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Predicting emotional divorce: The role of problem-solving skills and lifestyles

Ameneh Azargon¹ & Nadereh Sohrabi^{2*}

Abstract

This research was conducted to determine the contribution of problem-solving skills and lifestyles in predicting women's emotional divorce. The current research method was descriptive and correlational, and the statistical population of the research was all married female students of the Islamic Azad University, Marvdasth branch. Among the statistical population, 180 women were selected and studied through available sampling. Gottman's emotional divorce questionnaire (2008), lifestyle questionnaire (LSQ), and Cassidy and Long's (1996) problem-solving styles were used to collect data. After collecting and extracting data, participants' scores were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of problem-solving skills and the dimensions of lifestyles with emotional divorce in married students. Also, the results showed that the dimensions of problem-solving skills and the dimensions of lifestyles have the power to predict emotional divorce in married female students significantly. Overall, the results of this research showed that women's lifestyles and problem-solving skills could be important predictors of their divorce probability; Because the ability to solve family problems is one of the factors that moderate the effects of adverse life events, and lifestyle is an important factor that justifies healthy and unhealthy marital functioning and provides a way to respond to the reasons for couples' incompatibility.

Keywords: *Problem-solving skills, lifestyles, emotional divorce.*

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1. M.A. Department of Psychology, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran.
2. **Corresponding Author:** Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran.

Introduction

Emotional divorce is the first step in the divorce process and indicates a declining marital relationship that is replaced by a feeling of alienation (Bastani, Golzari, and Roshni, 2010).

Gottman and Gottman (2015) consider emotional divorce to be the first step in the divorce process and indicates a deteriorating marital relationship that is replaced by a feeling of alienation, and although the husband and wife may continue to be together as a social group, attraction and trust they are lost to each other, in this situation, instead of supporting each other, couples act to hurt, fail and degrade each other's self-esteem, and each one seeks to find a reason to prove each other's flaws and shortcomings and reject each other (Olson & Defrain, 2006).). Emotional divorce occurs when the differences between the spouses have intensified, they do not have the ability or desire to resolve these differences, and they have neglected each other (Heidari & Sojali Sangri, 2015). Among the various factors that may play a role in the divorce phenomenon is the issue of family problem-solving skills. Many researchers have focused on solving the family problem in understanding the dynamics of interactions and marital relations. The findings indicate that it is not important that people do not face problems, troubles, and troubles in life, but it is important to act when facing such situations correctly (Chang, Sana, Riley, Turnburg, Zomberg, and Edwards, 2007). Research has shown that people who cannot solve problems as soon as they encounter an obstacle may show impulsive behavior, feel frustrated, become aggressive or withdraw to avoid a problematic situation. Repetition of such situations may lead to the creation and

occurrence of maladaptive behaviors (Cassidy, 2010).

In addition to significant factors such as economic, social, and personal factors, other factors such as the intimacy of couples, the existence of marital boundaries, family interaction patterns (Rahimi & Khayyer, 2009), and lifestyles also affect the quality of relationships, marital commitment and emotional divorce of couples. Lifestyle has a decisive role in marital satisfaction and in reducing couples' emotional divorce (Jaafari, 2018). An unfavorable lifestyle provides the basis for weakening the roots of the family foundation, increasing divorce, and the emergence of corruption. This is a matter whose harmful effects on society, families, and individuals are undeniable. Therefore, by adopting a healthy and appropriate lifestyle, many marital problems and dissatisfactions and their direct and indirect negative effects can be prevented. One can enjoy more satisfaction in married life (Afshani, 2012). Lifestyle is the routine daily activities that people adopt in their lives, affecting their health. By choosing a lifestyle to maintain and improve his health and prevent diseases, a person performs actions and activities against diseases that make up this lifestyle. The importance of lifestyle is more because it is effective on the quality of life and prevention of diseases. To maintain and improve health, correcting and improving lifestyle is necessary (Tal Azar, Tavasoli, Sharifirad, and Shojaizadeh, 2011). Intending to solve the shortcomings of past research, the current research seeks to answer the question of whether there is a significant relationship between lifestyles and family problem-solving skills with emotional divorce in married students of Mavdasht Azad University.

