

Predicting Commitment Among Married Women: Intimacy, Passion, Sexual Satisfaction, Big Five Personality Factors, Attachment Styles, and Happiness

Parisa Donyadari^[1]
Zahra Yousefi^[2]

Abstract: This study investigated the relationships between five personality factors, attachment styles, intimacy, passion, happiness and sexual satisfaction with commitment among mother's center of Isfahan. We surveyed 125 volunteer women who had registered in mother's center of Isfahan using Sexual satisfaction inventory, Sternberg's Triangular love scale, Subjective Happiness scale and Big five Inventory-10 (BFI-10). The data was analyzed by statistical methods including Pearson correlation, and multiple regressions. The results showed that commitment was significantly and meaningfully associated with intimacy, passion, happiness, sexual satisfaction and extraversion. Passion and extraversion can predict sexual satisfaction.

Key Words: commitment, intimacy, passion, attachment styles, triangular love and happiness sexual satisfaction, Big five personality factors

I. INTRODUCTION

The triangular theory of love developed by Sternberg (2007). According to the triangular theory, the three components of love is introduced: (a) intimacy which encompasses feelings of attachment, closeness, connectedness and bondedness. Intimacy involves feelings of closeness and bondedness in romantic relationship. It includes feelings of experienced happiness with a partner, mutual understanding and intimate communication with the loved one (Sternberg, 1986).

(b) passion which includes drives to both limerence and sexual attraction. Hatfield and Rapson (1998) defined passionate love as the profound desire to be with another which through combination of emotions and behaviors. It encompasses the most intense feelings. Commitment consists of two aspects in the short term is the decision to love (Sternberg, 2007) and (c) commitment which comprises the decision to remain with another in the short term, and the shared achievements and plans made with the other in the long term (Sternberg, 2007).

Commitment is the sense of allegiance that is established with regard to the source of one's dependence (Rusbult, 1980, 1983). *Commitment* includes conative, cognitive, and affective components: (a) intent to persist (conative component); (b) long-term orientation (cognitive component); and (c) psychological attachment (affective component) (Drigotas, Rusbult, & Verette, 1999).

Many researchers have documented factors influence commitment, including self-perceived ability to do without the relationship, and the benefits that might be lost if the relationship ends, including possessions, friends and connections (Drigotas, Safstrom, & Gentilia, 1999). Also, researchers believe that attachment style remains active role in commitment with a spouse (Fraley & Shaver, 2000; Hazan & Diamond, 2000; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Research indicates that secure attachment is positively associated with more commitment (Miller & Fishkin, 1997), whereas

insecure attachment is positively associated with more extra-dyadic relationships (Bogaert & Sadava, 2002). In Iran there are no powerful literatures about commitment. We were interested in learning more about the multiple relations between intimacy, passion, sexual satisfaction, big five personality factors, attachment styles, intimacy, passion and happiness with commitment. The following is the main goals of this research: To investigate among of intimacy, passion, sexual satisfaction, big five personality factors, attachment styles, intimacy, passion and happiness which is most relation with commitment.

II. SEXUAL SATISFACTION

Many theories of sexual satisfaction have explained sexual satisfaction. Interpersonal exchange model of sexual satisfaction proposes that sexual satisfaction is influenced by physical pleasure, sense of intimacy and its costs such as time and effort that the individuals experience in sexual relationships. When costs and reward are balanced, sexual satisfaction is experienced by the persons (Lawrance & Byers, 1995).

Lauman, Gagnon, Michael and Michaels (1994) paid two dimensions to measure sexual satisfaction: physically pleasurable and emotionally pleasurable activities.

Rational – choice theories take in to partners organize people's goals for their sexual life. Lauman et al. (1994) suggested that finding a partner and bargaining in sexual relations imply investing a series of resources such as time, money and love. Then, if finding a new partner is a difficult process, people will make a rational selection by evaluating which partners are more beneficial for their physical and emotional needs. Thus, stability long – term temporal horizon, higher degree of sexual exclusiveness (Waite & Joyner, 2001).

