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The relationship between spiritual and emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction of married women

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Abstract:

INTRODUCTION: Maintaining family stability is an important principle, and sexual satisfaction is an important component of family stability. Disturbance in it is a threat to the survival and stability of the family. Emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence are psychological variables that affect marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The aim of this study was to determine the relationship between spiritual and emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction of married women.

METHODS: A cross-sectional correlation study was conducted on 200 married women referring to Lar health centers in 2017. Sampling was available in a way. The research units completed the King Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire, Short Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, Sexual Satisfaction and Beck Depression if they had inclusion criteria and written consent. Finally, the data were analyzed by Spearman statistical tests.

RESULTS: The results of the Spearman test showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction ($P = 0.001$), with increased emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction. The results of the study of emotional intelligence components showed that only the emotional adjustment component had a significant relationship with sexual satisfaction. The results also showed that there is a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and sexual satisfaction and the components of transcendental consciousness, transcendental alertness, and personal meaningfulness with sexual satisfaction ($P = 0.001$).

CONCLUSION: According to the results of this study and given that one of the duties of midwives is to provide counseling on sexual health, they can raise individual awareness, or group or educational classes, through awareness-raising campaigns for women, improving sexual relations and following are family health. midwives can enhance their spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, women's awareness, and sexual intercourse through counseling sessions (individually, in groups, or classes). All of the above can be a source of family health.

Keywords:

Emotional intelligence, sexual satisfaction, spiritual intelligence, women

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Introduction

In the history of man, man has needed sexual intercourse in order to survive the generation. Sexuality is a phenomenon whose significance is realistic and ignores it from the material; this is because, like all other instinctive instincts of man, there existed from the beginning of the birth and flourishes with its growth.^[1] Women

are the core of energy in the family; as a result, women's health is effective in terms of generating energy and dynamism in the family and reflecting it in society. Therefore, it should recognize the factors that cause women's physical and emotional problems and identify ways to prevent them, so that women's health can be promoted. One of the important factors in women's health is the recognition of normal and abnormal sexual function.^[2] Meanwhile, satisfaction

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with sexual relation, one of the important factors in satisfying marital life, is one of the important factors affecting the health and quality of life of couples and is one of the most important indicators of life satisfaction.^[3] Sexual satisfaction refers to a person's feelings of sexual intercourse. In another definition, sexual satisfaction refers to judging and analyzing each individual's sexual behavior that makes it enjoyable.^[4] Sexual satisfaction is of particular importance in family and marital affairs, and several studies have pointed to the effect of sexual satisfaction on marital satisfaction. These studies have shown that the existence of a desirable sexual relationship in such a way as to provide satisfaction to the parties has a crucial role to play in the sustainability of the family center.^[5] Therefore, in families with no satisfactory sexual activity, a variety of sexual problems occurs.^[6] Certainly, today sexual problems are very common and can directly or indirectly affect many aspects of couples life.^[7,8] It is estimated that 80% of marital conflicts and disagreements are due to the lack of sexual satisfaction between husband and wife. It has also been proven that sexual dissatisfaction is the cause of many psychological disturbances, increasing the rate of betrayal and divorce.^[9,10] In other words, sexual satisfaction as one of the physiological needs causes human health, and in the absence of it, the physical and psychological stress caused by it will disrupt the individual's health, reduce his abilities and creativity, and risk of strengthen the marital relationship.^[11,12] Several factors are involved in marital satisfaction, including: psychological variables, quality of before marriage relationships, how to marry, communication style, couples' character, and ways to deal with marital problems, which are among the known factors in this regard. On the other hand, marital satisfaction requires the efforts of couples.^[13]

Psychological variables are important among the factors affecting marital satisfaction. In this regard, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence are psychological variables that affect marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction.^[14]

From Bar-On's perspective, emotional intelligence is a bunch of talent and noncognitive skills that can increase individual's ability to achieve success in comparison with environmental pressures and constraints. Emotional intelligence is one of the important factors in the success of individual life.^[15] In Golman's theory, emotional intelligence is the ability to manage the mood, the psychological state, and the control of impulses, which can be motivating and hoping when faced with failure to achieve the goal.^[16]

