

Original Article: The Role of Gender Moderation and Mediation of Marital Intimacy in Relation to People's Attitude Towards Love and Marital Satisfaction of Married in Songor, Kermanshah province of Iran

Somaye Ghiasi¹, Abbas Abdollahi², Simin Hosseinian³

¹M.A in Family Counseling, Department of Counseling, Faculty of Education and psychology, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran

²Department of Counseling, Faculty of Education and psychology, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran

³Professor of Counseling, Department of Counseling, Faculty of Education and psychology, Alzahra University, Tehran, Iran



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ABSTRACT

Marriage and marital satisfaction are two very important aspects in people's lives and many factors play a role in creating marital satisfaction. Therefore, the present research was conducted with the aim of investigating the moderating role of gender and the mediation of marital intimacy in relation to people's attitudes towards love and marital satisfaction of married men and women in Sanghar city. The current study is of descriptive-correlation type and its statistical population is married men and women of Sanghar city, 224 samples participated in this research using available methods. The data were collected using the Love Attitude Questionnaire (LAS) by Hendrick and Hendrick (1998), Marital Intimacy by Bagaroosi (2001) and Marital Satisfaction by Enrich, Olson (1989) and using the Structural Equation Modeling method, using SPSS20 and PLS3 was analyzed. The analysis results showed that between the components of Eros ($P = 0.48$ and $P > 0.001$), Sturge ($B = 0.19$ and $P > 0.001$) and Agape ($P = 0.23$ and $P > 0.001$) There is a significant relationship with marital satisfaction, also, marital intimacy could play a partial mediating role for all three components of Eros ($B = 0.76$ and $P > 0.001$), Storg ($B = 0.37$ and $P > 0.001$) and Agape ($B = 0.32$ and $P > 0.001$) and gender also played a moderating role between research variables. Therefore, taking into account the effect of the gender factor, couples with closeness = They are more capable in dealing with problems and ultimately gain more satisfaction.

Introduction

Marital satisfaction is one of the important and determining factors in the strength of the family, and in it, couples feel satisfied and

satisfied with their relationship most of the time. Marital satisfaction is the level of interest of couples to each other and their positive attitude towards being married, which depends on various factors such as personality issues, conflict resolution, financial management, and

sexual relations. A person's satisfaction with his married life means his satisfaction with his family, and his satisfaction with his family is also a sign of his satisfaction with life, this satisfaction with life is ultimately the factor of material and spiritual growth and development [1].

Love has consequences for the well-being and satisfaction of married life, and love-making styles can affect the behaviors that lead to satisfaction in relationships and play a significant role in the happiness and predicting infidelity of couples [2]. Due to the importance of the topic of love, many theories have been proposed in this regard, one of these theories is Lee's six-dimensional theory, according to Lee, people's belief in love is influenced by six styles of love making. These styles, which were first proposed by Lee (1973 and 1977) and then by Hendrick and Hendrick (1998) include Eros, Ludos, Storg, Pragma, Mania, and Agape styles.

Eros love is the first style of love that emphasizes beauty and attractiveness. This style of lovemaking is an intense emotional experience and passionate love. People who have this style of love fall in love at first sight and use the poetic and romantic method for lovers who feel a strong attraction towards the other party. Ludus love is associated with high excitement and extroversion. And sometimes it involves loving multiple people who are with different people at the same time and enjoy it and have no commitment to the other party. Storg love is the third style of love that is associated with love and commitment. In this style of love ,people have a strong connection and commitment to each other, and respect and trust in the other party is a characteristic of this type of love style. Pragma love style is a style of love that is associated with a wise choice, people with this style pay attention to the demographic characteristics of the other party and look for someone who is compatible with them in terms of social status. Another style of love is the style of mania, which includes a state of intense excitement with jealousy. The last style is related to Agape love style, which is caring and patient along with altruism. People with this style seek long-term satisfaction from the relationship and do not have expectations

from the other party and ignore their opinions and interests for the sake of their other party [3]. They show that there is a significant relationship between love and marital satisfaction [4-7].

