



## Comparison of the Marital Five Needs Based on Choice Theory in Couples and the Relationship between These Marital Needs and Marital Satisfaction

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**ABSTRACT:** This study has been conducted to compare the marital five needs based on choice theory in couples and the relationship between these marital needs and marital satisfaction. The research method was descriptive - correlational. Research population was couples participating in family education courses in Bandar Abbas city. Sample included 30 couples (60 individuals) of those who were selected from the available sample. Data collection tools were the questionnaire of marital needs based on choice theory (Sahebi scale) and Enrich marital satisfaction questionnaire. In order to compare the marital needs of the wives and husbands t-test was used for independent groups and MANOVA analysis was applied. Pearson correlation coefficient test was used to calculate the correlation of the spouses in the division of needs consistency and needs inconsistency and also marital satisfaction consistency and marital satisfaction inconsistency. The results of the present study showed that in all five marital needs there is a significant difference between the men and women. Women's need for love and fun are significantly higher and men's need for survive, power and freedom are significantly higher. Results also showed that there is no significant relationship between marital satisfaction and marital needs in couples.

**Keywords:** Marital basic needs - Marital Satisfaction - Choice theory - Couples

### INTRODUCTION

The ultimate goal of marriage is to reach mental peace, promote the existence and attain salvation. Marriage is the most favorite world extent construction in front of couples Creator God. Marital satisfaction is couples special feature that shows how each of them evaluates marriage <sup>1</sup>. Although many studies have been conducted on marital satisfaction and the relation of its various aspects to human life, this variable is still an important issue in relationships, treatment and the factors influencing marital satisfaction in different cultures <sup>2</sup>.

Although it seems that marriage is a very pleasant union, statistics show that the couple's satisfaction is not easily accessible. Marital life is a very complex relationship and there is no test in order to predict its perpetuity or its dwindling.

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The couples are the only ones who are aware of the level of their needs, strengths and weaknesses of their relationships and can take decisions about their future <sup>3</sup>.

The first and most important nuclear of family is formed by husband and wife and studies have shown that the relationship between the two spouses is the main predictor of marital satisfaction <sup>4</sup>.

Marital satisfaction is defined as the adaptation between the current situation and the expected situation. Satisfaction with marriage is defined by intrapersonal conceptualization (the reactions that the individual experiences subjectively) or by interpersonal conceptualization of marital satisfaction (as the consistency between the expectations of the individual from others and from the spouse) <sup>5</sup>.

Currently, various theoretical perspectives with different approaches sought to clarify and resolve marital conflicts. These treatments include the approaches of cognitive, cognitive-behavioral, systemic, emotional therapy, reality therapy of William Glaser <sup>6</sup>. William Glaser, the American psychiatrist, whose theory is known as reality therapy, presented his new theory in 1998. He called this new theory the choice theory because he believes that everything we do is considered as behavior and almost all of our behaviors are selected <sup>7</sup>. He considers the behavior as including four components of performance, thinking, feeling and physiology that people have direct control on the two components of thinking and performance, and indirect control on the two components of feeling and physiology. Choice theory main emphasis is on the two components of performance and thinking <sup>8</sup>.

Another implication of this theory is external control psychology. External control psychology means that the couples, in their relationships, try to control their spouses and use seven external control destructive habits. The seven habits are: (a) faulting or criticizing, (b) censuring, (c) complaining and grumbling, (d) nagging and growling, (e) threatening, (and) chastisement, (g) accounting or tax giving to harnessing the other one <sup>8</sup>.

Glaser believes that if the spouses try to stop these habits and instead replace seven kindness habits, their difficulty level will be reduced. These seven habits are: A) listening, (b) supporting, (c) encouraging, (d) respect, (e) trust, (f) acceptance, (g) a permanent dialogue on the conflicts <sup>8</sup>. According to Glaser, the cause of failure of most couples in addition to using external control character is the difference in intensity of the spouses' fundamental needs. Glaser believes that all human beings are born with five genetic needs and all of our behaviors are to meet these requirements. These five genetic needs include: The need for love and belonging, freedom, power, recreation and survival. If married people understand that they are influenced by their five basic needs, and employ choice theory and from the beginning of their life try to satisfy these needs, their marital relationships will be improved significantly. In other words, the main goal of choice theory is to teach the couples to be aware of their and their spouse's basic needs and avoid the use of external control psychology and considering the concept of general behavior make effort to have better choices <sup>9</sup>.

