Original Article

Investigating The Relationship Between Attachment Styles And Psychological Constancy Characteristics And Its Effect On Improving Marital Relationships

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Abstract:

Objective: This study aimed to investigate the relationship between attachment styles and psychological constancy characteristics and their effect on improving marital relationships.

Method: The present study is descriptive and correlational. The study population is all middle school teachers in the 11th district of Tehran, of which 100 of them were randomly selected as the sample group. Standard questionnaires of attachment styles, psychological constancy, and marital satisfaction were used to collect data. Pearson correlation coefficient, linear regression, and t-test were used to analyze the data.

Results: The results showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between attachment styles and marital satisfaction. There is a positive and significant relationship between psychological constancy and marital satisfaction, and also there is a difference between the level of attachment of male and female teachers, but there is no difference between the level of psychological constancy and the marital relationship between male and female teachers. Meanwhile, attachment and constancy have a predictable significant power that effects on marital satisfaction of male and female teachers.

Conclusion: Psychological constancy as a personality trait modulates the relationship between stress and illness, i.e. it acts as a source of resistance and protective shield in the face of stressful life events, and diligent individuals can find meaning in disturbing experiences, and believe in their role as a valuable and important person.

Keywords: Attachment styles, Constancy Characteristics, Improving Marital Relationships, Marital Satisfaction

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Introduction

Family is the first and most fundamental institution that plays an essential role in the formation of a human's personality. Humans start their life from their family, and the deep of their personality is shaped there, and also their values and intellectual standards are established. These initial influences play a decisive role in the individual's behaviors, relationships with others, and adaptation to the environment in the future and in general throughout their life [1]. One of the manifestations of human social life is the existence of healthy and constructive interaction between human beings, and the establishment of love for each other, and the expression of intimacy and empathy. The family is a social institution or foundation that arises from the marital bond of a man and a woman. A family is a place of satisfaction of various physical, intellectual, and emotional needs; and having knowledge of biological needs, and knowing how to satisfy them, and being equipped with cognition techniques, and biological and psychological desires is an undeniable necessity [2].

Religious attitudes could be effective in marital bonds because religion contains guidelines for life and provides believes and values that such characteristics could affect married life. Religion provides a general guide for human beings that if human beings act on it, it will lead to the strengthening of the marital bond. These guidelines include rules about sex, gender duties, self-sacrifice, and conflict resolution in marital relationships. With marriage and the establishment of a marital relationship, the role of marital compatibility in the continuation of cohabitation and the formation of its positive and negative consequences becomes apparent. Marital adjustment is a situation in which most of the time the couples feel happy and satisfied with each other and satisfactory relationships between them could be evaluated through mutual interest, level of care for each other, and acceptance and understanding with each other. Spouses who have high marital adjustment have overall life satisfaction, show higher tolerance in stressful situations, and in fact, fully compatible couples are expected to have long-term relationships and more stable marriages [3]. Kendrick and Drentea (2016) [4] define marital adjustment as the adaptation of couples to each other, various factors such as marital satisfaction, cohesion, agreement, emotion, and conflict have influenced the formation of different levels.

Personality traits play a significant role in individuals' tendency to experience positive or negative emotions as an effective factor in interpersonal relationships and emotional relationships [5]. Another influential theory in the field of examining emotional relationships is attachment theory. Attachment is a lasting emotional bond that is characterized by a tendency to seek and to be close to a person, and of course, to maintain this relationship, especially when the situation is threatening. Mental models of relationships are of particular importance in attachment theory and link early attachment experiences to subsequent feelings and behaviors [6]. The first method specifically used to measure attachment in adults is interviewing to determine attachment. The secure attachment style that develops early in life could determine attachment behaviors that provide satisfying relationships in the future. There will be a high level of marital satisfaction among couples with secure attachment. [7].

Attachment researchers have divided attachment styles into three categories: secure, avoidance insecure, and ambivalent insecurity, by expanding Ballby's theories and considering the concept of a secure base, and by observing children's behavior in strange stages. The third category of insecure attachment, by name, psychological diligence, which is a personality trait, seems to be related to individuals' attachment. One of the personality traits that has received less attention to each person's health and level of life satisfaction is psychological constancy. Psychological constancy has three basic components including control (ability to control various life situations), commitment (tendency to get involved, as opposed to doing something), and challenge (ability to understand that life changes are normal) [8].