Another factor affecting marital satisfaction is marital intimacy. Intimacy is a basic need for humanity and is necessary to maintain mental health. On the other hand, the lack of intimacy causes anxiety, depression and low communication satisfaction [8]. Intimacy means having a close relationship with love and romance with another person, which requires a deep understanding of the other party [9]. Psychologists consider intimacy in the ability to connect with another person and also define it as the expression of emotions, which is a natural state for humans [10]. The depth of intimacy that couples feel in their relationships depends on the quick and open communication of their thoughts, feelings, and desires [11]. One thing that should be noted is that the method each couple chooses to express intimacy and closeness is important and is greatly affected by their needs [12]. Studies have shown that marital satisfaction is higher among couples who have higher intimacy, in other words, couples who have a higher degree of intimacy have more marital satisfaction [13].

Also, marital satisfaction can be affected by demographic variables, including gender [14]. Research shows that there are differences between men and women's attitudes towards love and there is evidence of gender differences in love-making styles [15]. According to the points presented and the variable importance of marital intimacy in the relationship between couples, in this research we intend to investigate the moderating role of gender and the mediation of marital intimacy in the relationship between people's attitude towards love and marital satisfaction among married men and women.

Participants, contributors

32 people out of 219 respondents are 20-30 years old (14.6%), 96 people are between 30-40 years old (43.8%) people are 50-40 years old (31.5%) and 22 people from The sample is

51 years and older (10%) with mean and standard deviation (2.37 and 0.854) Of the 218 respondents, 127 are women (58%) and 91 are men (41.6%), with the mean and standard deviation (1.42 and 0.494) respondents have a cycle degree (13.7%), 27 have an associate degree (12.3%), 85 have a bachelor's degree (38.8%), 61 have Master's degree (27.9%), and 3 people have doctorate degree (1.7%) with mean and standard deviation of all respondents have been married for 1-5 years 34 people (15.5%) from people between 5-10 years old, 41 people (18.7%) from 10-15 years old and 93 people from people over 15 years old from all respondents with an average and standard deviation (2.83 and 1.199).

Research tools

Love Attitude Scale (LAS)

This questionnaire was created by Hendrick and Hendrick (1998) based on Lee's model of love. The current questionnaire has 5 Likert-type items in the form of 5 options from completely agree (4) to completely disagree (1). Their alpha values ranged from 56% to 77%. The factorial structure of this questionnaire in Iranian society was investigated by Bayat (2007) and its 6-factorial structure was confirmed. In the current study, Cronbach's alpha of this questionnaire was 77%.

Bagaroozi Marital Intimacy Scale

This questionnaire was prepared and adjusted by Bagaroozi (2001). The questionnaire contains 41 questions. The answers to the questions in this questionnaire are graded from 1 (I don't have this need at all) to 10 (I absolutely have this need). In his research, Bagaroozi reported the validity of the questionnaire as 95%. This questionnaire has been investigated in Iran for the first time by Emetadi (2004). In his research, Emetadi measured the reliability of this questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha and reported it as 94%. Cronbach's alpha of this questionnaire in the present study is 95%.

Ethical considerations

In order to comply with ethical considerations, the couples were given the necessary explanations in order to keep the information confidential and have complete freedom to participate in answering or not.

Ethically, the veil has been reviewed for university review by the Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology.

Method

The statistical population of the present study includes married men and women of Sanghar city in 1401, of which 224 samples filled out the questionnaires. Due to the corona situation at the time of distributing the questionnaires, the sampling method of the current study is available sampling. On June 6, 1401, questionnaires were created using the Google Form platform, and the link created in Telegram and WhatsApp channels was provided to people, people completed the questionnaires, and after 25 days, data was collected and analyzed.

