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INTIMACY AND PERSONALITY TRAITS RELATION WITH WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT (A CASE STUDY: THE COUPLES EMPLOYED IN KOHGILUYEH EDUCATION SECTOR)

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ABSTRACT

The current study aimed to investigate intimacy and personality traits relation with work-family conflict (WFC) amongst the couples employed in Kohgiluyeh education sector. The population of this descriptive correlational study consisted of entire Kohgiluyeh education sector married couples (90 couples-180 individuals) out of whom 60 couples were randomly selected. They filled out the marital intimacy questionnaire (MIQ), personality traits questionnaire (NEO) and work-family conflict (WFC) questionnaire. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS-O through correlation and regression coefficients. The results indicated that there was a negative and significant relation between marital intimacy and WFC and its dimensions. Additionally, there was a significant relation between personality traits dimensions- between neuroticism and all WFC dimensions, between extraversion and family burnout, between agreeableness and all WFC dimensions excluding family-work dimension and between conscientiousness and conflict dimensions including work hours, family hours, work burnout and family burnout. Moreover, agreeableness had a significant relation with none of WFC dimensions. Intimacy and personality traits, neuroticism and negative intimacy could predict WFC.

Keywords: *Intimacy, Personality Traits, Work-family Conflict (WFC), Kohgiluyeh County*

INTRODUCTION

Family has been regarded a social institution resulting from wedlock. Of the human social life emblems is the existence of a constructive and safe interaction amongst humans and the love, intimacy and empathy humans express to their kind. It is in the family where physical, mental and emotional needs are satisfied. It also is an inevitable necessity to be informed of both biological and psychological needs, to know how to satisfy them and to be equipped with the techniques to recognize these needs. Marital bliss accounts for family satisfaction which, in turn, shows life satisfaction, eventually, leading to society's growth, elevation and both material and spiritual development (Edalati & Redswan, 2010). The increasing growth of the use of personality traits mobilized as the predictor of WFC and WF positive aspects is of high importance. Basically, only environmental predictors of WFC such as job independence, supervisory supports, work and family environments, family issues and friends have been highlighted so far. Furthermore, the personality traits affecting peoples' ability to manage both work and family aspects need to be identified in order to study the environmental features affecting work-family experience (Fred & Rayan, 2005).

Of the studies conducted regarding this filed are presented in the following. Hiun (2009) investigated the effect of WFC on job satisfaction and performance. The assumption suggesting that sexual differences play role in the effects of WFC on job satisfaction was also studied in this research. The results showed that WFC negatively affected job satisfaction and performance and that the sexual difference played no role in the effect of WFC on job satisfaction. Ikert (2009) studied the relation between intimacies, psychic or mental energy (libido) and depression symptoms and marital satisfaction between couples during the post-delivery period. The sample consisted of 21 couples whose babies were aged between 6 and 42 weeks old. The results of this non-experimental cross section study suggested that intimacy had a positive and significant relation with marital satisfaction. On the other hand, although women held lower mental energy compared to men, high intimacy could reduce the negative effect of low mental energy on marital satisfaction. Zhung *et al.*, (2008) comparing the shame and personality traits

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between two American and Chinese groups found out that there was a significant difference between the total sample and shame, personality traits, extraversion, neuroticism and social anxiety and that there was a significant relation considering gender in the overall aspect of shame, personality traits and social anxiety. Avrick & Campo (2007) suggested that there was a positive and significant relation between satisfaction and love components (intimacy, lust and commitment) and that the three components were regarded as the predictors of romantic relation continuity. Graford & Angel (2004) studying married couples realized that of the highly important factors building stable marriages is intimacy between the couples while avoiding intimate relations would lead to marriage fail. Brich (2003) carrying out a three-year longitudinal study to investigate the relation between personality traits and work burnout found out that there was a relation between neuroticism and emotional exhaustion, between extraversion and personal development and openness as well as between neuroticism and depersonalization. Wine, Musiska & Flizen (2003) studied the relation between neuroticism and WFC. They stated that there was a positive and significant relation between neuroticism and WFC and FWC.

Malekiha *et al.*, (2012) studied WFC and job stress effects on Iranian policemen's job burnout. The population consisted of the entire staff of Tehran police stations 1 & 5 out of whom 120 individuals were selected via cluster sampling. The results showed that WFC and job stress would lead to an increase in job burnout and depression which, in turn, would bring negative effects such as staff absenteeism, physical and mental problems, and low work quality, conflict amongst staff and job promotion decrease amongst others.

