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## A survey on the relation between EQ and marriage happiness of the married couples living in the city of Kashan

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### ABSTRACT

#### **Introduction**

Nowadays, EQ is of a high importance in the different aspects of people's life. Specifically 80 percent of people's success in different stages of their life is related to their EQ and only 20% is related to their IQ. Marriage happiness, which could be affected by EQ, is a very important factor in this issue. Hence, this survey aims at the relation between EQ and marriage happiness.

#### **Methods**

The method used in this survey is descriptive-analytic. All the 41 married couples in kashan city make the statistical population. Based on Morgan and Grajes table, 388 people were randomly selected using cluster sampling. Data were collected using two types of questionnaire, Shring's EQ questionnaire and Inrich's marriage happiness questionnaire. Descriptive and deductive statistics, such as Pearson correlation coefficient, were used for data analysis.

#### **Results**

In this survey, 63.5% of subjects were female and 36.5% were male. Subjects' level of education was from lower than diploma to higher than masters, of which, 50.5% had diploma or lower degrees. 49.5% were self-employed. 43.6% were between 25 to 35 years old (the go up with the highest frequency). 61.6% have been married during the past 10 years. The results show that there is a meaningful relation between EQ and marriage happiness. There also exist a meaningful relation between the components of EQ (empathy, understanding emotions, self-control and social skills) and marriage happiness ( $P=0.01$ ). In some cases, there was meaningful relation between demographic variables and EQ and marriage happiness, too.

#### **Conclusion**

Since there exist meaningful relation between EQ and marriage happiness and some other variables, therefore, EQ improves and energizes family relations and is considered as an important factor. Therefore improving young peoples' EQ, by training

them, will improve their personal relationships and later will result in a happy marriage. Keywords: EQ, marriage happiness, married

**Key Words:** Relation, EQ, marriage happiness, married couples, Kashan

## INTRODUCTION

EQ (Emotional Intelligence) is an umbrella term which includes extensive collection of skills and personal characteristics. The term usually refers to those categories of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills which are beyond specific areas of prior knowledge, such as IQ (Intelligence Quotient) and professional and technical skills. EQ encompasses the latest experts' discussions concerning understanding the distinction between logic and excitement and unlike early discussions, thinking and excitement have been considered as topics for satisfaction and intelligence. The scientific discussion of EQ was first put forward by Dr. Peter Salovey in 1980 which depended on capabilities such as understanding personal emotions, empathy with the feelings of others, and controlling your emotions and others as well [1]. A person with high EQ knows how to treat personality types and adjust him/herself with them as well as their feelings. Some of EQ's positive impacts cause a person to think better in difficult circumstances while preventing wasting time by feelings such as anger, anxiety and fear. One of the important areas of human life satisfaction is marriage and marital satisfaction to the extent which successful and satisfactory marriage requires stable level of satisfaction on the part of couples [2]. As IQ is demanding for success and being accepted at university, emotional intelligence is also needed in personal and occupational life. According to the findings of a one-year study which examined the stability and changes in emotional intelligence and conflict communication patterns along with relationship satisfaction in couples, emotional intelligence and communication patterns were considered as effective factors in the development of satisfactory relationships [3]. Regarding the relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction within a study, the emotional intelligence can significantly predict the marital satisfaction [2]. It is possible to assist the couples with development and change in unrealistic thinking and improvement of marital relationships through constant use of life skills and techniques to enhance the emotional intelligence [4]. As a major part of the art of communication, marital satisfaction and succeeding in marital affairs are the skills of emotion control in others like social competence or a lack of social competence and special skills. The prerequisite for these skills are those abilities which strengthen the popularity, leadership and interpersonal effectiveness. Those enjoying great ability in such skills, work well in whatever goes back to peaceful interaction with others. Regarding abilities in each of these areas, people are different and it is possible that some be quite successful in dealing with their anxiety while they do not work well at alleviating other people's sufferings. Undoubtedly, people's inertia in emotional skills can be recovered. Each of these areas largely represents a set of habits and reactions which can be improved with reasonable effort [5]. People with higher emotional intelligence are more satisfied with their lives, enjoying married life and family; they are often organized, hospitable, successful, motivated and optimistic individuals [6]. Therefore, given the importance of emotional intelligence in personal relationships, this research was conducted with the aim of assessing the effect of emotional intelligence on marital satisfaction. Findings are hoped to be effective in promoting family and community.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This descriptive-analytical study was conducted in 2014 with a population of married individuals in Kashan. According to Morgan and Grigsby table, 388 people were selected through random cluster sampling. To this end, the city was divided into 6 clusters of northern, southern, eastern, and western and two clusters in the center. The research was carried out on married people aged fewer than 60 living in Kashan. Data were collected using standard questionnaires including Emotional

Intelligence Inventory (by Schering) and Marital Satisfaction Scale (by Enrich).Data were coded and entered in SPSS software settings for descriptive analysis (mean, standard deviation) and inferential analysis including Pierson correlation coefficient.

