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## Predicting Lifestyle and Marital Intimacy on the Tendency to Marital Infidelity in Women

Zohrdeh Moradi<sup>1\*</sup>, Marjan Maleki<sup>2</sup> & Farhad Namjoo<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

This research was conducted to predict the tendency to marital infidelity in women: with the predictive role of lifestyles and marital intimacy. The current study was descriptive and correlational, and the statistical population of the research was women working in the offices of Karaj city in 2019; out of the statistical population, 250 women were selected and studied through available sampling. To collect data, a lifestyle questionnaire (LSQ), Bagarozzi's marital intimacy (2001), and Marami and Khademi's (2012) tendency to marital infidelity were used. After collecting and extracting data, participants' scores were analyzed using Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis. The results showed a significant relationship between lifestyles and marital intimacy and the tendency to marital infidelity in working women. Also, the results showed that the dimensions of lifestyles and the dimensions of marital intimacy could significantly predict the tendency of marital infidelity in working women. The findings of this research show that marital intimacy and lifestyles of married women significantly contribute to predicting the attitude towards marital infidelity.

**Keywords:** *Lifestyles, Marital intimacy, Marital infidelity.*

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1. **Corresponding author:** Master of Family Counseling, Science and Research, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

zohreh.moradi.39@gmail.com

2. Master's degree in family counseling, Estehban branch, Islamic Azad University, Estehban, Iran

3. PhD in Family Counseling, Khorasgan Branch (Isfahan), Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

## Introduction

One of the main themes of women's life in Iran is the issue of betrayal. The emergence of this concern in society indicates a slow and gradual transformation or, to put it more acutely, a gradual revolution in society (Rezaei & Kalantari, 2011). Infidelity in marriage means unfaithfulness and lack of commitment to the committed relationship of the couple and establishing any emotional and sexual relationship with the opposite sex outside of said commitment. Infidelity in marriage is considered to be the leading cause of marital dissatisfaction (Bagarrouzi, 2001), the main reason for marital conflicts and disputes, and one of the most important problems in marital relations and the most important reason for divorce and separation of couples (Pirzadeh, Banisi, and Watankhah, 2019). When the intimate relationship between husband and wife is damaged, the marital understanding and commitment of the couple decreases, and destructive and negative effects are created in the mental health of the family as well as the mental health of the children (Khayat, Attari, and Karaei, 2018). Also, avoiding establishing intimate relationships is one of the factors that cause failure in family life, emotional divorce, and a tendency to extramarital relationships and marital infidelity (Bloom, 2006).

Studies and clinical experiences also show that the root of many marital problems is the lack of intimacy and communication problems between couples. Therefore, intimacy is a basic human need, not just a desire or wish. Therefore, its lack of satisfaction can increase conflicts, reduce marital satisfaction, and cause emotional and psychological problems (Bagarrouzi, 2001). Research shows that having intimacy between couples is one of the important

factors in creating stable marriages (Crawford and Unger, 2004) and on the other hand, intimate relationships are one of the factors that cause failure in family life (Bloom, 2006). . research shows that problems in married life are the main cause of many men's deviance, and the most important problems are the way couples deal with each other and the existence of a deep gap in trust between them. 48% of men stated emotional problems as the most important reason for cheating. 32% considered emotional dissatisfaction and sexual dissatisfaction equally, 12% considered other factors, and only 8% considered sexual dissatisfaction as the main reason for their betrayal (Newman, 2006, translated by Askari and Askari, 2009). In addition to major factors such as economic, social and personal factors, other factors such as the intimacy of couples (Irfani Akbari, 1999), the existence of marital boundaries, family interaction patterns (Rahimi & Khayyer, 2009), the attachment styles of couples also affect the quality of relationships and marital commitment. In this, lifestyle can be mentioned as an important factor affecting couples' marital commitment. People in all cultures have a set of emotions and feelings, and although these emotions and feelings are specific to humans, humans, as cultural beings enclosed in their cultural pattern, act in their own way in the manifestation of this common characteristic, which is called their lifestyle. Lifestyle is the pattern of a person's life that manifests in personal activities, attachments and thoughts. In fact, lifestyle is more than a person's personality or social class. In general, lifestyle includes the complete pattern of a person's actions and reactions in the world; Therefore, according to the mentioned materials, the present research question will be whether lifestyles

and marital intimacy can predict the tendency to marital infidelity in working women.

### **Method**

The current research was applied and descriptive-correlational in terms of methodology. The statistical population of the present study was formed by all the women working in the government offices of Karaj city in 2020, according to the nature of the research and based on Cochran's formula, 250 women were determined as the sample size and selected in an accessible manner. The criteria for entering the research are having at least a diploma, being married, and having more than 5 years of work experience. The criterion for leaving the research was the incompleteness and confusion of the questionnaires.

### **Materials**

**1. Questionnaire of tendency to marital infidelity.** In this research, to measure the amount of marital infidelity, the marital infidelity aptitude questionnaire, which had 52 items, will be used. The questionnaire is given in the form of five Likert-type options with a score from 0 to 4. In order to determine the content and form validity of experts' opinions, as well as to determine the criterion validity of the scale, the correlation coefficient of the scores of this scale with the Enrich Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire was used. Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the scale. The obtained correlation coefficients for the total score of the questionnaire were in the range of 0.61 to 0.92.