Method

The current research was applied and descriptive-correlational in terms of methodology. The present study's statistical population was all married students of the Marvdasht Islamic Azad University in the academic year 2018-2019. The target sample in this research was 180 married students of Marvdasht Islamic Azad University, which were selected using the available sampling method.

Materials

1. Gottman Emotional Divorce Questionnaire. This questionnaire was written in 2008 and contained statements about different aspects of life that a person may agree or disagree with. This scale has 24 questions and must be answered with yes or no. Questionnaire scoring is yes/no. A yes answer gets one point, and a no answer gets 0. The higher the number of yes answers, the higher the probability of emotional divorce. A score between 0 and 8: the possibility of separation in life is weak. The score between 8 and 16: The probability of separation in life is average. A score above 16: the possibility of separation in life is strong. In order to check the reliability of this scale, Cronbach's alpha was 0.91. Also, five experienced professors evaluated and approved content and formal verification in this field. (Pourhossein and Bidst, 2014).

2. Lifestyle Questionnaire (LSQ). This questionnaire has 70 questions, and its purpose is to evaluate different aspects of lifestyles (physical health, exercise and wellness, weight control and nutrition, psychological health, disease prevention, spiritual health, social health, avoiding drugs and narcotics, preventing accidents, and environmental health). The response range of this questionnaire is of Likert type, and the score for each option is as follows. (never =

0 points, sometimes = 1 point, usually = 2 points, always = 3 points). The minimum possible score will be 0, and the maximum will be 210. The score between 0 and 70: Poor healthy lifestyle. The score between 70 and 105: Healthy lifestyle is average. A score above 105: Lifestyle score is high. In the research, Laali et al. (2012) confirmed the construct validity of the lifestyle questionnaire as a multidimensional tool for evaluating and measuring lifestyle using the factor analysis test. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha measurement method, and all numbers were higher than 0.70.

3. Questionnaire of problem-solving styles by Cassidy and Long. This questionnaire was created by Long and Cassidy (1996) in two stages and had 24 questions measuring six factors, and each factor includes four test items. Helplessness, problem-solving mastery, creative style, confidence in problem-solving, avoidance style, orientation style. Scoring is done in the form of zero and one, and for the I don't know option, a score of 0.5 is considered, and then the sum of these scores indicates the overall score of each of the six factors. In this case, the maximum score for problem-solving will be 24, the minimum score will be zero, and the average score will be 12 (Bakhshipour et al., 2008). The reliability of this questionnaire has been confirmed by Cronbach's alpha method.

Implementation. To conduct this research, theoretical literature and domestic and foreign research related to the research topic was first collected by field and library methods. Then, by obtaining permission from Morvdasht Azad University, the sample group was selected through convenience sampling. After communicating and reducing the sensitivity of the subjects about

the questionnaire and the reasons for their selection in the sample, the necessary explanations were provided to the researcher about how to complete the questionnaire, and the subjects completed the questionnaires. The subjects were assured that their answers would remain confidential, so they were asked to complete the questionnaire honestly. The subjects were asked to ask the researcher for further explanation if they encountered any ambiguity while completing the questionnaire. Emotional divorce, problem-solving skills, and lifestyle questionnaires were used to collect information in this research. Finally, the collected data were statistically analyzed using SPSS software, and at the end, the final research report was prepared.

Findings

The findings show that the mean and standard deviation of the total lifestyle score is 167.37 (11.23). The highest score related to physical health lifestyle with a mean and standard deviation of 19.92 (3.12), and the lowest score related to psychological health lifestyle with a mean and standard deviation of 14.40 (2.42) were reported. Also, the highest score in problem-solving styles is related to helplessness, with a mean and standard deviation of emotion regulation of 3.99 (0.76). The lowest score is related to avoidance style, with a mean and standard deviation of 1.99 (0.86). The mean and standard deviation of the emotional divorce score was 11.81 (2.23). The skewness and elongation coefficient is between +2 and -2; Therefore, the data distribution is normal. The value of Watson's camera is also within the allowed range of 1.5 to 2.5; Therefore, the hypothesis of no correlation between errors was confirmed, and regression was used.