According to researches on spouses' relationships, emotional intelligence components seem to be effective in marital satisfaction.^[14] Sincere relationships between

couples require communication skills, such as individual attention to issues from the perspective of their spouses and the ability to empathic understanding of what their partner experiences, as well as being sensitive and aware of their needs. In a study by Schutte and Malouff on a sample of spouses, they found that those who scored elevated emotional intelligence scores and those who gave their wives high marks in emotional intelligence were significantly more matched with marital satisfaction.^[17] Hassanzadeh and Sadat-Kyadehy showed that emotional intelligence is an important predictor of individual, family, social, occupational, and academic achievement.^[18]

On the other hand, managing emotions with spirituality also require a necessary relationship. Since human beings can only achieve self-perfection in the light of controlling and modulating, the negative emotions and self-esteem contribute to the formation of human qualities. Spirituality is the source of people who can use it in all circumstances, such as lack of grief and difficulty.^[19] Immunes believes that spirituality can be viewed as a form of intelligence because it predicts performance and adaptation of the individual and provides capabilities that enable individuals to solve problems and reach their goals.^[17] He used the term spiritual intelligence to explain spirituality in the form of intelligence and defined it as an adaptive application of spiritual intelligence with the aim of facilitating solving everyday problems and achieving the goal.^[17,19] Studies show that people with intellectual disabilities are more likely to cope with their illnesses and coping strategies are stronger than others.^[19]

Nasel believes that religious beliefs are related to positive outcomes such as physical, emotional, and psychological well-being, positive interpersonal interaction, marital satisfaction, and quality of life. The prevention of spiritual tendencies in life prevents personal and social maladaptive behaviors. It also leads to tangible experiences, feelings of satisfaction, and personality integrity.^[20] Spiritual intelligence creates a general and sacred purpose through the sanctity of daily matters, all that the person does, in addition to a dedicated goal. When a practice is performed with a sacred purpose, it becomes different.^[21-23]

Bakhshayeshy and Mortazavi (2010), in his research, aimed to predict marital satisfaction based on the spiritual and emotional intelligence of couples, reported that spiritual intelligence has a positive relationship with marital satisfaction.^[24] In a study of Yonker with titled "The Relationship Between Spirituality and Religion" on the psychological consequences of adolescents and adults, results showed spirituality and religiosity reduce psychological problems in adolescents.^[25]

Since the basis of successful and healthy life depends on having satisfactory relationships between spouses, it can be achieved through the development of skills such as self-awareness, self-awareness, self-management, and management of relationships that are components of spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence helped to strengthen the strength of marital relationships.^[22,23]

Regarding the importance of maintaining family stability, sexual satisfaction is considered as the most important principle for the stability and survival of the family, so that the disruption is a threat to the survival and stability of the family. It is clear that by increasing sexual satisfaction, couples are progressing socially, culturally, academically, and professionally. Therefore, the awareness of couples, especially young couples with a variety of emotional and spiritual intelligence components, can help to satisfy their sexual relationships. Research in this field can help the therapists and counselors working in counseling and divorce centers to use these findings to increase sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction of couples. According to what was said, the purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence with female sexual satisfaction.

Methods

This cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted to determine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence with sexual satisfaction on 200 women referring to Lar health center in 2017. The volume of the study after the pilot study was performed on 10 women referring to health centers with a confidence level of 1.96 and a precision of 1.5, 175 women was calculated. Considering 25% probability of sample loss, the number of final samples was estimated to be 200 women. After approving the project, the researcher at Larestan University of Medical Sciences visited the clinics of Lar city and contacted the patients in face-to-face contact. After explaining about the design and the goals, he encouraged the patients to participate in the research. The Inclusion criteria included: completed personal satisfaction questionnaire, marriage, ability to understand and speak Persian, ability to read and write, physical and mental health, and Exit criteria included: menopause, drug addiction and alcoholic beverages, physical illness and infertility, scored more than 40 from Beck Depression questionnaire. Then, The researcher provided demographic and midwifery questionnaires, Beck Depression, Spiritual Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, and Sexual Satisfaction to the participants. The research units completed the questionnaire and if there were any problems, they discussed the questions with the researcher. Furthermore, the research units were assured that their information was confidential

and could be excluded from the research in case of dissatisfaction.