^[1]M. A. in Psychology, Department of Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Nishbour Branch Khorasan, Iran, E-mail: parisadonyadari@gmail.com

^[2]Assistant Professor in Psychology, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) University, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran, E-mail: z.yousefi85@yahoo.com

Empirical studies of the sexual behavior and satisfaction of representative samples of people in Iran are very few in number but Edwards and Booth (1994) showed sexual satisfaction is related to marital quality and marital stability. Yeh, Lorenz, Wickroma, Conger and Elder (2006) reported that sexual satisfaction influences on marital quality, both directly and indirectly via an influence on marital instability. Delamater, Hyde and Fong (2008) conclude the sexual satisfaction was related to marital / relationship satisfaction and frequency of sexual activity. We investigated whether sexual satisfaction can predict commitment.

III. BIG FIVE PERSONALITY FACTORS MODEL

The big five personality factors model (Costa & McCrae, 1988) represents the dominant conceptualization of personality structure. This model is included five relatively independent dimensions: Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness reside at the highest level of the personality hierarchy.

Extraversion reflects tendencies associated with being assertive, talkative, and sociable (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Neuroticism reflects the tendency to experience distress (McCrae & John, 1992). It includes being anxious, depressed, emotional, worried and insecure (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Openness to experience is related to scientific and artistic creativity, divergent thinking and political liberalism (Judge, Heller & Mount, 2002). The behavioral tendencies typically associated with it include being imaginative, cultured, curious, intelligent and artistically sensitive. Agreeableness is the fourth factor which describes tendencies typically associated with this factor includes being courteous, good-natured, co-operative, softhearted and tolerant. The final factor is conscientiousness. The typical behaviors associated with conscientiousness comprise being hard working, achievement-oriented, and preserving (Barrick and Mount, 1991). We investigated whether big five personality factors play important roles in commitment.

IV. ATTACHMENT STYLES

Berman and Sperling (1994) pointed out adult attachment is the stable tendency to seek and maintain closeness to and contact with one or a few specific individuals who ready the subjective potential for physical and psychological safety and security as well as a base from which to explore.

Researchers have emphasized three major styles of infant attachment: anxious/ ambivalent and avoidant (Ainsworth, Blehar, Baters & Wall, 1978).

Hazan and Shaver (1987) classified three attachment styles: Secure, anxious or avoidant to describe these relationships. Many studies propose that attachment style is a significant predictor of relationship satisfaction (Simpson, 1990). Kobak and Hazan (1991) found that marital satisfaction was associated with a person's reliance on his or her partner and that the partner's reliance on self.

Compelling reasons exist for expecting an association between attachment style and communication patterns,

because communication is vital in development of internal model for closeness. We examined whether attachment styles are related with commitment.

V. HAPPINESS

One of the most researched topics in positive psychology is happiness. Iranian culture has embraced happiness as one of its most important goals, because in Islamic culture as the part of Iranian culture, happiness means life satisfaction and being satisfied from God.

In positive psychology, the word happiness is synonymous with (quality of life) or (well-being). In this meaning it denotes that life is good (Veenhoven, 2006). Philosophers have distinguished two models of happiness: Hedonism and life satisfaction.

Hedonists identify happiness with the individuals' balance of pleasant over unpleasant experience (Morris, 2011). Life satisfaction identifies happiness with having a favorable view toward one's life as a whole (Suikkanen, 2011; Brulde, 2007). The emotional state view identifies happiness with an agent's emotional condition as a whole. Hybrid views identify happiness with both life satisfaction and pleasure or emotional state (Brulde, 2007). Few studies have examined directly or indirectly on happiness influence on women's sexual satisfaction.

Rahmani, Khoei and Alah Gholi (2009) showed happiness and marital satisfaction related to sexual satisfaction among married men and women. We examined whether happiness is related with commitment.

