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Comparison of distress tolerance and sexual intimacy in working women and housewives

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Abstract

The present study aimed to compare distress tolerance and sexual intimacy in working women and housewives in Shiraz. The research method was a descriptive and causal-comparative type, and the statistical population of this research was all working women and housewives of Shiraz city in 2018; among them, 140 women (70 working women and 70 housewives) were selected in a targeted way and They responded to Bagarozzi's Intimacy Questionnaire and Simmons and Gaher's Distress Tolerance Questionnaire. The data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance and univariate analysis. The findings indicated that working women's distress tolerance and components (tolerance, evaluation, and regulation) were significantly higher than housewives. Also, the data showed that the sexual intimacy of working women was significantly lower than that of housewives. The findings of this research show that the sexual intimacy and stress tolerance of working women is much higher than that of housewives.

Keywords: *Distress tolerance, Sexual intimacy, working women, housewives..*

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Introduction

Research literature indicates the fact that women's employment, like any other phenomenon, includes a set of different opportunities and limitations (Mahmoudi & Honerparvan, 2019). In addition to the positive effects of women's employment, such as gaining financial independence, self-confidence and reducing depression, there may also be negative effects and consequences. Among them, we can mention the mental and physical pressure caused by double work and the feeling of guilt in taking care of the household affairs, stress, and reduced intimacy (Saroukhani, 2014).

Sexual intimacy is one factor that influences the increase of marital compatibility. Studies and clinical experiences have shown that couples experience severe and pervasive problems when establishing and maintaining intimate and compatible relationships with each other (Pascoal, Narciso, and Pereira, 2014). Sexual intimacy involves behaviors that increase emotional closeness. Emotional closeness includes mutual support and understanding, communicating and sharing ourselves, activities, and possessions with another person (Pillage & Levitin, 2005).

In successful marriages, mutual satisfaction of the couple's intimacy needs to an acceptable and expected extent leads to the consolidation of loving relationships between them. As far as we can say, one of the principles of successful marriages is to satisfy the need for intimacy between couples (Welgeston, Wenberg, Exilius, and Landusit, 2010). McCarthy (1991) states that one of the most important marital damages is caused by the reduction of sexual satisfaction in couples, and sexual satisfaction affects many aspects of married life, including marital commitment. Among the needs for intimacy, sexual motivation has a deep

fusion with psychological needs, so the effect of this need can be seen in many aspects of life. Also, this motivation has a constructive, important, and fundamental role in the journey toward mental health and balance. Having these characteristics, it is clear that sexual desire is separated from other biological needs and becomes an emotional and psychological need (Ohadi, 2015).

The capacity to bear distress is one of the effective factors in how couples respond to resolving their differences. Distress is a common instrument in research related to the emotional disorder, expressed as a meta-emotional construct and a person's ability to experience and resist negative emotional states. This structure, which may be created as a result of cognitive or physical processes in a person, is an emotional state often characterized by practical tendencies to reduce the negative effects of emotional experience (Simmons & Gaher, 2005). Also, distress tolerance has a multidimensional nature including several dimensions, including 1) the ability to tolerate 2) the evaluation and capacity to accept the emotional state 3) the method of emotion regulation by the individual 4) the amount of attracting attention by negative emotions and the amount of its contribution to the occurrence of dysfunction (Liro, Zolensky, and Bernstein, 2010).

Therefore, according to the mentioned materials, the current research question is whether there is a significant difference between distress tolerance and sexual intimacy in working women and housewives in Shiraz city.

Method

The current research was descriptive and causal-comparative. This research's statistical population was comprised of all

working women and housewives of Shiraz city in 2018. The sampling method in the group of working women was done with a targeted method from among the government organizations and offices of Shiraz city, and in the group of ordinary women, it was also done with a targeted sampling method from among the housewives of Shiraz city. The questionnaire was handed over, and after completion, 70 working women and 70 housewives formed the sample of the present study; and after homogenization based on age, education, economic and social status, they entered the study.