The instruments used included sexual satisfaction questionnaire, emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence, and Beck Depression Inventory.

Sexual satisfaction was measured by Sexual Satisfaction Questionnaire. This questionnaire is made in accordance with the Iranian culture and consists of 17 questions (Some examples of the questions: I feel that my wife enjoys the life of our family, Relationship with my wife is normal for me, I feel that our sex life is lacking in quality) and Likert score. Each option is given from 1 to 5 points and is designed by Maryam Yavari Kermani in 2007. In a research conducted by Asghary *et al.*, the reliability of this questionnaire was obtained through Cronbach's alpha (90%).^[26] The validity of this questionnaire was confirmed by five faculty members of Nursing Faculty of Larestan University of Medical Sciences. The reliability of this study was confirmed by a test-retest method of 0.84.

Shoot Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (1998) prepared with Schutte *et al.* based on the theoretical model of the Salovey-Meyer Emotional Intelligence Model (1990).^[27] The questionnaire consists of 33 questions (Some examples of the questions: When I feel numb and absent, I do not know what or who causes me to do this. Even when I do the best I can, I am looking forward to doing something that's not done. Everyone has some drawbacks, but I have so many problems that I cannot love myself) and includes three components of set: including Set the excitement (This subscale has 10 questions. The questions in this subscale are: 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 23, 26, 27, 30, 31.), evaluation and expression of the excitement (This subscale has 12 questions. The questions in this subscale are: 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 15, 18, 19, 22, 25, 29, 33.) and Taking advantage of the excitement (This subscale has 10 questions. The questions in this subscale are: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 21, 24, 28.)

The participant chooses his opinion with any of the sentences in a five-point Likert range from the completely opposed (Score 1) to the completely agree (Score 5).^[27,28] The reliability of the questionnaire by Jahangiri was 0.84 for the whole scale and the subscales was excitement expression 0.86, emotion regulation 0.92, and emotional exploitation 0.66.^[29]

The SISRI-24 King's Spiritual Intelligence Questionnaire is a 24-item questionnaire (Some examples of the questions: I often ask questions about the nature of your life. I can define my purpose or reason for my life. I am aware of the deeper relationship between myself and others) with four subscales, including Critical Existential Thinking (This subscale has 7 questions and its total

score is 0–28. The questions in this subscale are: 1, 3, 5, 9, 13, 17, 21.), Production of personal meaning (This subscale has 5 questions and its total score is 0–20. The questions in this subscale are: 7, 11, 15, 19, 23.), Transcendental Consciousness (This subscale has 7 questions and its total score is 0–28. The questions in this subscale are 2, 6, 10, 14, 18, 20, 22.) and transcendental consciousness expansion (This subsample has 5 items and its total score is 0–20. The questions in this subscale are: 4, 8, 12, 16, 24).

The total score of this questionnaire is between 0 and 96. High score reflects high spiritual intelligence. The reliability of the questionnaire by King in 2007 was 0.95 for the whole scale and for the subscales was: Critical existential thinking, 0.88; Production of personal meaning 0.77; transcendental consciousness 0.89; and transcendental consciousness expansion of 0.94.^[30]

The Beck Depression Inventory contains 21 sentences. Some phrases include four and some five sections, which are scored as 0, 1, 2, 3, and 4) Interpreting scores: 9–0 without depression, 14–10 borderline depression, 20–15 mild depression, 30–21 moderate depression, 40–30 severe depression, and 63–41 severe depression). Individuals with a depression score of under 40 were enter into the study and people with a score of 40 or more were not enter in the study. This questionnaire is valid and reliable tool.^[31]

Finally, the information was coded and entered into SPSS software version 22 (IBM Company, Armonk, NY) and analyzed by descriptive statistics and Spearman.

Results

The results of data analysis on 200 women referring to health centers in Isfahan showed that the average age of the participants in the study was 34 ± 6.70 and the menarche age was 13 ± 1.36 years. Most of them (152 people = 74.1%) were homemakers and most of them had diploma and postdiploma education (154 = 75.2%). These women had an average of 1.2 ± 1.30 pregnancy, and the number of live children was 2.1 ± 1.5 . The last delivery period was 4 ± 2.08 and the last lactation period was 3 ± 1.85 years.

