

Predicting the level of marital satisfaction based on cognitive emotion regulation and quality of marital relations (a case study: married women in 22 districts of Tehran city)

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Abstract

Background and objective: Misunderstanding between couples in marital relationships leads to dissatisfaction and low quality of life. The main purpose of this study is predicting the level of marital satisfaction based on emotional cognitive regulation and quality of marital relationships.

Methods: The present study is an applied research in terms of purpose and non-random sampling (available) in terms of data collection method. The statistical population of this study is "married women in 22 districts of Tehran city in spring 2019" and according to Morgan table, the sample size is 384 people. Skewness and Kurtosis tests, Pearson correlation test and multiple-regression model were used in SPSS 23 software to analyze the questionnaire data of this research in the inferential statistics section.

Results: Findings of the research show that there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction with positive cognitive emotional regulation and quality of marital relationships. Furthermore, a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and positive cognitive emotional regulation components is observed at the level of 0.004. The results of the third hypothesis show that there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and the components of marital quality at the level of 0.000.

Conclusion: The results of regression analysis for the main hypothesis of the study showed that cognitive emotional regulation has a high ability to predict marital satisfaction. According to the results, the regression analysis results showed that cognitive emotional regulation (positive) and the quality of marital relationships have a high ability to predict marital satisfaction.

Keywords: Cognitive Emotional Regulation, Marital Satisfaction, Marital Relation Quality

Background and objective

Marriage has always been approved as the most important and highest social traditional customs to meet emotional needs and it is a human, complex, delicate and dynamic relationship that has special characteristics¹. Family is one of the main institutions of society and the most important place for nurturing the body and soul. Couple's relationship plays the main and most important role in this regard. In fact, when there is a favorable understanding between couples, the family will be more permanence and stability². One of the factors that can be effective in family stability is quality of life³. Meanwhile, the quality of married life is one of the most important family issues, because the success and vitality of married life and the achievement of supreme goals depend on the proper quality of married life.

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In other words, achieving a satisfactory and successful life will not be possible without considering the issue of marital quality of life and efforts to improve and enhance it³. Marital quality is also described as the success and performance of a marriage. According to many researchers, the level of family life satisfaction is considered as one of the important factors on whole life satisfaction and consequently the quality of life. One of the effective factors in marital satisfaction is the cognitive emotional regulation. Psychological adaptation and compatibility largely depends on the regulation of emotions⁴. Studying couples' relationships helps to increase marital satisfaction. One of the dimensions of couples' relationships is the quality of marital relationships, which plays an essential role in the overall quality of family member relationships. The quality of marital relationships is a multidimensional concept and includes various dimensions of couple relationships such as compatibility, satisfaction, happiness, cohesion and commitment. Expressing high satisfaction in relationship, positive attitudes about the spouse and low levels of hostility and negative behaviors, indicate a quality of desirable marital⁵.

According to Diener (2005), marital satisfaction is people's satisfaction in life or feeling of satisfaction as an assessment of a particular area of their life (such as marriage or work) or their recent emotional feelings about what happened to them (pleasant emotions which results from positive evaluations of individual experiences, and low levels of unpleasant feelings, which result from evaluations of individual experiences).

Cognitive emotion regulation is the ability to manage and regulate emotion that plays

an important role in people's lives to maintain stable social relationship and well-being⁶. Life quality is defined as the result of interaction between individuals' personalities and the continuity of life events, and life events occur in a multidimensional set of life areas such as freedom, knowledge, economics, security, social relations, religion, environment and entertainment and quality of life affects the set of constituent areas of life³.

Marital quality is considered as one of the subsets of quality of life and one of the important areas in marital life, which today is considered as one of the important predictors of marital continuity and stability and has been studied in this study. Although this concept does not have a single and agreed definition about the quality of married life due to the lack of a single theory on what married life is. However, some scientists have offered their own views about it³. According to the above, we decided to predict the level of marital satisfaction based on cognitive emotional regulation and quality of marital relationships in this study. Therefore, the main question in this study is whether the level of marital satisfaction is predictable based on cognitive emotional regulation and the quality of marital relationships?

