The Evaluation between Love Attitudes and Sexual Satisfaction to Forgiveness in Married Employment of None Private in Shiraz City

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to determine the relationship between love attitudes, sexual satisfaction and marital forgiveness in married employees of Shiraz government offices. For this purpose, a sample of 255 people (150 men and 105 women) married employees of government departments in Shiraz were selected by random cluster sampling. Available tools included Hendrix love attitudes Questionnaire, sexual satisfaction and scale of marital resentment forgiveness. The plan of this study was a kind of correlation. These findings were analyzed by using Pearson's and Regression multivariate correlation coefficient and significant level of, these results were obtained. Between the aspects of the couple's love and forgiveness (benevolence scale) and between sexual satisfaction and couple's forgiveness (benevolence scale) and in $p<0.05$ there is a significant positive relationship and the Agape scale from love attitude, couples forgiveness (benevolence scale) in $p<0.001$ and then anger subscale Mania – to avoid couples forgiveness and sexual subscale in $p<0.01$ could predict the benevolence of the forgiveness scale. The results of this study suggest a training package to promote partner's relationship to examine its effectiveness.

Keywords: Attitude to Love, Sexual Satisfaction, Marital Gift.
Introduction

The word “love” does not mean the same for everybody, which may lead to some misunderstandings. Most people believe that the experience of love or lack of it affects almost everybody in a way. However, understanding and knowledge about the phenomenon of love is very little (Noori and Janbozorgi 2011).

Understanding the phenomenon of love is very important because there have always been ambiguity and confusion about love (Pato, 2002). Love is a positive deep feeling, strong interest, or intense attraction which refers to the unconditional acceptance and love of a person. Love is seeking redemption. There has always been some confusion about love. Moretti and Ratzyn (quoted from Boskalya 1992) believe that perhaps some confusion in this regard stem from two different attitudes that science has toward life: love with a psychological nature and love with literary nature. Asodo and Aaron (2009) suggest that love is one of the factors contributing to marital satisfaction. Love as an intense emotional feeling can make family foundation stronger and more stable.

There are some opinions expressed in explaining love, including

According to the theory of “universal language of love», children have some childish features which are suppressed by their parents to go to adulthood. According to this theory, in fact, people love those who have the features that have been deprived of in their childhood. So, by seeing that person, they think they have returned to their childhood, which gives them a sense of being alive. Finding your lost part reminds you of your childhood, when you had a perfect character without being deprived of anything. This makes you feel relaxed (Henrix 2004).

Theoretical Foundations of sexual satisfaction

Appropriate sexual activity is one of the signs of physical and mental health and is considered a component of quality of life. It creates a sense of joy to be shared by the couple and increases an individual's ability to cope more effectively with stress and life problems (Teymor-Pour et al., 2010). Intimacy, prosperity, and increasing level of pleasure and satisfaction among couples are the main factors in preventing rupture and seeking sexual satisfaction outside the marriage and family relations (Botlaei et al., 2010). A major problem that our society faces with today is the lack of adequate information about sex and incorrect attitudes and beliefs about this issue among families and especially newly married couples, which can make many relationships fail (Rahmani et al., 2011).

Sexual satisfaction in married life

Sexual satisfaction refers to the positive attitudes and satisfaction that couples feel about various aspects of their marital relations. Thus, marital adjustment can be considered as a source of
Sexual satisfaction is not only physical pleasure. It contains all the residual feelings after the positive or negative aspects of sexual relationship (McNeil, 2006; quoted from King Black et al., 2010). Many studies show that the predictors of sexual satisfaction in marriage are divided into three groups:

The first group is communication variables which are emotional components of sexual satisfaction. The second group is physiological characteristics of sexual relationship, which have sign of consent. The third group includes predictors of sexual satisfaction (Christine, 2004, quoting from Black King et al., 2007).

Forgiveness of couples

Marital satisfaction of spouses from each other can be caused by several factors. Forgiveness is one of the most important factors in sexual satisfaction. Forgiveness is defined in many different ways. In one of the best and most reliable definitions, forgiveness is defined as "positive interpersonal interpretation of the fault occurring in interpersonal domain" (Almond, Amberg, Zymperech and Fyncham 2007; Fyncham, Hall and Beach 2006; Leach and Lark 2004; Worthington, 2008).

