

## A Survey of Factors Related to Marital Satisfaction among Married Women in Taft City, Iran

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** The foundation of a healthy community is based on the healthy communication between family members. In this regard, marital satisfaction is one of the important factors in strengthening the family relationships, which can be affected by the type of marriage as well as the family demographic and cultural components.

**Methods:** This study was conducted on 120 married women in Taft. Participants were selected by systematic sampling method using Cochran formula. The research tools were Enrique Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire (1998) and a researcher-made questionnaire. Validity of the latter questionnaire was assessed using face validity and its reliability was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha.

**Results:** According to the results, the marital satisfaction of married women was in moderate level. Moreover, marital satisfaction was higher among the villagers (P-value = 0.006), non-familial marriages (P-value = 0.006), and housewives (P-value = 0.042) than other groups. Considering the type of marriage, forced marriage (P-value  $\leq$  0.50) showed a significant relationship with lack of life satisfaction; in other words, a higher degree of satisfaction was observed in unforced marriages. According to the regression analysis, four variables of couple's age differences, education level differences, duration of marriage, and type of marriage (forced and unforced) explained about 43.5 percent of the dependent variable variations.

**Conclusion:** Eventually, increase in the education level of couples decreased their life satisfaction; whereas, marital satisfaction increased by increase of age, duration of marriage, number of children. Moreover, marital satisfaction was lower in forced marriages.

**Keywords:** Forced Marriage, Education, Marital Satisfaction, Married Women, Marriage Age

## Introduction

Family is the best place for physical and mental education. It is the center of altruism and the best environment for the unity between men and women.<sup>1</sup> Family provides the best opportunity for individuals to achieve moral and social prosperity based on sexual satisfaction and emotional needs. The effort to strengthen family provides a platform for health and satisfaction in society and can transfer ethics from one generation to the next.

Surely, a healthy family and a satisfying marital relationship are rooted in a successful marriage. Marriage is a legal event for the relationship between men and women. Marriage is one of the most important event that occur during a person's life.<sup>2</sup> Marriage as one of the most complex types of human relationships has the potential to liberate emotions that cannot be found in other interpersonal relationships.<sup>3, 4</sup> Tranhelm calls marital relationship a process through which husband and wife exchange emotions and thoughts by verbal and non-verbal tools, such as listening, facial expressions, and various gestures. In addition, Tranhelm believes that marital satisfaction is a major contributor to the family survival and creation of the next generation.<sup>5</sup>

Marital satisfaction is a personal experience in marriage that can only be assessed individually by each party in response to the amount of pleasure in marital relationships. Marital satisfaction needs adaptation of tastes, recognition of personality traits, creation of behavioral forces, and formation of interactive patterns. Marital satisfaction depends on the couple's interest in each other and their positive attitude towards marriage, which includes factors such as personal issues, communication, conflict resolution, financial management, leisure activities, sex, children and parenting, as well as family and friends. Ellis stated that one of the best definitions of marital satisfaction was an objective feeling of happiness, satisfaction, and pleasure in spouses when they consider all aspects of their marriage.<sup>6</sup> Couples with high

marital satisfaction have agreement with each other in many areas, are satisfied with the type and level of their relationship, are satisfied with the type and quality of their leisure time, and can manage their time and financial issues.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, the important components of marital satisfaction include the personality characteristics and social class of couples as well as their mutual understanding. Sometimes, compulsory and imposed marriages based on common beliefs and traditions can be the basis for marital dissatisfaction. In forced marriages, the consent of one of the couples is neglected and physical and mental pressures are usually imposed. Mandatory marriage is considered as a global problem, which compromises the physical, psychological, social, and cultural security of women. Annually, four million women are bought, sold, or forced to marry worldwide. An aspect of the forced marriage is related to the children. Children marriages have different consequences and damages, which affect not only the individuals, but also emotional relationships among family members. Taft is one of the cities of Yazd province with traditional context. It underwent some social and cultural changes in the last two decades. These structural changes were influenced by various social, economic, and cultural factors and led to changes in family structure, type of marriage, and divorce rate. Therefore, considering that no research has ever been conducted in this regard, it is necessary to study marital satisfaction as one of the factors related to family development among married women in Taft. The current study examined the marital satisfaction as well as factors related to this fundamental and important issue.

