

## COMPARISON OF EGO-RESILIENCY BETWEEN WOMEN WITH AND WITHOUT MARITAL COMMITMENT

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to consider a comparison between ego-resiliency of married women with marital commitment and that of women without ego-resiliency. This paper was studied to see whether there is a difference between the ego-resiliency of women with marital commitment and that in women without marital commitment. This is a causal-comparative research. Sixty individuals comprising 30 women with marital commitment and 30 women without marital commitment were selected. The study used convenience sampling. Required data were collected using demographic and resiliency questionnaires. For data analysis, descriptive statistics methods such as mean, standard deviation and inferential statistics methods such as independent t, MANOVA were used. According to the results obtained using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), it was shown that means of the two ego-resiliency scales in the two groups differed, i.e. ego-resiliency in committed women was higher. The results of the present study show that the more self-resilient individuals are, the less they get involved in extramarital affairs, with more commitment and adherence toward mutual life.

**Keywords:** *Ego-Resiliency, Marital Commitment*

### INTRODUCTION

Marriage is one of almost global human institutions, and no institution has affected human beings so closely. According to data from the Statistical Center of Iran, divorce has had an increasing trend in recent years. This growth has been 7.2, 7.5, and 9.7 percent over 1994-1996, respectively, with the figure reaching 8.5 percent in 2007 (website of the Statistical Center of Iran, 2010).

So far, most discussions regarding the definition of healthy marriage argue that in marital units the following strong elements exist: sincerity, commitment, emotional connection, conflict settlement skills, and spirituality (Sherwood, 2008; cited by HashemAbadi). Also, healthy marriage means presence of several elements such as commitment, marital satisfaction, connection, and lack of such elements as violence and treachery. It appears that marital commitment between spouses is an important predictor for satisfactory and durable marriages. Lifetime commitment to marriage, loyalty to one's spouse, strong moral values, respect toward one's spouse as the best friend, and commitment to sexual loyalty are among satisfactory characteristics of the marriages with over 20 years of lifetime (Lindsey *et al.*, 2007; cited by HashemAbadi). By the way, it has been found that both commitment to one's spouse and commitment to the institution of marriage are crucial for success of a marriage (Anderson, 2008; cited by HashemAbadi). Thus, roots of many of social vulnerabilities and society's health issues are somehow closely interconnected with improper function and anomaly of the institution of marriage. Severe conflicts in individuals, disorder in individual and social behaviors, violence, modern and traditional addictions, suicide and divorce, moral illnesses, and unhealthy sexual behaviors, etc. are rooted in family's morbid and turbulent cultural-educational atmosphere. One of the turbulences the world has witnessed in recent years concerns extra-marital relationships (treachery). Discussion regarding extramarital field is detailed. Some have stated dissatisfaction from marital relationships, and some dissatisfaction of emotional needs. Some have considered sexual addiction, seeking diversity, inability to control obsessions (momentum control issues) and substance dependence effective in deviation of individuals.

Today, Internet and cellphones have been added to factors threatening spouses' relationships. It must be stated that virtual relationships are not less harmful to mutual life than real relationships. Researches

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regarding married people who got involved in such virtual relationships show that their personality styles and interest are accompanied with a high level of social anxiety, practical obsession, compulsion, instability, and depression. Signs of Narcissism, low level of conscientiousness, and insecure attachment styles are observed in them (Ameri, 2012).

It is clear that many of the challenges that entangle people in life exhaust their mental, psychic, and functional might. In fact, these problems are products of unawareness, negligence, or individuals' employing improper ways in family and social lives. Man's manner of reaction to life flow and its various issues generally results in unpredictable and meanwhile predictable consequences. How to use opportunities and times, capabilities and situations, choosing a life pattern, astuteness or negligence, and individuals' unawareness will have essential impact on their health quality and development of life. Undoubtedly, man's role and responsibility in causing problems and making issues for himself and others is a serious and meanwhile anguishing matter. It should be confessed that a great deal of our pressures and troubles in life can be comprehended, managed, and controlled if we face them consciously, fairly, sincerely, and with commitment, and if we always see God as an accurate supervisor and judge on our behavior and deeds.