Method

The present study is an applied research in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of method using a questionnaire. The statistical population of this study is "married women in 22 districts of Tehran city in spring 2019". Data collection method is non-random sampling (available) method. Morgan table was used to determine the minimum required sample size for the infinite population. According to Morgan's Table, the sample size should be at least 384 people. In order to ensure the return of this number of questionnaires, 450 questionnaires were distributed in the statistical population. 403 questionnaires were collected, of which 393

questionnaires were completely completed and usable. The validity of the questionnaire questions was confirmed by professors and experts. The reliability of the questions was calculated by Cronbach's alpha test (Table 1). SPSS software was used to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaire.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha value

Variable	Alpha Coefficient
Marital Satisfaction	0.912
Marital Relation Quality	0.910
Cognitive Emotional Regulation	0.879

Research Findings:

According to the results of Table (2), as can be seen, the value of Skewness and Kurtosis of the variable of marital satisfaction, positive and negative cognitive emotional regulation variables, variable of marital relations quality and their components is between negative 2 to positive 2, so the hypothesis of normal distribution is accepted and parametric tests are used to test hypotheses.

Table 2. Skewness and Kurtosis tests for Marital Satisfaction variable, Positive Emotional Regulation and Marital Relation Quality variable

	Components	Skewness	Kurtosis
Marital Satisfaction variable	Contractual Response	-0.064	-0.733
	Marital Satisfaction	0.577	0.839
	Personality Issues	0.221	0.190
	Marital Relationship	-0.122	-1.227
	Conflict Resolution	-0.088	-1.172
	Financial Supervision	0.423	0.170
	Leisure Activities	-0.054	-0.027
	Sexual Relations	0.309	-0.887
	Marriage and Children	0.170	-0.457
	Relatives and Friends	0.108	-0.639
	Equality Roles	0.533	-0.137
	Ideological Orientation	0.401	-0.198
	Total	0.066	-1.065
Positive Emotional Regulation	Acceptance	0.399	0.574
	Positive Refocusing	0.121	0.500
	Refocusing on Planning	-0.072	-0.110
	Positive Reappraisal	0.249	-0.576
	Putting into Perspective	-0.013	-0.142
	Total	0.223	0.313
Marital Relation Quality variable	Agreement	0.408	0.373
	Satisfaction	0.249	-0.025
	Cohesion	0.194	-0.937
	Total	0.418	0.750

According to Table (3) and emphasizing the obtained F value (92.399 for

relationships quality, and 3.497 for components), it can be said that there is a

significant relationship between marital satisfaction and positive cognitive emotional regulation and the marital relationships quality at the level of 0.000. In addition, it can be said that a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and positive emotional cognitive regulation components is observed at the level of 0.004. In other words, it is possible to predict marital satisfaction through positive cognitive emotional regulation in this model explain the 4.4% of marital satisfaction variance. Therefore, the first hypothesis and the first sub-hypothesis of the research are confirmed.

regulation of the marital relationships quality and regulation components. Given that the values of R²adj for the quality of relationships and its components are equal to 0.494 and 0.044, respectively. Therefore, positive cognitive emotional regulation and the marital relationships

quality in this model explain 49.4% of the variance of marital satisfaction and the components of positive cognitive

Table (3) Multiple Regression Prediction of "Marital Satisfaction" through "Positive Cognitive Emotional Regulation and the Quality of Marital Relationships, and Regulation Components

relationships quality	Source of Changes	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Squares	F value	Significance Level	R	R ²	R ² adj
relationships quality	Regression	39552	4	9888	92.399	0.000	0.703	0.494	0.488
	Remaining	40559	379	107					
regulation components	Regression	3541	5	708	3.497	0.004	0.210	0.044	0.032
	Remaining	76570	378	202					

According to Table (4) and the multiple-regression coefficients obtained with the simultaneous entry method and also the obtained regression coefficients, it can be suggested that positive cognitive emotional regulation with beta coefficient of 0.221, the quality of marital relations with beta coefficient of 0.635 affect marital satisfaction. Therefore, increasing

the positive cognitive emotional regulation index, increases the marital relationships quality and the level of marital satisfaction, and by decreasing them, the level of marital satisfaction decreases. Marital quality has the most impact on the satisfaction of marital life.