**Findings**

In this study, 246 women (63.5%) and 142 men (36.5%) participated among which 196 (5.50%) had high school diploma or less, 60 (15.5%) had associate degree, 114 (29.4%) had BA or BS, and 18 (4.6%) had a Master's degree and higher. Of the total 388participants, the age range was 16-58years with a mean age of 30.47and a standard deviation of8.07. The age group of24-35 years (43.6%) was the largest group in number (**Table 1**).

**Table 1:** The Frequency Distribution of Participants Ages

	<24 years old	25-35 years old	35-45 years old		45 years old<	Total
Frequency	96	169	89		34	388
Percentage	24.7	43.6	22.9		8.8	100

According to the data, the range of ‘marriage period’ was 1-36 years with a mean of 10.28 years and a standard deviation of 8.18.In terms of the number of children, 108 participants (27.8%) had no children, 135 (34.8%) had one child, 92 (23.7%) two children, 30 (7.7%) three children, and 23 (5.8%) had more than 3 children. All the 388 participants responded to questions about both emotional intelligence and marital compatibility. In examining the relationship between the two variables, the obtained correlation coefficient was 0.418 indicating a positive relationship between the two variables. Regarding the significant level of Pierson correlation (p<0.05) the relationship between the two variables was significant. The higher the level of emotional intelligence, the more the rate of marital compatibility (Table 2).According to the results of this study, the relationship between the components of emotional intelligence (empathy, understanding emotions, self-control, social skills) and marital satisfaction were significant (P=0.000) so that as the level of emotional intelligence components increased, the rate of marital compatibility increased as well (**Table 2**).

**Table 2:** The Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and its Components with Marital Compatibility

Variable	No.	PCC	sig.
Emotional intelligence	384	0.418	0.000
Empathy	384	0.212	0.000
Understanding emotions	361	0.384	0.000
Self-control	384	0.384	0.000
Social skill	384	0.259	0.000

**Discussion and Conclusion**

A correlation coefficient of 0.418% obtained between the two variables of emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction which indicated a significant positive relationship between the two variables. Regression analysis in Soleymanian’s study showed that emotional intelligence alone explained 30% of changes in marital satisfaction; therefore, if correctly recognized, the emotional intelligence can have an effective role in marital satisfaction [7]. The results in Rajabi’s research demonstrated that there was a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and the quality of life, i.e. if the emotional intelligence goes up, the quality of life will go up as well and vice versa. Moreover, if the participants enjoy higher emotional intelligence, they can understand each other better and will have more control over their own behavior and those of their partners. Such individuals are more competent in the management and control of their emotions and those of their spouses and therefore they will have better feelings in their married life.

In Rajabi’s findings, there is a significant positive relationship between gender ideologies, marital roles, and emotional intelligence with quality of life as numbered 45%, 52% and 32% respectively (p<0/001) [8]. In another study conducted by DoganeiFard, there was a positive and significant relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction at the level of alpha 1%. According to the findings of DoganeiFard, ‘interpersonal relationships’ of emotional intelligence could have a

significant role in explaining marital satisfaction. The correlation between interpersonal relationships and marital satisfaction has been reported as 0.396. Also, the correlation between the satisfaction impulsive control and marital satisfaction was 0.416 while marital satisfaction's was 0.352. The correlation between marital satisfaction and general mood was 0.221 playing a significant role in explaining marital satisfaction. Moreover, the role of the intrapersonal relationships in predicting marital satisfaction was 0.188 [9]. Results of this study are in line with those of Sadeqi, AreqAbadi, Gartis, et al [10-12]. The results of the present study are also corroborated with Tirgari's findings. Results of this research showed that there was a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction scores as well as the scores of their constructs among in compatible couples and compatible ones. This relationship also existed between compatible wives and compatible husbands. Tirgari revealed that there was a significant relationship between the mean of emotional intelligences cores and the total score of marital satisfaction of compatible married group ( $P=0.05$ ), but this relationship was not significant in incompatible married group ( $P=0.05$ ) (2). In another study carried out by MehanianKhamene, results showed that correlation coefficients were all significant as follows: emotional intelligence 0.375, self-awareness 0.316, self-control 0.264, empathy 0.192, and social skills 0.213. The correlation coefficients of "self-awareness", "self-control", and "social skills" were significant at the level of 99% ( $p \leq 0.001$ ) and empathy was significant at the level of 97% ( $p \leq 0.003$ ). Also, the correlation between "general emotional intelligence" and "self-awareness" with "marital satisfaction" is relatively higher than the correlation coefficients of other components with marital satisfaction [13]. This is in line with the current study as well.

