

## The Relationship between Locus of Control and Marital Satisfaction with Sexual Satisfaction of Couples

Askari Asghari Ganji<sup>1\*</sup>, Kamo Vardanyan<sup>2</sup>, Drshokouh Navabinezhad<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Education University, Babol Iran

<sup>2</sup>Faculty Member, Kharrazmi University, Tehran Iran

<sup>3</sup> Faculty Member, kharrazmi University, Tehran, Iran

\*[asghariganji@yahoo.com](mailto:asghariganji@yahoo.com)

**Abstract:** The goal of the present research is to examine the relationship between locus of control and marital satisfaction with sexual satisfaction of couples. The method of this research is descriptive one and of correlation kind. Statistical population includes the married students of education University of Babol. Research sample includes 100 couples who were selected by multi-step clustered sampling method. Research tools include: The level of perceived sexual satisfaction was measured by Golombok-Rust Sexual Satisfaction Inventory (GRISS) and a Demographic Information Form. For data analyzed additionally, correlation among the variables two independent hierarchical multiple regression analyses were the procedure of choice so as to determine relationships among predictor variables and criterion variable. The findings showed that Locus of control and marital satisfaction these variables differentiated the groups on the sexual satisfaction. Locus of control, marital satisfaction, intercourse frequency and orgasm frequency significantly predicted the sexual satisfaction.

[Askari Asghari Ganji, Kamo Vardanyan, Drshokouh Navabinezhad. **The Relationship between Locus of Control and Marital Satisfaction with Sexual Satisfaction of Couples.** *Life Sci J* 2013;10(2s):269-276] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 47

**Keyword:** Locus of control, marital satisfaction, sexual satisfaction, of the couples

### Introduction

All humans have sexual expressions in their development and their lives. Moreover, sex has existed in all cultures and also in all eras through history. However, experience of sexuality is private and personal. All persons have unique thoughts and feelings on sexuality (Masters, Johnson, & Kolodny, 1995). Today, most couples agree that they will attain their two main goals in the marriage having satisfactory sexual relationship and mental agreement with the spouse. Although most individuals emphasize more on having sexual relationship, satisfactory sexual relationship and mental agreement are considered as two inseparable components in a successful marriage (Ellis and Harper, 1995, page 45). Therefore, a successful marital relationship is formed when satisfactory sexual relationship and mental agreement shall be created continually and interwoven to each other among the wife and husband. Although all humans experience some kind of sexuality, very few seems totally satisfied with their sexuality (Barash & Lipton, 2002). Many sexual problems have multiple origins which can be organic (such as spinal injuries, strokes and menopause) psychological (such as stress, depression and anxiety) or relationship related (Crowe, 1995). By starting the marriage and creating marital relationship, sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction change into important

variables in association with the marriage quality. Sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction are regarded as one of the most important factors in affectionate stability of couples (Fisher & Nulty, 2008). Sexual relationship plays a fundamental role in intimate relationships resulted from the marriage and shared life (Crowe & Read Lee, 2000). Glasser and Glasser (2007) believe that Sexual relationship is a way by which the couples can really feel intimacy, sincerity and connection.

Ackerman (1995) states that, since sexuality is a very complex phenomenon, researchers recently pay attention to the cognitive, relationship related and sociocultural determinants of sexual problems. However, sexuality research has not provide an integral and complete information which can help a better understanding of sexual satisfaction and sexual dissatisfaction. On the other hand, there are many questions remain to be answered which points to the role of psychology in resolving sexual problems.