Descriptive indicators of the components of spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and sexual satisfaction are listed Table 1. The results of Spearman test showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction ($P = 0.001$), so that with increased emotional intelligence, sexual satisfaction increases. Furthermore, the results from the study of emotional intelligence components showed that only the set the excitement component had a significant relationship with sexual

satisfaction. The results also showed that there was a significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and sexual satisfaction and the components production of personal meaning, transcendental of consciousness expansion, transcendental consciousness and sexual satisfaction ($P = 0/001$) [Table 2].

Discussion

The results of this study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and all of its components with sexual satisfaction. Emotional intelligence means knowledge of excitement and the ability to manage and use them, which can help to stabilize and relax in marital life. But for people with moderate emotional intelligence, instability in life (economic instability and severe financial conditions) can affect the use of emotional intelligence skills, and they cannot use their usual emotional knowledge. In confirmation of the results of this study, the study of AliAkbari Dehkordi in 2012 aimed at determining the relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction.^[32] Furthermore, a study by Soleymani and Mohammadi in 2009 aimed at determining the relationship between emotional

Table 1: Descriptive indicators of the components of spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and sexual satisfaction

Indicator	Variable (Mean±SD)
Emotional intelligence	102/03±7/24
Set the excitement	31/39±7/24
evaluation and expression of the excitement	36/53±4/25
Taking advantage of the excitement	26/98±3/17
Spiritual intelligence	65/84±4/89
Critical existential thinking	18/45±2/28
Production of personal meaning	14/61±2/07
Transcendental consciousness	18/53±2/76
Transcendental consciousness expansion	14/13±2/25
Sexual satisfaction	62/28±4/37

SD=Standard deviation

Table 2: Correlation coefficients of spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence and their components with sexual satisfaction in married women

Spiritual and emotional intelligence	Sexual satisfaction
Emotional Intelligence	0/001
Set the excitement	0/001
evaluation and expression of the excitement	0/56
Taking advantage of the excitement	0/69
Spiritual intelligence	0/001
Critical existential thinking	0/019
Production of personal meaning	0/001
Transcendental consciousness	0/001
Transcendental consciousness expansion	0/001

intelligence and marital satisfaction, the results showed that there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence.^[33] The study of Bakhshayesh and Mortazavi in 2010 also highlighted the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction.^[24] A study by Dildar *et al.* in 2012 aimed at determining emotional intelligence and marital adjustment showed that higher emotional intelligence increases marital adjustment.^[34] Smith *et al.* pointed out in their study that high emotional intelligence increases adaptability and marital satisfaction.^[35] All the reported studies have investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction, while the present study has investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and sexual satisfaction. Nevertheless, all the above studies confirm the result of this study. Given that sexual satisfaction is one of the factors affecting marital satisfaction, this relationship can be confirmed. Many evidence proves that people who have emotional skills (those who know and direct their feelings) are privileged in every area of life, those people whose well-developed emotional skills are happy and efficient in their lives. However, those who cannot control their emotional life are engaging in internal conflicts that diminish their ability to do focused work and thinking.^[36] This is the reasoning behind the results of this study.

As a result of the impact of emotions in the realm of life, especially interpersonal communication and in view of the increasing problems of marital life, the results of the present study, while emphasizing the importance of teaching emotional intelligence, improve the quality of married and increase the emotional capabilities of couples. Hence, they have a higher self-esteem and a greater degree of flexibility, courage, confidence, and success; have more flexibility and learn how to solve their problems; become more optimistic in life; and increase their emotional capacities in marital life and have satisfactory sexual relations.

Furthermore, the results of this study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and sexual satisfaction. The results of spiritual intelligence components also showed that there is a significant relationship between the production of personal meaning, transcendental consciousness expansion, and transcendental consciousness with sexual satisfaction. Several studies have pointed to the role and importance of spiritual intelligence in people's mental health, including the following studies. Hamid *et al.*, in 2012, conducted a study to determine the relationship between mental health, spiritual intelligence, and flexibility in students of Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences, reported that higher spiritual intelligence would increase mental health

of individuals.^[37] Ya'qubi's study in 2010 aimed to determine the relationship between spiritual intelligence and happiness in students at Bouali University; results showed that increasing the level of spiritual intelligence increases the level of happiness of individuals.^[38]

