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Pridiction of marital burnout: Conflict resolution styles and marital expectations¹

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Abstract

This study was conducted predict marital burnout according conflict resolution styles and marital expectations in married women. The population of this study included all married women referred to counseling centers in Isfahan among whom. 209 married women referring to counseling centers in Isfahan city were selected using voluntary sampling method. The participated completed the Marital Burnout Scale, Conflict Resolution Styles and Marital Expectations Questionnaires. The data were analyzed using multiple-regression analysis method (stepwise method), and spss software. Results showed that integrated and compromise conflict resolution styles are negative predictors, and required conflict resolution style a positive prediction of marital Burnout, and marital expectations has not role of in marital burnout prediction. There of ores it can be concluded that have essential role conflict resolution styles about to marital expectations on predict marital burnout.

Keywords: Marital burnout, marital expectations, conflict resolution styles

Extended Abstract

Introduction

Marital burnout is defined as the gradual reduction of emotional attachment to the spouse with the feeling of alienation, lack of interest, disregard to the spouse and the replacement of negative emotions instead of

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positive emotions (Kizildag & Aidogan, 2018). Marital burnout is associated with various aspects of health. Regarding the physical aspect, it is associated with low general health, weakness of immune system and cardiovascular arousal (Amato & Keith, 2011). Marital burnout is related to many factors, such as social, economic, legal and marital conflicts. Marital conflict is have a aspect of importance in marital burn lit. Marital conflicts can be defined as a situation where there are different positive and negative aspects. According to this definition, conflict is a phenomenon that occurs in all marital relations (Kiani, Asadi, Ismaili, & Zawar, 2016). Ahmadi, Khodabandeh, and Abbasi (2015) investigated the prediction of marital burnout based on marital satisfaction and marital conflicts. Results showed that marital satisfaction and marital conflicts can predict marital burnout. Therefore, conflict resolution styles can be an important factor in a successful marriage. Rahim (1983) lists five types of conflict resolution styles including dominant, required, avoidance, compromise, and integrated.

According to Beck (1970) and Bassem, Shoham, Musser, and Daiuto (1998), when the number of irrational beliefs decreases and logical alternatives are replaced, marital satisfaction will increase. Various conflict resolution methods are named as conflict resolution styles. In addition, other factors that seem to influence marital relationship can be rational and irrational beliefs, which are called marital expectations. These beliefs can play a very important role in life satisfaction or dissatisfaction and can cause marital burnout (Vanier & Sullivan, 2017). Beck (1970) and Bassem, Shoham, Musser, and Daiuto (1998) also lend support to the results mentioned above. Andrew, Dammars, Ryan, and Carlson (2013) in married African-American women, concluded that marital satisfaction has a significant relationship with marital expectations, which is not related to nationality. According to the above-mentioned points, regarding importance of marital burnout, the use of conflict styles to cope with marital conflicts and effectiveness of marital expectations on marital burnout, the aim of this research is to predict marital burnout based on conflict resolution styles (integrated, avoidance, dominant, compromise and required) and marital expectations.

Method

The population, sample & sampling curent research was a correlation study. This research consisted of all married women referring to the private counseling centers of Isfahan city in 2017 years. 240 married women were selected using voluntary sampling method.

Instruments

Marital Burnout Scale. This scale was made by Pines (1997), and has 20 items for measuring marital burnout, each items is rated by a seven-point Likert-

type scale (1 = never, to 7 = always). The cronbach alpha coefficients was 0.84 to 0.90 in ranges from sub-scales of this instrument (Pines & Nunes, 2003).

Conflict Resolution Style Questionnaire. This questionnaire was made by Rahim (1997), and has 28 items for measuring conflict resolution style, each items is rated by a five-point Likert-type scale. Haghghi (2012) showed that there is a significant positive and negative correlation between the subscales of this questionnaire (integrated, compromise, required, avoidant and dominate styles) which shows the convergent and divergent validity of this questionnaire. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient was 0.75.

Marital Expectation Questionnaire. The questionnaire was made by Omidvar (2008) and has 32 items, each items is rated by a five-point Likert-type (At all = 0, rarely = 1, sometimes = 2, often = 3, always = 4). The correlation of the questionnaire subscales with each other and with the total score was significant, which indicated the validity of the questionnaire. Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of this questionnaire was reported 0.93.

Trend of research

At first, all consulting centers in Isfahan were identified and only 8 private center were tendency to corporate this study. Then women with marital problems were asked to respond to measuring instruments.

Data analysis method

The data were analyzed using multiple-regression analysis (step wise method), and SPSS software.

Finding

The results regression analysis indicate that integrated conflict style negatively predicts the criterion variable (marital burnout) [$\beta = -0.53$, $R^2 = 0.28$, $F = 80.81$, $t = -8.99$, $P < 0.001$]. When the compromise style variable was added to the integrated conflict style, the squared correlation increased from 0.28 to 0.29, which means the compromise variable adds only 0.01 to the prediction value of the criterion [$F = 43.60$, $t = -2.20$, $P < 0.001$]. Also, when the required conflict style variable was added to the integrated and compromise styles, the squared correlation increased from 0.29 to 0.31, which added only 0.02 to the required style to predict marital burnout [$F = 31.25$, $t = -2.44$, $P < 0.001$]. Based on the beta values (β), it can be concluded that the integrated conflict style ($\beta = -0.53$) and compilation conflict style ($\beta = -0.18$) were negatively predicted and required conflict style ($\beta = 0.16$) was positively predicted. In other words, integrated conflict style plays the most significant role in predicting marital burnout and marital expectations has no role to play in predicting marital burnout.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to predict marital burnout based on conflict resolution styles (integrated, compromise, required, avoidant and dominate)

and marital expectations. The results showed that integrated and compromise styles negatively predict and required style positively marital burnout, but marital expectations could not predict marital burnout. The results of this study are consistent with the results of Kiani, Asadi, Ismaili, and Zavar (2016), and Hashemi and Asghari (2015), which indicated that conflict resolution styles can be a key indicator of marital relationships, and with the results of Schadlich and Cumming (2012); Ahmadi et al., (2015); Etemadi, Jaber, Jazayeri and Ahmadi's (2012) and Karimi, Karimi, and Dehghan (2015). The can be said that conflict resolution styles are associated with the ability to analyze situations, create constructive and non-constructive interactions, and change the effects of marital expectations on marital burnout. Pines (1997), Hamamaci (2005), and Refahi & Shamsuddin (2015) showed that irrational expectations predicted marital burnout. Also, Pines (1997), and Andrew et al., (2013) showed that marital expectations play an important role in predicting marital burnout and satisfaction. But in the present study, marital expectations are less important in predicting marital burnout than conflict resolution styles. Marital expectations are rational and irrational beliefs in marital relationships and effectiveness on the relationships of the spouses. Beck, (1970), and Baccem, Shoham, Mueser and Daiuto (1998) believe that marital expectations could change with the use of cognitive skills. Conflict styles such as problem-solving skills are cognitive abilities that change marital expectations. The constructive conflict solving styles (integrated and compromise) change irrational expectations in the relationships of the spouses to the understanding of the reality of marital problems and help to solve couples' problems and reduce marital burnout. In contrast, the required style does not change the irrational beliefs to rational, and increases marital burnout. The above findings confirm the importance of the impact of conflict resolution styles on marital expectations. The results of this study confirm the importance of the impact of conflict resolution styles in comparison with marital expectations on marital boredom.

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