They, therefore, provided some solutions to reduce job burnout. In a study titled *Tabriz Hospitals Admission Staff Job Burnout; The role of Personality Traits and Coping Strategies* the researcher found out the staff bearing type A personality went through a higher job burnout (depersonalization) and that those mobilizing problem-focused coping strategies (positive reappraisal, planned problem-solving and seeking social support) experienced a lower job burnout (Badri *et al.*, 2011).

Garusi & Soufiani (2010) studied the relation between personality dimensions and general health amongst the University of Tabriz students.

They realized that the personality dimensions of extraversion as well as conscientiousness had a positive and significant relation with the students' general health and that there was a negative and significant relation between neuroticism and their general health. On the other hand, agreeableness had a significant relation with none of the general health dimensions. Fatehizadeh (2008) carrying out a study to investigate the effect of shift jobs on WFC and marital satisfaction amongst 240 nurses stated that there was a significant difference between fixed- shift and rotating-shift nurses, the latter reported more conflict.

No significant difference was found out between the two groups regarding marital satisfaction. According to the results, it was a necessity to train them with the required skills regarding WFC management and marital satisfaction increase. Zarean *et al.*, (2007) suggested that personality traits had a positive relation with general health, i.e. extroverted individuals possess a positive attitude and are highly engaged in social activities.

They also stated that these kinds of people held higher general health compared to introverted, depressed and anxious individuals less involved in social activities. Furthermore, extraversion positively affected general health, and depression as well as anxiety reduction. Olia & Fatehizadeh (2006) conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of marital life enrichment education on couples' intimacy.

Conflict solving along with problem solving education were included in the plan. Based on the results, marital life enrichment plan led to an increase in emotional, mental, psychological and social- recreational intimacy.

Literature review suggests that in order for the couples to cope with WFC they require both intimacy and personality traits. Moreover, the majority of the studies dealt with one of the personality traits variable or the relation between personality traits and intimacy. The current study aimed to propose strategies to prevent WFC and also reject/confirm the previous studies results regarding Kohgiluyeh education staff through identifying WFC amongst the couples employed in the education sector.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology

Since the current research describes and studies what existing, it is considered a descriptive correlational study regarding the way data is gathered. The population consisted of the entire married couples (180 individuals) employed in Kohgiluyeh education sector in the year 2014-15.

Due to the limited population size, the sample size was determined to be the entire married couples (90 couples) teaching in Kohgiluyeh schools. The secondary data (the previously generated data available in the resources) related to the research literature was gathered using the library studies including books, articles, theses and Persian and English journals as well as internet and databases in the net. Following this, a questionnaire was used to complete the secondary data, answer the research questions and collect the primary data- which needs to be generated by the researcher- related to research analysis. Descriptive data such as mean and standard deviation and inferential data including correlation coefficient and multiple regressions were used. The former analyzed research data related to the demographic variables while research questions analysis was conducted using the latter. It should be noted that SPSS was used to analyze the research hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The results of the study presented in the tables summarized and classified the data gathered using the questionnaires regarding the variables and indexes.

Descriptive Data

Descriptive features of the individuals studies including their number, mean, standard deviation along with other statistical features are presented in this section.

Table 1: Central tendency of intimacy indexes and its components in the sample

| Variables | Number | Min. | Max. | Mean | SD |
|-------------------------|--------|------|------|--------|-------|
| Intimacy | 120 | 60 | 219 | 155.79 | 31.45 |
| State of being intimate | 120 | 19 | 55 | 36.24 | 8.66 |
| Agreement | 120 | 8 | 48 | 34.25 | 7.89 |
| Honesty | 120 | 8 | 47 | 32.86 | 7.55 |
| Love and interest | 120 | 3 | 32 | 24.60 | 5.58 |
| Commitment | 120 | 15 | 39 | 27.81 | 5.70 |

Table 1 presents intimacy descriptive data and its dimensions. According to the results, intimacy and love and interest held the highest mean (36.24) and lowest mean (24.60), respectively.

Table 2: Frequency indexes of the sample's personality traits

| Variables | Number | Min. | Max. | Mean | SD |
|-------------------|--------|------|------|-------|------|
| Neuroticism | 120 | 4 | 39 | 20.75 | 8.24 |
| Extraversion | 120 | 14 | 39 | 28.94 | 5.62 |
| Agreeableness | 120 | 18 | 41 | 27.18 | 4.98 |
| Openness | 120 | 18 | 48 | 31.97 | 5.56 |
| Conscientiousness | 120 | 18 | 48 | 35.37 | 6.93 |

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Table 2 presents personality descriptive data and its dimensions. According to the results, conscientiousness and neuroticism held the highest mean (65.37) and lowest mean (20.75), respectively.

