

Role of Religious Orientation in Predicting Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being

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Considering indices such as dynamism and complexity of modern societies, advances in psychology science, and increasing growth of spiritual needs of human against physical ones, also with respect to increasing rate of divorce in Iran, current research was done in order to study the relationship between Religious Orientation and Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being. The method of current research is descriptive-correlation. Statistic population includes all married teachers of Langroud city in 2012, which 150 individuals were selected as sample via multi level cluster sampling. Alport Religious Orientation Scale (1950), Spanier Marital Adjustment Scale (1976) and Ryff Psychological Well-Being questionnaire (1998) was used. Data analysis shows that there is meaningful relation between internal religious orientation and marital adjustment ($p = .000$, $r = .436$) and also between internal religious orientation and psychological well-being ($p = .000$, $r = .506$). In addition, results showed that internal religious orientation is able to meaningful predictions of Marital Adjustment and Psychological Well-Being. These findings show that internal religious orientation can predict the psychological well-being and marital adjustment meaningfully. So from scientific dimension, application of religion with the meaning of inner faith is suggested in prevention and medical interferences in this area.

Keywords: Psychological Well-Being; Marital Adjustment; Religious Orientation

Introduction

According to comprehensive role of religious in improving mental health and level of psychological well-being, importance of spirituality and its growth in human being in recent decades has attracted attention of psychologists and psychiatrists (Kezdy et al., 2010; Aten & Worthington, 2009; Aten & Schenck, 2007). Many researches show that religious experiences have a great effect on Psychotherapy. At the same time, therapist schedule for making fundamental changes in characteristic structure of patients is related directly to these religious moods. In fact, religion as a mediator can effect on mental procedures and evaluation of daily events. Thus some researchers believe that confronting stresses and social situations are facilitated via religious believes. Furthermore, notice that attitudes of family members about religious will continuo and transfer religious values and behaviors to other generations, thus relation between religious and family is considered an interactive one (Mehoney et al., 2001).

Marital adjustment is harmony and sympathy between husband and wife in achieving common goals in life which lead to satisfaction from marriage. Marital adjustment let both sides ignore conflicts and solve them with a suitable method and achieve a positive feeling (Chen et al., 2007). Simply, marital adjustment is a method which two married person are adjusted with each other to keep their marriage (Bar-On & Parker, 2006).

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Importance of adjusted marital relationships is due to its role as one of the main factors in stability and strength of this relationship (Gaal, 2005). Unclear and ambiguous condition of couples (Alois & Bruno, 2009), problems in social relationships, tendency toward social and moral delinquency and falling of cultural values between couples are some results of marital unadjustment. Spanier (1976) define it as procedure that its results are become clear via degreasing serious problems between couples, interpersonal stresses, personal anxiety and increasing couples satisfaction from each other, stability and consultation about important marital problems (Gong, 2000).

Halford et al. (2007) notice that effective factors on marital adjustment include: personal characteristics, situational factors and life events. Mutual love, take care each other, accept and understand each other and satisfying needs. Among these, religious commitment as one of the basics of happy life is effective on marital adjustment. Many researches show these findings, as in Demaris et al. (2010) religiosity is reported to be the most important factor in marital adjustment and here results show that positive effect of religious in couples' relationship is undeniable.

So undeniable role of religious commitment in achieving marital adjustment and goal in life, having positive relation with each other and totally, psychological well-being is clear.

According to Ryff and Keyes' pattern of psychological well-being (1995), there are 6 main basic factors as follows: purpose in life, positive relationship with others, personal growth, self

acceptance, autonomy, domination on environment. In this point of view, health is not the same as having no disease, in other word the emphasis is on “being well” instead of “being bad or ill” (Ryff et al., 2004). Characteristics such as adjustment, happiness, self confidence and other positive ones show healthy and psychological well-being. In this situation religious can be mentioned as a useful unifying principle and a big support for mental health. World Health Organization (WHO) uses physical, mental social and spiritual aspects in his definition for human and the latest, spiritual, is said to be effective in growth and promotion of the man (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Thus, spirituality is an important part of peoples’ life and has important effect on health and well-being. Previous researches in this filed show a stable relation between religious and psychological well-being. Result of the same researches such as Kezdi et al. (2010) reports that religious training in childhood will lead to tendency toward religion in teenagers and youths and has positive effects on their mental health. Findings of Williams (2010) express a strong relation between doing religious behavior and psychological well-being. Also, Koeing (2007) believes that mental and physical health of human has positive relation with his spiritual life and those with higher religious commitment have higher adjustment in different conditions. Hills & Francis (2004) and Hackney & Sanders (2003) show that those who have stronger religious/ spiritual believes, achieve higher points in mental and physical tests. Faith, doing religious customs and attending related ceremonies prevent mental problems and with its therapeutic role, improve health level and psychological well-being.

