



## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE COMPONENTS AND MARITAL ADJUSTMENT OF MARRIED GRADUATE STUDENTS IN BIRJAND ISLAMIC AZAD UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in the form of a descriptive-correlational research to investigate the relationship between life orientation and emotional intelligence with marital adjustment of married graduate students of the Islamic Azad University of Birjand (branches of Humanities) in the academic year of 2015-2016. For this purpose, 196 people were selected by simple random sampling method. Of these, 180 people completed Sieber or Schering Emotional Intelligence questionnaire and Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (LWMAT). To analyze the data, Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis was used. The results showed that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence components (self-motivation, self-control, social consciousness and social skills) with marital adjustment and emotional intelligence components explain up to 28% of variance of marital adjustment.

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### Introduction

The most important issue in marriage is marital adjustment and marital satisfaction. Marital adjustment is a process that is created during the life of a husband and wife, because it requires adaptation of tastes, recognition of personality traits, creation of rules of behavior and the formation of interrelation patterns. Although the early days of life deserve serious consideration, it should be noted that marital adjustment is an evolutionary process Lock and Wallace, (1982) quoted from [1]. Marital adjustment is the co-ordination and empathy of the husband and wife to achieve common goals of life that lead to a sense of satisfaction with life. Adjustment between husband and wife allows them to avoid conflicts or solve them in an appropriate way, so that both feel the satisfaction of marriage and their relationship [2].

[3] states marital adjustment as a condition in which there is a general sense of happiness, marital satisfaction, and being together in both men and women, which promotes the growth and development of couples in different aspects and strengthens the mutual understanding of couples. So when the husband and wife try together to achieve harmony and balance in different areas of marital life, adjustment is achieved; therefore, marital adjustment is a dynamic process that can be evaluated at any point in time on a continuum from a fully compatible to fully incompatible. Consequently marital adjustment is a multi-dimensional concept that has more objective characteristics than marital satisfaction. Marital adjustment is also considered as one of the most important factors in determining the stability and durability of marital relationship [4].

Although social and cultural factors play an important role in marital adjustment, the individual factors or individual characteristics that are referred to here as the personality have a special and significant effect. In sum, existing evidence suggests that personality factors are effective empirical predictors for marital adjustment and stability, and the existence of relationships between the personality factors and marital satisfaction of couples has been confirmed by various longitudinal and cross-sectional designs [5]. One of these personality traits is intelligence. Intelligence is referred to as the ability to exploit abstract concepts such as thoughts, institutions, and communications. Emotional intelligence is a form of intelligence that includes the ability to monitor feeling and emotions of the self and others to distinguish between them and use this information for self-reflection and action [6].

Emotional intelligence is defined as one's recognition of the self and others, communication with others, and adaptation to the surrounding environment, which is necessary to succeed in satisfying social demands [7]. Emotional intelligence consists of a variety of components, each of which plays a role in arranging feelings and emotions. Of the components of emotional intelligence, we can refer to the impulse control, stress tolerance, emotional self-knowledge, self-actualization, optimism, and so on [6]. Emotional intelligence components can be effective in marital satisfaction because the spouses' intimate relationships depend on communicative skills, such as the attention of individuals to issues from the viewpoint of the spouse, the empathic understanding of what the spouse has experienced, being sensitive and aware of her/his needs. Researchers have found that there is a stable and significant relationship between individual differences in the ability to accurately express the emotions and the recognition of emotions with the happiness of life and the desirable marital relationship. For example, Nooler showed that the satisfied couples exhibit more sympathetic feelings and are more sensitive to feelings compared to couples who do not have a good marital relationship. The couples who feel happy with being together and are happy with their lives, and the couples who disagree with each other, both tend to somehow compensate and counteract the emotion that they feel in the other party toward themselves, especially in couples who are dissatisfied with each other and have false expectations of each other; these couples indicate the neutral or relatively negative emotional messages to one another, causing anger and wrath in both to the opposite party.

Therefore, in the present study, we attempt to provide an appropriate framework for the development of romantic honesty, understandable relationship, commitment and intimacy between couples by explaining the role of emotional intelligence components in marital adjustment in married students of Islamic Azad University, in order to appropriately contribute the couples' mutual life period. Therefore, the researcher seeks to answer the question "Is there a relationship between the components of emotional intelligence and the marital adjustment in married students of Islamic Azad University of Birjand?"

### Methodology

The present research is descriptive-correlational. The statistical population of this study consisted of all graduate students of the Islamic Azad University of Birjand (branches of Humanities) who studied in the academic year 2015-2016. According to the statistics provided, the number of all students was 400 people that 196 people were selected by simple random sampling method based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970), of which 16 questionnaires were excluded due to defects in completing the questionnaire; and the final sample based on which the statistical analysis was done included 180 people. Sieber or Schering Emotional Intelligence questionnaire was used to measure emotional intelligence. The questionnaire has 33 items and measures five components of emotional intelligence (self-motivation, self-awareness, self-regulation, social consciousness and social skills) and has been designed based on five-point Likert scale. In Mansouri (2011), the Cronbach's alpha value obtained from the emotional intelligence questionnaire was 0.74. Also Locke-Wallace Marital Adjustment Test (LWMAT) which is a self-report questionnaire was used to measure marital adjustment. This test contains 15 items that are scored according to Likert spectrum (from 'always agree' to 'always disagree'), which shows how well the respondent agrees with his/her spouse on a number of activities that have a fundamental role in marital adjustment. In [10], the Cronbach's alpha coefficient obtained from the marital adjustment questionnaire was 0.89.

