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A Comparison between Controlling Behaviors, Intimacy and Marital Adjustment of Iranian Couples Resident

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A B S T R A C T

This study has been conducted to compare controlling behaviors, intimacy and marital adjustment of Iranian couples living in Dubai and Bandar Abbas. The research method is causative - comparative. The study population is consisted of all couples resident in Dubai and Bandar Abbas. The statistical sample of the research includes 200 subjects (50 couples resident in Dubai and, 50 couples living in Bandar Abbas). Data collection tools include DAS Marital Adjustment Questionnaire, Marital Intimacy Questionnaire, as well as Controlling Behaviors Questionnaire. The research data analysis has been performed by two-way ANOVA test and multivariate regression test. Results show that there is a significant difference between controlling behaviors of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai. Research findings also indicate that there is a significant difference between marital intimacy and marital adjustment among couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai. Finally, these findings suggest that controlling behaviors of the couples have predictive power of marital adjustment and intimacy.

Keywords: Controlling Behaviors, Intimacy, Marital Adjustment.

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a human, complex, elegant and dynamic relationship, and has a special feature (Colman, 2018). In today societies human life has been undergone rapid and dramatic change in all aspects. Marriage and the marital life are excluded from this regulation. Although marriage has remained as a world institution, the goals and expectations, and how it formulated have been changed due to various social, cultural and economic changes over time (Montazeri, Gharacheh, Mohammadi, Alaghband Rad, & Eftekhar Ardabili, 2016; Salem, 2015).

The purpose of marriage also has changed from family and social relationships to satisfying personal emotional – psychological needs. The main reasons for marriage in today's society are generally love, having a partner and companion in life, satisfying emotional – psychological expectations and increasing happiness and rejoicing (Epstein & Zheng, 2017).

Conflict is an essential product of marital life (Constant, Vallet, Nandrino, & Christophe, 2016; Schaefer & Olson, 1981). There is always the possibility of conflict between two persons and how to communicate and behave the emerged conflicts are associated with marital happiness (Barton et al., 2016; Jakubowski, Milne, Brunner, & Miller, 2004). Conflict

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acceptance capacity is a sign of intimacy a healthy family. Good and healthy conflict is productive, but in problematic families they deny the problems or admit that they do not oppose, or shut down the lip of the words and they become isolated (Baucom, Epstein, Sayers, & Sher, 1989).

There is growing evidence that the ways of perception, interpretation and evaluation of each spouse about the other one and the events that occur in their relationships, have a significant impact on the quality of their relationships (Asen, 2002; Fraenkel, 2016; Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2012; McGoldrick, 1982).

Today marital adjustment is one of the terms that are used widely in marital and family studies. The expression is relevant to many other terms such as "marital satisfaction", "marital happiness", "marital success" and "marital stability" (Ghoroghi, Hassan, & Baba, 2015; Kendrick & Drentea, 2016; Soleimani et al., 2015). While the previous terms each represents one dimension of marriage, marital adjustment is a multidimensional term that throws light on multiple levels of marriage. Marital adjustment is a process which comes into beings during the couples' life, because its requisites are taste adaptation, knowing the person's characters, behavior rules developing and intercourse patterns formation. Therefore, marital adjustment is an evolutionary process among the couples. Over the years this concept is used among researchers without a clear and common definition. Marital adjustment in a way that married people adjust individually or together to remain married. So that marital adjustment is one of the most important factors in determining the stability and continuity of marital life (Fincham, Stanley, & Beach, 2007; Kim, Shin, & Yun, 2018; Najafi, Soleimani, Ahmadi, Javidi, & Kamkar, 2015).

Controlling behavior of the couples in marital life together is a process that can have a large impact on different aspects of their marital life. Cultural differences of living in different communities and their influence and norm-taking from the environment cause people have different behaviors in different areas of their lives. This can also be effective on different fields of individuals' psychology; based on communities' public culture, people engage in their social and interpersonal behaviors. Couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai in terms of cultural interactions are close and yet contradictory. Accordingly, it is necessary to examine the relationship between controlling behaviors and marital intimacy and adjustment of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai. Several factors can affect intimacy and marital adjustment of couples. Controlling the behavior by the couple is a phenomenon that highly influences the couple's relationship. Comparing the controlling behavior of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai and its relationship to intimacy and marital adjustment can be an appropriate comparison for explaining the relationship between these components.

