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Predicting Marital Boredom of Couples Based on Attachment Styles among Married Students

Nasrin Heydari Mollai^{*1}, Mona Movahedi Shakib², Reza Saeedi Abu Ishaqi³, Morad Rostami⁴

1. Master of Job Counseling, Islamic Azad University, Quchan Branch, Iran.

2. M.A of School Counseling, Allameh Tabatabai University, Iran.

3. M.A of Counseling and Guidance, Islamic Azad University, Khomeini Shahr Branch, Iran.

4. M.A of Psychology, Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch, Iran.

A B S T R A C T

The aim of this study was to predict marital boredom of couples based on attachment styles (safe, avoidance and anxiety). The present study was a descriptive correlational study and the statistical population of this study included all married students of Islamic Azad University of Mashhad in the winter of 1398 who were selected by multi-stage sampling method of 200 people and entered the study with informed consent. To collect the data, participants responded to the Kaiser (1996) Marital Boredom Scale, the Collins and Reed (1990) Adult Attachment Styles Scale. Data were analyzed using hierarchical regression analysis. The results of the present study showed that attachment styles positively and significantly predict the marital boredom of couples. Among the attachment styles, avoidant attachment style and anxiety attachment style in a positive and meaningful way and secure attachment style in a negative and meaningful way predict the marital boredom of couples.

Keywords: Marital boredom, Attachment styles, Married students.

INTRODUCTION

The family, as a small social unit, is one of the most important institutions of society. In fact, every family should be a strong institution for lasting social relations between relatives, the source of expression and the manifestation of emotions should be considered as the center of the most intimate relationships between individuals and the cultivation of thought, mind, morality and the promotion of the soul (Sirous Jahedi, Akbari, & Amir Sadeghi, 2017). The family is the most important unit of society. Marriage has been described as the most important and fundamental human relationship because it provides the basic structure for establishing a family relationship and nurturing the next generation. Evidence shows that more than 90% of the world's population will get married at least once. While marriage seems like a very desirable relationship, statistics show that marital satisfaction is not something that can be easily achieved. Therefore, the level of marital satisfaction is an important factor that affects the family in general (J. Khosravi, Moradi, Ahmadiyan, & Yousefi, 2019; Tsapelas, Aron, & Orbuch, 2009). Marriage, which is the basis of forming a family, is one of the most important interpersonal relationships in human life. Spanier, Lewis, and Cole (1975), defined marital adjustment as the

*. Corresponding Author: Amin.equity@gmail.com

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couple's adjustment to daily life and the change of living conditions and the appropriate change of these conditions in a certain period of time (Ahmadi Ardakani & Fatemi Oghada, 2019). Shahabi, Shahabi, and Foroozandeh (2020), defines marital compatibility as a marital relationship in which the partners can communicate with each other and there is no conflict in important areas of the marriage, or if a conflict arises, in some way. It is resolved that will lead to satisfaction for both couples. Marital conflicts are also considered as an indicator of marital compatibility. As conflict in a couple's relationship increases, incompatibility increases and more dissatisfaction results. Marital conflicts have detrimental effects on physical, psychological and family health. Marital conflicts with low psychological well-being, insecure attachment styles, psychiatric disorders, depression, anxiety disorders, sexual dysfunction and physical health problems such as high blood pressure, chronic pain and ischemic diseases The heart is positively correlated (Babcock, Jacobson, Gottman, & Yerington, 2000; Weiss et al., 2018).

Previous research has identified two factors for distress and confusion in marital relationships: overt marital conflicts or disagreement and discouragement and indifference or in other words boredom (Gottman & DeClaire, 2001). Kayser (1993), defined marital boredom as the gradual loss of emotional attachment, which includes reduced attention to one's spouse, emotional alienation.

And it increases the feeling of discouragement and indifference towards the spouse and includes three stages: 1) Frustration and despair: The prominent feature of this stage is the frustration of marital relations. At this stage, the bored person rumbles the frustration towards his wife in complete silence; 2) Anger and hatred: The clearest feeling at this stage is the feeling of hatred, which seems to be due to the recurrence of negative and harmful behaviors of the couple. Because it is difficult to ignore the mistakes of the spouse, which was easy in the first stage; 3) Discouragement and indifference: Emotional and physical distancing is characteristic of the last stage of the boredom process. Unlike the previous stage, anger and hatred are somewhat reduced and emotional coldness is significantly increased. Also, the restorative behaviors of the previous stages do not take place in this stage due to blaming the spouse for causing the problems. Boredom in a marital relationship means a negative and unsatisfactory attitude that a couple has from different aspects of their marital relationship (Taherian, Ghajavand, & Iravani, 2019). On the other hand, Cirhinlioglu, Tepe, and Cirhinlioglu (2016), in a study concluded that frequent marital conflicts also facilitate the occurrence of marital boredom.