VI. METHOD

Participants were 125 volunteer women who had registered in mother's center of Isfahan. They were randomly selected among the women. Their average age and standard deviation respectively were 36.2, 4.53. According to their evaluation, 75% belonged to average levels; 7% belonged to low level and 18% belonged to high level ESS. All of them had children.

VII. INSTRUMENTS

Sternberg's Triangular Love Scale (STLS) (Sternberg 1997). We applied STLS to measure commitment, intimacy and passion in our sample. It has 45 items, with 15 for intimacy, 15 for passion and 15 for commitment. All the items have a blank to be filled with the name of a single loved one; we filled it with "my husband" and are answered on a Likert-type scale of 1 to 9. We scored it on a 5-item scale. We examined internal consistency in our sample (for commitment, $\alpha = .88$; for intimacy, $\alpha = .82$ and for passion $\alpha = .75$).

Sexual Satisfaction Inventory (Whitley & Paulsen, 1975): We used the Persian version of the inventory. The original instrument contained 32 Likert-type items designed to allow individuals to rate the level of sexual satisfaction, they received from various sexual activities.

Whitley and Paulsen (1975) reported the Cronbach alpha coefficient for the 32-item was .78. Other psychometric characteristics were reported favorable (Whitley & Paulsen, 1975). We examined internal consistency in our sample ($\alpha = .78$).

Subjective Happiness scale (Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999): Subjective Happiness scale is a 4- item scale designed to measure subjective happiness. Each of items is completed by choosing one of seven options that finish a given sentence fragment. A single composite score for total subjective happiness is computed by averaging responses to the four items (the fourth reverse - coded). Lyubomirsky and Lepper (1999) reported good to excellent reliability, and construct, convergent and discriminate validities.

Big five Inventory - 10 (BFI -10) (Ramstad & John, 2007). We used the Persian version of BFI -10. Ramstad and John (2007) selected 2 BFI item for each big five dimension. Every item is reacted on a five step scale from 1= "disagree strongly" to five = "agree strongly". They reported test - retest reliability, structural validity, convergent validity with the NEO-PI-R and its dimensions and external validity using peer voting's.

Results showed that the BFI- 10 scales retain significant levels of reliability and validity.

VIII. RESULTS

To response to research questions, data was examined in two steps. The first step was to examine the intercorrelations matrix between dependent and independent variables. The results showed commitment was significantly and meaningfully associated with intimacy (r= .614, p= .001), passion (r= .782, p=.001), sexual satisfaction (r= .192, p=.01), happiness(r= .238, p= .01), and extraversion (r= .200, p= .01).

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations and Pearson correlations for dependent and independent variables. N=129

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1-commitment	121.18	16.71	1	.614*	.782*	.192*	.238*	.200*	-.006	-.042	.039	.010	.035		
2-Intimacy	107.19	19.43		1	.263	.216	.398	.112	.136	.260	.009	.105	.001	-.195	
3-passion	97.40	20.94			1	.317	.263	.027	.018	.062	.007	.049	.041	-.018	
4-Sexual satisfaction	97.01	9.05				1	.216	.082	.034	.066	.024	.287	-.025	.091	-.066
5-happiness	16.71	3.87					1	.136	-.002	-.020	-.001	.105	.001	-.192	
6-psychosis	6.32	1.14						1	.289*	.198*	.144	.047	-.001	-.161	
7-Extroversion	8.09	.848							1	.145*	-.020	.109	.026	.019	
8-agreeableness	6.18	1.23								1	.053	.103	.071	-.091	
9-Concencesness	6.71	1.00									1	.152*	.049	.066	-.048
10-Openness to experience	6.90	1.46										1	.071	-.091	
11-Anxiety	17.24	2.72											1	-.320*	
12-Dependent	17.10	2.30												1	.210*
13-secure	18.58	2.81													1

Note: *p<.0001, **p<.05 N=129

IX. PREDICTING COMMITMENT

Multiple regression analyses was conducted to responses research questions in relation to predicting commitment. Commitment was entered as the dependent variable, and intimacy, sexual satisfaction, passion, happiness, five factor personality and attachment styles were entered as the independent variables. Summary data are presented in Table 2.