Results

Preliminary analysis

At first, we identified missing data, the range of missing data was observed between 0.4% and 6.7%, which was resolved by regression. We continued the analysis operation in order to evaluate the normality of the data, according to the numerical value range obtained for skewness between (-3.497 and 1.028) and for elongation between (-1.894 and 33.23) we can conclude that our data does not have a normal distribution, but since the PLS software is not sensitive to the normality of the data, we can perform the analysis. It should be noted that our data have a normal distribution when the numerical values of skewness and kurtosis are between ± 2 and ± 5 , respectively [16] In order to evaluate the outlier data, we first identified these data and then by performing the Mahalanobis regression analysis for the three variables whose overall score was calculated, they were sorted from large to small

and compared with the chi-square distribution. With the finalization of the operation, the obtained numerical values are considered as outlier data because the five numerical values of the new column data are smaller than 0.001, as a result, the line corresponding to these two numerical values is deleted to normalize the data.

Fit the measurement model for each variable

To fit the measurement model for each variable, we checked the factor loadings, and the factor loadings with negative numerical value, greater than one and less than 0.4 were removed for each variable. In the output of the software, 34 items out of 112 items, which (10 items) were removed from the marital intimacy variable, (11 items) from the love attitude

variable, and (13 items) from the marital satisfaction variable. To evaluate the convergent validity, the mean and variance extracted (AVE) should be calculated, and if the numerical value is greater than half, it can be concluded that the latent variable has an acceptable convergent validity. By performing the related operation, the software output showed the numerical value of the variables less than half, and due to the unacceptability of convergent validity, we removed the indicators whose numerical value was less than half and negative. The output of the software showed that the construct reliability (CR) for the variables is acceptable and is above 0.7. Also, Cronbach's alpha (α) related to each variable has been obtained according to Table 1.

Table 1: Cronbach's alpha

Variable	Convergent	validity Reliability of the structure	Cronbach's alpha
Attitude to love	0.77	0.79	0.35
Marital Satisfaction	0.87	0.89	0.35
Marital intimacy	0.95	0.95	0.56

After calculating the HTMT index for the research variables, we observed that all the coefficients are less than 0.8 and because the acceptable value for divergent validity is less than 0.8, it indicates the acceptable divergent validity between the research variables.

Measurement model fit for the entire model

To evaluate the fit of the measurement model of the entire model, we first evaluated the fit indices of the assumed model, one of which is the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) and the other is the normalized fit index (NFI). A numerical value equal to or less than 0.08 for SRMR and a numerical value greater than 0.9 is acceptable for the NFI index.

If one of the two indicators have the fit of the measurement model, the fit of the measurement model is acceptable. The result of the operation showed that the SRMR is less than 0.08, which indicates that the

measurement model is acceptable for the assumed model. Then we evaluated the collinearity between the variables, which is measured by Tolerance Variance Factor (VIF). According to the instructions, we ran the model and the VIF value for the predictor variables was 2.55, which is less than 5, so there is no collinearity between the predictor variables.

Structural model fit

At this stage, we examined the path coefficients between research variables. Beta coefficients are added to the model, which are in the range of +1 and -1. Coefficients that are close to one have a strong and positive relationship. According to the analysis, beta coefficients and t_values for the components of eros, sturg and agape related to the exogenous variable of attitude towards love and the variable of marital intimacy were obtained,

which shows that they positively predict the variable of marital satisfaction (Table 2).

Table 2: Evaluation of significant coefficients for Eros, Sturg and Agape component

	p-values	t-values	The coefficient of determination
Eros and marital satisfaction	0.000	6.84	0.48
Marital intimacy and marital satisfaction	0.000	6.90	0.47
Agape and marital satisfaction	0.000	4.77	0.23
Marital intimacy and marital satisfaction	0.000	19.73	0.77
Storg and marital satisfaction	0.000	3.76	0.19
Marital intimacy and marital satisfaction	0.000	20.10	0.77

Then we examine the coefficient of determination (2R) related to endogenous latent variables. The coefficient of determination according to three numerical values is 0.19, 0.33 and 0.67, respectively, which indicates weak, medium and strong coefficient of determination [16]. The coefficient of determination of the endogenous variable in connection with the eros component from the variable of people's attitude towards love and the variable of marital intimacy is (0.81), for the Ludos component and marital intimacy (0.82) the Storg component and marital intimacy (0.74). Pragma and marital intimacy (0.74) is the component of mania and marital intimacy (0.74) and the component of agape and marital intimacy is (0.76), which according to the determined criterion, we can conclude that the coefficient of determination in the group is strong

