

## Relationship between Marital Commitment and Marital Satisfaction with Self-Conscious Emotions and Self-Coherence

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This research aimed to examine the relationship between marital commitment and marital satisfaction with self-conscious emotions and self-coherence.

**Method:** A descriptive correlation design was adopted. The sample consists of 160 married female students aged 20 to 65 years studying in Islamic Azad University in Tehran, selected by available method. Data collection tools included the Marital Commitment Questionnaire (MCQ), ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS), the Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA), and the Sense of Coherence Scale (SOC). Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficient tests and multiple regression analysis.

**Results:** The results showed that the self-conscious emotion of shame has a significant negative relationship with marital commitment and marital satisfaction of married women ( $p < 0.01$ ), while the self-conscious emotion of guilt and self-coherence had a significant positive relationship with marital commitment and marital satisfaction of married women ( $p < 0.01$ ). Also, the self-conscious emotion of shame ( $p < 0.05$ ) and self-coherence ( $p < 0.01$ ) can predict the marital commitment of married women. However, the self-conscious emotion of guilt did not contribute to the prediction of marital commitment of married women ( $p > 0.05$ ). In addition, the self-conscious emotions of shame ( $p < 0.01$ ) and guilt ( $p < 0.05$ ), and self-coherence ( $p < 0.01$ ) were predictors of married women's marital satisfaction.

**Conclusion:** In total, self-conscious emotions and self-coherence were able to explain 25% of the changes in marital commitment and 34% of the changes in marital satisfaction of married women. As a result, feelings of shame and guilt as self-conscious emotions of married women and their psychological coherence to adapt and improve themselves in married life can predict their marital commitment and satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Marital Commitment, Marital Satisfaction, Conscious Emotions, Self-Coherence

## 1 Introduction

Marriage is the most important contract in the life of every person. According to Anderson (1994), a healthy marriage includes several elements such as commitment, marital satisfaction, communication, and the absence of elements such as violence and betrayal (Sherwood, 2008). Commitments to the spouse and the institution of marriage seem necessary for a marriage's success (Hou, Jiang, & Wang, 2019; Lambert & Zagami, 2018). Every successful marriage contains three basic pillars of commitment, attraction and understanding, among which *marital commitment* (MC) is the strongest and most stable predictor of marital quality and stability (Siegel, Levin, & Solomon, 2019). High levels of MC are related to more love expression, higher marital adjustment and stability, more appropriate problem-solving skills, and marital satisfaction (Masters, 2008; Tilghman-Osborne et al., 2008). Although commitment or intention to continue the relationship is often considered a general construct, it is divided into three distinct types. These three types of obligations include: A) The commitment to the spouse (personal commitment) is based on the desire to remain in the relationship, and three factors are involved in it: the people in the relationship (attraction to the relationship and the identity of the couple); b) Commitment to marriage (moral commitment) is related to social or religious obligations and includes belief in these values: Keeping your word, maintaining marriage as a social and moral institution and maintaining marriage as a sacred responsibility; c) Coercive commitment is based on feeling trapped in a relationship due to the costs and difficulties involved in ending the relationship (Kapinus & Johnson, 2003). Goodfriend and Agnew (2008) primarily introduce marital satisfaction as the most important predictor of MC. According to the mentioned materials, marital satisfaction of couples is important as the most important factor in MC and the stability of relationships between couples (Goodfriend & Agnew, 2008).

*Satisfaction* with married life is a personal experience in a marriage that the individual can only evaluate in response to the level of enjoyment of the marital relationship (Kaplan & Maddux, 2002). *Marital satisfaction* (MS) is a person's overall subjective assessment of the marital relationship and the degree to which personal and couple needs, desires and wishes are met, and it is a process that occurs throughout the life of couples (Han et al., 2011; Lazarus, 1977). While marriage satisfaction is one of the main factors determining each person's quality of life and mental health (Bradbury,

Fincham, & Beach, 2000), relationship satisfaction decreases over time and in some marriages. Also, MS can predict stability and instability of relationship quality (Karney & Bradbury, 2020). But satisfaction in a marital relationship is not easily achieved but requires a significant effort from both life partners (Karney & Bradbury, 2020). So far, much research have been conducted on factors related to couples' MS. The results indicate that there are factors related to MS, including cognitive population variables (Abbasi, 2009); personality traits (Abbasi et al., 2012); self-esteem (Pourdehghan, Mohammadi, & Mahmoudnia, 2008); Coping styles of couples (Besharat, Tashk, & Rezazadeh, 2006); The transformation stages of the family life cycle (Abbasi et al., 2012). Young, Klosko and Weishaar (2003) also consider intrapersonal factors (characteristics, attitudes, beliefs, values and expectations) and interpersonal factors (love, commitment, emotions) to be effective on the level of MS (Young, Klosko, & Weishaar, 2003).