Materials

1. Simons and Gaher Distress Tolerance Questionnaire. This scale has 15 items by Simmons and Gaher, 2005; Was made. The items on this scale are scored based on a five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5. High scores on this scale indicate high distress tolerance. Simmons and Gaher, 2005; Cronbach's alpha coefficient of this scale was reported as 0.82, and its internal consistency after six months was 0.61 (Dry Organ, 2012). In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total distress tolerance score was 0.82.

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%.

Implementation. After identifying the sample, as mentioned in the sampling section, the purpose of this research was stated and the confidentiality aspect of the information was emphasized. After the presence of the sample members in the appropriate place and after establishing communication and reducing the sensitivity of the subjects about the questionnaire and the reasons for their selection in the sample, the researcher provided necessary explanations about how to complete the questionnaire. Subjects completed questionnaires (tolerance of distress and sexual intimacy). 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. Finally, Spss22 statistical software was used to analyze the collected data.

Findings

The average distress tolerance of housewives is lower than that of working women, and the average sexual intimacy of housewives is higher than that of working women. As can be clearly seen in the above table, the average of all distress tolerance components (tolerance, absorption, evaluation, regulation) of working women is higher than that of housewives.

The comparison of two groups of working women and housewives showed a significant difference in distress tolerance ($P < 0.01$, $F = 66.81$). Therefore, according to the descriptive information table, housewives' average stress tolerance is lower than that of working women. According to the results of the above table, the comparison of two groups of working women and housewives

showed a significant difference in sexual intimacy ($P < 0.01$, $F = 8.94$). Therefore, according to the table of descriptive information, the average sexual intimacy of housewives is higher than that of working women.

The results of MANOVA analysis indicate a significant difference between at least one of the components of distress tolerance in working women and housewives ($p < 0.01$). The results of the multivariate analysis show a significant difference between the components of tolerance, evaluation and adjustment in working women and housewives, and the amount of this difference is 27, 12, and 8%, respectively, according to the eta squared column. The average components of tolerance, evaluation, and adjustment of working women are higher than housewives.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to endure distress and sexual intimacy among working women and housewives in Shiraz. The results showed a significant difference in distress tolerance between working women and housewives groups. It can also be concluded that the average stress tolerance of housewives is lower than that of working women. In explaining this finding, distress tolerance is a state where people can understand their negative emotions and endure them. In each person's daily life, various stress and troubles are experienced. Confusion and subsequent stress are the body's reactions to inappropriate environmental conditions, but it is not always negative reaction. A low amount of stress is harmful and can also be useful and make life interesting and dynamic. If this stress exceeds the permissible limit, a critical situation will arise, and it will harm the

personal and social life of people and make them suffer. Stress allows people to try and face risks in life (Suri, 2015).

The behavioral ability to persevere in the face of internal distress caused by stressful conditions shows people's distress tolerance level. In explaining the dimensions of tolerance (tolerance of emotional distress) and evaluation (mental assessment of distress), people with higher levels of tolerance and evaluation of distress may be more able to respond adaptively to distress and distress-inducing conditions. Also, they are flexible and adapt to changes in their environment and quickly return to recovery after removing stressful factors (Gomez & Fisher, 2003). In fact, people with high distress tolerance consider negative and unpleasant events more flexibly and realistically and often consider problems to be temporary and limited. They also seek benefits from more useful coping methods. This human capacity can make him triumphantly overcome unfortunate events and improve his social and professional competence despite being exposed to extreme tensions.

According to the results of this research, which shows that women's employment increases the tolerance of distress, it seems necessary for the government to provide education and employment for as many women as possible in society, and the government can by creating Part-time employment for women take fundamental steps in this field. Also, according to the research results, it is suggested that the authorities hold meetings and training workshops on the training of distress tolerance and the necessary skills to increase sexual intimacy for families. In this context, conducting research in different regions of the country and especially considering

cultural differences can provide the possibility of comparison in a broader level.

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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