The studies conducted in the field of choice theory indicate the effectiveness of these treatment approaches. Loyd on a study evaluated the effectiveness of reality

therapy principle on the sense of need satisfy and behavior change in high school students. The intervention in experimental groups was conducted in five sessions. The purpose of this study was to demonstrate that teaching principles of choice theory lead to satisfy which psychological needs of the students. The results show that teaching principles of reality theory helped students to fulfill three needs of recreation, freedom and power (of the four needs of recreation, freedom, power and belonging)<sup>10</sup>.

The basic objective of this study was to determine the differences between men and women (couples) in terms of the five marital needs level, which was mentioned in William Glaser's Choice Theory. These five requirements include the need for love, the need for survival, the need for power, need for freedom and the need for fun. Moreover, determining the relationship between the five needs level in couples and marital satisfaction is another objective of this study. In other words, this research seeks to answer the question of is there a significant difference between the level of the couples (women and men) marital needs?

Glaser believes that every human being has five groups of basic needs that must be provided satisfactorily for each party in a successful marriage and in the case of imbalance in satisfying it by each party, it leads to dissatisfaction with marriage. These needs include the need for love, the need for survival, the need for power, the need for freedom and the need for fun. However, in relation to the impact of these five needs satisfaction based on choice theory on marital satisfaction, no specific research has been conducted; this study could provide the ground to assess the scale of marital needs based on choice theory in relation to marital issues and problems and couples treatment<sup>1</sup>.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research project was causative -comparative and descriptive - correlational. The study sample consisted of couples participating in family training courses in Bandar Abbas city in 2013. The research sample included 30 couples (30 women and 30 men) who were selected from the available sample. Required data collection tools were Enrich marital satisfaction questionnaire and the scale of marital basic needs based on choice theory<sup>11</sup>. Marital five needs based on choice theory questionnaire: This questionnaire has been made by Sahebi based on Glaser's choice theory Glaser<sup>11</sup>. The questionnaire contained 25 questions that 5 questions are considered for each need and 5 choices of very high, high, medium, low and very low are considered for each question. The reliability of the questionnaire in this study calculating by Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.84.

Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire: The original version of the test has 115 questions. Given the lengthy scale questions, its 47 questions form has been constructed. This form is used in this study. In this form five options are included for each of the questions. Questions options are: "totally agree", "agree", "neither agree

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nor disagree", "disagree", and "totally disagree". Questions grading is in the form of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and the maximum score of the testee in this questionnaire is 235 and higher score shows the higher marital satisfaction. Olson and Olson (1997) have reported the questionnaire validity using the alpha coefficient as 0.92. Alpha coefficient of 47- question form of this questionnaire in Soleimanian study <sup>13</sup> is obtained 0.95. The reliability of the questionnaire in this study using Cronbach's alpha coefficient equals 0.94.

## RESULTS

The investigation of five marital needs of men and women (couples) shows that women's need for love and fun are significantly higher and men's need for survive, power and freedom are significantly higher.

**Table 1.** Mean and standard deviation of the study variables according to sex

Variables	Sex	Mean	Standard deviation
The need for love	Female	23.26	0.980
	Male	15.36	1.711
The need for survival	Female	16.46	1.655
	Male	19.26	1.484
The need for power	Female	16.26	2.651
	Male	16.09	2.975
The need for freedo	Female	15.16	2.983
	Male	16.66	2.509
The need for fun	Female	19.05	1.925
	Male	16.63	2.511

Variables of the study according to the above table indicate that the average women's need for love is 23.26 and men's need for love is 15.36. The average women's need for survival equals to 16.46 while men's need for survival equals 19.26. The average women's need for power is 16.26 and men's need for power is 16.9. The average women's need for freedom equals 15.16 and men's need for freedom equals 16.66. The average women's need for fun is 19.5 and men's need for fun is 16.63. Results of t-test for the independent groups show that there is a significant difference between males and females in three needs of love, survival and fun at confidence level of 99%. In addition, in needs for power and freedom this significant difference is at confidence level of 95%.

