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Comparison of marital satisfaction and marital intimacy among employed and unemployed married woman students of Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz

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Abstract

Introduction: The aim of this study was to compare marital satisfaction and marital intimacy among employed and unemployed married woman students of Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz.

Materials and Methods: The statistical sample of this causal-comparative study concluded 246 married women (124 employed and 122 unemployed) of Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz, who were selected by the convenient sampling method. Research instruments were Enrich marital satisfaction questionnaire and Bagarozzi marital intimacy questionnaire. Data analyzed by two way ANOVA.

Results: The results showed that the differences between mean scores of marital satisfaction and marital intimacy among employed and unemployed women were significant ($P < 0.05$).

Conclusion: Based on the results employed women had higher scores in marital satisfaction and marital intimacy compared to unemployed women.

Keywords: Employed, Marital intimacy, Marital satisfaction, Women

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Introduction

The marriage contract in Islam is one of the most popular and happiest kinship duties between the creator and the creature. The religion of Islam has given great value to marriage. The healthiest human society is a society whose smallest unit, the family, is healthy. Husband and wife should love each other so that love for God can be achieved on the basis of that, and the warm heart of the family will attract the blessings and blessings of God and give a pure and healthy generation to the society. The first step of forming a family is marriage, which prepares people to leave the state of celibacy and to build a great society (1).

Marital satisfaction is an overall assessment of the state of a person's current marital or romantic relationship. Marital satisfaction can be a reflection of people's level of happiness from marital relationships or a combination of satisfaction due to many factors specific to marital relationships. A person's satisfaction with married life is considered as his satisfaction with the family, and satisfaction with the family means satisfaction with life, and as a result, it will facilitate the growth and excellence and the material and spiritual progress of the society (2). Marital satisfaction can be considered as a psychological situation that does not arise by itself, but requires the

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efforts of both partners. Especially in the early years, marital satisfaction is very unstable and relationships are at the highest risk (3).

Kaplan and Sadock (4) state that marital satisfaction is a personal experience in marriage that can only be evaluated by the person himself in response to the level of enjoyment of the marital relationship. They believe that marital satisfaction depends on people's expectations. Married life can be a successful life when the parties have cultural and class homogeneity and have similar values because with the emergence of machine civilization, the relationship between men and women has become complicated. Therefore, marriage has techniques that couples should be aware of, otherwise they will face problems that lead to separation (5).

Marital intimacy as an important aspect of married life has a long history, the attempt to classify it goes back to the time of Aristotle, and today part of the knowledge in this field confirms his observations, but the scientific study about it started in the 1990s. has begun and with the introduction of a topic such as interpersonal relationships in family psychology and considering intimate relationships between husband and wife as one of its important types, this relationship has found a special place and meaning in married life in such a way that in Theorizing about the family emphasizes the importance of intimate bonding between spouses and considers it necessary to create a secure family identity.

Intimacy is a protective and powerful factor against personal and social problems by creating a special and positive dimension in married life and ensuring the mental health of family members. In this sense, it emphasizes the intimacy between husband and wife in the family (6).

Recognizing intimacy means recognizing diversity in family structures, and for this reason, family therapists try not to consider individual problems as the result of individual growth and development by considering the person in intimate relationships in the family, and in treating a situation Make couples increase their intimacy with each other and understand different styles of intimacy. Definitely, intimacy is useful and necessary for parents and children, for spouses, and for the stability and strength of family and marital relationships. An intimate relationship includes caring, mutual trust, and acceptance, and the

quality of the relationship is stability for both sexual and non-sexual intimacy of couples (7). In a research that examined the marital satisfaction of the families of working women and housewives, the results indicated that the marital satisfaction of housewives is higher than that of working women. Also, the results showed that the marital satisfaction of men with a housewife wife is higher than men with a working wife (8). In a research by examining the prediction of marital satisfaction based on the variables of communication beliefs and marital intimacy in divorced and normal women of Mashhad (9), the results showed that marital satisfaction can be determined by the variables of communication beliefs and marital intimacy in two groups. The applicant predicted a normal divorce.

Syvnyly et al., in the research, investigated the effect of burden of responsibility on sexual intimacy and marital satisfaction in Alzheimer's couples. The findings showed that there was a difference between the experimental group and the control group regarding marital satisfaction and emotional and sexual intimacy (8).

Mirgain investigated the relationship between emotional skills, intimacy and marital satisfaction. The results show that emotional skills can be reliably observed in relationships between spouses. Also, the results support the model in which emotional skills affect marital satisfaction through their impact on intimacy. And high intimacy increases marital satisfaction (10,11).