Cui and Donnellan (2009) showed a significant relationship between marital conflict for the upbringing teenagers and marital satisfaction.<sup>8</sup>

Alson et al. (1997) reported that marriage and family satisfaction led to life satisfaction. The correlation coefficient between marital satisfaction and family satisfaction was about 70 percent and



the correlation coefficient between family satisfaction and life satisfaction was generally about 67 percent.<sup>9</sup>

In another study in Esfahan city, Naderi et al. (2015) concluded that empathy and forgiveness were among the effective components in marital satisfaction. They also found that with increase in the age of couples, marital satisfaction rised.<sup>10</sup>

According to the results of a study by Hajizadeh Mihmandi and Dehghan Chenari (2015) the couples' life satisfaction was at a moderate level and their lifestyle was health-centered. Furthermore, a significant relationship was observed between lifestyle and marital satisfaction.<sup>11</sup> Zare and Safiari Jafar Abad (2015) showed that marital satisfaction had a significant relationship with love and interest, marriage duration, age difference of couples, socioeconomic status, and couple's level of education. However, the relationship of marital satisfaction with other variables such as media usage, equal education of couples, family income, and women's employment status was not confirmed.<sup>2</sup>

Jawahiri and Mohammadi (2015) found that marital satisfaction had no significant relationship with traditional and non-traditional marriages. In the qualitative section, the results showed that traditionally married people were in a better status with regard to secure attachment, religiosity, and role playing.<sup>12</sup>

Maslehaty (2000) concluded that forced marriage and aging reduced marital satisfaction. Happy couples used less aggressive words and showed more peaceful behavior. Regarding the length of marriage, studies showed that satisfaction declined by increase of the marriage duration. During honeymoon and before the birth of first child, women were happier than ever.<sup>13</sup>

According to a research by Ellis (1992), which was conducted on 1000 couples (three years after marriage and 20 years after marriage), with the progress of marriage, the couples' satisfaction and adjustment decreased and they felt less friendly. In a study in the United States, 42% of women and 44% of men stated that at the beginning of their

marriage, they frequently exchanged their thoughts and feelings, and talked and worked together, but such behaviors decreased with the arrival of the first child.<sup>14</sup>

Andre (1975), in a research on 78 Dutch couples, indicated that in women with a relatively good health status, a significant and negative relationship was observed between marital satisfaction and their husbands' health problems. However, no significant relationship was seen between women's health problems and marital satisfaction in men.<sup>15</sup>

Marga (2013) stated that anxiety reduced marital satisfaction and increased the chance of divorce.<sup>16</sup> Breiton (2005) reported that pre-natal anxiety had similar effects on marital satisfaction of mothers who had just given birth. This was more observed in women who were forced to marry.<sup>17</sup>

An overview of the research on marital satisfaction and its related variables conducted in Iran and around the world indicates the widespread and important effect of these variables. Due to the deficiencies in previous studies and considering that no study has ever investigated the marital satisfaction among married women in Taft, the present research was conducted.