METHODOLOGY

The research method is causative - comparative. Causative - comparative research is referred to the research where the researcher examines the possible causes of its occurrence with regard to the dependent variable. This type of research is taken into consideration because some of the variables are characteristics and cannot be manipulated (such as gender) and if they can be manipulated, the manipulation is unethical and inhumane. In this research, controlling behavior, intimacy and marital adjustment among couples living in Bandar Abbas and resident couples in Dubai are assessed and compared. Study sample was composed of all couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai. Statistically precise information of the number of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai were not available, so the declaration of the couples' number is not possible. As a certain number of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai were not available to the researcher, according to the experts view in research methodology and sampling the number of

50 couples for each comparison will suffice. Therefore, the research sample consisted of 50 couples living in Bandar Abbas and 50 couples living in Dubai. The sample volume has been selected through an easy to collect sampling and has been studied. Tools used in this study were:

Couple's Controlling Behaviors Scale Questionnaire (CBS): Couple's Controlling Behaviors Scale was made by Graham-Kevan and Archer (2003) to evaluate the controlling behaviors. This tool is a 24 phrase scale that reviews the controlling behavior of spouses in marital life. For couples who have children 5 other phrases have been added to the scale (the last five phrases of the test). Controlling Behaviors Scale is based on information from an intervention program implemented against domestic violence in the United Kingdom and the results have shown that in these families controlling behaviors are the key behaviors.

The study's results have shown that controlling behavior scale has generally desirable internal consistency. The overall alpha coefficient of the test in females sample is 0.90 and in males is 0.89. Internal consistency of the economic control subscale has been reported down and between 0.48 and 0.66. Internal consistency of the emotional control subscale and control by isolating has been reported good and between 0.80 and 0.87. In order to calculate the reliability coefficient of the test in the present study Cronbach's alpha coefficient is used that is equal to 0.94.

Marital Adjustment Scale (DAS): Marital adjustment scale is a 32-item tool for assessing the marital relationship quality of couples who live together. This tool can be used to measure overall satisfaction in an intimate relationship. Factor analysis shows that this scale measures four dimensions: Duo-satisfaction (degree of satisfaction with different aspects of the relationship), duo-correlation (degree of participation in joint activities), and duo-agreement (degree of consensual in marital-related issues such as the financial, parenting and ...) and expressing love 8. Marital adjustment scale has been studied through logical methods (external validity). The scale also has shown its validity for known groups by discerning power of married and divorced couples in each question. Marital adjustment scale has concurrent validity and correlation with "Locke - Wallace Marital Satisfaction Scale"(Berger & Hannah, 2013). Cronbach's alpha coefficient 3 for the total score of the scale is 0.96, indicating remarkable internal consistency. In other study on Shiraz high school teachers and their spouses, using Cronbach's alpha, credit of couples adjustment scale is obtained 0.92. In this study, the calculated alpha coefficient has been equal to 0.83.

Marital Intimacy Questionnaire: intimacy as a critical process in the development of friendly relations is now a major concern for counseling and family experts. Technology, cultural, economic, social and religious changes have played a major role in the change in marriage primary function including love and intimacy between husband and wife(Patrick, Sells, Giordano, & Tollerud, 2007).

In order to analyze the research collected data SPSS software will be used and descriptive statistical methods (such as frequency, frequency percentage, mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (such as t-test for independent groups, two-way analysis of variance and multivariate regression simultaneously) were applied.

RESULT

The following table shows the distribution of couples' marriage duration separating Bandar Abbas and Dubai.

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Table 1. Frequency and frequency percentage of marriage duration separating Bandar Abbas and Dubai

Marriage duration	Bandar Abbas		Dubai	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 10 years	19	38	9	18
11 to 20 years	28	56	34	68
More than 20 years	3	6	7	14
Total	50	100	50	100

According to Table 1 among total 50 couples living in Bandar Abbas 19 couples, equal to 38 percent, have married less than 10 years ago, 28 couples, equal to 56 percent have married 11 to 20 years ago and 3 couples, equal to 6 percent, have married more than 20 years ago. Among total 50 couples living in Dubai 9 couples, equal to 18 percent, have married less than 10 years ago, 34 couples, equal to 68 percent have married 11 to 20 years ago and 7 couples, equal to 14 percent, have married more than 20 years ago.

In order to compare the controlling behavior of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai, two-way ANOVA test has been used. To achieve this objective the controlling behavior as the dependent variable and each of the couples' residence place and gender as independent variables have been analyzed. Controlling behavior of each of the couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai are in two forms of one's controlling behaviors towards his/her spouse (i.e. controlling behaviors that the subject shows towards his/her spouse), and the spouse controlling behaviors towards the person (i.e. controlling behaviors that the spouse shows towards the subject).