In terms of sexual problems, it is also stated that, people's concerns on sexual health and satisfaction have increased due to some developments such as frequent divorce rates and sexually transmitted diseases (Ackerman, 1995). In addition Hawton (1985) points that demand for treatment of sexual problems has increased in the last several decades because of the increased public knowledge of effective treatments. Sexual satisfaction is defined as

“An affective response arising from one’s subjective evaluation of the positive and negative dimensions associated with one’s sexual relationship” (Lawrence & Byers, 1995; cited in Timm, 1999, p.17). Sexual satisfaction might be classified on a continuum with two ends which are being ‘totally satisfied’ and ‘totally unsatisfied’ with sexuality. From this point of view, sexual problems and sexual dysfunctions take place near the ‘totaldissatisfied’ end. According to Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV) normal sexual function includes desire, arousal, orgasm and resolution phases (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Sexual dysfunction is manifested by absence or dissatisfaction of one or more of these phases (Kohn & Kaplan, 2000; Samelson & Hannon, 1999). On the other hand, some researchers (cited in Samelson & Hannon, 1999) suggest “satisfaction” as an additional phase of normal sexual functioning and they claim that satisfaction does not depend on orgasm but also an overall evaluation of how satisfying the sexual experience is. Hunt (1974) believes there is a relationship between general marital happiness and sexual satisfaction. Happy couples are more satisfied with their sexual life compared to unhappy wives and husbands and they have more sexual relationship. Current literature indicates that sexual satisfaction can be affected by several factors, one of which is gender. It is stated that, women and men experience sexuality differently and they have different sexual needs, expectations, and feelings (Barash & Lipton, 2002). However, the difference between the sexual satisfaction of men and women are not consistently found. Some studies indicate that women have greater sexual satisfaction (Renaud & Byers, 1997) however some report the opposite (Kabakçı & Daş, 2002). Moreover, some researchers (Timm, 1999) found no gender difference in sexual satisfaction. Studies also indicated that, sexual satisfaction is negatively related to age (Çetin, 1995), lower education level (Çetin, 1995; Meadow, 1982), and length of marriage (Colebrook Seymour, III, 1998), and positively related to sexual intercourse frequency (Meadow, 1982) and orgasm frequency (Meadow, 1982). Examining the association between these variables and sexual satisfaction might contribute to the existing literature.

The reason why people get married may be better understood in the concept of the need to belong. Baumeister & Leary (1995) suggests that need to belong is a very powerful motive which leads people to have social attachments and to form and maintain enduring interpersonal relationships. Having a long-term intimate relationship generally produces positive emotions. However, losing attachments generally results in pain and disappointment even if there is no

plausible reason to maintain them. Furthermore, even if maintaining the relationship is too costly, people resist to lose that attachment. On the other hand, the need of belongingness can just be met in pleasant or satisfactory relationships. Baumeister & Leary (1995) also claim that, belongingness positively affects the health and well-being. Physical and psychological problems are commonly seen in the case of unsatisfied need of belongingness. Similarly, Murray, Rose, Bellavia, Holmes, & Kusche (2002) believes that, an intimate's love and acceptance satisfies the need of belongingness and affirm the worthiness of the self. On the other hand, attaching to somebody makes people vulnerable to the pain of possible rejection and indirectly threat the self. Rho (1989) defined marital satisfaction as “...a subjective evaluation by an individual of the degree of happiness, pleasure, or fulfillment experienced within the marital relationship between spouse and self” (p.5). Marital happiness is found to be associated with physical and psychological health (Kiecolt-Glaser & Newton, 2001; Wood, Rhodes, & Whelan, 1989). In addition, the benefits associated with marriage are greater for women than they are for men (Wood, Rhodes, & Whelan, 1989). These positive effects that are related to marital happiness may be better understood with the following statement: “A supportive romantic or marital partner acts as a kind of buffer or barrier between us and the problems of life” (Bird and Melville, 1994, p.61).