### Theoretical framework of the research

Theorists categorized the types of couples' relationships based on marital satisfaction and analyzed the fields and factors affecting family life satisfaction. Ellson and Fawres (1994) divided the types of couples into four categories including lively, adaptable, traditional, and conflicting. Lively couples have a high level of marital satisfaction and have the ability to express their feelings and resolve the problems, and they are happy with the masculine and feminine roles. Adaptable couples have a moderate marital satisfaction and are relatively happy with each other's personality and habits, but they may not agree on matters concerning children and their relationship. Traditional couples have modest discontent with the areas of communication; they are dissatisfied with the personal habits of their



spouses. They are not comfortable in expressing feelings and confronting conflicts and care about religion in their marriage. Conflicting couples are dissatisfied with the habits and personality of their spouses, and have problems with communication, leisure time, sexual relations, friends, and their spouse's family. Some problematic patterns among couples include compulsory exchanges, mutual complaints, and self-centered syndrome in discussions.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, irrational expectations of life lead to marital boredom. Non-linked patterns result in marital incompatibility.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, forced and compulsory marriages can cause misunderstandings and marital dissatisfaction that may persist throughout couple's life.

Furthermore, Bergs (1966) defined family as a social organization and believed that people should choose their spouse from the same social class. In his opinion, people with similar viewpoints in traditional, familial, educational, racial, and national issues have a greater understanding of each other. Homogeneous selection leads to a happier family and reduces divorce rate.<sup>20</sup> Coordination in emotions and feelings, consistency in ethics and behavior, as well as similar worldview and interests form the basis of successful marriages.<sup>21</sup> In general; homogeneity has different characteristics, such as age, academic or occupational status, and social class.<sup>22</sup> Age difference between couples can play a disruptive role. The age difference between couples does not only result in physical differentiation, but also brings deep distance between two social classes, which may harm health and durability of the family, especially in the presence of other negative variables or factors.<sup>22</sup> Allen Girard wrote: "Most of the time, people who are at the same age get married." Although scientists believe that in most cases the large age difference between couples can be a destructive factor. However, researchers were not able to determine the boundaries of age differences. According to Bernard, the happiest women are five to six years younger than their

husbands and men who are 0 to 10 years older than their wives are happier.

In the case that couples are at the same age, they can rebuild their destiny based on continuous shared memories. In addition to age, other factors such as convergence of belief, education, social aspiration, and worldview of couples can have a positive effect on marital satisfaction. Burgess and Claude (1936) in their research stated that couples who were socially close to each other were more compatible. Hamilton (1962) reported a direct relationship between marital satisfaction and homogeneity of educational level. In his view, homogeneous education would help to establish an agreement between couples, since homogeneous educational level shows the coordination of couple's worldview, social class, and age. It seems that couples' homogeneity in terms of education shows class convergence. In fact, the homogeneity of two individuals not only attracts them to one another, but also makes their marriage more successful. Moreover, tradition is the most important factor in selecting the homogeneous spouse, which leads to the continuity and stability of marriage. Therefore, it is expected to see higher marital satisfaction in rural and traditional societies.<sup>23</sup>

According to Parsons, the most disruptive conditions for the family function include two fundamental differences among family members: First, two opposing poles of leadership and subordinates, and second, the difference between instrumental and expressive roles. In his view, men play instrumental roles and women play expressive roles. According to this researcher, these divisions of roles led to family unification.<sup>24</sup> Men are considered as the family heads and play the main role in dealing with economic issues; so, the man's job is the decisive determinant for the legal base of the family. In this regard, women are responsible for taking care of family members and children.<sup>15</sup> Parsons describes this division of roles as the best way for family unity; he believes that interference of roles destroy the balance of family. For example, employed women lose their expressive



roles and become the competitor of their husbands. This competition between husband and wife leads to disparity in the family.<sup>25</sup> Women's employment, their access to economic resources, and their participation in new social environments have changed the several hundred years of family structure, which indicates the need for a new equilibrium in family. The traditional relationship and distribution of duties between couples must be newly constructed.<sup>23</sup> However, some believe that women's employment fulfills many needs, including engagement with work environment and its challenges as well as experiment of diversity and power that may not be fulfilled at family.<sup>26</sup> It seems that women are more relaxed when they become financially independent and this has a profound effect on their relationships with their spouse, children, and other segments of society; consequently, it leads to marital satisfaction in life.<sup>27</sup>