Considering indices such as dynamicity and complexity of modern societies, advances of psychology science, increasing growth of spiritual needs of human vs material one, also number of divorces in Iran as a symbol of marital disorder (Halford et al., 2007). Iran is placed in 4th placed after US, Denmark and Egypt for the large number of divorces (Gholami & Beshlideh, 2012). Current research aims to study the relation between religious orientation and marital adjustment and psychological well-being in order to determine the role of religious commitment and use it as a complement beside other psychological theories.

Method

The Sample and Sampling

The method of current research is descriptive correlation. Statistical population includes all married teachers of Langrud City in 2012 year, which 150 of them selected as sample. First of all, the population was divided in to 5 geographical regions: North, South, Center, East and West via multi level cluster sampling ($1 \times 5 = 5$). Then from each region, 3 schools were selected randomly ($1 \times 5 \times 3 = 15$). And finally, all teachers were gathered ($1 \times 5 \times 3 \times 10 = 150$).

Research Tools

Allport Religious Orientation Scale: Allport and Ross in 1950 introduced this scale for evaluation of religious inward and outward orientation. Based on Allport theory, an inward-oriented religious is a comprehensive one with a organized principles, in other word it is a motivated comprehensive commitment which is a goal not a mean for that. On the other hand, outward-oriented religious is something for satisfying person

needs such as position and security. This test with 21 question measures the inward- and outward-religious orientation. Primary researches by Allport and Ross show that the Correlation between inward- and outward-orientation is .21. In Iran, Internal Consistency for the test is reported as .71 by Jan Bozorgi (1999) and retest reliability as .74.

Spanier Marital Adjustment Scale (D.A.S): Marital adjustment was measured by Spanier Scale which consist of 23 multi choice questions (always agree, almost always agree, sometimes disagree, often disagree, almost always disagree, always disagree). Spanier calculated the reliability of the questionnaire by Cronbach’s Alpha about .96 and the validity tested by Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale. The correlation coefficient of these two scales for married and divorced couples were .86 and .88, respectively. In other research by Spanier & Tampson, Cronbach’s Alpha was reported as .91. In Iran, Cronbach’s Alpha is .92 and Validity is .94 (Quoted by Yar-Mohammadyan, 2011).

Carol Ryff Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire: It concludes 82 questions and measures 6 separate aspects of psychological well-being. Each question has 6 choices and reported Cronbach’s Alpha is .83 up to .92.

Ryff (1989) study the reliability of the test by calculation of correlation coefficient of positive psychological performance (convergence validity) and negative psychological performance (divergence validity). Results show that there is positive meaningful correlation between 6 factors of this questionnaire and those who study the positive psychological performance ($p < .001$) and correlation domain is .25 up to .73 which confirmed the validity. At the same time, there is negative meaningful correlation between 6 factors of this questionnaire and those who study the negative psychological performance with the range of $-.03$ to $-.060$. He also prove that these 6 factors are independent but with internal correlation ($p < .001$) and range of .32 up to .76 and measure the psychological well-being (Quoted by Maddahi, 2011).

Result Analysis

The data obtained in the research were analyzed by using appropriate statistical techniques, then explained and interpreted by forming charts. Frequency calculations were made, “Pearson r Coefficient” and stepwise Multiple Regression was calculated. When the statistical data of the study were evaluated, the significance coefficient was taken as $p < .01$.

Results

Data analyze was done by Frequency, Mean, Standard deviation, Pierson Correlation Coefficient and Stepwise Multiple Regression. There were 150 participants and the age average and Std was (40.32 ± 7.28) , respectively.

Descriptive indexes of research variables are shown in **Table 1**.

According to **Table 1**, there is a meaningful relation between inward religious orientation and marital adjustment ($r = .436, p = .000$) and inward religious orientation and psychological well-being ($r = .506, p = .000$) but there wasn’t any meaningful relation between outward religious orientation and any of variables.

Stepwise Multiple Regressions was used for determining the role of “inward religious orientation” in predicting “marital

Table 1.
Correlation matrix of research variables.

R	Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
1	Inward Religious Orientation	35.77	7.82	1	-	-	-
2	Outward Religious Orientation	29.38	5.81	.005	1	-	-
3	Marital Adjustment	106.53	8.85	.062	.436**	1	-
4	Psychological Well-Being	302.25	26.49	.008	.506**	.305**	1

Note: **Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

adjustment”. **Tables 2-4** show the results.