The results indicated a significant model fit, for each model, for model 1, F = 199.50, p = 0.001, and that the independent variable (passion) included in the model was able to account for 61.1% of the variance (R2=0.611), for model 2, F= 109.07, p= 0.001, and that the independent variables (passion and extraversion) included in the model were able to account for 63.4% of the variance (R2=0.634).

Table 2: Stepwise multiple regression of commitment based intimacy, sexual satisfaction, passion, happiness, five factor personality and attachment styles

Dependent variables	model	Variables	B	SEB	β	T	sig
commitment	1	Passion	.626	.043	.784	14.64	.000
	2	Extraversion	2.92	1.04	.148	2.78	.006

X. DISCUSSION

We examined the multiple relationships among sexual satisfaction, big five personality traits, attachment styles, intimacy, passion and happiness with commitment. The results of Pearson correlation Showed intimacy, passion, sexual satisfaction and extroversion were significantly and positively associated with commitment and multiple regression analysis showed passion and extroversion can predict commitment.

The present findings are congruent with the theoretical base of commitments; willingness to stay with a certain person, the bonds in family points out to high levels of commitment. Intimacy is how connected, bonded and close to someone, and passion relates to attraction to a person in a romantic and erotic sense (Sternberg, 1986).

Therefore, it is expected that intimacy and passion become correlated with commitment. These findings are congruent with other research finding (e.g Aron, Henkemeyer, 1995). However intimacy and passion cause to string then the friendship and closeness between couples so that they can have sex with each other most comfortable therefore it is expected that sexual satisfaction helps to commitment to husband among married women.

Basson (2001 & 2002) reported, sex behavior and sexual arousal in women cannot be explained as regard to psychological need (estrogens and testosterone). The sex need in woman is predicted through intimacy. In fact in women sex need begins with intimacy and passion. In the other hand, it seems, commitment between couples cause they accept responsibility about each other needs.

Other variable had positive correlation with commitment is extroversion. It seems extroversion help to be interested in interaction and it reinforces relationships in long term. In the other hand it is a coping procedure to depression, hopelessness and negative affect and mood that they can help to more marital satisfaction and probably more commitment.