Findings show that each couple's attachment styles affect relationships, marital satisfaction and compatibility, and lead to marital conflicts (Beck, Pietromonaco, DeBuse, Powers, & Sayer, 2013; Chung, 2014; Muraru & Turliuc, 2012). One of the important factors that has been considered in recent years and has a great impact on the marital life of couples is the initial experiences of the person with the parents or the type of emotional relationship with the parents in childhood. Marchand-Reilly (2012), have argued that people's experiences in early parent-child relationships shape their romantic relationships in adulthood. Collins and Reid distinguished between adult attachments relationships by identifying the specific dimensions that underlie Hazan and Shaver (1987), discrete attachment styles. These dimensions include comfort in close relationships, the ability to rely on others, and the anxiety of being abandoned or unloved. Adults with a secure attachment style are comfortable in close relationships and feel that they can rely on others in times of need. They feel competent in relationships and do not have the anxiety of being abandoned or unloved. Adults with anxious insecure attachment styles have a strong tendency to have close relationships and generally believe that they can rely on others. However, they are also very worried about being abandoned or rejected. And finally, adults are unhappy with the insecure attachment style of avoiding close relationships and relying on others. They do not worry about abandonment or rejection and tend to minimize the

importance of intimate relationships (Marchand-Reilly, 2012). The findings of Ahmadi Ardakani and Fatemi Oghada (2019), and Z. Khosravi, Baliyad, Nahidpor, and Azadi (2011), showed that there is a significant relationship between attachment styles, marital conflicts and forgiveness. Also, the rate of marital conflict in couples whose attachment style is safe is less and the rate of forgiveness in them is higher than couples whose attachment style is both unsafe or the attachment style of one of them is safe and the other is unsafe.

In summary, it can be said that one of the closest interpersonal relationships is formed after marriage and marital relationship (Herrington et al., 2008). Considering the great effect of each couple's attachment styles on marital relationships and subsequent marital conflicts, and on the other hand, the relationship between marital conflicts, it can be said that each of the attachment styles also predicts marital boredom. Therefore, the aim of this study was to answer the question whether attachment styles predict marital boredom.

METHODOLOGY

The statistical population of this study included all married students studying at the Islamic Azad University of Mashhad in the winter of 2019 and 200 people were selected by multi-stage sampling method for regression research, according to the minimum sample size. Thus, out of 12 university faculties, 4 faculties in the first stage, 4 fields of study in the second stage, and in the third stage of the year of entering the University for each Field were selected randomly.

The Kayser (1993), Marital Boredom Scale is a self-report tool designed to assess the extent of boredom towards a spouse and includes 21 questions that do not apply to me at all in a 4-point Likert scale = 1 to completely My case applies = 4 is scored. Kayser (1993), reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.97 for this instrument. In Shaker (2011), study reported a negative correlation between boredom score and perceived marital happiness scale ($r = -0.56$) and marital intimacy scale ($r = -0.86$) as indicators of divergence of this tool.

The Collins and Read (1990), Adult Attachment Styles Questionnaire consists of 18 questions by marking on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Does not match my characteristics in any way = 1" to "Fully matches my characteristics" Is = 5 »is formed, it is measured. For options 1 to 5, scores of 0 to 4 are considered, respectively. Questions 1, 6, 8, 12, 13, 17 Safe Attachment (C), Questions 2, 5, 7, 14, 16, 18 Avoidance Attachment (D) and finally questions 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 15 Attachment Evaluates ambivalent / anxious (A). In cases where the questions should be scored in reverse, scores 4, 3, 2, 1 and zero should be considered on options 1 to 5, respectively (questions 1, 5, 8, 16, 17, and 18 to Are scored in reverse). The scores of the 6 items of each scale are added together and the score of the subscale is obtained. Collins and Read (1990), measured Cronbach's alpha for each subscale in two samples of 173 and 100 students for subscale C 0.81, 0.82 subscale D 0.80, and Sub-scale A reported 0.85, 0.83 as an indicator of test validity. Damirchi and Salahyan (2018), determined the validity of the test by using retesting as a correlation between the two performances. The results of two rounds of this questionnaire with a time interval of one month from each other showed that this test is valid at the level of 0.95. Damirchi and Salahyan (2018), has examined the construct validity for this questionnaire. The validity of the structure was measured using divergent (diagnostic) validity. The results showed that the correlation coefficient between subscales A and C, A and D at the significance level of -0.01 is -0.313 and -0.336, respectively, and the correlation coefficient between the subscales C and D at the significance level of 0.14 The value of 0.246 was obtained.