When a person is able to forgive, poor marital quality and marital satisfaction is moderated. Defamation can have negative effects on both the individual and family. Hence, the ability to forgive can lead to stability of relations and marital satisfaction (Bacchus 2009). People who are able to forgive their spouses believe their marriage is holy. This ability makes the relationship stronger and increases satisfaction (Magyar, 2001). Studies have shown the factors affecting sexual dissatisfaction in marriage are as follows: Psychological factors (depression, anxiety, phobia, etc.), physical illness, working couples (Nazari and Bayrami, 2008), Infertility (Besharat and Bazagani, 2004), duration of marriage and age gap of couples (the longer the married life, the less the sexual satisfaction) (Rahmani et al., 2010).

Reigiv (2008) studied attitudes to love and internalized attitudes and consequences of interpersonal communication and marital status of the parents of 400 students. The results showed that attitude to love affects the quality of relationship and are a predictor of people's judgment about the experience of a happy or unhappy life. Internalized attitudes are correlated with conflict, commitment, desire, and hope of success in marital relationship and they have an impact on individual’s indirect attitudes. In 1390, in a study titled “the relationship between styles of love and the quality of married life among married people”, Yousefi et. al concluded that the style of romantic love, selfless love, friendly and realistic love have positive relationship with marital satisfaction, while the style, of erotic love has negative relationship with marital satisfaction, marital cohesion, and consensus.

Sultan Poorr (2014) conducted a study and examined the criteria for marriage, sexual knowledge, and attitude to love in Bandar Abbas. He concluded that in terms of sexual knowledge and
attitude of love, there is no significance difference between women and men. However, individuals with varying educational levels have significantly different criteria for marriage, sexual knowledge, and attitudes to love. In couples with different education levels there was a significant difference. Golshani and Shamekhi (2007) in their study entitled “the role of sexual weakness and impotence in marital dissatisfaction” found out that marital dissatisfaction is definitely affected by sexual weakness.

Homae et al (2008) conducted a study on women and men aged 25 to 40 in Isfahan who were on the verge of divorce and found out that for the families on the verge of divorce, the effect of sex on married life is undeniable. The results show that the balance of sexual satisfaction of man and women, preparing the partner for sex before having sexual activity, wearing sexually provocative clothes at home, ad caring about sexual hygiene are all important in married life.

Dastan et al (2009) conducted a research study on the relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital quality in married women and they came to the conclusion that if sexual satisfaction is increased, the quality of marital life goes up. Worthington Junior, Miller, and Andrea (2010) examined the role of sexual resistance in forgiveness and mental health of couples married recently (not for more than a year). Considering forgiveness, self-report evaluation showed men are more forgiving in married life. Women also reported that men understand their partners very well. However, in mental health, both were at the same level (Jahandoost, 2014).

Methodology

The study population included all married staff members of state offices in Shiraz, who are 820 individuals.

Instrumentation

The following instruments were used in this research:
1. Love attitude scale (LAS): like the original love attitude scale, this scale which was developed by Hendrix in 1986 has six subscales or in other words six styles of love: Eros, Storage, Agape, Ludus, Pragma, and Mania. The only difference between this shortened version and the original one is that in the original scale, each subscale has 7 items but in this version, each subscale has 4 items for the ease of answering and saving time.
2. Sexual satisfaction scale (SSSW): This scale was developed in 1389 by Kermani Yavariand includes 24 items. By taking into account their current relationship (or a hypothetical relationship if you have not experienced a love relationship), the subjects do the test by marking their agreement or disagreement with each item on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree).
3. MOFS: The scale was developed in 2009 by Palyry, Fyncham and Regalia to determine the position of forgiveness in marriage. This test has 10 items and two subscales: benevolence and
anger-avoidance. Subjects must mark the level of their agreement with each item on a 6-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree)

**Sampling**

The method of sampling used here is random clustered sampling. Welfare organization, Gas Company, and Registry organizations were randomly selected among all state organizations in Shiraz. Using Morgan table, a sample size of 255 individuals (150 male and 105 female) was determined. These individuals answered Hendrix’s LAS (1986), sexual satisfaction scale by Kermani Yavari (2010), and MOFS (2009). They were given confidence that the responses would be kept confidential. Description of the demographic characteristics of the participants of this study is on the table below.