According to **Table 2**, Correlation Coefficient of inward religious orientation and marital adjustment is .43 Also Coefficient of determination is .19 which means that .19% of Variances of the “marital adjustment” variable can be determined by “inward religious orientation”.

As is shown in **Table 3**, $F = 34.66$ for “inward religious orientation”, and according to significant level the variable can predict marital adjustment ($p = .000$).

Based on Variance results and Stepwise Regression, calculated T in **Table 4** between marital adjustment and inward religious orientation is meaningful and we conclude that “inward religious orientation” with 99.9% reliability can predict “marital adjustment”.

The Regression equation for prediction of marital adjustment by inward religious orientation is as follows:

$$\text{Marital Adjustment} = 65.037 + 1.412 (\text{Inward Religious Orientation})$$

Stepwise Multiple Regression analyze was used for determination of “inward religious orientation” in prediction “psychological well-being”. Results are shown in **Tables 5-7**.

According to **Table 5**, Correlation of inward religious orientation and marital adjustment is .506. Also Coefficient of determination is .25 which means that .25 % of Variances of the “psychological well-being” variable can be determined by “inward religious orientation”.

As is shown in **Table 6**, $F = 51.02$ for “inward religious orientation”, and according to significant level the variable can predict “psychological well-being” ($p = .000$).

Based on Variance results and Stepwise Multiple Regression, calculated T in **Table 7** between psychological well-being and inward religious orientation is meaningful and we conclude that “inward religious orientation” with 99% reliability can predict “psychological well-being”. On the other hand, impact factor of inward orientation is which predict 7.13 of psychological well-being positively, i.e. the more inward orientation, the more improve in level of psychological well-being.

The Regression equation for prediction of psychological well-being by inward religious orientation is as follows:

$$\text{Psychological Well-Being} = 92.508 + 7.13 (\text{Inward Religious Orientation}).$$

Discussion

Results show that there is positive correlation between inward religious orientation and marital adjustment which means that inward religious orientation can predict “marital adjustment”. Research of Demaris et al. (2010), Nathaniel & David (2006), Orathinkal & Vansteewegen (2006), Hunler & Gencoz (2005), Mahoney (2005), Marsh & Dallos (2000) are in consistency with this research, i.e. all of them confirm a positive relation

Table 2.
Correlation Coefficient.

Independent Variable	R	R ²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Inward Orientation	.436 ^a	.190	.184	17.031

Note: ^aPredictors: (Constant), Inward Religious Orientation.

Table 3.
Results of variance prediction of Marital Adjustment by predictor var: Inward Religious Orientation.

Independent Variable	Source of Changes	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Inward Orientation	Regression	10052.94	1	10052.94	34.66	.000 ^a
	Residual	42926.38	148	290.04		
	Total	52979.33	149			

Note: ^aPredictors: (Constant), Inward Religious Orientation; ** $p \leq .01$; ^bDependent Variable: *Marital Adjustment*.

Table 4.
Variance regression of Marital Adjustment.

Dependent Variable		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Marital Adjustment	(Constant)	65.037	7.18		9.05	.000
	Inward Orientation	1.412	.240	.436	5.88	.000

Note: ^aDependent Variable: Marital Adjustment ** $p \leq .01$.

Table 5.
Correlation coefficient.

Independent Variable	R	R ²	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
Inward Orientation	.506 ^a	.256	.251	70.943

Note: ^aPredictors: (Constant), Inward Religious Orientation.

Table 6.
Results of Variance prediction Psychological Well-Being by predictor var: Inward Religious Orientation.

Indep Var	Source of Changes	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
inward orientation	Regression	256818.61	1	256818.61	51.02	.000 ^a
	Residual	744879.26	148	5032.968		
	Total	1001697.87	149			

Note: ^aPredictors: (Constant), Inward Religious Orientation; ** $p \leq .01$; ^bDependent Variable: Psychological Well-Being.

Table 7.
Variance Regression of Psychological Well-Being.

Dependent Variable		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Psychological Well-Being	(Constant)	92.50	9.27		3.09	.002
	Inward Orientation	7.13	.999	.506	7.14	.000

Note: ^aDependent Variable: Psychological Well-Being; ** $p \leq .01$.

between religious commitment and marital adjustment.