Based on William Good's theory, family, similar to any other system or social unit, has an authority system and anyone who has the most access to important family resources can make other members of the family to behave or act according to the rules set by authority. Good stated that resources such as position, social status, place outside the family, occupation, and political authority can influence the power of other family members.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, a conflict of power rises between couples in the family. This conflict can happen with regard to various issues such as emotional issues or selection of field of study for children, etc.<sup>28</sup> Most studies showed that happy couples were determined by common decision making, useful dialogue, and mutual agreement. The domination of one spouse or widespread disagreement over power is related to divorce and marital dissatisfaction. Divorce and marital dissatisfaction are relevant to decision-making on money issues. Contradictions are inevitable when one of the couples is spendthrift and the other is thinking about saving money. Todd and Friedman found that in unsuccessful marriages, husbands made all the important decisions.<sup>29</sup> Andre Michel

expressed that marital satisfaction in women had a negative and significant relationship with the power of their husbands. According to Georges Muko, the males' autocratic roles made the woman to feel worthless and caused family imbalance.<sup>15</sup>

Another theory in this regard is Horkheimer's theory. He believes that in industrial societies the importance of family, as a basic economic unit, was reduced and therefore, the community emphasized on its traditional form. In the meantime, women, in particular, are hurt more than men, because they must not only adapt themselves to the role of breadwinners in the men's world, but also offer the traditional role of housewives.<sup>24</sup>

### Methods

The present descriptive research was conducted in 2018. The statistical population of the study included 8322 married women in Taft city, Yazd province, Iran. Two stage cluster sampling method was used and 120 people were selected as the participants of the study. In the first stage, the city map was prepared and eight neighborhoods were selected as clusters using random method. Then, systematic method was used and families were selected from clusters. Later, married women were interviewed. The following questionnaires were used to collect data:

A) Demographic questionnaire: This researcher-made questionnaire was designed to collect the information about the demographic factors and family status of the participants. The questionnaire includes multiple choice questions and assesses the variables such as age, housing status, family income, husband and wife's occupations, place of birth, couples' family relationship, and marriage type.

B) Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire: Enrij's marital satisfaction questionnaire (1998) measures marital satisfaction through the following seven dimensions of marital relationship.

1. Personal issues: This scale evaluates the participants' understanding of their spouse according to their behaviors and characteristics as well as their level of satisfaction. A high score



indicates a low level of acceptance or lack of comfort with the personality and behavior of the spouse, while a low score reflects the adoption with the spouse.

2. Marital relationship: It is related to the feelings, beliefs, and attitudes of a person towards the role of communication in marital relationships. Low scores indicate the couples' awareness and satisfaction with the level and type of communication in their relationships, whereas, high scores indicate lack of satisfaction in their relationship.

3. Conflict Resolution: This scale evaluates attitudes, feelings, and beliefs of the spouse in creating or resolving the conflict. A low score reflects realistic attitudes towards social conflicts in marital relations, whereas, a high score represents dissatisfaction with the way of conflicts' resolution.

4. Financial Supervision: This scale focuses on the interests and attitudes associated with the economic approach and issues that affect the husband and wife relationship. A low score indicates satisfaction about the financial issues and a realistic attitude towards it. A high score represents different concerns about financial management in marital relations.

5. Sexual Relationship: These items reflect the satisfaction of couples in expressing emotions and comforts about sexual matters and sexual intercourses. The low scores reflect the satisfaction about expressing emotions and positive attitudes towards sexual issues or disagreement over decisions about the methods of pregnancy prevention. However, the high scores indicate dissatisfaction.

6. Marriage and Kids: This scale assesses the couples' perceptions and feelings about having a child and agreement over the number of children. It also reflects a realistic understanding about the effects of marital relationships on children and satisfaction about parental roles and responsibilities. A high score indicates dissatisfaction about decisions over having a baby or the number of children.

7. Roles about equality between men and women: This scale evaluates attitudes, feelings, and beliefs about different marital roles. Low scores represent equal values and high scores mean unequal values.