Table 3: Frequency indexes of the sample’s WFC and its components

| Variables | Number | Min. | Max. | Mean | SD |
|-------------------------|--------|------|------|-------|-------|
| WFC | 120 | 18 | 71 | 37.80 | 13.12 |
| Job hour conflict | 120 | 3 | 15 | 6.63 | 3.10 |
| Family hour conflict | 120 | 3 | 15 | 6.23 | 2.70 |
| Job burnout conflict | 120 | 3 | 15 | 6.86 | 3.34 |
| Family burnout conflict | 120 | 3 | 12 | 5.95 | 2.71 |
| Work-family | 120 | 3 | 12 | 6.19 | 2.59 |
| Family-work | 120 | 3 | 12 | 5.92 | 2.49 |

Table 3 presents WFC descriptive data and its dimensions. According to the results, job burnout conflict and family-work held the highest mean (6.86) and lowest mean (5.92), respectively.

Inferential Data

H1: Intimacy and its components have a significant relation with WFC and its dimensions.

Table 4: The matrix of correlation between intimacy as well as its components and WFC and its dimensions

| WFC dimensions | Job hour conflict | Family hour conflict | Job burnout conflict | Family burnout conflict | Work-family | Family-work |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Intimacy and its dimensions | | | | | | |
| Intimacy | *234/- | **294/- | *208/0- | *184/0- | *226/0- | **255/0- |
| | 01/0 | 001/0 | 02/0 | 04/0 | 013/0 | 005/0 |
| State of being intimate | *233/0- | 347/0- | **287/0 | 128/0- | 141/0 | 132/0- |
| | 01/0 | 090/0 | - | 162/0 | 123/0 | 150/0 |
| Agreement | *217/0- | **217/0- | 002/0 | *199/0- | *234/0- | **275/0- |
| | 017/0 | 017/0 | 025/0 | 03/0 | 010/0 | 002/0 |
| Honesty | **188/0- | *205/0- | 104/0- | 133/0 | *208/0 | **246/0- |
| | 040/0 | 006/0 | 26/0 | 148/0 | 023/0 | 007/0 |
| Love and interest | **256/0- | **249/0- | *192/0- | **215/0- | **234/0 | **306/0- |
| | 005/0 | 006/0 | 036/0 | 019/0 | - | 001/0 |
| Commitment | 137/0- | **28/0- | 116/0- | 16/0 | 008/0 | *196/0- |
| | 136/0 | 002/0 | 206/0 | 081/0 | *196/0- | *202/0- |
| | | | | | 032/0 | 027/0 |

*0.05
 **0.001

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to investigate the first hypothesis, i.e. the relation between intimacy as well as its dimensions with WFC dimensions. According to the results from Table 4, intimacy

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and all WFC dimensions; the state of being intimate and work hour conflict as well as job burnout; agreement and all WFC dimensions; honesty and work hour conflict, family hour conflict, work-family as well as family –work; love and interest and all WFC dimensions had negative and significant relations. Moreover, commitment had a significant relation with family hour conflict, work-family and family-work.

H2: There is a significant relation between personality traits and WFC dimensions.

Table 5: The matrix of correlation between personality traits and WFC dimensions

| | Job hour conflict | Family hour conflict | Job burnout conflict | Family burnout conflict | Work-family | Family-work |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Neuroticism | 453/0 | 350/0 | 422/0 | 531/0 | 277/0 | 251/0 |
| Extraversion | 000/0 110/0- | 000/0 060/0- | 000/0 070/0- | 000/0 237/0- | 000/0 008/0- | 000/0 049/0- |
| Agreeableness | 232/0 025/0 | 513/0 024/0 | 450/0 079/0 | 009/0 050/0- | 932/0 118/0 | 596/0 110/0 |
| Openness | 787/0 192/0- | 798/0 207/0- | 390/0 202/0- | 591/0 346/0- | 201/0 184/0- | 232/0 128/0- |
| Conscientiousness | 036/0 277/0- | 023/0 264/0- | 027/0 263/0- | 000/0 380/0- | 044/0 063/0- | 164/0 103/0- |
| | 002/0 | 004/0 | 004/0 | 000/0 | 495/0 | 262/0 |