According to the contents expressed in the field of commitment and MS and the factors affecting them, it is clear that the quality of marital relations is so intertwined with the whole personality of the couple that considering it as a phenomenon independent of psycho-social factors such as the degree of self-cohesion, interpersonal trust and feelings of shame and guilt are impossible (Lee, Sun, & Chao, 2001). Based on this, feeling of shame and guilt are also one of the factors discussed in this research, which have shown to have a significant correlation with the level of functioning of a relationship. The experience of feelings of shame and guilt will likely increase when conflict increases and, as a result, conflictual interactions between couples. Every person feels shame and guilt in their daily life for various reasons. In fact, each of us can experience these two emotions. Guilt has been described as an emotion resulting from failure, where a person feels anxiety, fear, and anger, and feels the need to compensate by behaving in ways that violate internal moral standards. Guilt focuses on the behavior, while shame focuses on the self (Bruno, Lutwak, & Agin, 2009). According to Kaufman's (2004) view, shame is cultivated in family relationships and affects perceptions of marital relationships; Humans are social beings who need to trust and rely on colleagues, the feeling of shame develops in the context of breaking an interpersonal trust and support (Kaufman, 2004). The research results by Turner and Schallert (2001) showed that women worried about experiencing intimacy and instability in their married life feel more shame (Turner & Schallert, 2001). Since shame and guilt are emotions seen after failure in interactions, it is

conceivable that shame and guilt are part of the emotional reactivity that follows from *self-coherence* (SC) (Kruse, 2007).

According to the research of Karimian, Karimi and Bahmani (2011), moderate levels of shame and guilt are associated with the adaptive functioning of a healthy person. However, borderline levels of these emotions cause psychopathology (Karimian, Karimi, & Bahmani, 2011).

Therefore, another variable that can affect the married life and mental health of couples and has been the focus of many researchers in recent years is *the sense of cohesion* (Sullivan & Feltz, 2003). *Coherence* is a structure that indicates a person's overall orientation toward life. People with self-coherence defend their life values, have realistic self-awareness, use adaptive coping strategies, are optimistic, curious, and flexible, and establish sincere relationships with others (Busch et al., 2018). MC and satisfaction, which need to adapt to life changes and different emotional, social, and psychological consequences of marriage (van der Wal, Finkenauer, & Visser, 2019), can also be influenced by self-consistency. Self-coherence is a factor in experiencing a sense of security and continuous effort in life (Antonovsky, 1993). The sense of coherence includes cognitions and feelings that make life more understandable and acceptable, under control, and meaningful for a person (Antonovsky, 1993).

As mentioned, various psychological constructs can affect the marital issues of couples, including their commitment and satisfaction; among these variables, *self-conscious emotions* (SCE) and SC can be mentioned. However, a limited number of researches have been conducted on the relationship between SCE (feelings of shame and guilt) and SC with commitment and marital satisfaction. They have exclusively dealt with the relationships between these variables separately, and these researches are much less on women. Accordingly, to create and improve marital relations and family strength, the present research is conducted on married women and by combining variables in one model. Therefore, considering the important role that SCE (feelings of shame and guilt) and SC have in improving marital relationships, these psychological structures can be considered important factors in MC and satisfaction and in increasing the quality of marital life. Therefore, it seems necessary to determine the role of each of these factors and their joint effect on women's commitment and marital satisfaction. Another reason for the importance of this research is its novelty. Despite the importance of SCE and SC in MC and satisfaction, no

research has been conducted to simultaneously investigate the effect of these individual-personality and psychological variables on MC and satisfaction. Because of this limitation, the researcher considers it a challenge, and to solve it, he will examine the effect of SCE (feelings of shame and guilt) and SC on commitment and marital satisfaction. Therefore, the proposed model can provide the necessary background for designing and implementing intervention programs to increase commitment and marital satisfaction. Applying the results of these studies can help form successful marriages and thus improve the quality of life and married life. Moreover, MC is an excellent value in our religion and culture. There are many sensitivities towards it, which is known as one of the basic factors in the stability and quality of married life. In addition, satisfaction with married life as a factor that plays a fundamental role in the life of couples and their commitment to each other guarantees the stability of married life and plays an important role in the health of couples and their quality of life. Therefore, according to the materials mentioned, the current research seeks to answer this question: Are SCE (feelings of shame and guilt) and SC related to MC and satisfaction in married women?