Researches have shown that psychological constancy reduces stressful events, and also the psycho-physical arousal resulting from these

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events, and has a positive effect on human health [9].

Among the many factors that affect the formation and evolution of personality traits, the role of the family has been considered for long time. The impact of family on the growth and development of personality traits is of particular importance and experts agree on it. The family never loses its importance in shaping personality, because change and transformation in the family will lead to changes in the psychological processes of its members [10].

Studies show that men and women who in childhood and adolescence have healthy patterns and regular and balanced families will have a more balanced and successful married life. Communicating effectively with the other party, not being angry, maintaining the individual independence of men and women while participating together, valuing the wishes and interests of the spouse, companionship, and empathy, having common goals and aspirations, accepting difficulties, and being ready to face problems, living and being together in happiness and hardship days, and emphasizing and paying attention to the positive points of the spouse's personality, expressing friendship, and giving importance to each other are considered as factors in the continuation of cohabitation and satisfaction between men and women [2]. Marital satisfaction indicates the strength and efficiency of the family system. The happiness and health of the family depend on the existence of healthy and growing relationships between the couples, and if the foundation of the family does not have the necessary strength, its negative message would be all kinds of physical and mental problems [11]. This phenomenon prolongs the life of the couples and increases their physical and mental health, economic progress, and life satisfaction. Marital adjustment and satisfaction are created through mutual interest, caring for each other, mutual acceptance and understanding, and satisfaction of needs [12].

Amir Ghorbanpour Lafamjani et al. (2016) [13] were done research entitled “The role of attachment styles, lovemaking styles, and expression of emotion in predicting the happiness of married teachers to determine the role of attachment styles, lovemaking styles, and emotion expression in predicting happiness of married teachers in Rudsar”. At the level of correlations, it was found that the variable of happiness is directly related to the levels of secure attachment style, expression of emotion, and high levels of intimacy, enthusiasm, and commitment, and is inversely related to the variables of insecure attachment style and ambivalent attachment style.

Aras Rasouli, Zari Kahrizi (2016) [14] in their research entitled “Predicting family performance based on the relationship among attachment styles, religious commitment, and marital adjustment of married students” stated that the results showed that among secure attachment style and religious commitment and marital adjustment with a family performance has a positive and significant relationship, and there is a significant negative relationship between avoidant insecure and ambivalent insecure attachment style with family performance. Secure attachment style, marital adjustment, and religious commitment are predictive of family functioning, respectively.

Ahmad Ali Jalilian (2016) [15] in his study entitled “The relationship between marital satisfaction of married women and elements of lovemaking styles” stated that the average variables of marital satisfaction and lovemaking were higher among married women, the results showed that with increasing levels of lovemaking and its dimensions in married women, their marital satisfaction increased. Furthermore, various love styles such as the element of intimacy, the element of lust, and the element of commitment had a positive and significant relationship with marital satisfaction, and on the other hand, were able to predict marital satisfaction.

Sabunchi, Faranak; Behboodi, Masoumeh (2016) [11] in their research entitled “Structural model of satisfaction prediction based on attachment styles and life orientation in married women with the mediating role of emotion seeking”, stated that the appropriate structural model for predicting marital satisfaction based on attachment styles and life

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orientation corresponds to the mediating role of emotion seeking with the theoretical model and has a good fit, so for cohesion and relationship creation for an optimal marriage can improve couples' relationships by recognizing the emotions of each couple, the type of attachment, and the confrontation of their intra-psychological elements. The discussion and conclusion of the present study were aimed to design an appropriate structural model for predicting marital satisfaction based on attachment and life orientation with the mediating role of emotion seeking in married women.

Zheila Ommani (2021) [16] in her study entitled “The effect of attachment to close relationships and economic and social status on optimism, doubt, and mental well-being”, stated that those who belong to a higher socioeconomic status in terms of a higher level of happiness show optimism, discouragement, and life satisfaction. The results also showed that those who were more securely related in close relationships showed more optimism, happiness, and life satisfaction. Finally, the results of the study showed that secure attachment, optimism, cruelty, and life satisfaction are the best predictors of the consequences of current findings and future guidelines, respectively.