The Enrique questionnaire consists of 115 questions; its reliability was estimated as 0.93 by Navabinejad and Naderi (1991). However, in this research, the Enrique Short Questionnaire was used, which was prepared by Soleimani Nejad (1994) with Cronbach Alpha of 0.93. In addition, in order to confirm the face or content validity of the questionnaire, the viewpoints of professors in social sciences, education, and psychology fields in Yazd University were used. As a result, a number of questions were corrected and deleted. Cronbach's alpha was also calculated to confirm the reliability of the tool, which was 0.91 for the general questionnaire and more than 0.8 for different dimensions of the questionnaire. Each question had five options of very low, low, medium, high, and very high, which were scored from 1 to 5. The high scores in this questionnaire show dissatisfaction, while low scores indicate satisfaction about the marital relationship. The minimum attainable score was 41 and the maximum score was 205

Collected data were analyzed by SPSS. Data analysis was performed by t-test, Chi-square, correlation coefficient, and multivariate regression.

## Results

Based on the results, the average age of women was 31.5 years, the average age of their husbands was 36.5 years, the average age of women at marriage time was approximately 19.5 years, and the average age of their husbands at marriage time was approximately 25 years. The average level of education in women was 11.50 grades and the average education level of their spouses was 10.50 grades. Participants had two children in average. The average length of their marriage was about 12 years and 35.7 percent got married to their relatives. Furthermore, 65.7 percent of the marriages were non-forced and 34.3 percent were



forced marriage. The results also showed that 85.7 percent of participants were housewives and 14.3 percent of them were employed. In the case of husbands, 5.7 percent were unemployed, 34.3 percent were employed in governmental sector, and 60 percent were employed in non-governmental sector. In addition, 91.4 percent of women were native to Yazd province and 8.6 percent were non-native. Considering the family income, 8.6 percent of families had an income of less than 200 thousand Tomans, 40 percent had an income between 200-350 thousand Tomans, 35.7 percent had an income between 350 - 500 thousand Tomans, and 15.7 percent had an income over 500 thousand Tomans. 14.7 percent were rural and 84.3 percent were urban. Table 1 shows the main variables of research and their dimensions. Moreover, this table shows the difference between the mean of marital satisfaction.

According to Table 1, a significant relationship was seen between the place of birth ( $0.05 \geq 0.006$ ) and marital satisfaction; marital satisfaction was higher in rural women. The average of marital satisfaction ( $0.05 \leq 0.65$ ) was higher in non-native women, but this relationship was not significant. The average of marital satisfaction ( $0.05 \leq 0.31$ ) was higher among those who had familial marriage than others, but this relationship was not significant. The average of marital satisfaction in housewives was higher than employed women; this relationship was statistically significant ( $0.05 \geq 0.042$ ). Mean of marital satisfaction in unforced marriages was higher than forced marriages and this relationship was also statistically significant.

Marital satisfaction in middle-income groups was higher than low and high income groups, but this relationship was not significant ( $0.05 \leq 0.18$ ). Women who had unemployed husbands were less satisfied. Women whose husbands were employed in the non-governmental sector were more satisfied than others, but this relationship was not statistically significant ( $0.05 \leq 0.97$ ).

Regarding the fact that rural and non-native women, women who had familial marriage, non-employed (housewives) women, non-governmental

sector employees, and middle income earners had higher marital satisfaction, it can be said that traditional life style brings higher marital satisfaction. Although urban life has increased industrial progress, employment, income, speed of life, and well-being, it raised the level of needs and reduced living satisfaction. As we know, rural women and housewives have a traditional lifestyle, according to the results of this study, a significant and statistical relationship was observed between this issue and marital satisfaction.

According to the results of Chi-square test, a significant relationship was found between place of birth and the type of marriage, which means that forced marriages were more common in the villages. Moreover, a significant relationship was observed between familial marriages and forced marriages. Unemployed participants also had more forced marriages. However, no significant relationship was observed between residence status and type of marriage.

