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Predicting marital infidelity tendency based on lifestyles and communication patterns in working women

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Abstract

This research was conducted to determine the predictive contribution of family communication styles and lifestyles on the tendency to marital infidelity in working women. The current research was descriptive and correlational. The statistical population of the research was made up of all working women of Lar city in 2018. Among the statistical population, 200 people were selected and studied by single-stage cluster sampling. Questionnaires of family communication styles, lifestyles, and tendency to marital infidelity 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 a significant relationship between the dimensions of family communication styles and the dimensions of lifestyles with a tendency to marital infidelity in working women. Also, the results showed that the dimensions of family communication styles (dialogue and harmony) and lifestyles (environmental health and social health) significantly predict the tendency to marital infidelity in working women.

Keywords: *Communication patterns, Lifestyles, Marital Infidelity, Working women.*

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Introduction

One of the main themes of women's life in Iran is the issue of marital infidelity. This concern's occurrence in society indicates a gradual transformation or, to put it more acutely, a gradual revolution in society (Rezaei & Kalantari, 2013). Recent studies show that it is not the occurrence of conflicts and conflicts that leads to marital infidelity in troubled marriages. However, reducing the expression of emotional feelings, positive emotional connection, and couples' sensitivity to each other predicts the collapse of the relationship and marital infidelity (Yenisri & Kekdemir, 2006).

In this, lifestyle is an important factor that affects the marital commitment of couples. Lifestyle means a way; that couples choose to deal with tasks and life events. Each person has a specific way of dealing with tasks and life events based on unconscious defense mechanisms, conscious adaptive strategies, and the influence of environmental factors (Mohan, Wilkes, and Jackson, 2008). A healthy lifestyle is a way of life that reduces the risk of disease and, as a result, premature death. In real life, lifestyle is a product of a combination of choices, opportunities, and resources. A healthy lifestyle is a valuable resource for reducing the incidence and effects of health problems, increasing recovery, coping with stressful life factors, and improving the quality of life (Park, 2004).

One of the prominent models in the family that deals with interactions in the family and its role in the effective adaptation of couples to the environment and quality of life are the family communication model. The concept of family communication patterns or family communication schemas is a scientific structure of the world of family communication, which is based on the

communication of family members with each other, what family members say and do to each other, and what they mean by these communications. Koerner & Maki, 2004). Avoiding intimate relationships is one of the factors that cause failure in family life, emotional divorce, and a tendency to extramarital relationships and marital infidelity (Blume, 2006). Communication problems are the most common problem of couples, and more than 90% of conflicted couples state these problems as the main problem in their relationship (Bernstein & Bernstein, 2001; translated by Pourabdi, 2010). In short, the studies showed that the communication pattern of conversation and listening has a positive and significant relationship with mental health, and the communication pattern of conformity has a negative and significant relationship with mental health (Zarei et al., 2015). Therefore, according to the stated contents, the question arises "can lifestyles and communication styles predict the attitude towards marital infidelity in working women?". In order to find the answer, the aim of the current research is "to determine the predictive contribution of family life communication patterns on the tendency to marital infidelity in working women".

Method

The current research is of applied purpose and descriptive-correlational in terms of methodology. The present study's statistical population was comprised of all the working women of Gachsaran city in 2018. Sampling in this research was done using single-stage cluster sampling. For this purpose, four departments (Education Department, Municipality, Imam Khomeini Relief, and Welfare Committee) were randomly selected from all the departments of Gachsaran city. In each office, randomly, 200 married

women who met the conditions of participation in the research (at least one year has passed since their marriage, do not have severe mental illness, and have a diploma or higher education) were selected as a sample group.

Materials

1. Marami and Khademi's (2013) marital infidelity tendency questionnaire: This scale has thirteen elements that explain four big factors. Factor one (globalization) includes 3 subscales and includes the Internet, satellite, and imitation of western societies; The second factor (sexual) includes 3 subscales that include sexual thoughts, sexual behavior, sexual modeling; Factor three (personality) includes 4 subscales that include dependent, narcissistic, emotional, and insecurely attached personalities; The fourth factor (family) consists of 3 subscales, which include family communication, family structure, and forced marriage. The questionnaire is scored on a five-point Likert scale. The reliability of this questionnaire in this research was obtained through Cronbach's alpha of 0.92.