The study of Yanker with the aim of determining the relationship between spirituality and religiosity on the psychological outcomes of adolescents and adults showed that spirituality and religiosity reduced mental health problems in adolescents.^[25] The study of Hosniyan *et al.* in 2011 aimed at predicting the quality of life in female teachers based on emotional and spiritual intelligence variables, and the results showed that spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence variables increased the quality of life of female teachers.^[39] Gain and Purohit (2006) argue that spiritual intelligence is an experienced experience that enables people to gain more knowledge and understanding and provides the ground for achieving perfection and progress in life, This issue itself raises sexual satisfaction.^[22]

In other words, learning couples and applying spiritual intelligence skills to couples can increase marital satisfaction. Applying skills, such as relying on the divine presence of God in the world and their common life, the reliance on God at the height of the hardships and crises of his life, the belief that their life is meaningful, purposeful, and valuable, increases their sexual satisfaction.

Emotional intelligence is essential for the happiness and health of the community. The ethical development and development of religious practices is crucial in the process of identifying and controlling emotions and enhancing emotional intelligence. In fact, religion and morals prevent many personal and social abnormalities. Sexual dissatisfaction also causes abnormalities in each of the couples. This is why with the results of this study and similar studies, the satisfaction and quality of individual and marital life are higher in people with higher spiritual and emotional intelligence.

Couples who are satisfied with marital life have a positive relationship between them. There is a lot of unity. In different aspects of life, they are supportive of each other; they are in agreement with many family and recreational activities, ability to manage the problems. Sexual satisfaction provides a framework where couples can experience love, pleasure, and affection in the best possible way. Sexual satisfaction increases the satisfaction of couples from each other and thus increases their mental health. Spiritual intelligence means understanding the meaning of life in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, except for high-level needs. Clashes in lower-level needs divert people

from reaching this goal and affect marital satisfaction. Emotional intelligence enhances the ability to control, recognize, and utilize emotional empowerment. As a result, emotional intelligence can increase the positive attitude toward dealing with problems. This can be a reason for promoting couples. As a result of the importance of sexual satisfaction, attention to the two components of spiritual and emotional intelligence as factors affecting sexual satisfaction should be taken into consideration by the psychologists. This study was one of the limited studies that examined sexual satisfaction and its relationship with emotional and spiritual intelligence. According to the results of the research, many young couples suffer from family trauma due to their little experience in establishing each other's communication and lack of proper education in this regard. They cannot establish a good relationship with each other. Teaching skills such as communication skills, empathy, self-confidence, expressive and perceptual skills (active listening), ability to make decisions, and manage these emotions may well increase mutual satisfaction by increasing the ability of individuals to interact with one another. In fact, increasing age and experience and teaching life skills and emotional intelligence can increase the individual's satisfaction with the environment and challenges to effectively deal with his family and marital environment.^[23] Therefore, it is suggested that special training be provided on spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence and research on the effect of spiritual and emotional intelligence training on increasing sexual satisfaction.^[40] By organizing group counseling sessions for couples with marital problems, they can be helped using the results of this study. Regarding the cultural and religious conditions of our society, we need to pay more attention to spiritual intelligence subscale and to take more effective steps in order to increase the sexual satisfaction of couples. Since everyone does not have access to counseling services, it is suggested that family-specific people be used to familiarize people with these issues, as well as with mass media, in particular television as the most receptive media. From the limitations of this study, doing it in women is a region with the same culture, while their different cultures and their perception of sex are one of several factors affecting sexual satisfaction, so it is recommended that studies be conducted in different cultures.

Conclusion

Considering that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and spiritual intelligence with sexual satisfaction, therefore, having high emotional and spiritual intelligence has an effect on the process of improving and strengthening the family center and are considered as important components. Therefore,

by educating and promoting the level of emotional and spiritual intelligence in couples, especially young couples, they can improve interpersonal relationships and sexual satisfaction, followed by marital satisfaction, to reduce many of the relationships outside the family and divorce. It should be noted that since one of the duties of midwives is providing counseling in the field of sexual health, they can raise individual intelligence or group counseling or classes, especially before marriage, to promote spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, women's awareness, improve sexual relationships, and consequently increase sexual satisfaction and family health.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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