

The relationship between forgiveness, perfectionism and intimacy and marital satisfaction in Ahwaz Islamic Azad University Married Students

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Abstract: The study examined the relationship between forgiveness, perfectionism and intimacy and marital satisfaction in Ahwaz Islamic Azad University Married Students. The sample included 200 persons (100 men and 100 women) were students who were selected through stratified sampling. Data collection tools, including 4 measure of Family Forgiveness Scale (FFS), Ahvaz Perfection Scale (APS), the Intimacy and Marital satisfaction Enrich. This type Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis of data ($P < 0/0001$) saying that a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and forgiveness, the significant positive relationship between intimacy and marital satisfaction and significant negative relationship between perfectionism and marital satisfaction, respectively. Results of multiple correlation analysis also suggests the existence of multiple relationships between forgiveness, perfectionism, intimacy and marital satisfaction and forgiveness and intimacy with impunity was the best predictor of marital satisfaction.

Key words: Forgiveness • Perfectionism • Intimacy and Marital Satisfact

INTRODUCTION

Human being leaves behind sensitive levels and staged during his life time. One of these sensitive and important stages is marriage and making common life and more important than this stage, is attempt of both couples for preserving their common life and as much as much possible reaching to higher marital degrees till under shadow of this satisfaction could obtain their special aims from marriage. Marital relationship in the life, like other relationships has its own positive and negative dimensions and the most important index and determining factor in marriage is quality and kind of relationship between couple [1]. Generally satisfaction of individual from marital life counts as his satisfaction from family and satisfaction from family counts as satisfaction from life, so this subject will causes facilitation in material and spiritual growth, excellence and development in society [2]. Marital satisfaction is a general measurement from condition of marital relationship or current romance relationship of individual. Marital relationship can be a reflection from rate of happiness of individuals from marital relationship or mixture of being happy because of many factors related to marital relationship [3].

In marital relationship, various factors cause satisfaction of couples for each other. On of these factors

can affect on satisfaction from marriage, is forgiveness agent. In the one of the most famous definition, forgiveness is mentioned as “interpersonal and positive social change versus error that happened in the interpersonal field” [4, 5]. Forgiveness doesn't mean necessity of returning to previous relationship with guilty individual, but means that guilty person must obtain that rate of change that could reach to forgiveness [6]. In this field, many researchers like [7, 8], by performing some studies have shown that there is relationship between rate of marital satisfaction and trending toward forgiveness among couples and forgiveness is an important factor for predicting marital satisfaction. Satisfaction from marriage in each individual has much relationship with other factors like rate of perfectionism of couples.

Hamachek [9] inserted that perfectionism can be describes as collections of ways and directions that relationships are not symmetric with achievement. Perfectionism is not a discrepancy, but is causing injury agent that creates problems for adolescents, youths and children. Most peoples mistake perfectionism with seeking success or deontology. Perfectionism is different with these views. Because this agent is an abnormal model for behaviors, that causes many discrepancies [10] and by this way causes negative affect on satisfaction of individual from marriage and marital life.

The other effective agent on rate of marital satisfaction is intimacy. Intimacy consists of feeling of closeness, relationship, solidarity and connection. These types of descriptions based on them, means individual reaches to that rate of individual growth till could create intimate connection with others. In this regard, Erickson knows youth and adult period level, as stage of marital connection and intimacy versus isolation.

He believes that in this period individual makes intimate communications with others and creates marital relationships. He doesn't know intimacy as sexual relationship, but knows it as feeling illustration of loyalty of self by reckless form [11]. For this reason, marital satisfaction can be more in couples by higher rate of intimacy and we can say these couples may have more capability in confrontation with problems and related changes of their relationships and so they experience higher marital relationship. In this regard and according to above subjects some studies had performed that confirmed these subjects and they are as follow:

Miller and Worthington [12] in a study had performed relationship between sexuality, marital satisfaction, marital forgiveness and mental health. Results show that men have more marital forgiveness and empathy than women. Also marital satisfaction has positive relationship with marital forgiveness and also women, more understood forgiveness from their partners than men. Although results had shown that forgiveness is the best predicted item for marital satisfaction. a study by name of measuring scale of forgiveness fault among marital satisfaction and found that there is meaningful relationship between forgiveness dimensions with marital satisfaction in a six month periods.

Gordon *et al.* [1] performed a study and measured relationship between marital satisfaction, family performance and forgiveness and findings have shown that forgiveness of betray, has meaningful relationship with rate of marital satisfaction and forgiveness was the best predictor of marital satisfaction.

Backus [6] in a study reviewed relationship between disrespect and forgiveness and quality of marital relationship in the pregnancy period. On the other hand findings showed that forgiveness of spouse from women can partially reduces relationship among disrespect and lower levels of marital satisfaction.