On the other hand, while some marriages are happy, some others “begin as a source of satisfaction, but often end as a source of frustration” (Karney & Bradbury, 1995, p.1). Although there are satisfactory marriages, there are also marriages which suffers from marital discord or which results in divorce. Amato & Booth (2001) reported that, parents’ marital discord is transmitted to their offspring’s marriage. This transmission leads to a decrease in marital harmony and an increase in marital discord. Researchers argue this finding from the view of the social learning perspective, by suggesting that children observe and learn negative interpersonal styles from their parents. Moreover, they are less likely to learn positive behaviors which facilitates satisfying relationships, such as showing support or successfully resolving the conflicts. Literature indicates several variables related to marital satisfaction. Dökmen & Tokgöz (2002) found that there is a positive relationship between marital satisfaction and education level. That is, subjects with university degree reported higher marital satisfaction when they compared to their counterparts with high-school degree. Additionally, in terms of the relationship between marital satisfaction and gender, inconsistent results were reported. Although some

studies reported that husbands have greater marital satisfaction than wives (Gökmen, 2001) some reported no gender difference on marital satisfaction (Dökmen & Tokgöz, 2002). Also, the results of Honar-parvaran research (2006). Showed that totally, %30 of women had complete satisfaction with sexual relationship, %4 of them had no satisfaction with it and %14 performed sexual activity just for the spouse satisfaction. The reasons for dissatisfaction included respectively disturbed family relationship, lack of paying attention to woman needs and inclinations, lack of sexual coordination and similarity, the effect of daily problems and difficulties, lack of sexual knowledge, poor affectionate relationship with the spouse, the existence of guilt feeling during sexual intercourse, negative attitude about sexual problems, lack of pre-caress, tormenting sexual demand, man's inability to satisfy the wife, fear from sexual dissatisfaction of the spouse, undesired sexual experiences before marriage. In the light of these findings, it may be concluded that predicting the factors which affects the marital satisfaction is necessary. However, current research on this subject is not satisfactory to predict which married couples stay together and which separate or divorce (Gottman, 1993). Questions such as "What differentiates a happy marriage from an unhappy one?" and "What qualities that maritally satisfied couples have but others do not?" are still remains unanswered. The association between marriage and sexuality also takes place in the current literature. Sexuality is regarded as one of the most important elements in a marital relationship (Masters, et al., 1995). Crowe (1995) suggests that, sexual relationship of the couple can be seen as a kind of microcosm of the general relationship. If general relationship is not satisfactory, sexual relations between partners are affected negatively. Similarly, according to Klemer (1970), good sexual adjustment generally depend on a good marital relationship. In the same way, Southern (1999) claims that, current technological improvements give different opportunities, such as medicalizations, for everyone to have a satisfying sexual life. However, these opportunities do not assure a satisfying interpersonal relationship. It is also reported that sexual problems negatively affect the intimate relationships (Dziegielewski & Resnick, 1998). Some researchers claim that, sexual problems must be treated in the relationship in which the problems are experienced (Crowe, 1995) since sexual problems usually occur in discordant relationships (Hawton, 1985). Although the sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction have reciprocal contributions on each other, issues such as marital sex and the relationship

between marital and sexual satisfaction do not seem to be studied widely. Cristopher & Sprecher (2000) claims that although there is an increased interest in sexuality within a relational context in recent years, sexual relationship in the marriage has not been the interest of many research. Authors state that since sexual activity in marriage is socially approved and sex and marriage are linked, marital sex is not viewed as a problem or as a phenomenon that can be result in negative outcomes, which may be the reason of this restricted interest on marital sex. (1995) also emphasizes the relationship between marital satisfaction and sexual satisfaction. Authors states that, it is unclear that how does the marital satisfaction of the couple affects their sexual satisfaction, and also how a couple's sexual satisfaction contributes to their overall marital satisfaction. They also claim that, everyone has their own feelings and judgements on their marital and sexual life which needs special inquiry to be understood. Although marital and sexual satisfaction needs special inquiry, there is no complete knowledge on these subjects since little research has been done on them. In the same way, there is no large amounts of studies on marital satisfaction and sexual satisfaction, as well as their association, in Iran. However, even limited numbers of studies (e.g. Gökmen, 2001) indicates that, it may be useful to examine these variables. In the light of these above findings and suggestions, it is In addition to the sex and marriage, people have always interested in the causality. History reflects stories and myths on events which are controlled by gods, fate, and people's own behaviors (Rotter, 1990). Similarly, psychology is also interested in the causality. There is a growing interest in people's causal explanations and expectations on future events in recent decades (Shapiro, Schwartz, & Astin, 1996).