According to Table 3, marital satisfaction had a significant and inverse correlation with women's education ( $0.05 \geq -0.006$ ) and husband's education ( $0.05 \geq 0.015$ ). In other words, as the level of education increases, marital satisfaction decreases. Considering that increased level of education leads to an increase the awareness of society, living standards, level of expectations, and needs, the marital satisfaction reduces.

A significant and positive relationship was found between the number of children ( $0.05 \geq 0.004$ ) and marital satisfaction, so that higher number of children increased the marital satisfaction. This correlation was spurious because it was affected by age. A significant relationship was observed between duration of marriage ( $0.05 \geq 0.009$ ) and life satisfaction, so that longer marriage durations increased the marital satisfaction in the couples. Additionally, life satisfaction had a significant relationship with the age of couples (age of the woman ( $0.05 \geq 0.001$ ), age of husbands ( $0.05 \geq 0.000$ ), age of couples at marriage time (age of women at marriage time ( $0.05 \geq 0.03$ ), and age of husbands at marriage time ( $0.05 \geq 0.001$ )).

This means that marital satisfaction increases by increase of age, which can be due to increase of awareness and consciousness of individuals. Furthermore, by gaining experience in marital life, the individual's ability to resolve conflicts of life increases as a result marital satisfaction increases. However, marital satisfaction had a negative and significant relationship with age difference between couples ( $0.05 \geq -0.000$ ). As the age difference increased, marital satisfaction of life decreased. In addition, with increase of education level gap between couples, marital satisfaction decreased. Consequently, it seems that individuals at any age have special needs and desires; they have different levels of awareness and insight in every educational level. Therefore, age and education inconsistencies lead to the lack of understanding of needs and demands, which lead to misunderstandings and consequently decrease the marital satisfaction.

#### **The result of multivariate regression analysis between marital satisfaction and independent variables**

In order to determine the marital satisfaction, multivariate regression in step by step method was used. After regression analysis, four independent variables, from 10 variables remained in the

analysis. Correlation coefficient of variables with life satisfaction was  $R = 66.4$  and the coefficient of determination was  $R^2 = 43.6$ . It means that 43.5 percent of variance for the dependent variable was explained by the four variables in the analysis. In addition, regression model according to ANOVA test was linear and significant, since the value of F for determining the significance of the independent variables on marital satisfaction was 211.379 and the significance level was  $P\text{-value} = 0.000$ . In Table 4, the order of independent variables in the regression model, along with its corresponding coefficients and its significant level are shown.

According to the above table and the standardized beta coefficients, the dependent variable was affected by the age difference of couples with  $\beta = -0.437$ , their educational inconsistency with  $\beta = -0.332$ , duration of marriage with  $\beta = 0.323$ , and marriage type with  $\beta = 0.105$ . It can be seen that age disparity had the greatest impact on life satisfaction. On the other hand, age and educational disparity had a negative impact on marital satisfaction and the duration of marriage and unforced marriage had a positive impact on marital satisfaction.



**Table 1.** Mean of marital satisfaction in terms of demographic variables

variables	dimensions	Percentage	mean of satisfaction	F/T	P-value
Place of birth	Village	15.7	120.1	2.8	0.006
	City	84.3	47.4		
Residence status	Native	91.4	100.6	0.44	0.65
	Non-native	8.6	105.5		
Couples family relationship	Related	35.7	100.6	1.1	0.31
	Not related	64.3	80.7		
Women's employment	Unemployed	85.7	105	1.89	0.042
	Employed	64.3	80.7		
Type of marriage	Unforced marriage	65.7	103.2	6.41	0.000
	Forced marriage	34.3	87.5		
Husband's job	Unemployed	5.7	99	0.24	0.97
	Nongovernmental sector	34.3	100.5		
	Governmental sector	60	101.5		
Family income	Less than 1000000 thousand tomans	8.6	100.17	1.65	0.18
	1000000-2000000 thousand tomans	40	110.18		
	2000000-3000000 thousand tomans	35.7	105.8		
	Over 3000000 thousand tomans	15.7	87.4		