**Table 1. Demographic characteristics of subjects based on age and sex**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>7/95</td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard deviation</td>
<td>31/36</td>
<td>32/93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>52/7</td>
<td>47/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age range</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>31-40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instrument for data collection**

The instruments used were three questionnaires: Hendrix’s Love attitude scale (LAS), Kermani Yavari’s sexual satisfaction scale (SSSW), and Fyncham’s MOBS.

**The findings**

The first hypothesis: there is a correlation between love attitude and forgiveness of couples.

To investigate this hypothesis, Pearson correlation coefficient was used. The results of this investigation are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: the correlation between attitudes to love and forgiveness of couples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>General forgiveness</th>
<th>Anger avoidance</th>
<th>Benevolence</th>
<th>Eros</th>
<th>Love attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>0/05</strong></td>
<td>-0/14</td>
<td><strong>0/0/27</strong></td>
<td>-0/07</td>
<td>-0/03</td>
<td>Ludus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0/06</strong></td>
<td>-0/07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0/01</strong></td>
<td>-0/15</td>
<td>*0/16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Storage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0/09</strong></td>
<td>-0/11</td>
<td><strong>0/0/8</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pragma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to information contained in Table 2, there is a positive and significant correlation between love and attitudes and the subscales of Eros, Pragma, Agape, and general love attitude at (p<0.01) (except Ludus that is not significant). In addition, there is a positive and significant relationship between Storage and Mania at (p<0.05) and benevolence as well as a positive and significant relationship between the subscales of Eros and agape with anger – avoidance at (p<0.05). What’s more, there is a significant negative correlation between the subscales of mania and agape at (p<0.05) and general forgiveness.

**Hypothesis 2: there is a positive correlation between sexual satisfaction and forgiveness of couples.**

To investigate this hypothesis, Pearson correlation coefficient was used. The results of this investigation are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: The correlation between attitudes to love and forgiveness of couples**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General forgiveness</th>
<th>Anger-avoidance</th>
<th>Benevolence</th>
<th>Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0/08</td>
<td>-0/03</td>
<td>*0/15</td>
<td>Sexual satisfaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the information contained in Table 3, there is significant positive correlation between sexual satisfaction and benevolence, and the figure obtained at the level of (p<0.05), which means as sexual satisfaction of couples increases, benevolence of them increases too.

**Hypothesis 3: love attitude predicts forgiveness**

In order to test this hypothesis, simultaneous multiple regression method was used. Simultaneous multiple regression analysis showed that agape (altruistic love) was the only subscale which had significant predictive power for the sub-scale of benevolence. The results showed that this variable predicts 13% of the variance of the subscale of benevolence, ie R²= 0.13. The subscale of agape is the only love subscale which is smaller than 0.13 at (p<0.001) (f= 5.20, df= 202.6, p<0.001).

**Hypothesis 4: sexual satisfaction predicts forgiveness**

In order to test the hypothesis, simultaneous multiple regression method was used. Simultaneous multiple regression analysis showed that sexual satisfaction has significant predictive power for the sub-scale of benevolence. The results showed that this variable predicts 2% of the variance of the subscale of benevolence, ie R²= 0.02, which is bigger than (p<0.001) (f= 6.44, df= 253.1, p<0.001).
Discussion and conclusion

Hypothesis one: There is a relationship between attitudes to love and forgiveness

The results of Pearson correlation test showed there is significant positive correlation between all aspects of love attitude except Ludus and forgiveness (subscale of benevolence) and also there is a significant negative correlation between two aspects of love attitude namely Eros and Agape (Friendly love) on the one hand and anger and avoidance on the other. No similar studies were found in the literature in order to compare these results with the results of previous research. However, if we consider marital satisfaction the result of of agape (divine love), Pragma (logical and practical), and storage (friendly) and if we believe marital conflicts arise from Eros, Ludus, and Mania (property-related), it can be said the results of this study are in line with the results of research conducted in this regard, such as Afkhami et.al (2007), Haghjoo (2011), Ehteshamzadeh et.al (2009), Zare et al (2013), Ghafoori et.al (2013), Jahandoost (2014), Gordon et al. (2009), and Miller and Worthington (2010). To justify this hypothesis, one should consider the meaning of love as well as the signs and symptoms of it. Love is the response to relieving anxiety and loneliness of separation (Fromm, 2001). Beck (2011) also believes that love is the most important and effective component in successful marriages. From the perspective of Fromm (2001), love is a serious desire to live.

Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between sexual satisfaction and forgiveness of couples

Based on the results of the present research, sexual satisfaction and forgiveness are significantly correlated. This is consistent with the findings of the research by Johnson (1995), Stop and Perlman (2001), Mac Kalaf et.al (2001), Hill (2001), Ransley (2004), Fyncham and Stone (2004), Fyncham and Beach (2007), Gordon et al (2009), Miller and Worthington (2010), Afkhami (2006), Zandipour (2007) and Geuki (2009). In all these studies, it is reported that those with higher marital satisfaction tend to be more forgiving to their spouses. In justification of this hypothesis, it can be stated that forgiveness can be defined as a positive interpersonal and social change toward a mistake in inter-individual domain (Fyncham et al., 2006). According to this definition, forgiveness reduces or mitigates negative feelings and increases positive emotions. Given the role of forgiveness in reducing negative emotions and increasing positive emotions, we can see that forgiveness is associated with high quality of marital relationship. Accordingly, when a person is able to forgive, the relation between irreverence, poor marital quality, and marital satisfaction is moderated. The ability to forgive your partner can lead to a stable relationship and marital satisfaction. People who are able to forgive their spouses believe their marriage is sacred. This ability makes the relationship stronger and increases satisfaction (Bacchus, 2009).

Fit and healthy sexual function is one of the signs of physical and mental health. That creates a sense of joy to be shared by the couple and an individual's ability to cope more effectively with stress and life problems increases (Timor-Pour et al., 2010). Appropriate sexual activity is one of the signs of physical and mental health and is considered a component of quality of life. It creates a sense of joy to be shared by the couple and increases an individual's ability to cope more effectively with stress and life problems (Teymor-Pour et al., 2010). The couples who are aware
of each other’s sexual demands and desires, can spot and solve the problems that may exist in their intercourse before it is too late (Teymor-Pour et al., 2010).

**Hypothesis 3: attitude to love is able to predict forgiveness**

Simultaneous multiple regression analysis showed that Mania could significantly predict anger-avoidance and agape (altruistic and divine love) could significantly predict benevolence. To explain these findings, the quality of the relationship between attitude to love and marital conflicts could justify everything. Accordingly, marital satisfaction can be a mediating factor between attitudes to love and forgiveness. The research results show significant predictive role of marital satisfaction for forgiveness, as the studies conducted show marital satisfaction can significantly predict forgiveness. In addition, the studies by Afkhami et.al(2007), Haghjoo (2011), Ehteshamzadeh et.al (2009), Zare et al (2013), Ghafoori et.al (2013), Jahandoost (2014), Gordon et al. (2009), and Miller and Worthington (2010) show love attitude can significantly predict benevolence. To explain these findings, the quality of the relationship between attitude to love and marital conflicts could justify everything. Accordingly, marital satisfaction can be a mediating factor between attitudes to love and forgiveness. The research results show significant predictive role of marital satisfaction for forgiveness, as the studies conducted show marital satisfaction can significantly predict forgiveness. In addition, the studies by Afkhami et.al(2007), Haghjoo (2011), Ehteshamzadeh et.al (2009), Zare et al (2013), Ghafoori et.al (2013), Jahandoost (2014), Gordon et al. (2009), and Miller and Worthington (2010) show love attitude can significantly predict benevolence. According to Abdi and Golzari’s findings (2010), erotic and altruistic love can be positive predictors of marital satisfaction and commitment of couples. The results of the study by Amanolaahi et.al (2012) also suggest the predictive role of erotic love on marital satisfaction. The findings of the study by Yousefi et al (2011) suggest the predictive role of friendly, romantic, realistic, sensual, and altruistic love attitudes with satisfaction, integrity, and marital understanding.