Specifically, as it is defined as a "generalized expectancy of internal or external control of reinforcement" (Lefcourt, 1976, p.29) in social learning theory, locus of control construct has become a very popular and widely examined personality concept in psychology (Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2002; Rotter, 1990). Literature indicates that locus of control is relevant with gender (Lachman & Weaver, 1998) and education level (Nurmi, Pulliainen, & Salmela-Aro, 1992). That is, being a male and having higher levels of education were found to be positively related to internal locus of control. Additionally, internal locus of control is found to be related to more satisfactory interpersonal relationships (Crandall & Crandall, 1983; cited in Carton & Nowicki Jr., 1994). However, although its popularity, the role of locus of control construct in interpersonal relationships, especially sexual and

marital relationships have not been very popular. Whereas, holding a belief that personal efforts would be effective for one's own satisfaction might be important when considering one's marital and sexual satisfaction (Lefcourt, 1976). In fact, even few studies conducted on the association between the interpersonal relationships and locus of control clearly demonstrates the importance of considering such an association between these variables.

According to Ross (1991) although marriage has a powerful effect on the sense of control, the relationship between marriage and sense of control is widely ignored. However, marriage may increase the sense of control by providing greater social and economic resources as well as social support and decrease it by limiting autonomy, freedom and independence. Madden & Janoff-Bulman (1981) claimed that, blaming the spouse for marital problems is associated with low perceived control which may result in poor coping and indirectly, marital dissatisfaction. On the other hand, if a spouse blame him/herself for a negative event, s/he may believe that he can control such similar situations next time. After their study on married women, Madden & Janoff-Bulman (1981) reported that the most satisfied wives were those who don't blame their husbands and who feel they have control over the negative marital events. However, wives who are blaming their husbands regard the marital problems as relatively unresolvable and the marriage as unsatisfying. Moreover, it is claimed that, not assuming responsibility for one's own problems and discomforts, and blaming the other spouse for the tensions and unhappiness in marriage generally result in marital conflict and prevents a meaningful marital relationship (Berg-Cross, 2001). Berg-Cross (2001) claims that instead of seeing oneself as a victim of the environment or others, one must see him/herself as the one who is capable of making the situations better. It is also reported that, the most satisfactory and less conflictual marriages occur among spouses who feel they have control over marital events (Myers, 1999). Moreover, it is concluded that, internal locus of control is generally found to facilitate better interpersonal relationships (Crandall & Crandall, 1983; cited in Carton & Nowicki Jr., 1994). On the contrary, external locus of control was found to be related to higher frequency of negative tactics to resolve conflict, being less committed to the relationship, lower levels of marital satisfaction and higher levels of verbal aggression, physical violence, and angry response. Furthermore, it is concluded that, for spouses with greater sense of control, it is less likely to expect their marriage would end in separation (Lachman & Weaver, 1998).

Based on the literature, it can be said that, the causal attributions or control senses of the individuals may affect the sexual or marital satisfaction. If one's sense of control is high, in other words, if s/he has an internal locus of control, it can be expected that s/he can get the responsibility of his/her life and try to change the conditions to make him/herself more satisfied with his/her marital and sexual relationship.

### **Research Hypotheses**

1. There is a significant relationship between locus of control and marital satisfaction with sexual satisfaction.
2. Marital satisfaction, and locus of control, predict sexual satisfaction.

### **Method and Material**

#### **Participants and Research design**

The method of study is descriptive and of correlation kind. Statistical population of this research includes all married students who were studying in Islamic Azad University, Sari branch, provided that they have at least three years marital life up to 2011. Sample volume was selected based on Koch ran formula as 200 participants by multi-step clustered sampling method.