The 2f effect size is a measure that deals with the strength of the relationship between the latent variables of the hypothesized model according to three cut lines of 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 (Cohen, 1988). And performing the operation, we came to the conclusion that the

Table 3: Relationship coefficients between the mediating variable and the components of eros, sturg and agape

Criterion variable	Predictor variable component	Direct model	mediation model
Marital Satisfaction	Eros	0.85	0.48
Marital Satisfaction	Marital intimacy		0.47
Marital intimacy	Eros		0.76
Marital Satisfaction	Sturg	0.50	0.19
Marital Satisfaction	Marital intimacy		0.77
Marital intimacy	Sturg		0.37
Marital Satisfaction	agape	0.57	0.23
Marital Satisfaction	Marital intimacy		0.77
Marital intimacy	agape		0.32

numerical value of 2f for the Eros and Ludos component related to the exogenous variable of attitude to love in this research is more than the other exogenous variable, namely marital intimacy, on the endogenous variable, marital satisfaction. But the effect of marital intimacy variable is more than the effect of storg, pragma, mania and agape components in the exogenous variable of people's attitude towards love on the endogenous variable i.e. marital satisfaction.

Model analysis with mediator variable

The mediating variable explains the relationship between the predictor variable and the criterion variable. To analyze the mediating variable, we use Baron and Kenny's method.

By performing the mediation model analysis, we came to the conclusion that marital intimacy plays a partial mediation role for the components of eros, sturg and agape (Table 3).

Model analysis with moderator variables

Considering that in this research we are looking to investigate the moderating role of gender and since the gender variable is considered a qualitative variable, we used the model analysis method for different groups in order to test the qualitative moderating variable. It can be said that the gender variable has acted as a moderating variable when there is a significant difference between the research variables in the group of women and men and

the significance level is less than 0.05. By performing operations related to this method of analysis and the difference between the beta coefficient in the relationship between the variables and the significance level for the difference between the studied variables between the two groups of women and men, the gender variable was able to play a moderating role because the significance level is less than 0.5 is 0 in Table 4.

Table 4: The moderating role of gender in the assumed model

structure structure		Significant level difference	Female	Man
		p	Beta coefficient	Beta coefficient
People's attitude towards love	Marital Satisfaction	0.019	-0.436	0.481
Marital intimacy	Marital Satisfaction	0.000	0.432	0.436

Discussion

In the surveys conducted on marriage and family, special attention has been paid to the satisfaction of couples with life. Because the quality of life together and marital satisfaction has an impact on the strength and stability of the family. The present research has investigated the factors affecting marital satisfaction. Kim and Hatfield (2004) showed in a study that love is an important predictor of happiness and satisfaction in couples and makes them feel safe and reduce their anxiety. Intimacy is also a factor and sign of quality in relationships that has a positive relationship with couples' satisfaction with marriage [17-19]. Therefore, we have investigated the mediating role of marital intimacy in the relationship between people's attitude towards love and marital satisfaction. We also examined the gender variable as a moderator. After analyzing the data obtained from this study and testing the hypotheses of this research, we reached the results that we will refer to below.

In testing the hypothesis related to the relationship between lovemaking styles and marital satisfaction, the results of the analysis point to the relationship between the

components of Eros, Sturge and Agape with marital satisfaction ,which is in line with the findings of the research of Edilavadzdeh et al .,

in explaining this relationship ,it should be mentioned that couples who have an Eros style of love are thinking of a warm and romantic relationship, these people receive emotional support from their spouses, and ultimately this romantic relationship ends in marital satisfaction.

People who have Storg style feel closeness and intimacy towards each other, and this closeness and affection ends in relationship satisfaction. But when the relationship between couples is cold and indifferent and devoid of affection and love, their trust and confidence in each other decreases and it weakens the satisfaction of married life.