**Table 2:** Results of the t test for independent groups of marital basic needs in both males and females groups

Basic needs	F amount	Significance level	Variances condition	T amount	Freedom degree	Significance level
The need for love	9.006	0.004	Equal Variances	21.937	58	0.0001
			Unequal Variances	21.937	46.175	0.0001
The need for survival	0.499	0.483	Equal Variances	-6.898	58	0.0001
			Unequal Variances	-6.898	57.321	0.0001
	0.117	0.733	Equal Variances	-2.87	58	0.03

<b>The need for power</b>			<b>Unequal Variances</b>	-2.87	57.247	0.03
<b>The need for freedom</b>	0.287	0.594	<b>Equal Variances</b>	-2.107	58	0.03
			<b>Unequal Variances</b>	-2.107	56.347	0.04
<b>The need for fun</b>	0.121	0.729	<b>Equal Variances</b>	4.961	58	0.0001
			<b>Unequal Variances</b>	4.961	54.332	0.0001

According to the results of Table 2, in general there is a significant difference between the level of the basic needs of the men and women at 95% level.

**Table 3:** The results summary of the multivariate covariance analysis on the research variables scores

Test	Value	F	Df Hypothesis	Df Error	Significance level
<b>Pillai's Trace</b>	0.999	15.6070	6	54	0.0001
<b>Wilks' Lambda</b>	0.001	15.6070	6	54	0.0001
<b>Hotelling Effect</b>	461.674	15.6070	6	54	0.0001
<b>Roy's largest root</b>	461.674	15.6070	6	54	0.0001

The results of Table 3 show that at least in one of the dependent variables there is a significant difference between the two groups. To further explore this difference, one-way ANOVA in Mankowa text has been conducted on scores of dependent variables. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 3. Table 3 shows the results of one-way ANOVA in Mankowa text to compare scores of variables in the two different groups.

**Table 4:** Results of one-way ANOVA in Mankowa text on scores of dependent variables

Component	Sum of Squares	Freedom degree	Mean of Squares	F	P
<b>The need for love</b>	22388.017	1	22388.017	1259.213	0.0001
<b>The need for survival</b>	19153.067	1	19153.067	4330.727	0.0001
<b>The need for power</b>	15200.417	1	15200.417	1889.709	0.0001
<b>The need for freedom</b>	16500.417	1	16500.417	2086.497	0.0001
<b>The need for fun</b>	19584.267	1	19584.267	2792.793	0.0001

The results listed in Table 4 show that one-way ANOVA in the variable of the need for love (F=1259.213 and p=0.0001), the variable of the need for survival (F=4330.727 and p=0.0001), the variable of the need for power (F=1889.709 and

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p=0.0001), the variable of the need for freedom (F=2086.497 and p=0.0001) and the variable of the need for fun (F=2792.793 and p=0.0001) are significant.

**Table 5:** frequency and frequency percentage of the modes of the couples need for love in their marital satisfaction modes

Couples marital satisfaction The need for love	Dissatisfied man and satisfied woman		Satisfied man and dissatisfied woman		Both dissatisfied		Both satisfied	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
man's need for love is low, woman's need for love is high	1	3.33	1	3.33	0	0	7	23.33
man's need for love is high, woman's need for love is low	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both have low need for love	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both have high need for love	2	6.67	2	6.67	1	3.33	16	53.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>76.67</b>

According to the above table related to the state of marital satisfaction among couples with different modes of the need for love, it indicates that the highest frequency (17 frequencies equal to 53.34%) refers to those married couples whose need for love and affection are high and both are satisfied with their life. Couples that man's need for love is low, but woman's need for love is high, have high marital satisfaction (7 frequencies equal to 23.33%).

**Table 6:** frequency and frequency percentage of the modes of the couples need for survival in their marital satisfaction modes

Couples marital satisfaction The need for survival	Dissatisfied man and satisfied woman		Satisfied man and dissatisfied woman		Both dissatisfied		Both satisfied	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
man's need for survival is low, woman's need for survival is high	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
man's need for survival is high, woman's need for survival is low	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6.67
Both have low need for survival	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Both have high need for survival	3	10	3	10	1	3.33	21	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>76.67</b>

According to the above table related to the state of marital satisfaction among couples with different modes of the need for survival, it indicates that the highest frequency (21 frequencies equal to 70%) refers to those married couples whose need for survival are high and both are satisfied with their life.

