

A Review of the Relationship of Religious Attitude, Optimism, and Attachment Styles with Marital Satisfaction in the Spouses Employed in Education Department

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the relationship of religious attitude, attachment styles, and optimism with marital satisfaction in the spouses employed in Bandar Abbas education department. Research method is correlative based on multivariate regression analysis in order to test research hypotheses. The statistical population consists of 380 teachers in Bandar Abbas, who were selected by random stratified sampling method. Four questionnaires were used to gather information on attachment styles, religiosity scale, optimism scale, and marital satisfaction scale. The results of research showed that the studied model significantly determines 76% of the variance of the standard variable, i.e. marital satisfaction. All of the variables existing in the model were significantly related to marital satisfaction. On this basis, religious attitude with $\beta=0.38$ had the highest relationship with marital satisfaction and optimism ($\beta=0.24$) had the lowest relationship with this variable.

KEYWORDS: Religious Attitude, Optimism, Attachment Styles, Marital Satisfaction

1. INTRODUCTION

Marriage is the holiest and most sophisticated relationship between two humans of two opposite sexes which has deep and extensive aspects and multiple objectives. Undoubtedly no emotional and social abnormality exists unless under the influence of family. According to Plato, the main tenets required to organize a good republic are the ones which organize the marital relationship. A society with no healthy and balanced family cannot claim to be healthy. The families will have better function and better play their role if the spouses understand each other and feel satisfaction with their lives. Marital satisfaction is one of the factors for making progress and achieving the objectives of life [1]. Marital satisfaction includes a friendly relationship accompanied by understanding each other, and a logical balance among the material and moral needs of the spouses. Marital satisfaction in a family is the most important pillar of mental health of the family members [2]. Marital satisfaction indicates the strength and efficacy of the family system. A healthy family and society are formed based on the conscious ties and healthy and growing relationship of spouses. Lack of a satisfactory strength in the family foundation will lead to negative consequences not only on the family but also on the society in whole [3]. Marital satisfaction is a quality that is influenced by a variety of factors including mental-personality, social-economic, and cultural factors. Related research indicates that happiness and misery in women and men can be predicted from the beginning of their marital life, and hence many of their problems can be prevented. For this reason, today pre-marriage training for the young couples is a very important necessity. The more a boy and a girl knows oneself and one's future spouse and consider more plausible standards for choosing spouse, they will confront less problems and conflicts in their marital life [4]. Ellis and Harper [5] considers marital satisfaction as a feeling associated with consent, satisfaction, and joy experienced by man or woman. Nemechek, and Olson [6] refers to a number of studies and points out that marital satisfaction is mostly influenced by the personality characteristics of spouses. Personality indicates that part of the characteristics of the individual(s) that includes their fixed intellectual, emotional, and behavioral patterns [7]. These personality characteristics are certainly evident in all grounds of life and social relations, which influence the spouses' compatibility and their marital satisfaction when it comes to an important issue like marriage [8].

The attachment style is one of the personal factors that influence marital compatibility and incompatibility and many research works have been performed in relation with it [9]. New research shows that the attachment styles are strong predictors of marital satisfaction [10]. Research works in this area show that people with safe attachment style have healthier relationships with others and particularly with their spouses and are therefore more stable and satisfied in their relations [10, 11].

The studies prove that there is a positive significant relationship between religious attitudes and marital satisfaction [12]. Dudley and Kosinski [13] studied the relationship between the religious attitude variables and marital satisfaction among 228 couples. The results of this research showed that there is a strong relationship between religious attitude and marital satisfaction. Almost 86% of the research participants stated that through

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commitment to religion they became more patient so that it helped them behave more sympathetically toward others and have more flexibility in their relations with others.

One of the variables of personality is optimism which has a positive relationship with perseverance, and occupational, family, and social achievements, health and even life time [14]. Optimism and hope are rooted in positive psychology perspective [15]. Lin and Raghbir [16] believe that pessimist couples are extremely influenced by their emotions and get easily disappointed with their spouse's behaviors. They are not accountable and fail to solve their marital problems. Research works prove that personality characteristics such as optimism and physical health of spouses play roles in a successful life. McNulty and Karney [18] study proves that positive expectations and optimism have a positive relationship with marital satisfaction.

Based on the relationships between the above variables and marital satisfaction and the importance of these variables in predicting marital satisfaction, the relationship of religious attitude, attachment styles, and optimism with marital satisfaction in the spouses employed in Bandarabbas education department is studied in this research.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is a descriptive research of correlation type. The statistical population of research consists of all married teachers employed in Bandarabbas education department. A sample of 384 teachers (180 female and 200 male) was taken by random stratified sampling method according to Morgan Table.

Three questionnaires were used to gather the data required for this research. The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) was used to review the religious attitude of the individuals participating in this research. This scale is a self-report tool for assessment of religiosity. It is made up of 15 questions and has been prepared by *Huber and Huber* [18]. Huber and Huber calculated the reliability of this questionnaire at 0.96 and estimated its validity in an appropriate level.

The Simpson et al. [19] questionnaire was used to assess attachment styles. This test consists of 13 items of which 5 items serve to assess safe attachment style and 8 items for assessment of unsafe attachment style. Simpson et al. [19] estimated its reliability at 0.70 and reported its validity appropriate. Conchas and Clark [20] positivism scale was used to assess optimism variable. The optimism subscale of this questionnaire was used to assess optimism. This scale is made up of 11 questions which the developers report its reliability at 0.79 and its validity at appropriate level. Higher scores in this scale show higher degrees of optimism.

Enrich questionnaire was used to assess marital satisfaction. Enrich questionnaire is a 45-item tool. Higher scores show higher marital satisfaction. The alpha coefficient of Enrich questionnaire in Fower and Olson [21] were reported 0.81 for marital satisfaction. The validity of this questionnaire was reported satisfactory [21]. Calculation of mean and standard deviation was used for the analysis of data in descriptive section. The multivariate regression analysis was used in inferential section in order to test research hypotheses.