Fincham *et al.* [13], performed a study in the field of forgiveness in marital relationships and findings showed that there is meaningful relationship between forgiveness with marital satisfaction. These findings are similar to studies of individuals like Ortinkal and Wanistogen [7], Fincham *et al.* [14] and Fincham *et al.* [15]. Also the

results of their studies have shown that forgiveness has positive meaningful relationship with marital satisfaction among both couples.

Ashby *et al.* [16] had studied relationship between perfectionism (normal and abnormal), quality of communications and satisfaction from marital relationships. Results showed that couples with abnormal perfectionism, had less quality and satisfaction from their marital relationships, but couples with normal perfectionism, had higher relationships quality and more satisfaction from their marital relationships. Diabartolo and Barlow [17] and Dimitrovsky *et al.* [18] by their studies have found similar results and illustrated that there is meaningful negative relationship between perfectionism and marital satisfaction.

Martin and Ashby [19] performed a study by name of perfectionism and fearing from intimacy in the field of marital satisfaction and results had shown that incompatible perfectionists versus non-perfectionists, showed meaningfully more fear from intimacy among their marital relationships. Also results showed multiple relationships among perfectionism, intimacy and marital satisfaction.

Eckert [20] performed a study by title of reviewing intimacy, mental energy (Libido), depression's signs and marital satisfaction in couples after childbirth. Results showed that among both sex rate of mental energy had positive relationship with marital satisfaction in two sexes and high emotional intimacy can reduce negative affect of low mental energy on marital satisfaction. Borden *et al.* [21] have performed a study by name of prediction marital satisfaction in the beginning of marital relationship and next changes in emotional intimacy during 25 years studies. In average rate, women had showed higher emotional intimacy versus men in first stage. Dunham [22] reviewed effect of intimacy as modifier of relationship between emotional skill and marital satisfaction. Both in spouses and women, difficulty of recognizing of their emotions was negatively connected with marital satisfaction and intimacy. Difficulty in mentioning emotions of spouses was negatively connected with marital satisfaction and intimacy of women.

Mirgain and Cordova [23] reviewed relationship between emotional skills, intimacy and with marital satisfaction and intimacy. Results had shown that high intimacy increase with marital satisfaction and intimacy.

Crawford *et al.* [24] have found that love and equality are predictors of relationship frequency and cause increase of commitment in romance relationship. On the other hand, commitment keeps romance relationships.

Also during research in Iran, Ghafour [25] reviewed spirituality dimension of family and result of study showed that using forgiveness method based on spiritual and religious treatments, cause increase of marital satisfaction, decrease of family conflicts and promotion of family's healthy performance among two couples.

Results obtained from Vali Beig *et al* [26] have shown that among elements of love (intimacy, enjoy and commitment), only there is meaningful and direct relationship between intimacy and satisfaction from marriage.

Natqyan [27] performed a study and reviewed forgiveness and marital satisfaction among men by stress disorder after impact of emotional crisis. Results showed that rate of forgiveness can predict better marital satisfaction among men by PTSD disorder and their spouses.

Sepah Mansour and Mazaheri [28], performed a study and showed that increasing of intimacy and enjoy in couple's transactions can cause more satisfaction from marital relationships.

Afkhami *et al.* [29] also performed a study and reviewed relationship between forgiveness and marital conflict among couples in Yazd province. Findings show that there is meaningful relationship between forgiveness and marital; conflict in three subscales of realistic understanding, recognizing and proving mistake and compensating mistake action.

According to mentioned subjects and necessity and importance of study of mentioned variables, the aim of this study is answering this question that whether there is relationship between rate of forgiveness, perfectionism and intimacy between couples by satisfaction from marriage among married university students?

Hypothesizes of Study: First hypothesis: there is relationship between forgiveness with satisfaction among marriage of married students.

Second Hypothesis: there is relationship between perfectionism with satisfaction among marriage of married students.

Third Hypothesis: there is relationship between intimacy with satisfaction among marriage of married students.

Forth Hypothesis: there is multiple relationship between forgiveness, perfectionism and intimacy with satisfaction among marriage of married students.

Statistical Community and Sampling Method: Statistical community of this study consist of whole female and male married students in Islamic Azad university of Ahvaz center and the sample of study consists of 200 students(100females and 100 males) and from this community and for selecting them we used stages random sampling method. By this way that at first married students in Islamic Azad university of Ahvaz center were clarified in different courses and from each course based on students in community, similar to that rate testing item in the selected sample and in tested research was inserted.

Research tools

Family Forgiveness Scale (FFS): Family forgiveness scale is designed by Pollard *et al.* [reported by 4] This scale has 40 items. It is consisted of two parts. First 20 items are about main family relations and last 20 items are about existing marital relations. This scale is scored by Liker simple spectrum. Pollard *et al* [reported by 4] used family forgiveness scale in his research and performed that on 229 female and 113 male. Cronbach Alpha coefficient for total questionnaire was 93%. In addition, Cronbach Alpha coefficient for all subscales of questionnaire was between 55% and 86% that is in an agreeable level.

