

Biannual Journal of Applied Counseling
2018, 8(2), 39-54
Received: 15 Nov 2018
Accepted: 12 Jan 2019
DOI: 10.22055/jac.2018.25017.1571

دوفصلنامه مشاوره کاربردی
۱۳۹۷، ۸(۲)، ۳۹-۵۴
دریافت: ۹۷/۰۸/۲۴
پذیرش: ۹۷/۱۰/۲۲

The study and comparison of marital satisfaction, quality of life, happiness and life expectancy among married women with either less or more than five years of marital

Masoud Shahbazi*

Gholamreza Khadem Ali**

Abstract

The purpose of the current research was to study and compare marital satisfaction, quality of life, happiness, and life expectancy among women with either fewer or more than five years of marriage. This research design is casual-comparative and the population of the research consisted of all married women with either less or more than 5 years of marital experience in Dezful city. 170 married women (85 married women with less than 5 years of marital experience and 85 married women with more than 5 years of marital experience) were recruited using voluntary sampling method. The participants filled out the ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire, World Health Organization's Quality of Life Scale (WHO-QOL BREF), the Oxford Happiness Inventory (OHI) and the Miller's Hope Inventory (MHI). The data were analyzed using the t-test and SPSS-25 software. The results showed that the married women with less than 5 years of marital experience have more levels of marital satisfaction, happiness and life expectancy, but there is not differences between the two group in of quality of life variable. According to the results, can conclude that passing time can affect how couples react to their marital life and how they feel about it.

Keyword: Marital satisfaction, quality of life, happiness, life expectancy.

Extended Abstract

Introduction:

One of the most powerful findings in the marital research literature may be the honeymoon-is-over effect (Logan, 2018) which states that the initial high levels of marital satisfaction decreases over time and follows a U-shaped curve. The research has shown that the marital satisfaction is at the highest levels in the

* Assistant Professor, Department of Consultation, Islamic Azad University, Masjed-e Soleiman Branch, Masjed-Soleiman, Iran (Author) masoudshahbazi66@yahoo.com

** Master of Science (Counseling and Guidance), Islamic Azad University, Masjed Soleyman Branch, Iran

first years of marriage, then it decreases over the following years and finally it gets higher after passing years (Lavner & Clarck, 2017). On the other hand, marital life quality is essential to a useful, effective and satisfying personal life and includes peoples' cognitive evaluation of their own life status (Graption, Lemesle, Arabian, & Strotz, 2018). In fact, quality of life is a general concept and originated from cognitive and emotional perception of individuals from the whole life. Ergo, people with high quality of life experience more positive emotions from their own and others past, future and they recall more positive events and have positive evacuation from their surroundings (Thimm, 2010).

Amato and James (2018) found that people experience different levels of happiness in different cycles of their marital life. Also, Beja (2018) found that in his research that the happiness people feel in their lives follows a U-shaped curve which increases with increasing age initially then it decreases and finally after years it increases again. Variety of studies have addressed the age differences in hope along childhood and adolescence but only a few studies have compared hope in adolescence and adulthood (Bronk, Hill, Lapsley, Talib, & Finch, 2009). Most of the available studies have addressed to the age differences in different developmental periods and because of large differences in their samples combinations, comparing their results is not possible (Marques & Gallagher, 2018). In result, given what has been mentioned and lack of research literature in Iran regard to the current research, the current research aims to compare marital satisfaction, quality of life, happiness and life expectancy among women with fewer and more than five years of marriage in Dezful.

Method

The current research design was casual-comparative study. One hundred and seventy (85 married women with less than 5 years of marital experience and 85 married women with more than 5 years of marital experience) married women of Dezful were recruited using valuntary sampling method. The participants were selected from public areas such as parks, mosques, and markets.

Instruments

Participants completed Enriching and Nurturing Relationship Issus Communication Happiness-ENRIC, World Health Organization's Quality of Life Scale-BREF, and the Oxford Happiness Inventory-OHI. The Cronbach's was calculated for all the used questionnaires in order to make sure of their reliability. The results of Cronbach's for the ENRICH, the WHOQOL-BREF, and the OHI were satisfactory 0.84, 0.72, and 0.73, respectively.

Trend of research

For the purpose of the research, the research attended to different areas of Dezful including public areas such as parks, mosques, and markets and requested the eligible women to fill out the questionnaires. Also, the research ethics were followed by explaining the purpose of the research, some information about the research, the anonymity of the forms and the secrecy of

their personal information, their rights to withdraw the research, and also instructions to complete the forms. After collecting the information.

Analysis of data

The data were analyzed using independent groups t-test, and Statistical Package for Social Science version 25.

Findings

The results of the t-test showed that there are differences between the two groups in terms of marital satisfaction, happiness, and hope. In more details, the married women with marital life experience of less than 5 years have more marital satisfaction ($t = 3.406, p < 0.01$), happiness ($t = 3.398, p < 0.01$) and hope ($t = 3.393, p < 0.01$) than married with marital life experience of more than 5 years have more marital satisfaction. But there is not difference between the two groups in life quality variable ($t = 1.382, p = 0.169$).

Discussion

As was mentioned earlier, the purpose of the current research was to compare married women with marital life experience of less than 5 years with married women with marital life experience of more than 5 years in terms of marital satisfaction, marital life quality, happiness, and hope as well. The results of the current research are in line with those of Shakerian (2009), Cohen and Manning (2010), and Halford, Sanders, & Behrence (2011) who found out newlywed couples experience more levels of marital satisfaction than couples with more than 5 years of marital life. Also, Jose and Alfones (2012) and Halford et al. (2011) found that couples with more than 5 years of marital life experience more levels of quality of life than newlyweds which is in contrary to the results of the current research which found no statistically significant differences between the two groups which might be due to the narrow time difference between the two compared groups of the current research. Alexander et al. (2017), Cohen and Manning (2010), and Argyle (2001), in line with the results of the current research, reported that newlywed couples experience more levels of happiness than their old counterparts mainly due to the freshness of their marriage and sexual satisfactions. Finally, the current research showed that newlyweds experience more hope than couples with more years of marital life which could be accounted for by privilege of not facing with heavy burden of marital life problems and difficulties.

Conclusions

Generally, one can conclude that couples' marital life undergoes lots of changes and developments during years and after shaping the marriage. The researches have shown that marriages face with developmental challenges in middle and later of adulthood in which women with well-adjusted identities can

develop new interactional patterns and increase emotional intimacy in their marital relationship. This, in turn, leads to more interactional behaviors between the spouses along with longer period of marriage. Though one can conclude that short marriages and long marriages differ in terms of their quality.

Acknowledgment

Many thanks and gratitude to the people who participated in this research, and all those who helped us somehow, are sincerely grateful.



© 2018 by the authors. Licensee SCU, Ahvaz, Iran. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0 license) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0>).