XI. REFERENCES

- Ainsworth, M. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the Strange Situation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Berman, W. H., & Sperling, M. B. (1994). The structure and function of adult attachment. In W. H. Berman & M. B. Sperling (Eds.), *Attachment in adults* (pp. 1–28). New York: Guilford.
- Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). *The Big Five personality dimensions and job performance: A meta-analysis*. *Personnel Psychology*, 44(1), 1–26.
- Bogaert, A. F., & Sadava, S. (2002). Adult attachment and sexual behavior. *Personal Relationships*, 9, 191-204.
- Brülde, B. (2007). Happiness theories of the good life. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 8(1), 15-49.
- Costa, P.T. & McCrae, R.R. (1988). Personality in adulthood: A six-year longitudinal study of self-reports and spouse ratings on the NEO Personality Inventory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 853-863.
- DeLamater, J., Hyde, J. S., & Fong, M. - C. (2008). Sexual Satisfaction in the Seventh decade e of Life. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 34 (5), 439–454.
- Drigotas, S. M., Rusbult, C. E., & Verette, J. (1999). Level of commitment, mutuality of commitment, and couple well-being. *Personal Relationships*, 6, 389-409.
- Drigotas, S. M., Safstrom, C. A., & Gentilia, T. (1999). An investment model prediction of dating infidelity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77, 509-524.
- Edwards, J. N., & Booth, A. (1994). Sexuality, marriage, and well-being: The middle years. In A. S. Rossi (Ed.), *Sexuality across the life course* (pp. 233–259). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Fraley, R. C., & Shaver, P. R. (2000). Adult romantic attachment: Theoretical developments, emerging controversies, and unanswered questions. *Review of General Psychology*, 4, 132-154.
- Hazan, C. , & Shaver , P . (1987). Romantic love concetualize dāsan attachment process. *Journal o f Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 511-524.
- Hazan, C., & Diamond, L. M. (2000). The place of attachment in human mating. *Review of General Psychology*, 4, 186-204.
- Hatfield, E. & Rapson, R. L. (1987). Pa ssionate love/sexual desire: Can the same paradigm explain both? *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 16, 259-277.
- Kobak, R. R., & Hazan, C. (1991). Attachment in marriage: Effects of security and accuracy of working models. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60(6), 861–869.
- Judge , T. A., Heller, D., & Mount, M. K. (2002). Five - Factor model of personality and job satisfaction: A meta - analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 87(3), 530- 541.
- Lauman, E. O., Gagnon, J. H., Michael, R. T., & Michaels, S. (1994). *The social organization of sexuality: Sexual practices in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lawrance , K. Byers , E. S. (1995). *Sexual satisfaction in long-term heterosexual relationships: The interpersonal exchange model of sexual satisfaction*. *Personal Relationships*, 2, 267-285. doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6811
- Lyubomirsky, S., & Lepper, H. (1999). A measure of subjective happiness: Preliminary reliability and construct validation. *Social Indicators Research*, 46, 137-155.
- McCrae, R. R., & John, O. P. (1992). An introduction to the Five-Factor Model and its applications. *Journal of Personality*, 60, 175-215.
- Miller, L. C., & Fishkin, S. A. (1997). On the dynamics of human bonding and reproductive success: Seeking windows on the adapted-for-humanenvironmental interface. In J. A. Simpson & D. T. Kenrick (Eds.) *Evolutionary social psychology* (pp. 197-235). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Morris, S. (2011). In Defense of the Hedonistic Account of Happiness. *Philosophical Psychology*, 24(2). 261-281
- Rahmani, A., Merghati Khoei, E., Alah Gholi, L. (2009). Sexual Satisfaction and its Relation to Marital Happiness in Iranians. *Iranian Journal of Public Health*, 38(4): 77-82.
- Rammstedt, B. & John, O. P. (2007). Measuring personality in one minute or less: A 10-item short version of the Big Five Inventory in English and German. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 41, 203-212. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2006.02.00
- Rusbult, C. E. (1980). Commitment and satisfaction in romantic associations: A test of the investment model. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 16, 172-186.
- Rusbult, C. E. (1983). A longitudinal test of the investment model. The development (and deterioration) of satisfaction and commitment in heterosexual involvements. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 45, 101-117.
- Simpson, J. (1990). Influence of attachment styles on romantic relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59, 971 - 980.
- Sternberg, R. J. (1986). A triangular theory of love. *Psychological Review*, 93, 119-135.
- Sternberg, R.J. (1997). Construct validation of a triangular love scale. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 27, 313–335.
- Sternberg, Robert J. (2007). Triangulating Love. In Oord, T. J. *The Altruism Reader: Selections from Writings on Love, Religion, and Science*. West Conshohocken, PA: Templeton Foundation. p. 332.
- Suikkanen, J. (2011). An improved whole life satisfaction theory of happiness. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 1(1), 149-166. doi:10.5502/ijw.v1i1.6.
- Whitley, M. P., & Paulsen, S. B. (1975). Assertiveness and sexual satisfaction in employed professional women. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 37, 573-581.
- Veenhoven, R. (2006) Rising happiness in nations 1946-2004: A reply to Easterlin *Social Indicators Research*, 77, 1-16.
- Y eh, H.C., Lorenz, F., Wickrama, K. A. S., Conger, R. D., & Elder, G. H. (2006). Relationships among sexual satisfaction, marital quality, and marital instability at midlife. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20, 339–343. doi: 10.1037/0893-3200.20.2.339