Table 4. Regression Coefficients

Dependant Variable	Independent Variables	Non-standard beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	T value	Significance level
	Constant	42.494	-	0.797	0.009
Marital Satisfaction	Positive Cognitive Regulation	0.221	0.101	20.342	0.020
	Marital Relations Quality	1.511	0.635	16.422	0.000

According to the multiple regression coefficients with the simultaneous entry method and also the obtained regression coefficients, it can be said that positive refocusing with beta coefficient of 0.189, refocusing on planning with beta coefficient of 0.131 and positive Reappraisal with beta coefficient 0.116 affect marital satisfaction. Thus, with the increase of positive refocusing index refocusing on planning and positive

Reappraisal, the level of marital satisfaction increases and when they decrease, the level of marital satisfaction decreases. Positive refocusing had the greatest effect and positive Reappraisal had the least effect on marital satisfaction. Furthermore, acceptance with beta coefficient of 0.007 and acceptance with beta coefficient of 0.048 have not been able to affect marital satisfaction (Table (5)).

Table 5. Regression Coefficients

Dependant Variable	Independent Variables	Non-standard beta coefficient	Beta coefficient	T value	Significance level
	Constant	78.61	-	11.044	0.000
	Acceptance	0.058	0.007	0.133	0.894
Marital Satisfaction	Positive Refocusing	0.652	0.189	3.743	0.012
	Refocusing on Planning	0.933	0.131	2.501	0.013
	Positive Reappraisal	0.612	0.116	2.177	0.020
	Putting into	0.313	0.048	0.884	0.377

According to the multiple regression coefficients obtained with the simultaneous entry method as well as the regression coefficients, it can be said that self-blame with a beta coefficient of -0.085

and Rumination with a beta coefficient of -0.065, Catastrophizing with a beta coefficient of -0.0447 and blaming others with a beta of -0.011 are not able to affect marital satisfaction (Table (6)).

Table 6. Regression Coefficients

Dependant Variable	Independent Variables	Non-standard Beta Coefficient	Beta Coefficient	T Value	Significance Level
	Constant	127.474	-	14.97	0.000
Marital Satisfaction	Self-Blame	-0.064	-0.085	-1.547	0.123
	Rumination	-0.269	-0.065	-1.326	0.121

Dependant Variable	Independent Variables	Non-standard Beta Coefficient	Beta Coefficient	T Value	Significance Level
	Catastrophizing	-0.428	-0.047	-0.918	0.359
	Blaming Others	-0.072	-0.011	-0.202	0.840

According to Table (7) and emphasizing the obtained F value (142/558), it can be said that a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and the components of marital quality is observed at the level of 0.000. In other words, there is predicting marital satisfaction through the

components of the quality of marital relationships is possible. Considering that the value of R^2_{adj} is equal to 0.530, so components of marital relations quality in this model explain 53% of the marital satisfaction variance. Therefore, the third hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

Table 7. Multiple Regression Prediction of "Marital Satisfaction" through "Marital Relationship Quality Components"

Dependant Variable	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean of Squares	F Value	Significance Level	R	R2	R2adj
Regression	42420	3	14140	142.558	0.000	0.728	0.530	0.526
Remaining	37691	380	99					

According to the multiple regression coefficients with the simultaneous entry method and also the obtained regression coefficients, it can be concluded that agreement with the beta coefficient of 0.385 and coherence with the beta coefficient of 0.414 affect marital satisfaction. Therefore, by increasing the

index of agreement and cohesion, the level of marital satisfaction increases and by decreasing them, the level of marital satisfaction decreases. Furthermore, satisfaction with a beta coefficient of 0.059 could not affect marital satisfaction (Table (8)).

Table 8. Regression Coefficients related to table (23-4)

Dependant Variable	Independent Variables	Non-Standard beta	Beta Coefficient	T Value	Significance Level
Marital Satisfaction	Constant	60.764	-	2.684	0.000
	Agreement	1.983	0.385	8.739	0.000
	Satisfaction	0.306	0.059	1.381	0.168
	Cohesion	3.289	0.414	9.795	0.000

Results

Regression analysis results for the second hypothesis of this study showed that the components of positive cognitive emotional regulation have the ability to predict the level of marital satisfaction. Positive refocusing with a beta coefficient of 0.189, refocusing on planning with a

beta of 0.131, and positive Reappraisal with a beta of 0.116 affect marital satisfaction. Furthermore, Acceptance with beta coefficient of 0.007 and Putting into Perspective with beta coefficient of 0.048 have not been able to affect marital satisfaction. The results showed that this hypothesis was confirmed.