In the current study topic, with the stated goal, the fact that resistance in facing tensions and hard conditions can play a considerable role in occurrence or non-occurrence of extramarital issues was considered.

Various studies have proven effects of belief systems in establishing family coherence. Findings imply that adherence to moralities and religion in relationships, solving conflicts, decision making, commitment of spouses, and sexual activities are effective (Matingli *et al.*, 2011).

Nonetheless, little studies have investigated the connection between ego-resiliency and spouses commitment. Thus, this study aims to answer the following question: Is ego-resiliency in women with marital commitment different from that in women without marital commitment?

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Methodology**

The present study is of a causative/comparative, and expo facto type. In this research, the author compares ego-resiliency in married women with marital commitment with that in married women without marital commitment.

### **Statistical Population**

All married women with and without marital commitment in the city of Tehran in 2013.

### **Sample Size and Sampling Method**

A statistical population comprising 60 married women (30 married women with marital commitment and 30 without marital commitment) had been identified from among women, who were selected with convenience sampling.

It is noteworthy that women without marital commitment were partly selected from among patrons of counseling clinics and partly through friends' recommendation and voluntarily. Subjects with marital commitment were selected from several women employed in a state-owned company, in addition to a few selected from among acquaintances.

### **Research Tools**

*Resiliency questionnaire:* This scale consists of 25 questions, prepared by Connor and Davidson (2003) to measure strength in dealing with pressure and threat. This scale evaluates different dimensions of resiliency, including individual sense of ability, resistance against negative effects, positively accepting changes, confidence about individual instincts, sense of support and social security, spiritual belief, and pragmatic approaches regarding problem solving methods.

### **Statistical Analysis Methods**

According to the study hypothesis, inferential statistics (independent t test and multivariate analysis of variance, MANOVA) has been used for data analysis in addition to descriptive statistical methods. Data analysis has been performed using the SPSS software.

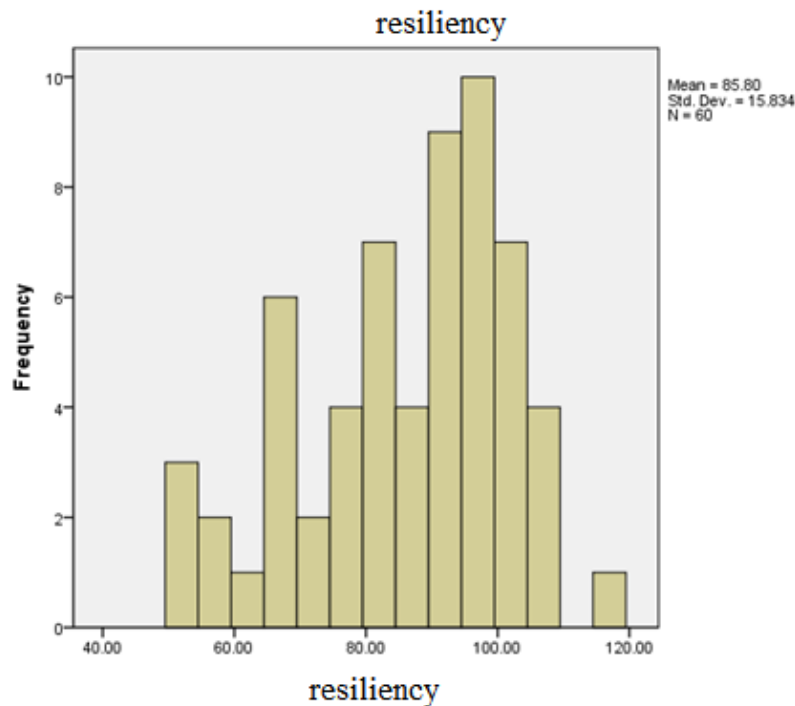
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### Descriptive Statistics

First, some descriptive criteria of research variables, calculated using Cronbach's alpha, have been reported in the following tables.

