Components of couples sexual relationship: a moral perspective

Ladan Sadeghi, Siamak Samani

Dep. Psychology Marvdasht Beranch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Fars, Iran

Abstract

The important part of marital relationship is sexual relationship between couple. This part of marital relationship has an effective role in marital satisfaction. Generally, Low quality level of sexual relationship is with a high level of marital conflicts. The aim of this study was to exam the important moral components in a sexual relationship. The sample of the study consisted of 150 couples. Based on interview 12-items scale was developed. All participants filled out the scale. Principle component factor analysis was run to clarify the construct of the scale. The results of the analysis showed a three factors solution: permission for sexual relationship, sexual satisfaction, and sexual tendency. These factors have a significant positive correlation with marital satisfaction, and a significant negative correlation with marital conflicts.

Keywords: Marital communication, Sexual Function, Psychometric properties

1. Introduction

Marital communication is an important factor for marital satisfaction. Researches explored a significant relationship between marital communication and couples' satisfaction (Carrere & Gottman, 1999; Gottman & Levenson, 1992). Deficit in communication skills effectively increase marital dissatisfaction. Many researchers revealed that couples lacking the necessary communication skills to organize their emotional expressiveness tend to withdraw from conflict situation, and it leads to later marital dissatisfaction (Litzinger and Gordon, 2005). Marital sexuality ranked as an important factor to determine the level of marital satisfaction. According to Lauman, Paik, and Rosen (1999) there are a negative significant relationship between sexual dysfunction and quality of life. Based on it, sexual function is effective factor for marital satisfaction. Trudel (2002) in his research revealed that couples ranked sexual satisfaction as one of the important factors of marital satisfaction and happiness. Frequency of sexual intercourse is another important component for marital satisfaction. Thus, it is clear that quality and quantity of marital sexuality is correlate factor with marital satisfaction.

Sexual function as a kind of communication has different aspects: physical, emotional, cognitive and moral. Physical aspect related to physiological factors, emotional aspect refers to emotional expression, cognitive aspect related to cognitive process about sex, and moral aspect related to reciprocal respect and consideration. This study was aimed to identify moral components of the marital sexuality.
2. Method

This study was design in two phases: pilot study and main study. In pilot study 30 married persons were interviewed.

2.1. Pilot Study. In pilot study 30 married persons were interviewed. Participants were asked about the effective factors those determine his/her moral quality of sexual relationship with his/her spouse. Based on the interviews, a 12-item scale was developed. In main phase of the study, the scale was filled out by 150 participants.

2.2. Sample. The sample of the main study consisted of 150 married person (83 female and 67 male). The average age for female and male were 26.6 and 28.9 years respectively. The average age for the length of married was 3.4.

2.3. Instruments. In this research two scale were used: Quality of Marital Sexuality Scale and the Satisfaction with Life Scale

2.3.1. Quality of Marital Sexuality Scale (QMSS). QMSS consisted of 12 items with a 5-point Liket-scale (from 0= strongly disagree to 5= strongly agree) it was design in pilot study was used for data gathering. This scale was design in pilot study. The scale was filled out by all participants in this study.

2.3.2. The Satisfaction with Life Scale. To exam the convergent validity of the QMSS, the Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin, 1985) was used. This scale consisted of five items rated on a 7-point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 7= strongly agree.

3. Results

3.1. Factor analysis. The exploratory factor analysis was run to check the factor structure of the QMSS. The KMO for the analysis was 0.84 and Bartlett's sphericity test was significant for correlation matrix of the QMSS's items. Based on these two indexes, principle component factor analysis with a varimax rotation used to extract the factors. Principal-components factor analysis (based on scree plot, see Graph 1) offered a three-factor solution to the 12-item QMSS. Although this solution accounted for 86% of the variance in QMSS item intercorrelations, both an examination of the scree plot as well as the decrease in eigenvalues of additional factors supported the solution (see Table 1). These factors named permission for sexual relationship, sexual satisfaction, and sexual tendency based on their content. Items were supposed to load on a single factor if the rotated factor loading was at least 0.40, based on it, 2 items were omitted. Eigenvalues ranged from 4.6 to 1.02 for first to third extracted factors. These three factors estimate 57%, 15%, and 11% of the variance for the QMSS respectively (see Table1).

3.2. Internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the extracted factors were ranged between .70 to .90. This index for total items was .91.

3.3. Convergent validity. The correlation coefficient between QMSS's subscales with the Satisfaction with Life Scale was computed. Table2 shows these coefficients for QMSS's scores and the Satisfaction with Life Scale's score (N=50).
3.4. *Qualitative data analysis*. The content of the interviews showed that, participants define a moral marital sexuality based on a reciprocal respect based on permission for initiation, attention to reciprocal satisfaction during sexual functions, and tendency to make a sexual relationship. According to the data, a qualified marital sexuality is done when these three considerations are in touch.

4. Conclusion

The results of this research supported the psychometric qualities of the QMSS. In sum, the scale is a valid and reliable instrument to assess cognitive and moral quality of marital sexuality. Moreover, the findings showed that a qualified marital sexuality associates with moral considerations. Also the results of this study revealed that moral marital sexuality has a positive correlation with life satisfaction. In sum, this study clarifies a moral dimension for marital sexuality and revealed that considering moral aspects during sexual communication helps couples to have a high level of life satisfaction.

References


Appendix 1. The Quality of Marital Sexuality Scale (Persian Form)

1- همراهی رابطه جنسی با همسرم می‌توانم ندارم.
2- رابطه جنسی من با همسرم توام با رغبت است.
3- رابطه جنسی من و همسرم یا به مدتی من و یا همسرم توام است.
4- رغبت چندانی به برقراری رابطه جنسی با همسرم ندارم.
5- به راحتی به همسرم اجازه برقراری ارتباط جنسی می‌دهم.
6- در برقراری ارتباط جنسی با همسرم با مقاومت و امتاع او روبرو می‌شوم.
7- همسرم به راحتی به من اجازه ارتباط جنسی نمی‌دهد.
8- فرصت کافی برای برقراری ارتباط جنسی به هم می‌دهم.
9- نوع رابطه جنسی من با همسرم رضایتبخش است.
10- از نوع روابط جنسی خودم با همسرم احساس رضایت دارم.
11- همسرم از روابط جنسی با من احساس رضایت دارد.
12- ارتباط جنسی باعث رضایت و طرفداری من و همسرم می‌شود.