In their research, Daghighleh, Asgari and Heydari investigated the relationship, love, intimacy with marital satisfaction among the employees of the Islamic Azad University of Ahvaz. The results showed that there is a significant positive relationship between intimacy and marital satisfaction (12).

Hiyoten and, Berat came to the conclusion that there is a positive and significant correlation between the practice of religious beliefs and the level of intimacy, agreement, honesty, affection and adherence to commitments, in the sense that the higher the level of practice of religious beliefs in couples, they experience more satisfaction (13). In a study that compared sexual satisfaction, marital commitment, marital intimacy and body image in married working women and housewives. The results showed that there is a significant difference between working women and housewives in terms of sexual satisfaction, marital

commitment, marital intimacy and body image, meaning that working women reported better results in all four variables (14,15).

According to the presented materials, the aim of this research is to compare the marital satisfaction and marital intimacy of working and non-working female students of Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz branch.

Materials and Methods

The statistical population of this research includes all working and non-working married female students of Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz branch, who were examined in the academic year 2013-2014. The size of the statistical population is 3500 people, and according to Morgan's table, the sample of this research consists of 246 people from the mentioned population, and available sampling method was used to select them.

Research instruments

A) Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire: This scale was created in 1989 by Olson, Forni and Drankman in America with the aim of evaluating potentially problematic areas or identifying areas of strength and fruitfulness in the marital relationship (16). The validity and reliability of this questionnaire was calculated by Soleimaniani. The criterion validity of this questionnaire with the family compatibility questionnaire was obtained as 0.86 and 0.92 respectively (all were significant at the 0.05 level), which indicates its acceptable validity and its reliability is 0.95. It is calculated by Cronbach's alpha method. In this research, Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the marital satisfaction questionnaire, which is equal to 0.70 for the entire questionnaire, which indicates the acceptable reliability coefficients of the mentioned questionnaire (17).

B) Bagaroozi Marital Intimacy Questionnaire: Bagaroozi Needs Survey Questionnaire (18) is designed to evaluate the needs of intimacy in emotional, psychological, intellectual, sexual, physical, spiritual, aesthetic and recreational-social dimensions. It contains 41 questions that the subject answers each question in a ranked form, from 1 meaning "there is no such need at all" to 10 meaning "there is a great need". The highest score is 50 in each dimension and 60 in the dimension of spiritual intimacy.

Emetadi et al. (15) obtained the reliability of this questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha test of

0.94 and to determine the content validity, the questionnaire was given to 15 counseling professors and 15 married couples, and its content validity was confirmed.

The reliability coefficient of the whole questionnaire was obtained by Cronbach's alpha method of 0.94. In addition, Khamse and Hosseinian (20) in a study calculated the reliability of each dimension of intimacy with the test-retest method, which for emotional, psychological, intellectual, sexual, physical, spiritual, aesthetic and social-recreational intimacy, respectively, 0.89, 0.82, 0.81, 0.91, 0.80, 0.65, 0.76, 0.51 were obtained and it indicates the acceptable reliability of this scale. In the current research, Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the emotional intimacy questionnaire, which was 0.89 for the whole questionnaire (emotional intimacy 0.70, psychological intimacy 0.58, intellectual intimacy 0.61, sexual intimacy 0.54, physical intimacy (0.65), spiritual intimacy (0.59), aesthetic intimacy (0.74) and social intimacy (0.70), which indicate the desired reliability coefficients of the mentioned questionnaire.

Results

The descriptive findings of this research including statistical indicators such as mean, standard deviation for all variables studied in this research are presented in Table 1.

As can be seen in Table 1, in the variable of marital satisfaction, the mean and standard deviation are 147.52 and 9.84 for working students, 143.84 and 12.80 for non-working students, and 145.70 and 145.53 for all students. 11, as well as the standard deviation and average in other variables are given in the table.