2. Fitzpatrick and Ritchie communication patterns questionnaire (1994): This tool is a self-assessment scale designed by Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1994) and consists of 26 items. The scoring of this scale is based on a 5-point Likert scale. In the research of Rahimi and Khayyer (2009), the correlation coefficient of each item with its corresponding dimension score was used to determine the validity of this questionnaire. All coefficients were significant. Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability, and the coefficients were 0.88 for the dialogue dimension and 0.85 for the conformity dimension.

3. Lifestyle Questionnaire (LSQ): This questionnaire was created by Laali, Abedi, and Kajbaf (2013) and had 70 questions. The scoring of this questionnaire is based on a 5-point Likert scale, and its purpose is to evaluate different dimensions of lifestyles. The validity of this questionnaire is 0.91, and its reliability is 0.87 (Lali, Abedi, and Kajbaf, 2012).

Implementation. After identifying the sample members, 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 communicating and reducing the sensitivity of the subjects about the questionnaire and the reasons for their selection in the sample, the researcher provided the necessary explanations about how to complete the questionnaire, and the subjects completed the research 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. Finally, Spss22 statistical software was used to analyze the collected data.

Findings

The results of the correlation test showed that there is a significant correlation between the tendency to marital infidelity and the dialogue pattern. However, no significant relationship was seen with the conformity pattern. The findings show a direct and significant relationship between the dimensions of lifestyles and the tendency to marital infidelity (in the marital infidelity

tendency questionnaire, the higher the score, the more negative the attitude).

The multiple correlation coefficient R between lifestyles with a tendency to marital infidelity is equal to 0.64, and the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.4. This means that lifestyles explain 40% of the changes in marital infidelity tendency scores. Also, because the value of F (12.74) is significant at the significance level of $P < 0.001$, lifestyles can predict the tendency to marital infidelity. Also, according to the value of the regression coefficient (Beta), it can be concluded that environmental health has the largest contribution in predicting the tendency to marital infidelity. The t values also show that only environmental health and social health dimensions can predict the tendency to marital infidelity alone and by controlling other variables.

The multiple correlation coefficient R between family communication styles with a tendency to marital infidelity is equal to 0.43, and the coefficient of determination is equal to 0.18. This means that family communication styles explain 18% of the changes in marital infidelity tendency scores. Also, because the F value (21.78) is significant at the significance level of $P < 0.001$, then family communication styles can predict the tendency to marital infidelity. Also, according to the value of the regression coefficient (Beta), it can be concluded that communication has the largest contribution in predicting the tendency to marital infidelity. The t values also show that both communication and conformity can predict the tendency to marital infidelity (in the opposite direction, of course) by themselves and by controlling other variables.

Discussion

The present study aimed to determine the predictive contribution of the dimensions of

family communication styles and lifestyles on the tendency to marital infidelity in working women. The results showed a significant relationship between the dimensions of family communication styles and the dimensions of lifestyles with a tendency to marital infidelity in working women. Also, the results showed that the dimensions of family communication styles and lifestyles could significantly predict the tendency to marital infidelity in working women.

In explaining the obtained results, it can be said that the change in lifestyle leads to a change in the dysfunctional beliefs of couples, improvement in verbal exchanges, sexual relations, and mutuality in how to solve life problems. A lifestyle based on cooperation and common 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 (Behrang et al., 2017). An active lifestyle reduces symptoms of depression and anxiety and increases people's ability to deal with stress and tensions in married life. Nervous tension, depression, anger, fatigue, and confusion all decrease following physical activity, while mental strength increases. Positive changes in self-concept, increased self-confidence, and self-awareness, positive mood changes, increased energy and ability to deal with daily activities, increased enthusiasm for social relationships, and positive progress in coping with problems, life expectancy, and health are all benefits of physical activity. Doing sports activities and having an active lifestyle leads to better health. As a result of these factors, the quality of marital

relationships increases, and the tendency of couples to commit marital infidelity decreases (Pourmidani et al., 2014).

The results obtained can be beneficial in the implementation of counseling sessions. Counselors focusing on couples' lifestyles and communication patterns can achieve success in counseling related to marital infidelity. It is also suggested to conduct research with the data collection method through interviews and applying other intervening variables such as economic conditions, type of job, social status, gender, etc. The findings of this research can be used in family courts, premarital counseling, family therapy counseling, and group family training sessions.

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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