



The Relationship between Marital Satisfaction and Academic Achievement of Children

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to evaluate the relationship between marital satisfaction and academic achievement of children. Material used to collect data included two kinds of questionnaire; Afrooz marital satisfaction questionnaire to measure marital satisfaction among parents of the students and average scores of students obtained in previous semester to measure academic achievement. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to describe data and to evaluate the relationship between variables, respectively. Obtained results showed a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and academic achievement of children; moreover, marital satisfaction of the mother had more influence on academic achievement of children. A significant relationship was also found between scales of marital satisfaction and academic achievement of children. According to obtained results, there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction of parents and academic achievement and social adjustment of children; considering limitations, however, this relationship needs further investigations.

Keywords: marital satisfaction, academic achievement

INTRODUCTION

Marital satisfaction considerably influences on mental and physical health of the family. Quality of marital satisfaction positively influences on degree of general health of the family. Marital satisfaction influences on behavior and responses of the child; in the other words, the relationship between parent and the child as well as child's well-being damage when the marital relationship is stressful [3]. Recently, the world is losing peace [2]. During recent years, marital relationships and child's response have been widely discussed. For example, Alder (2010) believes that high levels of anxiety and depression in marital life negatively influences on emotional and behavioral growth of the child [1]. According to [2], Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) rightly called the family as the most popular entity and this is noteworthy. Vulnerability of the family to the pressures and various problems of life recently led scholars and family therapists to evaluate quality of marital interaction and performance of the child [4]. Among many social factors which contribute to parenting, family is undoubtedly the most essential; because family is both the first and oldest place for social communications of the child. Emotional relationship between children and parents forms future expectations and responses of children. Considering the fact that society forms based on family and due to important role of family in parenting style to build a healthy representative society with regard to increasing number of divorce in most new societies including Iran, mutual satisfaction of parents refers to marital satisfaction with physical and mental attractions and greatest sense of peace and security in life [2]. Marital satisfaction is considered as a factor guaranteeing mental health of the family. Shackelford (2001) believes that marital satisfaction results from three factors including general satisfaction with marriage, sexual satisfaction and emotional satisfaction. Recently, improved academic status of students is an essential objective of contemporary educational systems [8]. Therefore, the present study tries to find a relationship between marital satisfaction, parental satisfaction and academic achievement of children.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants of the present study included high-school students living in Tehran, Iran, in 2012-2013. The sample included 100 students selected by cluster random sampling. Average scores of students obtained in the previous semester were used to measure academic achievement. Descriptive and analytic statistics were used to analyze data by correlation using SPSS software, V. 17.

Afroz marital satisfaction Scale (AMSS): AMSS was developed by Dr. Afroz to evaluate and measure satisfaction among spouses by a new approach. AMSS is highly consistent with Iranian-Islamic culture of Iran. AMSS includes 110 items in a Likert four-point scale from 'totally disagree' to 'totally agree'. The correlation between AMSS and Enrich marital satisfaction is 0.431 which is significant in 99% confidence [2].

California social adjustment scale (CPI-AD): California psychological inventory (CPI) has several forms among which the 9-16 year-old form was developed in 1939 and revised in 1953. This scale was developed to measure different life adjustments in terms of personal and social adjustment. CPI-AD includes 180 two-point items (Yes or No); 90 items cover personal and remaining 90 are related to social adjustment.

Average score: Average scores of students obtained in the previous semester were used to measure academic achievement.

RESULTS

Hypotheses were tested by Pearson correlation coefficient. Results showed a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction and academic achievement of children. Moreover, marital satisfaction of the mother had more influence on academic achievement of children (Table 1).

Table 1: Pearson correlation coefficient for the relationship between marital satisfaction and academic achievement of children

Variables	Academic achievement of children	Sig.
Marital satisfaction of the mother	.495	.000
Marital satisfaction of the father	.397	.000

Results from Pearson correlation coefficient showed a significant positive relationship between scales marital satisfaction including optimism, sexual satisfaction, personal behaviors, social interactive behaviors, problem solving, financial and economic activities, religious attitudes, parenting style, leisure, as well as emotional, verbal and visual interaction of the mother and academic achievement of children. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between scales of marital satisfaction of the mother and academic achievement of children (Table 2).

Table 2: Pearson correlation coefficient for the relationship between scales of marital satisfaction of the mother and academic achievement of children

Variables	Academic achievement of children	Sig.
Optimism	.442**	.001
Sexual satisfaction	.472**	.001
Personal behaviors	.455**	.001
Social interactive behaviors	.537**	.001
Problem solving	.490**	.001
Financial and economic activities	.383**	.001
Religious attitudes	.512**	.001
Parenting style	.444**	.001
Leisure	.402**	.001
emotional, verbal and visual interaction	.347**	.001

Results from Pearson correlation coefficient showed a significant positive relationship between scales marital satisfaction including optimism, sexual satisfaction, personal behaviors, social interactive behaviors, problem solving, financial and economic activities, religious attitudes, parenting style, leisure, as well as emotional, verbal and visual interaction of the father and academic achievement of children.

Therefore, there is a significant relationship between scales of marital satisfaction of the father and academic achievement of children (Table 3).

Table 3: Pearson correlation coefficient for the relationship between scales of marital satisfaction of the father and academic achievement of children

Variables	Academic achievement of children	Sig.
Optimism	.446**	.001
Sexual satisfaction	.404**	.001
Personal behaviors	.528**	.001
Social interactive behaviors	.439**	.001
Problem solving	.445**	.001
Financial and economic activities	.265**	.008
Religious attitudes	.363**	.001
Parenting style	.313**	.002
Leisure	.356**	.001
emotional, verbal and visual interaction	.255*	.011

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Results of Pearson correlation coefficient showed a significant positive relationship between marital satisfaction of the parents and academic achievement of the children in 95% confidence; moreover, marital satisfaction of the mother had more influence on academic achievement of the children. This is consistent with Poag et al (1992) indicating that marital satisfaction of the parents was an important predictor of interaction between children and both peers and teachers[6]. Children of satisfied parents had more positive interaction with their peers and teachers. Turnbullet al (2002) believed that weak parental relationship was a common reason for friction in the family; teenagers who thought that marriage of their parents was happy and successful believed that home was a suitable place for life[9]. The lesser struggle among parents the lesser struggle between parents and children and siblings. Whitson and El-Sheikh showed that marital dissatisfaction and divorce influenced on physical health of the children. In fact, a happy marriage is an important predictor of health for both parents and children. People with higher marital satisfaction are more physically healthy. On the other hand, family conflict exposes children to stress. Many psychosomatic diseases are reported for dissatisfied families. In the other words, marital satisfaction not only predicts health of both spouses and children. A life without stress, psychosomatic diseases with physical health is a requisite of academic achievement of the children[10].

There is a significant relationship between scales of marital satisfaction of the mother and academic achievement of the children. This result is consistent with Loukas and Murphy (2007) who showed a significant positive relationship between high-quality friendly interactions between children and high-quality marriage of mothers and safe attachment[5]. Our other finding also showed a significant relationship between scales of marital satisfaction of the father and academic achievement of the children. According to[2], all families are recently interested in education, school and sociality of children. Therefore, education, social status academic achievement becomes increasingly important for parents. An effective factor on academic achievement and social adjustment is family and its interactions. Naturally, home will be a place full of cooperation, sympathy, joy and love when the father is satisfied with his marriage. In fact, satisfied fathers are more responsible for taking care of the children; therefore, the children practically learn these skills to perform in the future[7].

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