3. RESULTS

As mentioned before mean description and standard deviation indices were used to describe data. Mean and standard deviation of each variable under study are presented in table 1.

According to the above table, the mean of scores of the participants of the religious attitude variable is 49.50. The scores' means of the participants of safe and unsafe attachment style variables scale were respectively calculated at 19.43 and 18.80. The participants' scores mean on optimism was reported 24.60. Also the mean of scores on marital satisfaction obtained by the participants was 125.87.

The concurrent multivariate regression analysis was used in order to test research hypotheses for a significant relationship between religious attitude, safe and unsafe attachment styles, and optimism as predictive variables and marital satisfaction as standard variable.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of study variables

| Variable | N | Mean | SD | Min. | Max. |
|---------------------------|-----|--------|------|------|------|
| Religious attitude | 380 | 49.50 | 5.58 | 26 | 78 |
| Secure attachment style | 380 | 19.43 | 8.26 | 5 | 38 |
| Insecure attachment style | 380 | 18.80 | 5.58 | 9 | 25 |
| Optimism | 380 | 24.60 | 8.42 | 11 | 38 |
| Marital Satisfaction | 380 | 125.87 | 8.34 | 26 | 78 |

Table 2. The Results of ANOVA Analysis in Relation with Significance Test of the Studied Model

| Model | SS | DF | MS | F | Sig. |
|------------|------------|-----|----------|---------|-------|
| Regression | 195965.58 | 4 | 48991.39 | 301.632 | 0.001 |
| Residual | 60907.90 | 375 | 162.421 | | |
| Total | 256873.484 | 379 | | | |

According to the above table, the ANOVA results show that the tested model significantly predicts the standard variable. In table R^3 , R^2 , nonstandard coefficients, standard coefficients, and T quantity for significance of each standard coefficient have been presented.

Table 3. Summary of the Studied Model

| Variable | B | Beta | T value | Sig. | R | R ² |
|---------------------------|--------|------|---------|-------|------|----------------|
| Constant | 68.154 | | 11.26 | 0.001 | 0.87 | 0.76 |
| Religious attitude | 0.54 | 0.38 | 5.24 | 0.001 | | |
| Secure attachment style | 0.48 | 0.36 | 3.11 | 0.001 | | |
| Insecure attachment style | -1.79 | 0.37 | -9.75 | 0.001 | | |
| Optimism | 0.75 | 0.24 | 3.53 | 0.001 | | |

According to the above table, the presented model determines almost 76% of the variance of the standard variable. The standard coefficients and T quantities calculated for each of the predictive variables show that the variables of religious attitude, safe attachment style, and optimism have a positive and significant relationship with marital satisfaction. The unsafe attachment style has a negative and significant relationship with marital satisfaction. On this basis, the variable religious attitude ($\beta=0.38$) has the highest relationship, and optimism ($\beta=0.24$) has the lowest relationship with marital satisfaction.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research aims to review the relationship of religious attitude, attachment styles, and optimism with marital satisfaction in the spouses employed in Bandarabbas education department. The research results indicate that the studied model significantly defines 76% of the variance of the standard variable, i.e. marital satisfaction. All of the variables of the model were significantly related to marital satisfaction. Religious attitude was one of the predictive variables of the study that was positively and significantly related to marital satisfaction. The finding was coherent with previous studies [13]. The spouses' belief in God and enjoying a moral spirit could have a strong role in solving the problems. Being religious could strengthen the spouses with management skills through the variables of patience and fortitude and increase their strength to enjoy their lives.

Other predictive variables of this study were safe and unsafe attachment styles. The obtained results showed that the relationship between safe attachment style and marital satisfaction was positive and significant although unsafe attachment style was significantly and negatively related with marital satisfaction. By another words, safe attachment style can increase marital satisfaction although unsafe attachment style can reduce marital satisfaction. The results obtained in previous researches show that people with safe attachment style have a healthier relationship with others and particularly their spouse, and are more stable and satisfied in their relationships [11]. One of the likely explanations of these relationships could be safe and unsafe attachment styles depending on the individuals' personality characteristics. People with safe attachment style feel satisfied with establishing relationships with others and have no fear from approaching the others. The attachment style influences the individual's relationships from the childhood until the end of life. It is therefore natural that the individual shows the same characteristics as a spouse and his relationship with his wife is influenced by the attachment style.

An unsafe child feels no safety when contacting with others during childhood. At the same time the child wants to have relations with his/her mates. He tries to reconcile with others when he could have disputes with other mates. These groups of children tend to permanently reject the others, get easily angry, and permanently feel lack of trust. These children tend to become spouses in their adulthood that ask for excessive cordiality and relationship. But when their spouses approach to satisfy their wish, they get angry and avoid their contact. They withdraw intimacy although they want it eagerly. They do not know exactly how much they want their spouses get closed to them.

Optimism was another variable which had a positive and significant relationship with marital satisfaction. The finding was coherent with previous studies [17]. The results of these studies prove that pessimist spouses are to a great extent influenced by their emotions; they get disappointed with the performance of their spouses impulsively, are not accountable, and fail to solve their marital disputes. It is obvious that optimism can create positive expectations from each other in the spouses and substantially increase marital satisfaction.

This research has some limitations such as using self-report questionnaires and that the sample was taken only from the population of spouses employed in Bandarabbas education department. It is recommended to apply methods such as interview to confirm the information obtained from the questionnaire in future studies. Repeating this study in other cities and on other samples can help generalize the findings. In future research, researchers can study the influence of teaching positivism and optimism skills on marital satisfaction.

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