Regression analysis results for the third hypothesis of the present study showed that the quality of marital relationships have a high ability to predict the level of marital satisfaction. Agreement with beta coefficient of 0.385 and cohesion with beta coefficient of 0.414 affect marital satisfaction. Also, satisfaction with a beta coefficient of 0.059 could not affect marital satisfaction. According to the research results, this hypothesis is confirmed. Marital satisfaction is predictable based on positive cognitive emotional regulation and marital relationships. The regression analysis results for the main hypothesis of this study showed that positive cognitive emotional regulation (with beta coefficient of 0.221) and marital quality of life (with beta coefficient of 0.635) have the ability to predict the level of marital satisfaction.

Discussion and Conclusion

Cognitive emotion regulation is one of the effective factors in marital satisfaction. Psychological adaptation depends on the regulation of emotions to large extent. Most psychological disorders are specified by an emotional disturbance and these disturbances are fundamentally associated with dysfunction in emotional regulation. Emotional regulation is one of the most important tasks for physical and psychological health, especially in marital relationships¹⁰. In 2014, By Bloch et al. Conducted a study on the hypothesis that emotion regulation is an important ingredient for successful interpersonal relationships; In this study, a 13-year study of long-term married couples middle-aged (40-50 years) and older (60-70 years) found that the benefits of reducing the negative emotion during conflict for marital satisfaction and related The maker mentions spouses as a mediating way¹¹. One of the dimensions of couples'

relationships is the quality of marital relationships, which plays an essential role in the overall quality of family member relationships. The quality of marital relationships is a multidimensional concept and includes various dimensions of marital relationships such as compatibility, satisfaction, happiness, cohesion and commitment. A study by Zahra Alipour et al. In 2019 on age, infertility, anxiety and depression within the questionnaire showed that marital quality is an important predictor of mental health and the quality of marital relationship on mental health in Pregnancy is very effective¹². Expressing high satisfaction in the relationship, positive attitudes about spouse and low levels of hostility and negative behaviors, indicate a desirable marital quality. It seems that these results are obtained because emotion regulation in married life can have positive effects such as better understanding of the spouse, appropriate behaviors in emotional situations and consequently leads to reducing marital conflicts. In fact, emotions regulation eliminates the disturbance between couples and promotes their health in various biological, psychological, social and moral dimensions and thus increases their quality of life¹³. Marital satisfaction is predictable based on positive cognitive emotional regulation. It seems that these results are due to the fact that recognizing emotions and regulating them at the right time and place gives the person the power to show the best decisions and reactions. Proper response to the emotions of the spouse and children reduces dissatisfaction between couples and among family members. In fact, emotion management is an internal and external process that is responsible for controlling, evaluating and changing the

emotional reactions of a person on the way of achieving his goals, and any defect in emotions regulation can make a person vulnerable to mental disorders such as depression and anxiety. The level of marital satisfaction is predictable based on the quality of marital relationships. The quality of the marital relationship has a great impact on the happiness and well-being of the individual and the family and is even beneficial for society. Because if the couples who live in a society have a warm and intimate relationship, not only their children will learn the appropriate relationships and live in an atmosphere full of love and affection, but also the society will also achieve health and happiness¹⁴. Individual emotional expression, support and social relationships have important effects on the tendency and efficiency of individuals in regulating interpersonal emotions (Abigail L et al., 2018)¹⁵. In fact, increasing the quality of married life helps couples to live together with more compatibility, happiness, satisfaction and peace of mind. Researches show that married people who have stable and satisfying lives, live longer and are healthier, happier, and less likely to suffer from cancer, heart disease, and chronic pain. Furthermore, divorced men live shorter in comparison to who have successful marital relations. These results showed that the high level of quality in marital relations causes love and affection between couples, and the difficulties and problems of life are easily resolved in such circumstances, and intimate relationships replace inappropriate relationships. Intimate couples assume themselves as one soul and forgive each other's mistakes easily. In other words, marital satisfaction is related to the enjoyment of the couple relationships and means to have a

desirable feeling of marriage, which can be considered as a psychological situation that does not arise spontaneously but requires the effort of the couples. Increasing the level of marital satisfaction and life satisfaction helps couples to live more peacefully and the quality of marital life will increase subsequently. Furthermore, satisfaction feeling of couples with each other can be a sign of their happiness and well-being¹⁶.

Conflict of interests

None.

Authors' contributions

The authors are the same

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