After familiarizing the subjects with the research objectives and assuring them about the confidentiality of personal information, the research questionnaires were given to those students who were ready to answer the questionnaire items. Students in each class completed the

questionnaires in groups. According to the number of items, the average time for completing the questionnaires was 10 minutes. The researcher was present during the response of the people in the environment to be responsible in case of any problems. In the present study, Pearson correlation coefficient and multivariate regression analysis were used to analyze the data to determine the share of predictor variables in predicting the criterion variable. The assumptions of the multivariate regression analysis method include the normality and linearity of the relationships between the variables.

RESULTS

The number of participants was 156 females and 44 males, the mean age range of females was 33.17 and its standard deviation was 8.03 and the mean age range of males was 34.27 and its standard deviation was 7.97.

the elongation and skew values of any of the variables were not more than 1%. This means that the data distribution was probably normal for each of the research variables. This indicates that one of the basic assumptions of regression analysis is established. The use of scatter plot diagrams (one of the most common methods for examining the assumption of linearity between relationships between variables) showed that the variables of the present study have created two-by-two scatter plots that are elliptical. Accordingly, none of the relationships between the markers show a clear deviation from linearity. This indicates the assumption that the relationships between variables are linear among the research variables and attachment styles explain 11.9% of the variance in marital boredom.

CONCLUSION

The results of the present study showed that avoidant attachment style and anxiety in a positive way and safe attachment style in a negative way predict marital boredom.

In line with the results of this study, Besharat (2003), concluded that couples with secure attachment style in their relationships experience more interdependence, trust, commitment and satisfaction, while couples with insecure attachment styles experience more problems. Experience in their relationships. Shaker (2011), showed that there is a significant positive relationship between mental health and marital adjustment in people with secure, worrying and denying attachment styles. Whereas, in people with anxiety attachment style, there is a significant negative relationship between mental health and marital adjustment. People with secure attachment styles always trust their partner. People with secure attachment styles are more responsible and less likely to have a bleak future for their relationships. They do not see separation as a stressful process, which is why they are not afraid of their future relationships. This safety of mind leads to more focus on the present and more enjoyment of relationships. These people express their love and affection confidently and completely and use less vague communication patterns (Linley & Joseph, 2004). People with secure attachment styles are comfortable in intimate relationships, willing to receive support from others, have a positive self-image, and have positive expectations of others. People with secure attachment styles are more responsible and less likely to have a bleak future for their relationships. They do not see separation as a stressful process, which is why they are not afraid of their future relationships. This security of mind leads to more focus on the present and more enjoyment of relationships. Insecure attachment styles, including anxiety, are the product of experiences of lack or fluctuation in access to the subject of attachment; anxious insecure attachment style is the experience of unstable access to the subject of attachment. This instability and fluctuation can manifest itself in mood disorders and fluctuations. People with insecure attachments show

different patterns in their very close and intimate relationships. Anxious people tend to be preoccupied with their sexual or love partner and are alert, prepared, alert, and suspicious, and experience very low communication satisfaction, many failures, and confusion. Avoiding people are significantly less likely to find themselves in the middle of nowhere, especially when it comes to safe and secure relationships. Like anxious people, their very close and intimate relationships are accompanied by little satisfaction and in many cases disrupt their relationship. Also, their relationships are characterized by less intimacy and closeness.

On the other hand, most people with anxiety attachment styles use negative strategies of emotional regulation and failure to regulate emotions. However, people with secure attachment styles use emotion regulation strategies that minimize stress and activate positive emotions compared to people with insecure attachment styles. Thus, the use of dysfunctional strategies by people with anxiety attachment reduces their ability to cope with stressful situations and makes them more vulnerable to problems. Emotional dysfunction in marital situations is likely to lead to emotion regulation strategies and maladaptive conflict resolution techniques and ultimately marital boredom.

This is why people with insecure avoidance and anxiety attachment styles in their close relationships, such as marital relationships, experience crises and, consequently, conflicts in such relationships. Existence of conflict in marital relationships, if not resolved and addressed properly, little by little, couples become discouraged and distant from each other, and each of them is encouraged in some way by their hobbies. Every research has its limitations. In this research, cross-sectional research plan and failure to study other influential variables are among the limitations of the research. Therefore, it is suggested that this plan be repeated in the form of longitudinal plans and research should be done on variables such as socio-economic status, duration of marriage, number of children, etc.

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