Ahvaz Perfection Scale (APS): Perfection scale is a 27-item self-report scale that is designed by Najarian *et al.* [30] in a sample of 395 subjects from students of Shahid Chamran University and Islamic azad university of Ahvaz. This questionnaire is scored by Likert scale (never, rarely, sometimes and often). In a research, Najarian *et al* [30] used Cronbach alpha coefficient for considering internal consistency of perfection. Research results showed that Cronbach alpha coefficient for total sample is 0/90. For female is 90% and for male is 89%. Hormozinejad [31] has reported that validity coefficient of perfection scale with scales of toxic type A behavioral models is equal to $r= 0/74$ and with nontoxic type A is equal to $r= 0/67$.

Sincerity Questionnaire: This 17-item questionnaire is provided by Walker and Tampson for measuring amount of sincere relations between couples and is translated by Sanaee [31]. Naeem [32] used two methods, Cronbach Alpha and bisection for determining reliability of sincerity questionnaire. Respectively, 0/96 and 0/96 indicated desired reliability of aforementioned questionnaire. Also validity of this questionnaire was calculated 0/88 through correlation with basis question. It determines high validity of test.

Table 1: Mean, standard deviations, minimum and maximum of score in variables including marital satisfaction, forgiveness, perfection and sincerity of married students

Statistical indicators Variables	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum score	Maximum score	Number
Marital satisfaction	171/62	25/63	101	222	200
forgiveness	33/124	24/12	85	145	200
perfection	71/67	9/67	46	93	200
sincerity	112	17/77	35	192	200

Table 2: Results of correlation between forgiveness, perfection, sincerity and marital satisfaction

Criterion variable	Predictive variable	Correlation coefficient (r)	Significant level p	Number of testees
Marital satisfaction	forgiveness	059/0	0001/0	200
	perfection	202/0-	027/0	200
	sincerity	629/0	0001/0	200

Table 3: Multiple correlation coefficient of scores of forgiveness, perfection and sincerity with marital satisfaction using method a) concurrent entry b) step-by-step

a		Statistical indicators1			Regression coefficients		
Criterion variables	Predictive variables	Multiple correlation MR	Coefficient of determination RS	Ratio F Possibility P	1	2	3
Marital satisfaction	Forgiveness	0/059	0/348	62/448 0/0001	B=0/059 T=7/391 P=0/0001		
	Perfection	0/059	348/0	960/30 0/0001	B=0/558 T=391/7 P=0/0001	B=-0/005 T=-0/058 P=0/954	
	Sincerity	0/007	0/476	784/36 0/0001	B=0/371 T=610/4 P=0/0001	B=0/055 T=0/764 P=0/447	B=0/448 T=650/5 P=0/0001
b		Statistical indicators			Regression coefficient		
Criterion variable	Predictive variables	Multiple correlation MR	Coefficient of determination RS	Ratio F possibility P	1	2	
Life satisfaction	Sincerity	0/329	0/395	414/76 0/0001	B=0/629 T=741/8 P=0/0001		
	Forgiveness	0/695	0/487	083/55 0001/0	B=0/439 T=609/5 P=0/0001	B=0/357 T=4/562 P=0/0001	

Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire: Answering items is performed by Likert method and has 5 options (completely agreed to completely disagree). Olson [reported by 8] calculated reliability coefficient of this questionnaire equal to 0/92 and Sharifnia [32] calculated validity coefficient of questionnaire equal to 0/92 and soleymanian [33] calculated concurrent validity of 47-item questionnaire with main form equal to 0/95 that indicates acceptable validity and reliability of questionnaire.

Research Findings

Descriptive Findings

Findings Related to Research Hypothesize: As it is shown in Table 2 there is significant relation between forgiveness and marital satisfaction ($r=0/059$ and $p=0/0001$), perfection and marital satisfaction ($r=-0/202$ and $p=0/027$) and sincerity and marital satisfaction ($r=0/620$ and $p=0/0001$). So first, second and third hypothesis of research are confirmed. In other words with increasing family forgiveness and

sincerity between couples and decreasing perfection, amount of marital satisfaction of married students is increased.