In fact, with a brief knowledge of the satisfaction of married life and the factors affecting it, such as psychological diligence and attachment mentioned in this section, we will examine the issue and the context of its creation. Because the physical, emotional, and mental health of individuals in society and the stability and reliability of the family depends on the health of marital relationships and the continuity and survival of marriage, everyone’s satisfaction with married life is considered as his satisfaction with the family, and family satisfaction means life satisfaction and as a result, will facilitate the transcendent growth and material and spiritual progress of society. Therefore, psychologists, sociologists, and even religions give importance attention to the family, and effective marital relationship and family formation is not a place for dissatisfaction.

Considering the importance of psychological characteristics such as attachment styles and psychological constancy in life success, career success, academic success, etc., the researcher intended to examine the effect of psychological attachment and constancy on marital satisfaction.

The findings of the present study could confirm and supplement the results of previous studies and theories related to the relationship between attachment styles and couples' relationships, and according to the results, this study has some hypotheses;

Research hypotheses:

- There is a relationship between attachment and marital relationships in the teachers of the sample group;

- There is a relationship between psychological constancy and marital satisfaction in the teachers of the sample group;

- There is a difference between the mean of attachment scores of male and female teachers;

- There is a difference between the mean scores of psychological constancy of male and female teachers;

- There is a difference between the mean scores of marital relationships between male and female teachers;

- Psychological attachment and constancy have the power to predict marital relationships.

2. method

The method of this research is descriptive-correlational. In the present study, the statistical population is all middle school teachers in District 11 of Tehran, whose number is 130 people. Morgan and Kerjecy's (1970) tables were used to determine the statistical sample size. According to the size of the statistical population, 97 people should have been selected as a sample, which to be more confident and prevents the decline of the subjects, the sample number of 100 people was selected. Therefore, the statistical sample in the present study is 100 male and female middle school teachers in Tehran. To sample in this study, by having a list of community members,

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a simple random sampling method has been used. In this study, standard questionnaires of attachment styles, psychological constancy, and marital satisfaction were used to collect data.

The scoring of the questionnaire was for the questionnaire used, a sheet was used as a guide, and a sheet was used to justify and receive the required specifications of the people in the research community. The Family Justification Sheet provided an overview of the importance and necessity of achieving the characteristics of spouses in communities and advice with a realistic and honest response, as well as reassuring them about the confidentiality of the information received. The guide sheet also mentions how to respond and comment on the sentences stated in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was considered as five options (which was a Likert-type attitude gauge) in which each option was given one to five points. Two methods of descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the obtained information. In the descriptive statistics section, central tendency measures such as mean and mode and measures of variation such as standard deviation, variance, and range of changes were used to describe the data. In this study, Pearson Correlation and Regression Tests were used to examine the hypothesis and test them. SPSS statistical software was used to analyze the data.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Findings

The descriptive findings of the study show that 38% of the sample group were in the age range of 35-39 years, 22% of the sample group were in the age range of 30-34 years, 22% of the sample group were in the age range of 40-44 years, 10% of the sample group were in the age range of 25-29 years, and 8% of the sample group were in the age range of over 45 years. Frequency status and percentage in terms of background service in the sample group show that 24% of the sample group have 16-20 years of background service, 38% of the sample group have 6-10 years of background service, 6% of the sample group have a background service of more than 21 years, 22% of the sample group have a background service between 11-15 years, and 10% of the sample group have a background service of fewer than 5 years. Frequency and percentage according to the degree of the sample group show that 72% of the sample group have a bachelor's degree, 12% of the sample group have an associate's degree, and 16% of the sample group have a master's degree. Sub-statistical measures such as mean, the standard deviation of research variables in the sample group show that the mean and standard deviation of psychological constancy variables are 28.46 and 10.46, respectively, the mean and standard deviation of attachment styles variables are 102.10 and 12.83, respectively, the mean and standard deviation of marital satisfaction are 164.74 and 23.71, respectively.

3.2. Inferential Statistics and Analysis of Variables

In this section, the results of the analysis of the extracted data were interpreted and based on the basis of the research hypotheses and their objectives, appropriate solutions as well as suggestions based on the research findings were presented. This research has questions that have been examined using statistical methods. In this section, the first research hypotheses were given, then the results of statistical tests were presented in the form of SPSS output tables, and the interpretation of the obtained statistical results would be explained.