**Table 7:** frequency and frequency percentage of the modes of the couples need for power in their marital satisfaction modes

Couples marital satisfaction The need for power	Dissatisfied man and satisfied woman		Satisfied man and dissatisfied woman		Both dissatisfied		Both satisfied	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage

man's need for power is low, woman's need for power is high	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	10
man's need for power is high, woman's need for power is low	0	0	2	6.67	0	0	2	6.67
Both have low need for power	1	3.33	0	0	1	3/33	1	3.33
Both have high need for power	2	6.67	1	3.33	0	0	17	56.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3/33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>76.67</b>

The above table indicates that the highest frequency (17 frequencies equal to 56.66%) refers to those married couples whose need for power is high and both are satisfied with their life.

**Table 8:** frequency and frequency percentage of the modes of the couples need for freedom in their marital satisfaction modes

Couples marital satisfaction The need for freedom	Dissatisfied man and satisfied woman		Satisfied man and dissatisfied woman		Both dissatisfied		Both satisfied	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
man's need for freedom is low, woman's need for freedom is high	1	3.33	0	0	0	0	3	10
man's need for freedom is high, woman's need for freedom is low	1	3.33	3	10	0	0	6	20
Both have low need for freedom	1	3.33	0	0	0	0	1	3.33
Both have high need for freedom	0	0	0	0	1	3.33	13	43.34
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>76.67</b>

According to the above table related to the state of marital satisfaction among couples with different modes of the need for freedom, it indicates that the highest frequency (13 frequencies equal to 43.34%) refers to those married couples whose need for freedom are high and both are satisfied with their life.

**Table 9:** frequency and frequency percentage of the modes of the couples need for fun in their marital satisfaction modes

Couples marital satisfaction The need for fun	Dissatisfied man and satisfied woman		Satisfied man and dissatisfied woman		Both dissatisfied		Both satisfied	
	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage	N	Percentage
man's need for fun is low, woman's need for fun is high	2	6.67	0	0	0	0	2	6.67
man's need for fun is high, woman's need for fun is low	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Both have low need for fun	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Both have high need for fun	1	3.33	3	10	1	3.33	21	70

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Total	3	10	3	10	1	3.33	23	76.67
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According to the above table related to the state of marital satisfaction among couples with different modes of the need for fun, it indicates that the highest frequency (21 frequencies equal to 70%) refers to those married couples whose need for fun are high and both are satisfied with their life.

**Table 10:** Spearman correlation matrix between couples marital satisfaction and their basic needs

		The need for love	The need for survival	The need for power	The need for freedom	The need for fun
Marital satisfaction	Correlation coefficient	-0.006	-0.146	0.164	0.311	0.306
	Significance level	0.9	0.441	0.3	0.09	0.1

## DISCUSSION

Five marital needs in William Glaser's choice theory consisted of the needs for love, survival, power, freedom and fun. According to this theory, the difference between the needs level in the couples may cause marital discord, conflict and dissatisfaction in marital life. Reality therapy process in relation to couples, help the spouses to accept the facts relating to the level of needs or differences in their five marital needs and ultimately help to balance the needs and to response the needs by the couples.

According to Glaser's view in couples counseling based on choice theory, talking about the level of needs is the main key to solve the problems arising from different level of needs. Talking about the level of needs leads to balance the needs based on the facts exist in each of the couples <sup>15</sup>.

This study has addressed the level of needs in a group of couples. In other words, the main aim of the study was to determine the differences in couples regard to each of the five marital needs presented by William Glaser in his Choice Theory. The main research hypothesis is that there is a significant difference between men and women in terms of level of needs.