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of controlling behaviors

Residence place	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dubai	Male	26.08	17.198
	Female	25.49	15.518
Bandar Abbas	Male	15.2	11.15
	Female	16.1	9.848
Total	Male	20.64	15.441
	Female	20.8	13.782

The results in Table 2 indicate that among Dubai residents, men have more controlling behavior than women. So that the mean of men's controlling behavior is at level of 26.08 and women's controlling behavior mean is equal to 25.49. Among the residents of Bandar Abbas women's controlling behavior towards their spouses is more than men's controlling behavior. So that the mean of women's controlling behavior is equal to 16.1 and men's controlling behavior mean is 15.2. Totally women's controlling behavior towards their spouses is more than men's controlling behavior towards their spouses.

Table 3. Two-way ANOVA between controlling behavior and residence place and gender

Variations source	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	p
Residence place	7731.333	1	7731.333	40.644	0.001
Gender	1.921	1	1.921	0.01	0.9
Residence place and gender	14.813	1	14.813	0.22	0.6

Two-way ANOVA results in Table 3 show that controlling behavior of couples only due to their residence place is significant at 99% confidence level and the research hypothesis is confirmed. The effect of gender on couples controlling behavior has not been significant.

To compare marital intimacy of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai two-way ANOVA test has been used, the results of which are presented in the following Table. The controlling behaviors differences of women and men living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai have

been calculated and analyzed.

Table 4. Mean and standard deviation of marital intimacy

Residence place	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dubai	Male	125.41	12.756
	Female	123.2	15.131
Bandar Abbas	Male	125.16	11.185
	Female	121.52	13.437
Total	Male	125.28	11.957
	Female	122.36	14.286

The results in Table 4 indicate that among Dubai residents, men's marital intimacy mean is more than women's marital intimacy mean. So that the mean of men's marital intimacy is 125.41 and women's marital intimacy mean is equal to 123.2. Among the residents of Bandar Abbas also men's marital intimacy is more than women's marital intimacy. So that the mean of men's marital intimacy is equal to 125.16 and women's marital intimacy mean is 121.52. Totally men's marital intimacy is more than women's.

Table 5. Two-way ANOVA between marital intimacy and place of residence and gender

Variations source	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	p
Residence place	70.083	1	70.083	0.402	0.5
Gender	624.403	1	624.403	3.685	0.05
Residence place and gender	38.163	1	38.163	0.219	0.6

Two-way ANOVA results in Table 5 show that marital intimacy of couples only due to their gender is significant at 95% confidence level. The effect of residence place on couples' marital intimacy has not been significant.

To compare marital intimacy of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai two-way ANOVA test has been used.

Table 6. Mean and standard deviation of marital adjustment

Residence place	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
Dubai	Male	111.36	15.058
	Female	109.42	14.225
Bandar Abbas	Male	105.33	16.044
	Female	106.2	15.524
Total	Male	108.34	15.799
	Female	107.81	14.926

The results in Table 6 indicate that among Dubai residents, men's marital adjustment mean is more than women's marital adjustment mean. So that the mean of men's marital adjustment is 111.36 and women's marital adjustment mean is equal to 109.42. Among the residents of Bandar Abbas also, according to the above table, women's marital adjustment is more than men's marital adjustment. So that the mean of women's marital adjustment is equal to 106.2 and men's marital adjustment mean is 105.33. Totally men's marital adjustment is more than women's.

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Table 7. Two-way ANOVA between the marital adjustment and residence place and gender

Variations source	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	p
Residence place	453.1605	1	453.1605	6.923	0.009
Gender	333.21	1	333.21	0.092	0.7
Residence place and gender	147	1	147	0.634	0.4

Two-way ANOVA results in Table 7 show that marital adjustment of couples only due to their residence place is significant at 99% confidence level and the research hypothesis is confirmed. The effect of gender on couples controlling behavior has not been significant.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to compare controlling behavior, intimacy and marital adjustment of couples resident in Bandar Abbas and Dubai. The results of the study suggest that there is a significant difference between controlling behavior of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai. The results indicate that couples living in Dubai have more controlling behavior towards their spouses. The cultural differences of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai led to different controlling behavior of couples in these cities, different cultures that have different norm-taking. Furthermore, the dominant religious differences between the two cities are probably a reason for cultural conflicts and consequently different interpersonal behavior of people in these two cities. Results also showed that there is no significant difference between intimacy and marital adjustment of couples living in Bandar Abbas and Dubai.

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