## 2 Methods

### 2.1 Study design and Participant

The method of the current research was a correlational description. The statistical population of the research was made up of married female students aged 20 to 65 studying in the units of Islamic Azad University of Tehran in the second half of the academic year 2021-2022, of which 160 people were selected according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Due to the conditions of the Covid-19 disease, sampling was done online and through virtual networks. The sample size was calculated based on the minimum sample size in correlation studies using the formula  $N \geq 50 + 8M$ . In this formula, N is the minimum sample size, and M is the number of predictor variables. The number of predictor variables is 3 (2 self-conscious emotions, shame, guilt, self-coherence) ( $M=3$ ). By calculating the sample size using the above formula  $N \geq 50 + 8(3)$ , 74 is obtained. Due to the possibility of dropping out due to non-cooperation, increase in external validity, and distorted or incompleteness of some questionnaires, we increased the sample size to 180 people. The inclusion criteria included female gender, willingness to participate, at least one year of marriage, no legal action for divorce, and no addiction to drugs or stimulants. The criteria

for withdrawing from the research included unwillingness to continue participating, incomplete answers to the questionnaire questions, and being treated by a psychiatrist or psychotherapist.

After preparing the research tools and obtaining the necessary permission from the Research Council of the Islamic Azad University, South Tehran branch, due to the lack of face-to-face classes due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) spread, it was done to refer to the selected units. After preparing the list of students studying in those universities and making the necessary arrangements to communicate with them, questionnaires were provided to them online and through virtual networks. At first, the following explanation was given: The purpose of the research for the people of the sample group; assuring them of the confidentiality of their information; assuring them about the optionality of participating in the research and the possibility of announcing the withdrawal at any stage of filling out the questionnaires; Assuring the people of the sample group that the results of the study will be provided to them if they wish; Refusing to include their names in all documents related to research. Finally, after discarding distorted and incomplete questionnaires, 160 questionnaires were analyzed. The implementation of the questionnaires lasted for about three months.

## 2.2 Measurements

*Marital Commitment Questionnaire (MCQ)*, *ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (EMS)*, the *Test of Self-Conscious Affect (TOSCA)*, and the *Sense of Coherence Scale (SOC)* were used to collect data.

### 2.2.1 Marital Commitment

MCQ was prepared and compiled by Adams and Jones (1997) for research purposes, which measures people's adherence to their spouse and marriage and its dimensions. This questionnaire contains 44 questions that measure the three dimensions of marital commitment, including personal commitment, moral commitment, and structural commitment. Each test question has a 5-point scale: strongly disagree, disagree, no opinion, agree, and strongly agree, with scores between 1 and 5 being assigned to each option. A score of 5 is given to the completely agree option and 1 to the completely disagree option. The general range of people's scores is between 1 and 172 points, and a higher score in this test indicates a high overall commitment of couples. Adams and Jones (1997) obtained the validity of

each scale of this test on the mentioned sample as follows: personal commitment, 0.91; structural commitment, 0.86; Moral commitment, 0.89 (Adams & Jones, 1997). In a preliminary study by Abbasi (2009), the content validity of this test was confirmed (Abbasi, 2009). In the validation of the test by Shahsiah, Bahrami and Mohebi (2009), the content validity was confirmed by counseling professors of Isfahan University and Cronbach's alpha was 0.85. In the present study, the reliability coefficient of this questionnaire was obtained using Cronbach's alpha method for all the questions in the questionnaire at 0.79 (Shahsiah et al., 2011).

### 2.2.2 Marital Satisfaction

EMS created by Fowers and Olson (1993) with the aim of evaluating and identifying potentially problematic areas and areas of strength and fruitfulness in marital relationships. Its main form consists of 115 substances and its short form consists of 47 substances. In this research, its short form is used. Questions are scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale (strongly agree (5), agree (4), neither agree nor disagree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1)). Therefore, the lowest and highest scores of the individual in this questionnaire are 47 and 235, respectively. A higher score indicates greater satisfaction. Fowers and Olson (1993) have reported the validity of this instrument using Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 (Fowers & Olson, 1993).