Allport & Ross (1967) believes that inward religious orientation is comprehensive with organized principles. People with inward religious orientation believe their religious training honestly and their behaviour comes from their thought and esoteric science. On the reverse, outward religious orientation is a tool for satisfying needs such as position and security. In other word in outward religious orientation, religious is in concern about unhealthy needs and aspect of human so the more outward religious orientation increase, the more marital adjustment growth. As religious give directions for life and believes, can effect on marital life positively (Hunler & Gencoz, 2005). In marital life these directions include principles about sexual relationships, sex roles, self-sacrifice and solving conflicts (Mahoney et al., 2003).

Another aspect is effectiveness of religious on couple thinking, i.e. people with higher religious commitment, probably may have more spiritual life (Mahoony, 2005). While a conflict appears, religious can appear in form of common values and concepts and solve the couples' problems (Mahoney et al., 1999).

From inter-personal point of view, religious customs enable person to control his anger physiologically and emotionally, also help him accept his responsibility while conflict appears. Religious provide situations that the person pay more attention to God and act as a support for both couples to avoid conflicts. Thus relationship with God is somehow an interactive role in marital adjustment.

Another finding of current research is the positive meaningful correlation between inward religious orientation and psychological well-being which means that inward religious orientation can predict "psychological well-being". Research of Newton & McIntosh (2010), Williams (2010), Kezdy et al. (2010), Rodriguez & Henderson (2010), McCullough & Willoughby (2009), MacGregor (2008), Sorajjakol et al. (2008), Marks (2008) are in consistency with this research, i.e. all of them confirm a positive relation between religious commitment and psychological well-being.

Allport believes that it is just inward religious orientation that improves mental health. Religious provide a suitable condition for answering basic questions of human such as identity and choosing life style in order to get perfection so contribute to adjustment and psychological well-being. In inward religious orientation person gain the pleasure of connecting to the source of perfection and promotion and motivated for promotion. This motivation encourages them for living better (Allport, 1950, 1963).

Religious effect on improving level of psychological well-being can be expressed as providing a supportive space and "social unity source". In fact religious increases level of self confidence, adjustment and self-esteem, which are basic factors of mental health and psychological well-being, via providing social support and understanding.

Adler believes that comparison of human with the source of perfection and promotion is an important factor in psychological well-being, also accept the effect of religious in social environment and express that it is more advanced than sciences as he thinks that religious motivated people more actively. According to his point of view, religious and knowledge are the same for peoples only when knowledge can create the same enthusiasm as religious and provide the well-being of whole components of the society (Nelson & Jones, 1957; Nelson,

1990; Nielsen, 2001).

Frankel define religious as a "search for final meaning" and believes that human nature consist of three components: spirituality, freedom and responsibility and achieving to perfection is possible only through spirituality. He thinks that main role in promotion of person and society belongs to coordination between physical, mental and religious aspect (Frankel, 1975).

Religious behaviors and beliefs with positive effect make the life meaningful. Internal relaxation mechanism via religious happens through actions such as trust in God and worship which create hope and motivate person for positive attitude. Religious functions in facing with complex situations of life will be effective through feeling of belonging to an unlimited source of power, hope to God help, benefit from social support and having goal in live (Yang & Mao, 2007). Thus religious with important functions in peoples' life such as relaxation, giving hope, create happiness, giving meaning to life and satisfaction is useful for improving psychological well-being.

Another finding of current research is the positive meaningful correlation between marital adjustment and psychological well-being which is in consistency with researches of Vanderbleek et al. (2011), Yalcin BM, Karahan (2007), Stutzer et al. (2006), Wilson & Oswald (2005), DePaulo & Bella (2004), Diener et al. (2002).

Vanderbleek et al. (2011) show that those couples which spent more times with each other and have common entertainment will have more verbal and emotional communication, therefore it affects their physical and psychological health. Yalcin & Karahan (2007) believe that training components of psychological well-being such as sympathy, responsibility and self-analysis increases marital adjustment.

Adjustment between husband and wife let them avoid conflicts and solve them in a proper way with common positive feelings and improve their level of psychological well-being (Chen et al., 2007). Emotional and psychological needs of person such as biological ones are created in family and satisfied or suppressed by family members' reactions. In an adjusted marital relationship, satisfying mental and sexual needs is a basic factor in providing the most suitable condition for promotion and perfection of peoples' well-being.

According to the results of this research, commitment to religious can create and promote level of marital adjustment and psychological well-being. Thus besides other common methods of prevention and treatment of psychological problems, important role of spirituality in marital adjustment and psychological well-being is become highlighted.

As religious and spiritual treatment methods have not gained their proper scientific position, and then such researches are necessary. It is suggested that in future researches, level of religiosity and other related factors to be evaluated in both wife and husband, also relation between religious orientation and marital adjustment and psychological well-being in other religious and various faith to be studied.

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