, we have cognitive distortions (Beck, translated by Gharchdaghi, 2011). Therefore, misunderstandings and misinterpretations become a dissatisfaction factor of the couples and will make negative impacts on the marriage aspects, and the intimacy between the couples fades away and the quality of their relationship is minimized (Zarrinkolah, 2012). This means that a decision making which is dependent upon others is a little effective on the amount of intimate attitude, and if there are some cognitive distortions in the decision making, the effect will be much more detrimental. Therefore, people who are strict and independent in decision making and analyze independent people with more negative thoughts become more upset and anxious in decision making than their own independence and therefore experience more negative feelings, and their intimate attitude will significantly decrease.

Implications

The findings of the present research can be beneficial in educating and activating capabilities and modifying the couples’ behaviors in governmental and private counseling organizations and other social entities. Focus must be on including educational programs based on modifying cognitive distortions and decision making styles. Because by identifying and removing these cognitive distortions, the growth and consistency of lack of intimacy can be stopped.

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