Similarly, Eisanezhad et.al (2010) believes realistic love of spouses to each other can be the result of consistency of marital relations between them. This consistency leads to understanding and it guarantees the continuation of marital life. In another explanation, the relationship between love, self, and forgiveness can be referred to. Forgiveness is intolerable for self. We can never forgive others or ourselves through self.

**Hypothesis 4: sexual satisfaction of couples is able to predict forgiveness**

The results showed that sexual satisfaction could significantly predict forgiveness. The results of testing this hypothesis are consistent with the findings of Hill (2001), Fyncham and Beach (2004), Bacchus (2009), Fyncham et al (2007), Fraynok and Porenthe(2009), Worthington et.al (2010), Nateghian (2006), Khojastemehr (2010), Ehteshamzadeh (2010), and Salahian (2010). All the mentioned studies report the role and impact of sexual satisfaction on forgiveness and resolving marital conflicts and increasing marital satisfaction. In justification of this hypothesis it can be said that retaliatory -motivated behavior of couples leads to hostility towards each other and can put their marital relationship at risk (Fyncham et al., 2007). In this regard, the results of the study by Frensen, Fletcher and Averal (2006) showed that positive attributions and quality of relationship can significantly predict forgiveness. On this basis, we can say that confession and apology in intimate relationships not only increases the chance of forgiveness, it also makes marital life more stable. Some research consider the relationship between marital satisfaction and forgiveness is mutual as forgiveness improves the quality of marital relationship and the quality
of marital relationship leads to forgiveness. It is probably because forgiveness and marital satisfaction fight with stress and negative emotions and also develop one’s cognitive and behavioral framework. Forgiveness focuses on positive emotions such as hope, acknowledgement, gratitude, and happiness. The existence of so strong and positive emotions increases people's sexual satisfaction. Then, in turn, couples are expected to be kinder, more forgiving, and more caring to each other. As a result of forgiving, one is relieved from the feeling of guilt which is the consequence of unconscious anger.

Restrictions and limitations

Each research study has some restrictions and the present study is not an exception. The major restrictions of this study are the followings:
1. One limitation of this study is that this research is only conducted on a particular population (couples I state organizations of Shiraz). Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other populations.
2. Another limitation is related to the lack of precise control of social, economic, and demographic factors of the subjects.

Constraints outside the control of the researcher

1. Some subjects did not answer the questionnaires because of lack of motivation and interest.
2. Regarding the type of questions, some subjects did not properly answer the questionnaire of sexual satisfaction.
3. There was lack of sufficient literature and background studies in the field of sexual satisfaction and forgiveness because of the novelty of the issues.

Research recommendations

Considering the extraordinary and undeniable impact sexual relations on the quality of marital life, workshops should be held to improve sexual relations with the purpose of prevention of sexual problems in counseling centers.
- Training workshops should be held to enhance people's awareness.
- Training workshops should be held for couples before they marry.
- Sex education should be paid more attention to, in practice not in words.
- The conditions should be prepared by government agencies for conducting research on the topic of sexuality.
In the end, counselors, therapists and planners who are active in the field of family and family therapy should try to increase marital satisfaction through scientific training in society, the media, workshops, and counseling centers.
Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, some recommendations are offered for researchers wishing to study on factors affecting marital satisfaction. Given the importance and role of marital satisfaction in continuing family life and welfare, the following items are recommended:

- It is advised to use interviews and observations during the study with the aim of increasing the power of the generalizability of the findings.

- It is advised to conduct the same study on bigger populations and higher age ranges with the aim of increasing the power of the generalizability of the findings to prevent marital problems and divorce.

- Since love has different meanings in different cultures and in different parts of the country, it is suggested that love should be studied, investigated and compared in various parts of the country.

- It is recommended that this research should be done on non-employees and other groups.

- Making standard, reliable, and appropriate tools for assessing attitudes to love, sexual satisfaction, and forgiveness, in accordance with the culture of the country and even in different cultures, can have a positive impact on the accuracy and relevant results.

- IT is also recommended to conduct the study in an experimental research design.
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