**Table 2.** Results of Chi-square test for different variables and marriage type (forced and unforced)

Variables	$\chi^2$	significance level
Place of birth Village-City	24.7	0.000
Couples family relationship Related-Not related	37.1	0.000
Women's employment Unemployed-Employed	29.5	0.000
Residence status Native-Non-native	2.1	0.24

**Table 3.** Correlation of marital satisfaction with age and educational disparity

Variables	correlation coefficient	significance level
Women's education	-0.323	0.006
Husband's education	-0.289	0.015
Number of children	0.336	0.004
Duration of marriage	0.309	0.009
Woman's age	0.400	0.001
Woman's age at marriage time	0.181	0.03
Husband's age	0.430	0.000
Husband's age at marriage time	0.396	0.001
Age difference in couples (age disparity)	-0.881	0.000
Educational difference in couples (academic disparity)	-0.823	0.000

**Table 4.** The order of independent variables in the regression model and the corresponding coefficients

Independent variables	Raw coefficients		Standard coefficients	T	sig
	β	std	Beta		
Alpha coefficient	7.32	-	-	-	-
Age difference in couples (age disparity)	1.67	0.188	-.437	8.8	0.000
Educational gap in couples (academic disparity)	1.63	0.199	-.332	8.2	0.000
Marriage duration	3.98	0.643	0.323	6.18	0.000
Type of marriage	-7.28	2.36	0.105	3.078	0.000

## Discussion

Marriage is one of the most complex and rare forms of human interpersonal relationships. Consent and cooperation between couples strengthen the family structure. According to experts, marriage must be based on morality, love, affection, and mutual understanding to bring hope and happiness. Forced marriage makes this sacred bonding a terrible nightmare and causes personal, familial, and social serious problems. Scientific study of marital satisfaction has been strongly considered since the 1990s. In fact, study of marital satisfaction provides a general assessment of communication status. Marital satisfaction and adaptation are the broadest concepts for determining the happiness and sustainability of the relationship. It seems that when women are forced to marry they are not content with their married life. Various factors affect the marital satisfaction. In this research, some of the factors related to marital satisfaction were investigated. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effective factors on marital satisfaction. According to the results of this study, marital satisfaction among married women in Taft city was at the moderate level.

According to the results of this research, a significant relationship was found between the place of birth (city and village) and marital satisfaction. Apart from the fact that the villagers have a simpler life, the role of tradition in the villages cause the habitants to make more homogeneous decisions, which contributes to the continuity and stability of marriage. However, this result was not consistent with the results of Javaheri and Mohammadi (2015). Moreover, there was a negative relationship between women's

employment and marital satisfaction, which was consistent with the results of Zare and Safiari Jafarabad (2015). A significant and positive relationship was also found between the number of children and the marital satisfaction, which was consistent with results of Johnson (2009). Considering that education changes the attitude of women towards life and increases their level of expectation, it is expected that women with a high education level feel less satisfied. The reason is that satisfaction is a relative concept that decreases by increase of living standards and expectations. On the other hand, employed and educated women have economic power and express their expectations and lack of satisfaction more often, while low-educated or illiterate women, due to their lack of knowledge about their standards and rights and lack of self-confidence do not express their dissatisfaction.