### 2.2.3 Self-Conscious Emotions

TOSCA was developed by Tangney, Wagner and Gramzou (1989) and is a paper-and-pencil self-assessment tool that presents 16 situations (scenarios) of everyday life conditions to the subject. In this questionnaire, in addition to self-conscious emotion, the subscales of couples' shame and guilt traits were also examined. Answers are graded on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (not likely or never) to 5 (very likely) (Tangney, Wagner, & Gramzow, 1989). In the research of Ferguson and Airy (2001), Cronbach's alpha coefficient was reported as 0.81 for shame scale and 0.78 for guilt (Ferguson & Eyre, 2006). Tangney et al. (1989) reported the construct validity of two shame and guilt scales to be adequate, and they state that the validity of this test on three different student samples indicates that the Cronbach's alpha of the shame subscale is 0.76 to 0.88 and the guilt subscale is 0.70 to 0.83 (Tangney, Wagner, & Gramzow, 1989; Tangney & Dearing, 2003). In Zarei et al.'s research (2010), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for shame and guilt scales was 0.80 and 0.82, respectively. In the present study,

the reliability coefficient of this test was obtained using Cronbach's alpha method for all questions of the test, 0.78, and for shame and guilt subscales, 0.80 and 0.77, respectively (Zarei & Hosseingholi, 2014).

#### 2.2.4 Self-Coherence

The initial version of the sense of coherence questionnaire was presented by Aaron Antonovsky (1993) in San Francisco (Antonovsky, 1993). He believes that the sense of coherence questionnaire evaluates the ability to manage tension. The sense of coherence questionnaire has two forms of 29 items and 13 items. In this research, a 13-item form will be used. Items are scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 to 5), a score between 13 and 26 is a low sense of coherence, a score of 26 to 52 is a medium sense of coherence, and a score above 52 is a high sense of coherence. In Iran, the 13-item form was validated by Mohammadzadeh (2010), which was validated with an alpha coefficient of 0.77. In the present study, the reliability coefficient of this scale was obtained by Cronbach's alpha method for all questions of the scale of 0.74 (Robati & Namani, 2021).

#### 2.3 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS24 software and descriptive statistics indicators (prevalence, frequency percentage, mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum score), Pearson correlation coefficient, and multiple regression analysis simultaneously.

### 3 Findings and Results

In terms of demographic characteristics, the majority of married female students in the sample group were in the age range of 31 to 35 years (25%). Most of them were studying in the fields of behavioral sciences (20%) and social sciences (20%) and bachelor's degree (47.5%). The majority reported being married between the ages of 24 and 29 (31.9%). The education of most of their spouses was at the bachelor's level (40 percent) and most of them had been married for 6 to 10 years (32.5 percent). A higher percentage reported that they have only 1 child (46.3%) and assessed their socio-economic status at an average level (48.8%).

Descriptive information related to research variables is provided in Table 1.

**Table 1**

#### Descriptive results

| Variable |       | Mean   | Standard deviation | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|----------|-------|--------|--------------------|----------|----------|
| SCE      | Shame | 49.66  | 10.56              | 0.132    | 0.132    |
|          | Guilt | 59.226 | 9.78               | 0.399    | 0.399    |
| SC       |       | 44.96  | 8.29               | 1.090    | 0.783    |
| MC       |       | 158.37 | 24.44              | 0.917    | 1.190    |
| MS       |       | 169.80 | 28.90              | 0.188    | -0.220   |

As shown in Table 1, the skewness and kurtosis of all variables were between -2 and 2, which indicates the normality of the data. In Table 2, the correlation coefficients of SCE (feelings of shame and guilt) and SC with MC and MS are reported.

**Table 2**

#### Correlation coefficients of SCE and SC with commitment and MS

| Index | Predictor variable | Criterion variable |        |     |       |        |     |
|-------|--------------------|--------------------|--------|-----|-------|--------|-----|
|       |                    | MC                 |        |     | MS    |        |     |
|       |                    | r                  | p      | n   | r     | p      | n   |
| SCE   | Shame              | -0.36              | < 0.01 | 160 | -0.39 | < 0.01 | 160 |
|       | Guilt              | 0.27               | < 0.01 | 160 | 0.32  | < 0.01 | 160 |
| SC    |                    | 0.46               | < 0.01 | 160 | 0.42  | < 0.01 | 160 |

The results of the Pearson correlation coefficient (Table 2) showed that the SCE of shame has a negative relationship with MC ( $r = -0.36$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and MS ( $r = -0.39$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) of married women. is significant, while the SCE of guilt has a significant positive relationship with MC ( $r = 0.27$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and MS ( $r = 0.32$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) of married women. SC also had a significant positive relationship with MC ( $r = 0.46$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) and MS ( $r = 0.42$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) of married women.