The research results have shown that men's need for survival, power and freedom is higher than women's need, while women's need for love and fun is higher than men's need. In each of the five studied needs, there has been a significant difference between men and women. This part of the study is consistent with what has been stated by William Glaser in his choice theory. In this study, the five marital needs have been evaluated through the marital needs scale that were designed and developed by the doctor Ali Sahebi. Sahebi, based on Glaser's choice theory, has designed a 25 question scale that has been used in couples counseling based on choice theory.



Sahebi scale has not been used yet by the researchers in studies related to family and it has only been applied in couple therapy process based on choice theory by couple therapists, who believe in choice theory. However, the reliability of 0.86 of the questionnaire in this study demonstrated an acceptable level of reliability for the questionnaire (Sahebi scale).

The relationship between marital satisfaction and the level of the needs was found significant. This reflects the fact that the factors influencing marital satisfaction are not only related to the differences or similarities factor in five marital needs level. Though there is a significant difference between the level of the needs of men and women (couples) in total, there is no significant relationship between marital satisfaction and the level of needs in couples.

In general, with regard to the results of this study it can be concluded that the level of marital needs questionnaire (Sahebi scale) can be valid for detection and determination of spouses' differences in terms of the needs. But it cannot serve as a valid tool to predict other variables related to marital life. More studies related to the level of the needs and the use of this scale in other areas can help the performance of this scale in areas related to families.

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### Appendix: Sahebi marital needs scale In the name of Allah

Please read the following statements carefully and rate each of the listed needs in yourself from very low to very high. Any statement asks about the amount and rate of the existence of a bias or requirement in you. Rate the existence of each need or inner desire based on the following 5 grades :

1-Very high 2- High 3- Average 4- Low 5- very low

Please complete the following table to enable the analysis of the questionnaire.

Personal Information:

Gender:

Age:

Age at marriage time:

Number of children:

Education Degree:

		Amount				
Row	Love	Very high	High	Average	Low	very low
1	How much do you feel need love, devotion and compassion?					
2	How important is other people's prosperity for you?					
3	How much do you need to be accepted and liked by others?					
4	How much do you need to be granted and loved by others and you too love them and give them a sense of belonging?					
5	How much do you need to be in contact with others and take part actively in meetings, ceremonies, and group activities?					
		Amount				
Row	Survival	Very high	High	Average	Low	very low
1	How much do the issues such as savings, living expenses, housing, financial security, job future and so on make your mind busy?					
2	To what extent do you think about physical health, hygiene and the risk of disease?					
3	How do you see your libido?					
4	To what extent do you pay cautious for risky jobs and performances?					
5	To deal with new experiences and starting unknown ways to what extent would you avoid?					
		Amount				
Row	Freedom	Very high	High	Average	Low	very low
1	To what extent do you need that no one should tell you how to run your life? (That is to say, one tells you what to do and what not to do).					

2	To what extent do you need to take your decisions alone without the interference of others?
3	To what extent would you like to accomplish what you want, without paying attention to the pressures and interferences of your spouse?
4	To what extent do you insist to accomplish what you without paying attention to inner and outer limits?
5	How much do you think you need to have sometimes for yourself to spend your time as you want, regardless of others interferences, bothers and even presences?
Amount	
<b>Row</b>	<b>Power</b>
	Very high    High    Average    Low    very low
1	To what extent do you try to show yourself in your job as a capable and meritorious person and become popular?
2	To what extent do you like (tend) to command others?
3	To what extent do you think you're competitive?
4	To what extent do you like your spouse listen to you, and follow it?
5	To what extent do you try to prove that your idea, thought, and the way you think is right and urge to convince others to accept it?
Amount	
<b>Row</b>	<b>Fun</b>
	Very high    High    Average    Low    very low
1	How much are you interested in fun, jest and joke?
2	To what extent do you need your own leisure and entertainment?
3	How do you see the level of your companionability and vivacity?
4	To what extent do you feel you need to do things such as cycling, fishing, watching movies and other enjoyable entertainments?
5	To what extent do you look for funny and joyous occasions such as celebrations, parties, fun events and games?

Grading Method: Grades of each part is added together (each 5 questions together), then the result is divided by 5 and the obtained number is put in the following table. Your profile is a five-digit number. Each of the numbers includes one need. For example, the profile of the average is: LSFPP = 33333

Need	Love:	Power:	Freedom:	Survival:	Fun:
Grade					