According to part (a) of above table, multiple correlation for linear combination of forgiveness, perfection, sincerity and life satisfaction scores of married students is equal to $MR=0/007$ and coefficient of determination is $RS=0/476$ that is significant in $P<0/0001$. So forth hypothesize of research is confirmed. Given to coefficient of determination, it is determined that about 48 percent of marital satisfaction variance is determined by predictive variables including forgiveness, perfection and sincerity. Meanwhile in part (b) of above table, among variables of forgiveness, perfection and sincerity scores, sincerity and forgiveness are respectively more appropriate predictors for marital satisfaction. Multiple correlation coefficient for linear combination of predictive variables is equal to $MR=0/695$ and correlation of determination is equal to $RS=0/487$ that is significant in $P<0/0001$.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Based on considered question, this research aimed to determine that “ is there any relation between forgiveness, perfection and sincerity with marital satisfaction of married students of Islamic azad university of Ahvaz?”

According to findings of this research there is significant positive relation between forgiveness and marital satisfaction ($r= 0/059$ and $p=0/0001$). In other words with increasing forgiveness among couples, marital satisfaction is increased. So first hypothesize is confirmed.

Findings of this hypothesis is consistent with previous researches including Miller and vertington [12], Gordon *et al.* [1], Bakous [6], Fincham *et al.* [13], Ortinkalo wanstinogon [7], Fincham *et al.* [14], fincham and Pliry regaya [15], ghafoor [25].

For explaining this hypothesis, we can say that probably given to this point that talent, skill of forgiving others mistakes is one of factors causing positive and desirable feeling among people and it leads to kindness and sincerity among them, this factor has double effect on satisfaction from marital life. Because probability of seeing individual mistake is higher when they live together and spend most of their time with each other so forgiving spouse mistake is a factor for decreasing conflicts and/or preventing defamation and negative relations in marital life. In general, couples should be flexible and merciful, tolerate each other mistakes and respect each other character. Only if these features are existed, marriage would gradually actualize and mature and feeling of marital satisfaction is provided.

According to findings of this research there is negative significant relation between perfectionism and marital satisfaction ($r= -0/202$ and $p= 0/027$). In other words, as couples perfectionism is decreased, marital satisfaction is increased. So second hypothesis is confirmed.

Findings of existing hypothesis are consistent with researches of Ashbay *et al.* [16], diabarto and Barlo [17], Martin and Eshbai [19] and Daimitowosky *et al.* [18].

It seems that although perfectionism is not a disease, but because of tends to high avoidance of making mistake and increase of expect from self, it can be destructive. Individuals with this character are not satisfied from doing anything even in a desired way and are not able to feel satisfied from what is done well in natural way and/or is

better than others work. This feeling can be a factor influencing marital satisfaction or satisfaction from choosing spouse. In this regard many studies including Diabarto and Barlo [17] indicated that amount of individual perfectionism has negative relation with amount of marital satisfaction. This confirms aforementioned finding.

According to findings of this research there is significant positive relation between sincerity and marital satisfaction ($r= 0/629$ and $p=0/0001$). In other words as sincerity among couples increases, marital satisfaction is increased. So third hypothesis is confirmed.

Findings of this hypothesis is consistent with researches of Ekert [20], Borden *et al* [21], Dunham [22], Mirgan and Gordma [23], Vali beige *et al* [26 and Sepah Mansour and Mazaheri [28].

Although some researchers believe that sincerity is a factor that leads to resemblance of feelings and thoughts of couples but it is not necessarily equal to beatific emotional and behavioral contact. Sincerity is often caused through solving conflicts in order for mutual satisfaction of parties. This factor itself can lead to positive insight, love and affection, attention and respect to each other, commitment to each other and collaboration and subsequently according to research of Boden *et al.* [21] and dunham [22] it can leads to marital satisfaction and so it can have close relation with marital satisfaction.

Meanwhile during current research it was determined that there are multiple significant relations between forgiveness, perfectionism and sincerity with marital satisfaction of married students. So forth hypothesis was confirmed. On the other hand, results of research indicated that among forgiveness, perfectionism and sincerity scores, sincerity and forgiveness respectively are more appropriate predictors for marital satisfaction.

These results are consistent with findings of previous researches of Diabarto and Barlo [17], Martin and eshbai [19] and Vali beige *et al.* [26].

For explaining this finding, we can say that combination of factors such as sincere relations with spouse, forgiveness and avoiding from abnormal perfectionism strengthen marital relations. In relations between couples, as sincerity increases and perfectionism decreases, possibility of forgiveness increases and subsequently marital satisfaction increases significantly [6].

On the other hand, results of current research indicated that forgiveness and sincerity plays more important role than perfectionism in marital satisfaction of married students. Current finding indicates this point that degree of ability of forgiving others in the case of making mistake, in addition to creating positive relation and sincerity, can have stronger effect than tend to perfection and ambitious thoughts on satisfaction from marital life. Although imbalance of any factor in life have more or less some effect on marital life but ability of forgiving and creating sincere relation with spouse have more effect on marital life because it creates positive insight and subsequently makes their behavior and thoughts similar to each other. If one of spouses were Perfectionism this characteristics can act like a dam in front of negative effects of perfectionism on marital life.

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