Before performing the multiple regression analysis using the simultaneous method, the assumptions of normality, linearity of the relationship, uniformity of dispersion around the regression line, independence of errors and non-collinearity were evaluated. The values obtained for the skewness and kurtosis of the variables indicated that the assumption of normality was established (Table 1). A scatter diagram was used to determine the assumption of linearity and uniformity of dispersion around the regression line, indicating that these assumptions were established. The assumption of independence of errors or non-correlation between errors was checked using the Durbin-Watson test, the value of which in the first model (1.96) and (1.91) was

between 1.5 and 2.5. Therefore, it was ensured that this assumption was established. Variance inflation factor (VIF) and TF indices were used to check the collinearity of independent variables. Their results for the analyzes were between 1.18 and 2.09 for VIF and between 0.56 and 0.92

for TF, which show that there is non-collinearity between the predictor variables. Table 3 presents the results of multiple regression analysis using the simultaneous method to investigate the power of SCE and SC in predicting commitment and MS.

**Table 3**

*Regression analysis of SCE and SC in predicting commitment and MS*

| Criterion variable | Predictive Variable | Beta  | t     | p     | Model |                |      |         |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|----------------|------|---------|
|                    |                     |       |       |       | R     | R <sup>2</sup> | F    | P-value |
| MC                 | Shame               | -0.15 | -2.57 | 0.011 | 0.50  | 0.25           | 7.38 | 0.001   |
|                    | Guilt               | 0.07  | 1.09  | 0.275 |       |                |      |         |
|                    | SC                  | 0.19  | 3.52  | 0.001 |       |                |      |         |
| MS                 | Shame               | -0.17 | -3.19 | 0.003 | 0.58  | 0.34           | 9.86 | 0.001   |
|                    | Guilt               | 0.13  | 2.09  | 0.038 |       |                |      |         |
|                    | SC                  | 0.18  | 3.42  | 0.001 |       |                |      |         |

The results of multiple regression analysis using the simultaneous method (Table 3) showed: There is a multiple correlation between SCE and SC with MC ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $R = 0.50$ ) and with MS ( $p < 0.001$ ,  $R = 0.58$ ). In addition, SCE and SC explain a total of 25% of the total variance of MC and 34% of the total variance of MS. Beta coefficients to show the main role of each variable showed: First of all, its coherence ( $p < 0.01$ ,  $Beta = 0.19$ ) can predict MC. Then, that was the conscious emotion of shame ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $Beta = -0.15$ ). However, the conscious emotion of guilt did not significantly predict MC ( $p < 0.01$ ). In addition, both SC could predict MC and SCE of shame and guilt ( $p < 0.01$ ).

#### 4 Discussion and Conclusion

This research investigated the relationship between MC and MS with SCE and SC. The results of the first part of the research based on the negative relationship between the conscious emotion of shame and commitment and MS and the positive relationship between the conscious emotion of guilt and commitment and MS are in line with the findings of previous studies (Clifford, 2013; Kargar, Davoodi, & Mozafari, 2019; Karimian, Karimi, & Bahmani, 2011; Lewis, 2008; Turner & Schallert, 2001). However, it is inconsistent with the research results of Zarei and Hosseingholi (2014) who showed that shame has a significant negative relationship with commitment and marital compatibility. However, guilt, commitment, and marital compatibility do not have a significant relationship. In explaining this result, it can be said that the feeling of shame separates the spouses and damages their communication (Tangney & Dearing, 2003). In the

experiences of shame, different aspects of the psyche conflict; shame arises from the difference between self and self-ideal and causes interference in behavior, thinking and speaking (Young, Klosko, & Weishaar, 2003). Women often suffer from depression as a result of shame, and men show self-aggression. People feel ashamed when they need their partner's approval for how to feel about themselves and adapt to create a secure relationship. They cannot feel secure in their relationship with their partner (Kargar, Davoodi, & Mozafari, 2019). Turner and Schallert (2001) showed that women who worry about experiencing intimacy in marital relationships experience more shame. Since intimacy is one of the important dimensions in commitment and MS, the more intimacy women experience, the less shame and guilt they feel, and as a result, they will have more commitment and MS. However, it has been found that guilt is a suitable foundation for responsible people, which increases their satisfaction and commitment to their relationships (Turner & Schallert, 2001). When a person in a relationship sees that the other party has spent a lot of money in the relationship and provided a lot of rewards and spent a lot of time and energy for their joint relationship, or on the contrary, he invested a lot in the relationship and spent a lot of time and energy. Therefore, from the decision or thought of leaving the relationship or establishing another relationship with a third person, one feels a pang of conscience or guilt and is affected by their thoughts and imagination (Zarei & Hosseingholi, 2014). In this regard, many researchers have shown that guilt is the basis of many psychological, hurtful, self-conscious and moral injuries formed by transgression, mistake or failure in the interpersonal context (Tangney & Dearing, 2003). Therefore, guilt can be a stimulus that