Pearson correlation coefficient was used to investigate the second hypothesis, i.e. the relation between personality traits and WFC dimensions. Based on the results, there was a significant relation between neuroticism and job hour conflict with the coefficient of 0.453, family hour with the coefficient of 0.350, job burnout conflict with the coefficient of 0.422, family burnout with the coefficient of 0.531, work-family with the coefficient of 0.277 and family-work with the coefficient of 0.251 at 0.000 level. Furthermore, there was a significant relation between extraversion and family burnout conflict with the coefficient of 0.237 at 0.009 level; agreeableness had a significant relation with none of WFC dimensions; openness had a significant relation with work hour conflict with the coefficient of 0.192 at 0.036 level, with family hour with the coefficient of 0.207 at 0.023 level, with job burnout conflict with the coefficient of 0.202 at 0.027 level, with family burnout with the coefficient of 0.346 at 0.000 level and with work-family with the coefficient of 0.184 at 0.044 level. Additionally, there was a significant relation between conscientiousness and work hour conflict with the coefficient of 0.277 at 0.002 level, family hour with the coefficient of 0.264 at 0.004 level, job burnout conflict with the coefficient of 0.263 at 0.004 level, and family burnout with the coefficient of 0.380 at 0.000 level.

H3: Intimacy and personality traits can predict WFC.

Table 6: WFC prediction analysis summary based on intimacy and personality traits scores

| Variables | R | R2 | R2 | F | Significance level |
|------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------------------------|
| Neuroticism | 499/0 | 249/0 | 243/0 | 42/11 | 12/39 |
| Intimacy | 554/0 | 307/0 | 258/0 | 02/11 | 80/9 |

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According to Table 6 data analysis, in the first step, neuroticism holding the highest zero-order correlation with the dependent variable entered the regression equivalent and explained 0.249 of WFC variable variance 39.12 of which, according to the observed F, was explained, therefore, the regression model at the first step was significant at 0.001 level. In the second step, the intimacy variable holding the highest correlation coefficient with WFC entered the regression equivalent and, along with the neuroticism variable, explained 0.307 of WFC variance 9.80 of which, according to the observed F, was explained and, consequently, the regression model at the second step was significant at 0.002 level.

Discussion and Conclusion

The current study mainly aimed to investigate the relation intimacy and personality traits had with WFC in the couples employed in Kohgiluyeh education sector.

According to the results, there was a negative and significant relation between intimacy and WFC dimensions. Therefore, the higher the score of intimacy, the lower the score of WFC dimensions. In other words, intimate relation between couples would maintain and reinforce family relationship, reduce stress in family and work and prevent potential fails. In addition, family life quality meaning individuals family health and the roles of being a father, mother or spouse along with reward and completion and conditions void of stress and other negative consequences as well as work conditions including individual's work experiences, rewards, completion and conditions void of stress and other negative consequences depend on the family.

According to the results, there was a significant relation between neuroticism and WFC dimensions. Extraversion had a significant relation with family burnout while there was no significant relation between agreeableness and WFC dimensions. Moreover, openness had a significant relation with all WFC dimensions excluding family-work. There was a significant relation between conscientiousness and work hour conflict, family hour, job burnout and family burnout. In other words, the higher the openness of the teachers, i.e. the more the teachers get along well with life hardships, students, school environment, low salary, lower life conditions and family and society problems and think of teaching as a value in which they believe and accept, they will go through less job burnout and can keep their jobs longer and more interestingly. Therefore, as the openness of the teachers increases, their job burnout decreases. Furthermore, once a teacher is more conscientious, pays more attention to their jobs, does well in their work, tries to promote their work, uses more creativity and is more active, they need to spend more energy; therefore, they will feel exhausted in a shorter time and their abilities fall. As a result, the higher the conscientiousness of the teachers, the higher their job burnout.

Studying the variables of intimacy and personality traits showed that neuroticism and intimacy can predict WFC. The results suggested that there was a positive relation between neuroticism and WFC, i.e. as the neuroticism increases, WFC rises. In other words, neurotic teachers or the ones holding lower levels of intimacy in the family suffer from more work-family problems. So they are often anxious and have to bear higher levels of WFC. Most probably, the teachers suffering from emotional liability, disagreeability or neuroticism are emotionally exhausted, depersonalized, and unsuccessful in business and, consequently, hold higher WFC.

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