Hypothesis 1: There is a relationship between attachment and marital relationships in the teachers of the sample group.

Table 1. Correlation between attachment and marital relations

Variable	Marital Relationship	
Test	Pearson	
	Correlation Coefficient	Significant

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Attachment Styles	0.64	0.000

As the information in the table above shows, the correlation coefficient obtained is a significant relationship between attachment and marital relationships (r = 0.64) at the alpha level (0.01). Therefore, it can be said with 99% confidence that there is a significant relationship between these two variables, and the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between these two variables is rejected. And the research hypothesis that there is a relationship between the two variables is confirmed.

Hypothesis 2: There is a relationship between psychological constancy and marital satisfaction in sample teachers.

Table 2. Correlation between psychological toughness and marital relationships

Variable	**Marital Relationship**	
Test	**Pearson**	
	Correlation Coefficient	**Significant**
Psychological constancy	0.51	0.000

As the information in the above table shows, the correlation coefficient obtained is a significant relationship between psychological constancy and marital relationships (r = 0.51) at the alpha level (0.01). Therefore, it can be said with 99% confidence that there is a significant relationship between these two variables, and the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between these two variables is rejected. And the research hypothesis that there is a relationship between the two variables is confirmed.

Hypothesis 3: There is a difference between the mean of attachment scores of male and female teachers.

Table 3. Independent t-test of the difference between the two sample groups in attachment scores

Significance Level	**Degree of Freedom**	**Test Score**	**Standard Deviations**	**Mean**	**Number**	**Gender**
0.036	98	-2.913	12.37	100.44	50	Male
			13.31	103.76	50	Female

Based on the results in the above table, the calculated t value (t = | -2.923 |) with degree freedom of 98 at the level of (0.05) is significant. Therefore, it can be concluded with 95% confidence that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the male and female sample groups in the degree of attachment.

Hypothesis 4: There is a difference between the mean scores of psychological constancy of male and female teachers.

Table 4. Independent t-test of the difference between the two sample groups in psychological constancy scores

Significance Level	**Degree of Freedom**	**Test Score**	**Standard Deviations**	**Mean**	**Number**	**Gender**
0.719	98	0.362	11.14	29.00	50	Female
			9.90	27.92	50	Male

Based on the results in the above table, the calculated value of t (t = | 0.362 |) with degree freedom of 98 at the level (0.05) is not significant. Therefore, it can be concluded with 95% confidence that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the sample group of men and women in the degree of psychological constancy.

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Hypothesis 5: There is a difference between the mean scores of male and female teachers' marital relationships.

Table 5. Independent t-test of the difference between the two sample groups in marital relationship scores

Significance Level	Degree of Freedom	Test Score of t	Standard Deviations	Mean	Number	Gender
0.837	98	0.207	25.12 22.60	165.33 164.22	50 50	Female Male

Based on the results in the above table, the calculated value of t (t = | 0.207 |) with degree freedom of 98 at the level (0.05) is not significant. Therefore, it can be concluded with 95% confidence that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the sample group of men and women in the rate of marital relations.

Hypothesis 6: Attachment and psychological constancy have the power to predict marital relationships.

Table 6. Results of marital relationship regression analysis in terms of predictor variables of attachment and psychological constancy

Criterion Variable	Predictive Variable	Beta	t	P	R	R^2	F	Df	P
Marital relationships	**Psychological Constancy**	0.514	-4.15	0.000	0.514	0.264	17.24	1.99	0.000
	Attachment Styles	0.64	4.721	0.001	0.64	0.409	2.13	1.99	0.000

Based on the results of the above regression table, it can be concluded that there is a significant linear relationship between psychological constancy and marital relationships, and psychological constancy (0.26) has predicted the percentage of variance (changes) in marital relationships. There is also a significant linear relationship between attachment and marital relationships, and the attachment variable (0.40) has predicted the percentage of variance (changes) in the marital relationship variable.

4. Discussion

According to the data obtained in Table (1), since the obtained correlation coefficient between attachment styles and marital relationships (r = 0.64) at the level (α = 0.01) indicates a positive and significant relationship, therefore, it is concluded that the relationship between attachment and marital relationships is significant in the sample group. This research finding indicates that individuals who have higher attachments have more marital relationships. In other words, people with high attachment show closer and more loving relationships and experience more marital relationships in their lives. Researches have shown that people with empathy skills are more loyal and can adapt to the other party, and also people with high attachment scored higher in empathy, self-review, and self-control in social situations. These people have had responses about their spouses with more help and participation, and have shown closer and more loving relationships.