prevents marital dysfunction and lack of commitment and thus increases MS. Of course, the positive relationship between guilt and commitment and MS can also be related to cultural factors. In this way, feeling guilty is a positive and acceptable thing in our culture. In fact, we consider the feeling of guilt or the torment of conscience as a way to avoid or not commit many moral mistakes, and how our people view the feeling of guilt differs from the western viewpoint. In our society, people who are not satisfied with their married life and are not committed to it, because they cannot establish an intimate relationship with their spouse or because they cheat on them feel guilty. This feeling provides the basis for treatment and looking for a solution (Zarei & Hosseingholi, 2014).

In addition, another finding obtained from the research showed that SC has a positive relationship with the commitment and MS of married women and predicts their commitment and MS. This finding aligns with several studies that have found cohesion to be an important factor in the quality of married life, commitment and satisfaction (Robati & Namani, 2021; Zielińska-Więczkowska et al., 2012; Zielińska-Więczkowska & Sas, 2020). This finding can be explained based on Antonovsky's (1993) origin of health theory. According to this view, women with a higher sense of coherence; are more resistant and efficient against mental pressure and marital turmoil, and the possibility of their vulnerability in stressful situations is reduced because they can accept the situation. Instead of avoiding, such people try to use their abilities to manage the situation, according to them, these conditions and situations give meaning to life. Therefore, this personality structure changes the person's attitude towards stressful events in such a way that he experiences the least negative emotion and the person's internal energy resources are directed to improving the conditions and using the available opportunities and facilities instead of being used to adjust the negative emotions. This leads to satisfaction in married life, which ultimately brings commitment and success in a relationship. Antonovsky (1993) believes that the ability to understand the sense of coherence includes the components that create the sense of recognition. In people with a high sense of coherence, the information related to the cognitive component is orderly, comprehensive, structured, and clear and not confused, damaged, random and flexible (Antonovsky, 1993). Therefore, the feeling of coherence makes a person understand better and accept the emotions and events that he suffers in life. They are ready to face positive and negative emotions, accept challenges, and

identify personal and social resources to facilitate coping. Somehow, they try to change the position from an unpleasant situation to the pleasant one. Having a high sense of coherence can help a person mentally deal with the possible challenges of married life and manage stress reduction in relationship health. In addition, people with internal coherence value the problems and demands they face and will seek meaning in unpleasant experiences and overcome problems better. Therefore, it is expected that internal cohesion can have an effective role in satisfaction with married life and, as a result, commitment to it.

## 5 Limitations

Among the limitations of the present study was the statistical population that included only married female students studying in the units of Islamic Azad University in Tehran. The next limitation is the generalizability of the findings related to the available sampling method. Therefore, in order to increase the generalizability of the results, in addition to using available sampling methods, it is suggested to carry out similar research in wider samples with different demographic characteristics, especially married male students. Another limitation of this research was using a correlation design that depends on the data collected at a time and prevents accurate causal interpretations. The last limitation is related to the bias of a single method; the use of self-report questionnaires alone leads to a decrease in the construct validity of the research, with the increase of the possibility of dishonesty and carelessness in answering - despite the researcher's care and the use of stimulating methods. Therefore, to increase the research structure's validity, conducting an interview with the subjects at the same time as conducting the questionnaire is suggested.

## 6 Suggestions and Applications

It is suggested to implement educational interventions to improve the sense of psychological coherence and self-awareness and create a cultural background regarding the change of unfavorable beliefs to reduce incompatible and negative emotions. Therefore, according to the obtained results, the practical proposal of this research is training based on self-awareness and a sense of coherence to improve the commitment and MS of married women. The training focused on the sense of psychological coherence and strengthening the skill of self-awareness in the field of conscious emotions affects people's responses in different

situations of married life, especially in times of crisis, and makes them psychologically integrated and flexible.

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### Declaration of Interest

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### Ethics principles

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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