The findings show a positive correlation between the helplessness style in problem-solving, the inhibitory style of problem-solving, and the avoidance style with emotional divorce, and the creative style, the confidence style in problem-solving, and the tendency style have a negative correlation with emotional divorce. The findings show a negative correlation between all dimensions of lifestyles and emotional divorce. Considering the significance of the correlation coefficient obtained between problem-solving skills and lifestyle dimensions with emotional divorce, regression is used to investigate the prediction of emotional divorce based on problem-solving skills and lifestyle dimensions.

In this research, the R² value of problem-solving skills is equal to 0.43, which means that problem-solving skills can predict emotional divorce by 43%. As the results of the table shows, problem-solving skills could predict emotional divorce. The helplessness style in problem-solving with a beta coefficient of 0.30, control style 0.15, creativity style -0.35, trust style -0.11, avoidance style 0.20, and orientation style -0.11 could predict emotional divorce.

In this research, the value of R² dimensions of lifestyles is equal to 0.41, which means that lifestyles have a 41% ability to predict emotional divorce. As the results of the table shows, lifestyles could predict emotional divorce. Disease prevention lifestyle with a beta coefficient of -0.22, psychological health lifestyle of 0.55, spiritual health lifestyle of -0.67, accident prevention lifestyle of -0.19, and whole lifestyle of -0.32 was able to predict emotional divorce.

Discussion

The present study was conducted to determine the contribution of problem-

solving skills and lifestyles in predicting the emotional divorce of working students. According to the results, problem-solving skills could predict emotional divorce. In explaining the result of this hypothesis, it can be mentioned that every family faces different problems. Therefore, learning problem-solving skills will help the couple to be able to prioritize them before solving the problems and first solve the problems and issues that have a more significant impact on the couple's relationship. In Shur's opinion, the performance of couples who can solve problems in married life is better than others. In this context, he believes that couples who lack problem-solving skills in facing the various issues and problems they face are unable to predict their actions and cannot think of different and diverse solutions to solve the problem. The results of the present research showed that a confidence style in problem-solving could reduce the tendency of married students to emotional divorce among the components of problem-solving skills. Therefore, students who have higher self-confidence due to their high self-confidence are more capable of solving problems and show more appropriate behavioral strategies in facing problems because they actually deal with the situations that arise more actively (Rezaian et al., 2018).

In explaining the obtained results, it can be said that changing the lifestyle changes the dysfunctional beliefs of couples and improves verbal exchanges, sexual relations, and mutuality in how to solve life problems. A lifestyle based on cooperation and shared goals leads to a life with marital satisfaction. By modifying their lifestyle, people can put aside their selfish tendencies and choose goals with a high social orientation. Concerning the psychological stress

management component and psychological health from the aspects of lifestyle, couples who can solve their problems profoundly and not superficially will lead to growth and emotional security towards the other. They also learn to see their conflicts as an opportunity for deeper intimacy and contact with each other. Since the existence of conflicts between couples is one of the reasons for the tendency to divorce, as a result of the proper resolution of conflicts, the possibility of emotional divorce is reduced (Lichter & Karmat, 2009).

In explaining the obtained results, lifestyle is the specific way of life of a person, group, or society. A set of attitudes, values, behaviors, moods and tastes, that is, all the things that sharing them lead to more contact, and more contact leads to more perceived similarity; Because the more things two people have in common, the more similar they will see each other. Perceived similarity combined with the possibility of connection leads to timely interpersonal communication that is fruitful. Overlapping communication networks and many interactions lead to many isomorphic features. More contact also leads to the creation of the same ideas, considering that the ideas of couples find objectivity in actions. Therefore, couples usually have relatively similar activities and hobbies, which is important for bringing men and women closer together (Jaafari, 2018).

Considering that the results from this research confirm the existence of a relationship between problem-solving styles and lifestyles with emotional divorce, it is suggested that counselors and counseling centers use the results from this research. It is also possible to help couples through lifestyle change training to improve their relationships by modifying their lifestyles and identifying destructive styles that reduce

marital intimacy and lead to emotional divorce, thus enriching their common life. Specialists can focus on changing problem-solving models in couples to reduce incompatibility and marital conflicts of couples (which are among the reasons for emotional divorce).

Ethics

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

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Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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