**Table 1: Summary of descriptive criteria for the resiliency test**

Tests	Mean	Standard deviation	Min	Max	Count
Ego-resiliency	80.050	16.059	52	117	60



**Figure 1: Summary of descriptive criteria for ego-resiliency tests**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings of the Study

RQ: Is there a difference in ego-resiliency of women with marital commitment and those without marital commitment?

**Table 1: Independent t test for the ego-resiliency scale in the sample group**

Test	Group	Mean	Count	Standard deviation	Sig	T	Df
Resiliency	Obliged women	89.533	30	12.013	0.000	5.091	58
	Non-obliged women	82.066	30	18.354			

According to the results observed in table 2 and given the presumption of equal variances, and t calculated in ego-resiliency scale (with sig=0.000, df=58, t=5.091), it can be suggested that the offered

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hypothesis is true with a probability of 0.99. This means that ego-resiliency is more among obliged women than that in non-obliged women.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Every human individual typically seeks a coherent and stable family. It could be concluded from what was considered in this study, that infidelity to one's spouse is a complicated phenomenon that cannot be comprehended with simple linear models. Too widespread factors such as childhood experiences, attachment style, learning patterns, personality traits, etc. are effective in this regard. As stated, one of these important factors was effectiveness of resiliency in reducing extramarital affairs, suggesting that a significant relationship exists between ego-resiliency and marital commitment. This finding is in agreement with several other studies concerning resiliency. Resiliency is one of intrapersonal resources that can adjust the level of stress and debility in unpleasant circumstances (Besharat, 2008). In one of these studies conducted on 211 students of Tehran University, results showed that there was a positive correlation between the score of mental health and resiliency. Also, there was a negative correlation between the score of psychological debility, depression, stress, general problems and resiliency. Different degrees of resiliency find relevance through having impacts on one's respects, personal competency and strength, tolerating negative emotions and psychological vulnerability.

The final result implied confirmation of effectiveness of the two variables in reducing the signs of extramarital affairs. Therefore, results of the present research show that the more resiliency individuals have, the less they establish extramarital affairs and the more they will have commitment and adherence to mutual life. This finding is in line with meta-analysis results of Boss and Smith (2004), which showed that lack of adaptability and level of consciousness, which are considered as two scales of resiliency, has a direct impact on possible extramarital affairs.

### **Recommendations of the Study**

Regarding the results of the study, then following issues can be taken as recommendation:

- Due to rich literature regarding effects of ego-resiliency on marital commitment, need is felt for further studies in this regard. Therefore, it is recommended that in prospective studies, the role of ego-resiliency in marital life be investigated
- It is recommended that in prospective studies intervening variables such as economic condition, religious background, parenting style, etc. be controlled.
- Making use of other variables such as individual traits and personality types, particularly of avoidance and ambivalent types and their connection with extramarital affairs
- Performing similar studies in other cities

### **Practical Implications**

- According to numerous injuries and damages that extramarital affairs will have for children and eventually the society, what can reduce this phenomenon in the society involves increased sense of commitment and fidelity of spouses to each other and increased individual conscience and eventually collective conscience of the society.
- Attempts to fulfill psychic requirements of spouses
- Supports from family and friends by playing the role of a good listener can make the biggest contribution to reinforce commitment of individuals
- Seeking help from professional and expert people will be the best way to improve marital relationships

### **Limitations of the Study**

- The first limitation that showed up for the researcher was to select sample groups without marital commitment. Therefore, the selection was done from available sections.
- As other research limitations, participants' distrust despite reassurance given by the researcher can be mentioned.
- One of the other issues that can be addressed was that due to dominant customary beliefs, most of the women with extramarital affairs refuse to reveal and relate their infidelity.
- The main problem in this study was too few conducted studies and in cases, lack of conducted studies regarding the connection of the two variables mentioned in this study with marital commitment.

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