According to the results, by increasing the age of couples, duration of marriage, and age of couples at the marriage time, life satisfaction increases. These results are not consistent with results of Maslehati (2018), Ellis (1992), and Nadery et al. (2015) who believed that by increasing the duration of marriage, the exchange of thoughts and intimate conversation between couples's decreases. However, these results are consistent with the results of Naderi et al. (2015), Zare and Safiari Jafar Abad (2015) and Ellis (1992). It seems that older people get used to their problem and do not report it as a problem; they also adapt themselves to the conditions of their spouse. On the other hand, over time, people get enough experience to solve their marital problems. Furthermore, conservatism of older people should



be considered as another reason for not expressing dissatisfaction. When older people get married, they have enough experience, have more logical marriages, and are more successful in solving problems in their relationships. An important point is that, when couples age and education differences (age and education disparities) increases, marital satisfaction decreases. Given that expectations of people, their attitude towards life, and their level of awareness at different age and educational levels are different, this dissatisfaction is predictable.

Moreover, a significant relationship was observed between marriage type and life satisfaction; life satisfaction in the forced marriages was lower than unforced marriages, which was consistent with the results of Maslehati (2000). *Consignere* means being physically or psychologically abusive, whether people are forced to do something despite their desire, or because they have been prevented from doing what they want. Prevalence of forced marriage has become a social dilemma in many countries. This phenomenon is not limited to third world countries, although it is often stated that in traditional countries women's rights are ignored in issues such as choosing a spouse, making decisions on the family, and getting divorce. However, in the current age, these issues are solved in industrial societies such as Germany.<sup>30</sup> Forced marriages were widespread in our country and were reported in some provinces such as Kurdistan, Khuzestan, as well as Sistan and Baluchestan, but there are still no accurate data on the number and extent of this social harm. The first negative effects of forced marriages (especially in the lower ages) are related to the body of women and threaten their physical health. Moreover, people who are forced to get married suffer from mental and psychological disorders; suddenly, they are separated from family and are forced to live with someone who has no interest in. These injuries are more serious in the case of a significant age gap between husband and wife. The harm caused by the forced marriage is not limited to individual injuries and affects the emotional relationships

between couples and children. Divorce, escape from home, suspicion, lack of understanding between couples, domestic violence, and offended children etc. are among the horrific outcomes of this type of marriages. In fact, forced marriage, causes marital dissatisfaction undoubtedly. On the other hand, according to the results of this research forced marriages had a significant relationship with place of birth, couples' family relationship, employment, and education of women. In other words, forced marriages are more common in the villages, family marriages, as well as among unemployed and lower-educated women. It is worth noting that among the villagers, despite the higher number of forced marriages, life satisfaction is higher. This paradox is due to the development of social and cultural norms in the villages, social support of the family and their participation in collective activities, which eliminates the effects of imposition in marriage over time.

### Conclusion

According to the results, in order to reduce the number of forced and unequal marriages and to increase the level of marital satisfaction, the following items are suggested:

Educational and age differences of the couples should be considered at the time of marriage. It is better for women to be 5 to 6 years younger than their husbands or at least be at the same age.

Although marital satisfaction is higher in villagers, but due to the prevalence of tribal traditions and beliefs, familial and forced marriages are still very common in these areas. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the level of marital satisfaction among rural married girls and their parents also should be aware of the consequences of forced marriages through education.

Women's employment can lead to self-sufficiency; lack of education and unemployment in women caused by their lack of authority and independence in decision making can lead to forced marriages and marital dissatisfaction. On the other hand, employment and high education of

women due to the interference of men and women's roles and lack of their cooperation will lead to marital dissatisfaction. Therefore, opportunities of education and employment of single girls should be provided as much as possible and men's co-operation in home affairs and upbringing of children should be considered in the families with employed women.

It is better to prevent girls from getting married at an early age; the marriage centers and offices should avoid registering these marriages. Intellectual and social maturity should replace physical and religious maturity.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in this work.

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### Authors' Contribution

Conceptualization, A.Z.S.; Methodology, A.Z.S.; Formal Analysis, A.Z.S.; Investigation, A.Z.S.; Writing Review & Editing, A.Z.S.; Resources, M.M. Writing - Original Draft, A.Z.S. All authors read and approved the final manuscript and are responsible about any question related to article.

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