In the variable of emotional intimacy, working students 41.22 and 60.60, non-working students 42.72 and 4.52 and all students 41.96 and 5.70, in psychological intimacy variable, working students 40.54 and 4.81. Unemployed 40.69 and 5.58 and all students 40.61 and 6.22 and in the variable of intellectual intimacy, the average scores of employed students 40.02 and 9.58, non-employed 43.94 and 5.47 and all students 41.97 and 8.04, in the variable of sexual intimacy, working students are 40.35 and 11.01, non-working students are 41.98 and 8.11, and all students are 41.16 and 9.70. In the variable of physical intimacy, the scores of working students are 42.05 and 9.29, non-

working students are 34.42 and 7.31, and all students are 20.42 and 8.35, in the variable of spiritual intimacy, working students are 26.45 and 5.97. , non-employed 47.95 and 5.97 and total students 41.10 and 6.51, in the variable of aesthetic intimacy, employed students 41.10 and 6.51, non-employed students 42.75 and

4.40 and total students 92 obtained scores of 5.41 and 61. While in the variable of social-recreational intimacy, the scores of working students were 39.89 and 7.40, non-working students were 40.92 and 4.75, and all students were 40.40 and 24.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

Variable	Subjects statistical indices	Average	SD	Number
Marital Satisfaction	Employed married woman students	147.52	9.84	124
	Unemployed married woman Students	143.84	12.80	122
	Total students of married woman	145.70	11.53	246
Affectional intimacy	Employed married woman students	41.22	6.60	124
	Unemployed married woman Students	42.72	4.52	122
	Total students of married woman	41.96	5.70	246
Psychological intimacy	Employed married woman students	40.54	6.81	124
	Unemployed married woman Students	40.69	5.58	122
	Total students of married woman	40.61	6.22	246
Intellectual intimacy	Employed married woman students	40.02	9.58	124
	Unemployed married woman Students	43.94	5.47	122
	Total students of married woman	41.97	8.04	246
Sexual intimacy	Employed married woman students	40.35	11.01	124
	Unemployed married woman Students	41.98	8.11	122
	Total students of married woman	41.16	9.70	246
Physical intimacy	Employed married woman students	42.05	9.29	124
	Unemployed married woman Students	42.34	7.31	123
	Total students of married woman	42.20	8.35	246
Spiritual intimacy	Employed married woman students	45.26	8.85	123
	Unemployed married woman Students	47.95	5.97	123
	Total students of married woman	46.59	7.66	246
Aesthetic intimacy	Employed married woman students	41.10	6.51	123
	Unemployed married woman Students	42.75	4.40	123
	Total students of married woman	41.92	5.61	246
Social-recreative intimacy	Employed married woman students	39.89	7.40	123
	Unemployed married woman Students	40.92	4.75	123
	Total students of married woman	40.40	6.24	246

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to compare the marital satisfaction and marital intimacy of working and non-working female students of Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz branch. The results showed that there is a significant difference between working married female students and non-working married female students in terms of marital satisfaction. In other words, working married female students have higher marital satisfaction than non-working married female students. The findings of this study are consistent with the

conducted (8-11). The satisfaction experienced by men and women is correlated in different dimensions. Also, the quality of life of these couples is favorable for both husband and wife due to their relatively good financial situation due to two incomes. For a woman, employment provides many of her needs, including busyness, variety and challenging, and strength, which may not fulfill the role of a housewife with all its importance. In men's view, women's employment means performing non-traditional roles and obligations. In these marriages, the man feels less psychological pressure due to the

fact that he is not solely responsible for providing the family's finances. This way of life also has a positive effect on the quality of marital relations because in these marriages there is more interaction between men and women in power and decision-making. Joint decisions make husband and wife respect each other more and bring them closer together. Both of them feel valuable and worthy because they experience a fair relationship (20,21).

On the other hand, in the present research, it was observed that between the areas of intimacy in the emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic fields, working women have lower intimacy than non-working women, and a significant difference was observed, which is similar to the researches of Mahdizadegan and Sharifi. Renani (10), Rasti et al. (11), Daghighale et al. (12), Hiyoten W, Berat R (13) are consistent. In explaining these results, it can be said that due to the lower stress level and less fatigue of non-working women compared to working women, a safe and calm environment has been prepared at home, which has resulted in better mental and psychological conditions for non-working women. It has provided more marital intimacy. The common definition of intimacy is the level of closeness to a spouse, sharing values and opinions,

common activities, knowing each other, sexual relations and emotional behaviors such as caressing.

A person who experiences more intimacy is able to express himself better in relationships and express his needs more effectively to his partner (21). To create emotional intimacy, there should be few barriers and restrictions so that feelings can be easily expressed in a relationship situation. In order to create rational intimacy, respect for the other party's point of view, the ability to role play, understanding and empathy are necessary.

As a result, it can be said that if the conditions for expressing all kinds of intimacy are not provided for the couple, the couple will not be successful in expressing any of them. It seems that people who experience higher levels of intimacy are able to present themselves in a more favorable way in relationships and express their needs more effectively to their partners and spouses. Intimacy is often described as a dynamic process.

Conclusion

The results showed that working women reported higher marital intimacy and marital satisfaction than working women.

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