**2. Marital intimacy questionnaire.** This questionnaire was prepared and adjusted by Bagarozzi in 2001. The questionnaire contains 41 questions and evaluates intimacy needs in eight dimensions: emotional intimacy, psychological intimacy, intellectual

intimacy, sexual intimacy, physical intimacy, spiritual intimacy, aesthetic intimacy, social-recreational intimacy. Higher scores in one dimension will indicate the respondent's greater need for that dimension of intimacy from his spouse. upside down. In Iran, Etemadi (2008) calculated the total reliability of this questionnaire at 94% and the content validity at 58%.

**3. 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.

**Implementation.** In order to collect information in the current research, marital infidelity, marital intimacy and lifestyle questionnaires were used. Finally, the collected data was 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 111.28 (7.88). The mean and standard deviation of the total intimacy score is 142.68 (11.69). The findings show a significant positive correlation between lifestyle and marital intimacy and the tendency to commit marital infidelity. Also, there is a significant negative correlation between lifestyle dimensions and the tendency to cheat. According to the findings, there is a direct and significant relationship between the dimensions of lifestyles and the tendency to cheat. Finally, the dimensions of emotional, psychological, intellectual and spiritual intimacy with the tendency to cheat have a negative correlation at the level of 0.01, and also between the dimensions of physical, aesthetic and social-recreational intimacy with the tendency to cheat, there is a significant negative correlation at the level of 0.05.

The results of multivariate regression analysis of variance showed that the obtained F value is equal to 18.21, which is significant at the alpha level of less than 0.05. The results show that the lifestyle and marital intimacy can explain the changes related to the attitude towards marital infidelity well and it shows the appropriateness of the presented regression model.

According to the findings, lifestyle ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.27$ ) and marital intimacy ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.27$ ) can predict married women's attitude towards marital infidelity.

The results of multivariate regression variance analysis showed that the F value obtained is equal to 51.28, which is significant at the alpha level of less than 0.05. The findings show that lifestyle dimensions can explain the changes related to marital infidelity well, and it shows the

appropriateness of the presented regression model.

Based on the findings, dimensions of physical health ( $P=0.004$ ,  $\beta=0.23$ ), exercise and wellness ( $P=0.040$ ,  $\beta=0.12$ ), weight control and nutrition ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.42$ ), disease prevention ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.27$ ), social health ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.32$ ), avoiding drugs and substances ( $P=0.003$ ,  $\beta=0.13$ ) and environmental health ( $P=0.006$ ,  $\beta=0.13$ ); They can predict married women's attitude towards marital infidelity.

The results of multivariate regression analysis of variance showed that the obtained F value is equal to 25.16, which is significant at the alpha level of less than 0.05. That is, the lifestyle dimensions can explain the changes related to marital infidelity well, and it shows the appropriateness of the presented regression model.

Based on the results of emotional intimacy ( $P=0.004$ ,  $\beta=0.19$ ), psychological intimacy ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.24$ ), intellectual intimacy ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.21$ ), sexual intimacy ( $P=0.003$ ,  $\beta=0.16$ ), physical intimacy ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.24$ ), spiritual intimacy ( $P=0.003$ ,  $\beta=-0$ ) and social and recreational intimacy ( $P=0.001$ ,  $\beta=0.33$ ); They can predict married women's attitude towards marital infidelity.

## Discussion

The present study aimed to determine the predictive contribution of lifestyle dimensions and marital intimacy on the tendency to marital infidelity in working women. The obtained results showed that lifestyle and marital intimacy could predict the tendency to infidelity.

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. A suitable lifestyle can increase couples' understanding and increase marital satisfaction and the absence of marital infidelity (Tol et al., 2011). It can be said that a long time ago, based on a common custom, the man's role in the family was education and income, and the woman's role was to do housework and take care of the children. However, when both work outside the home, the woman often finds a double responsibility. Therefore, when the husband and wife participate in the work of providing income and performing household duties, sometimes the husband and wife accuse each other of violating the marriage contract in performing these duties, which causes a decrease in the quality and intimacy of marriage and as a result, the tendency to Extramarital relationships and infidelity are common among women (Ajam, 2016). Marital infidelity is mostly a process of gradual emotional, emotional and even physical separation that marks the integrity and sense of security of individuals and results such as the absence of a sense of security, a sense of revenge from the betrayer, relatively stable emotional and perceptual disturbances to the other party. , neglect, annoying doubts, and doubts and constant illusions about the existence of continued betrayals, and the feeling of lack of support and emotional support follow; Therefore, it seems natural that the absence of marital intimacy causes a tendency to marital infidelity and extramarital relationships in working women (Kordbcheh & Arefi, 2017).

Extensive research in Iran and the world in the field of family shows that the most important factor in the success of married and family life is communication and intimacy between husband and wife and other family members. In explaining this finding, as much as couples express their emotions in the family environment, are encouraged to express their feelings, and can freely discuss and exchange opinions on a wide range of issues, they can have a better quality of life.

Considering that the results obtained from this research confirm the existence of a relationship between marital intimacy and lifestyles with marital infidelity, it is suggested that counselors and counseling centers use the results obtained from this research.

### **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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