In another research, marital satisfaction and emotional intelligence abilities of 1120 married managers were studied. In 'life satisfaction' group, participants attained a higher score compared to 'dissatisfied group' regarding 14 components out of the fifteen factors of Bar-On Emotional Intelligence [14].

Scott and Maloof studied 37 volunteer couples in their research. Participants who achieved higher scores in emotional intelligence enjoyed significantly higher marital satisfaction. In general, the results of this research confirm that emotional intelligence is in total correlation with interpersonal relationships and marital satisfaction [15].

In Abdollahi's research, the means for different components were as follows: emotional intelligence 129.13, marital satisfaction 159.13, and marital compatibility 54. The correlation between emotional intelligence with marital satisfaction and marital compatibility is significant and positive. The most significant correlation was between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction (0.86) [16]. Amini and Rahmani had also indicated the positive significant relationship between emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction separately in their studies [18-17].

People with high emotional intelligence have less negative interactions with their relatives; hence positive relationships with family members are felt more. High emotional intelligence enables people to restrain stressful situations [20-19]. Findings of Abdollahi and Akbari ZardKhaneh are also congruent with the findings of the current research [16-21].

In Ahmadi's research, the results were reported as: emotional intelligence 0.34, self-efficacy 0.37, internal and external documents 0.13, temporary/sustainable documents 0.11, general and exclusive documents 0.12. In the present study, Regression coefficient according to t statistics showed that self-efficacy had a significant role in predicting life satisfaction ( $p=0.4$ ), but emotional intelligence cannot explain the variance in life satisfaction significantly [22]. In Ja'farYazdi's research, of 109 subjects, 17.43% were between 27-29 years old and had the highest frequency. The mean age was 35.5 years and the highest mean score belonged to the component of intrapersonal emotional intelligence (147.87) and the lowest mean score belonged to component of tackling-stress emotional intelligence (65.83). The correlation coefficient between the general emotional intelligence in women and their marital satisfaction was significant at the level of 0.01 [23]. Mayer highlighted in his research that emotional intelligence fully correlated with interpersonal communication and marital satisfaction. He showed that couples who were able to understand and accept each other's thoughts and feelings were more satisfied and pleased with their lives [24]. In Ja'farYazdi's research, the correlation coefficient between the general emotional intelligence in women and their marital satisfaction ( $r=0.42$ ) was significant. In other words, there was a positive and direct relationship between the two variables of general emotional intelligence and marital satisfaction. This means that, by increasing women emotional intelligence, their marital satisfaction will likewise increase [23]. In accordance with the results of this research, there is a direct relationship between empathy and marital satisfaction. In Mehanian Khamane's research, the correlation coefficient of empathy was 0.192, frequency was 240 and the level of significance was 0.003. The above data indicate that there is a correlation between marital satisfactions along with empathy as a component of emotional intelligence [13]. In the Doganei Fard's research, the correlation between "interpersonal relationships" and "marital satisfaction" was 0.396. Also, an explained variance of 0.157 in marital satisfaction is predicted; empathy which is a sub-component of interpersonal relationships has been obtained 0.87 in this study [9]. In Abdollahi's research, means of emotional intelligence, marital satisfaction, and marital compatibility were 129.13, 159.13 and

54 respectively. The result of this research indicated that the correlation of emotional intelligence with marital satisfaction was positive and significant [16]. MehanianKhamanetook the emotional intelligence 0.375, self-awareness 0.316, self-control 0.264, empathy 0.192 and social skills 0.213. Also, 13% of changes in marital satisfaction were explained by “general emotional intelligence”, 9% by “self-awareness”, 6% by “self-control” and 3 % of changes in marital satisfaction according to changes in amount of “empathy”. It means that, women who have the capacity to know and understand their emotions are well aware of their impact on their partners [13. According to the results of the conducted studies in this area, many young couples suffer family crisis because of their low experience in communicating with each other and a lack of proper training in this case; they thus fail to establish favorable relationship with each other. Training skills like communication skills, empathy, self-esteem, perceptual and expressive skills (active listening), the ability to make decisions, and well management of these emotions may meet the consent of the couples by increasing their ability in interacting with one another. In fact, aging and gaining experience, training life skills and emotional intelligence increase their satisfaction with environmental challenges, until they can effectively and efficiently deal with their marital relationshipsand family environment.

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