According to the data obtained in Table (2), since the obtained correlation coefficient

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between psychological constancy and marital relationships (r = 0.51) at the level (α = 0.01) indicates a positive and significant relationship, therefore it is concluded that the relationship between psychological constancy and marital relationships in the sample group is significant. Explaining this finding, it can be said that people with higher constancy scores can withstand more problems and have more adaptability, and in the face of the difficulties and problems of their married life, due to their commitment to life, they spend more time and money to challenge the problems and solve them. No research was found in this area that examined these variables.

According to the data obtained in Table (3), the calculated value of t (t = | -2.923 |) with degree freedom of 98 at the level (α = 0.05) is significant, which with the results of Zheila (2021) [16] and Johnson (2013) [8] were in line. Therefore, it could be concluded that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the sample group of men and women in the degree of attachment. Explaining this finding, we could say that women have higher attachment scores than men because they are emotional beings, and men are more known for reasoning and thinking. Usually, women score higher in dimensions such as empathy, interpersonal communication, self-esteem, flexibility, and men score higher in dimensions such as self-awareness, responsibility, and realism.

According to the data obtained in Table (4), the calculated t value (t = | 0.362 |) with degree freedom of 98 at the level (0.05) is not significant. Therefore, it could be concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the male and female sample groups in the degree of psychological constancy. In explaining this finding, it could be said that due to the level of social activity of the sample group and dealing with different situations, both sample groups have achieved sufficient psychological constancy and equality to face the events and problems of their lives. Achieved results according to the data obtained in Table (5), the calculated t value (t = | 0.207 |) with a degree of freedom of 98 at the level (0.05) is not significant. Therefore, it would be concluded that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the sample group of men and women in the rate of marital relationships. Explaining this finding, it could be said that due to the high or relatively high good social position among teachers, as well as their relative socio-economic well-being and their high ability to solve life problems and observe each other's expectations, there was no significant difference in marital relationships rate of teachers in sample groups.

According to the data obtained in Table (6), the results of multivariate regression show that the variable of psychological constancy (0.26) predicted the percentage of variance (changes) in the variable of marital relationships. In addition, the attachment variable (0.40) predicted the percentage of variance (changes) in the marital relationship variable. In regression analysis, psychological constancy, and attachment it would be possible to significantly predict marital relationships in teachers, i.e. this was in line with the results of Pen et al. (2020) [12] and Wheeler et al. (2018) [5] and Sabounchi et al. (2016) [17]. It could be stated that increasing levels of psychological constancy and attachment promotes marital relationships, increases job performance, and improves living conditions. And this shows that the more factors that increase diligence and attachment in families, or the more they are trained, there would be a stronger relationship between family members and their intimacy to support each other; and ultimately more marital relationships between couples that guarantee a more stable life would follow.

Conclusion:

As a result, considering the effects of attachment in life, especially in interpersonal relationships, and also due to the increasing problems of married life, the main purpose of this study was to emphasize the importance of teaching attachment styles to improve the quality of marital relationships, and taught the capabilities of couples' attachment to have more self-esteem and as a result to achieve peace, courage, confidence, and success, to have more flexibility, and to learn how to solve their problem, to be more optimistic in life, and by increasing these capabilities, they would

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have a satisfying married life. Life satisfaction is one of the valuable achievements of attachment styles. Attachment improves people's social status in terms of assertiveness, intimacy, and responsibility by increasing satisfaction and reduces interpersonal problems. Attachment affects the reduction of interpersonal problems, and consequently the improvement of relationships by increasing well-being and expanding the scope of social and emotional compromise. Individuals with high attachment have less negative interactions with their loved ones, and have more positive relationships with family members, and are more inclined to deal with stress, and can control stressful situations and prevent the involvement of negative emotional factors.

Research findings had shown that psychological constancy as a personality trait modulates the relationship between stress and illness, i.e., it acts as a source of resistance and protective shield in the face of stressful life events. And diligent people, despite the unfortunate events, hope for a successful and efficient confrontation with tensions, can find meaning in disturbing experiences and believe in their roles as valuable and important people.

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