People with self-sacrificing love style are altruistic and do not expect from the other party and give up their interests for the sake of the other party, this self-sacrifice can lead to relationship satisfaction. The reason for this is that the more a person feels comfort, love and intimacy with his spouse, the stronger their relationship is, and these strong relationships can prevent many disagreements and

ultimately lead to marital satisfaction. According to the second hypothesis and the results of the research, which show that there is a significant relationship between the variable of marital intimacy and marital satisfaction, this finding is in line with the findings of researches is aligned. When couples have the necessary intimacy, they have a correct understanding of each other's behavior and speech and understand their words well, which prevents many conflicts and thus strengthens marital satisfaction. Intimacy makes couples have deep empathy, knowledge and understanding of each other.

According to the third hypothesis, the research results showed that there is a significant relationship between the components of eros, storg and agape with the marital intimacy variable. In fact, intimacy is created when the relationship between the couple is romantic. Couples who have eros, storg and agape love styles have a relationship with love, intimacy and forgiveness and can experience satisfying relationships in an intimate and comfortable way. In other words, couples can feel intimacy and closeness based on romantic and intimate relationships and support and self-sacrifice in their relationships.

According to the fourth hypothesis of this research, the analysis results showed that marital intimacy can play a mediating role between the components of eros, storg and agape from the variable of attitude towards love and satisfaction of couples. Intimacy can play a mediating role when couples can expand love and friendship and self-sacrifice in their relationship. When there is romantic, sincere and divine love between the couple and the couple have an altruistic thinking, do not expect from their spouse and expand the spirit of giving in their relationship, in this case, the relationship between them is sincere and encouraging, and this Sincere relationship is the cause of marital satisfaction. However, due to the lack of relationship between other components of love (ludos, mania, pragma) and marital satisfaction, marital intimacy cannot play a mediating role in such a situation.

Regarding the moderating role of gender in the relationship between research variables, we came to the conclusion that the gender variable could play a moderating role between the variables of people's attitude towards love and marital satisfaction. The present study showed that men and women can express their feelings, emotions and experiences differently. According to the result of this research, it can be said that, in addition to the psychological and personality characteristics of individuals in the way of expressing feelings and making love, the gender difference is also effective on the romantic experiences of people [19-21]. For example, women's view of love is a kind of emotional commitment and a sense of security that exists in a relationship, but men see love as a kind of sexual commitment and physical pleasure [22-24]. This difference in the view of love and how it manifests can affect marital satisfaction. To justify and explain this difference, according to the parental investment theory [25-2] it can be stated that the amount of time and energy that parents spend on male and female children is different. And this inequality causes the difference in the amount of experience of romantic feelings between women and men. This is why men invest less in romantic relationships than women and prefer relationships without romantic feelings. In addition, society, culture and cultural characteristics are important factors that can influence gender differences in love making styles [28].

Conclusion

Marriage is an emotional bond between two poles, male and female, which sometimes arises due to the difference in the perceptions and attitudes of women and men regarding the category of love and marital satisfaction, and this difference in attitude, over time, sometimes turns into conflict. But according to the results of this research, it can be said that intimacy plays an important role in increasing marital satisfaction. In other words, intimacy is associated with the high quality of marital relationship and this shows that despite the relationship between research variables and marital satisfaction, due to the overlap of the

variables with each other, the best predictor of marital satisfaction among them is intimacy because the main purpose of marriage is intimate relationship. And without it, marriage will not be a perfect marriage.

Limitations

Among the limitations of this research was that due to the corona situation, it was not possible for the researcher to take samples in person, as a result, many people were not available, in addition, the present research was conducted in a specific period of time and on couples in Sanghar city. The conclusion is general and therefore the generalization of the results to other couples should be done with caution. The presence of intervening variables, including the cultural load of some sentences and words in the questionnaires, caused people to refuse to answer all the questions in the questionnaire and the researcher spent a lot of time to collect the questionnaires. Therefore, it is suggested that in qualitative and in-depth researches, this issue should be carefully investigated by interview method and clinical observations.

Application of research findings

According to the studies, it is certain that the personality and love styles of people are formed years ago in childhood and in the parental relationship, so it is very important and significant for the health professionals of the society to start from childhood and with consistent training and According to the current needs of the country, they should take steps to educate parents and children at both the family and school levels.

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