### Findings

**Table 1.** Relationship between emotional intelligence subscales and marital adjustment

Variable	No.	Correlation coefficient	P-value
Self-motivation	180	0.14	0.04
Self-awareness	180	0.06	0.42
Self-regulation	180	0.36	0.001
Social consciousness	180	0.33	0.001
Social skills	180	0.30	0.001

The results of (Table 1) show that the p-value of the hypothesis test is lower than the error level of 0.05 for all components of emotional intelligence except for the self-awareness, so at the confidence level of 95% there is a significant relationship between the components of emotional intelligence (self-motivation, self-control, social consciousness and social skills) with marital adjustment. Also, the type of relationship in all aspects is direct and positive.

**Table 2.** The results of multivariate regression analysis for the role of emotional intelligence in marital adjustment

Model	Sum of squares	df	MS	F	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P
Regression	2342.772	5	469.554	8.85	0.540	0.280	0.001
Reminder	9222.672	174	53.004				

<b>Total</b>	11570.444	179					
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The results from (Table 2) show that 0.28% of the variance of marital adjustment was explained through emotional intelligence. Therefore, considering that the significance level is less than 0.05, the model is statistically significant.

**Table 2.** The results of multivariate regression analysis for the role of emotional intelligence in marital adjustment

Variable	B	$\beta$ ( $\beta$ coefficient)	t	Sig.
Self-motivation	0.051	0.014	0.195	0.864
Self-awareness	0.251	0.075	1.095	0.275
Self-regulation	0.679	0.237	2.882	0.004
Social consciousness	0.398	0.135	1.589	0.114
Social skills	0.744	0.207	2.881	0.004

According to the results of (Table 3), the largest  $\beta$  coefficient is 0.237 which is related to the self-regulation dimension. This means that this variable has the strongest single contribution in explaining the dependent variable, i.e., marital adjustment, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled. The beta coefficients for the dimension of social skills was obtained slightly lower (0.207), which indicated that it was less important. Also, concerning the significance level ( $P < 0.05$ ) shown in the above table, this dimension had a significant single contribution in determining the role or prediction of the dependent variable.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The results of Pearson coefficient analysis indicated that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence components (self-motivation, self-control, social consciousness and social skills) with marital adjustment. Also, the type of relationship in all dimensions is direct and positive. Also, the results of the standardized multivariate regression analysis to determine the role of emotional intelligence on marital adjustment showed that 0.28% of variance of marital adjustment was explained by emotional intelligence and the largest beta coefficient was 0.237 that was related to self-control dimension. This means that this variable has the strongest single contribution to explaining the dependent variable, that is, marital adjustment, when the variance explained by all other variables in the model is controlled.

To explain the above findings, it can be said that for most adults, happiness in life is more dependent on successful marriage and marital relationship with satisfaction than other aspects of life. Marital adjustment can completely affect the quality of life, and research has confirmed the importance of its impact on a variety of clinical outcomes such as mental health, physical health and even lifespan. Also, marital adjustment in life can also be related to the overall satisfaction of life. In order to achieve a better and healthier life, human needs to coordinate among his/her thoughts, feelings and emotions and use them in accordance with their life situations. Emotional intelligence is one of the things that can conduct people's lives and give them a more acceptable satisfaction with the environment and people in these environments [9]. [10] believes that emotional intelligence brings happiness to people. He defines four basic skills of emotional intelligence, including recognition of his/her feelings, control of feelings, provoking and encouraging the self, and identifying the feelings of others and regulating his/her relationships with others. [10] believes that emotional intelligence can improve the general quality of life and personal and social situations of an individual.

Several studies in different countries indicate that emotional intelligence provides a comprehensive picture of the individual's ability to succeed. For example, the research results on emotional intelligence and interpersonal relationships carried out by Schutte et al. (2001), quoted from [9] showed that people with high emotional intelligence responded the question with more participation with their spouses, showed closer and more affable relationships and experienced more marital satisfaction with their spouses. Therefore, in general, according to the mentioned subject matters, it can be stated that people with high emotional intelligence also have higher marital adjustment and this is the same result that was obtained in the present study. This finding is congruent with that of the previous researches, including [10], [9]; Gholamrezaei, (2016); Hamarat et al., (2011), which referred to the role of emotional intelligence in marital adjustment.

Although, due to the cross-sectional nature of the research and using self-reporting tool, the generalization of the results should be carried out with caution, it is suggested that considering the role of components of emotional intelligence in marital adjustment, the theoretical foundations and practical educational workshops of emotional intelligence are included in premarital education programs to improve couples' relationships and consolidate the family. Also to increase the scope of generalizability of findings, it is suggested this study is conducted with a larger sample size in different groups of people and students from other degrees and universities.

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