#### **Instruments:**

For assessment of locus of control, Rotter's locus of control scale was used. Different researches have reported the validity of this scale between %70 to %81. Also, for measurement of marital satisfaction, 47 questions short form of Inrich's marital satisfaction questionnaire was used. Olson et al have reported the validity of this questionnaire as 0.22 by calculation of alpha coefficient. Also, for measurement of marital satisfaction, 47 questions short form of Inrich's marital satisfaction questionnaire was used. Olson et al have reported the validity of this questionnaire as 0.22 by calculation of alpha coefficient. Also, for assessment of the level of perceived sexual satisfaction was measured by Golombok-Rust Sexual Satisfaction Inventory (GRISS) and a Demographic Information Form. GRISS is a 28 item Likert-type self-report scale which is developed by Rust & Golombok (1983; cited in Tuğrul, Öztan, & Kabakçı, 1993; Wolsky, 1998) in order to assess the quality of sexual relationship and sexual functioning of both individuals and couples. Reliability and validity studies of the scale were made by Tuğrul, et al. (1993) on 243 subjects. The sample consisted of both clinical subjects (73 women and 66 men) who were diagnosed with a sexual dysfunction as well as

randomly selected non-clinical subjects (53 women and 51 men). In terms of internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha was reported as .91 for women and .92 for men. Split-half reliability was reported as .90 for men and .91 for women. These findings point the high reliability of the scale. Additionally, high validity of the GRISS in Turkish population is also reported. Both total scores and subscale scores differentiated the clinical and non-clinical women ( $t = -14.52$ ,  $SD = 123.33$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and men ( $t = -13.93$ ,  $SD = 108.80$ ,  $p < .001$ ). However, only communication subscale did not differentiate the clinical and non-clinical women. Moreover, discriminant analyses indicated that, items truly discriminate 98% of women and 98% of men; and subscales truly discriminates 94% of men and 95% of women (Tuğrul, et al., 1993).

For data analysis, additionally, correlation among the variables were examined and whether multicollinearity among them exists was also checked. Two independent hierarchical multiple regression analyses were the procedure of choice so as to determine relationships among predictor variables and criterion variable. All statistical analyses in this study were conducted through different functions of SPSS program.

## Results

In the current study, a sample which was composed of 200 married persons was investigated. Statistical analysis of data by testing three hypotheses of research at confidence level of 95 percent was led to the following results.

### 1. Correlations Between Variables

Prior to regression analyses, the Pearson correlation coefficients of the variables which were included in regression analyses were computed (see Table 1 and Table 2). First correlation matrix which included sexual satisfaction, marital satisfaction, and locus of control revealed that, all of these variables were related to each other. Sexual satisfaction significantly and strongly correlated with marital satisfaction ( $r = -.73$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In other words, subjects reported higher levels of sexual satisfaction when

they feel that their level of marital satisfaction is high. Sexual satisfaction also significantly correlated with both locus of control ( $r = .22$ ,  $p < .01$ , ( $r = .17$ ,  $p < .01$ ). That is, when a person is more internally control oriented s/he is more sexually satisfied. In addition, subjects reported more marital satisfaction when they reported internal locus of control ( $r = -.20$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

### 2. Predictors of Sexual Satisfaction

Two hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the predictors of sexual satisfaction. In the first analysis, it was examined that whether marital satisfaction, and locus of control, predict sexual satisfaction of the married subjects. Prediction of Sexual Satisfaction: Marital Satisfaction, and Locus of Control, as Predictor At the first step, of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, locus of control was entered to examine whether locus of control predict sexual satisfaction. It is found that, beyond the contribution of self-esteem, locus of control significantly predicted the sexual satisfaction with  $R^2 \text{ change} = .04$ ,  $F \text{ change} (1,197) = 7.39$ ,  $p < .01$ . Furthermore, locus of control accounted for 4% of the variance in sexual satisfaction, meaning that variance in sexual satisfaction was accounted for, partly, subject's locus of control orientation.

At step two, marital satisfaction was entered into the equation in order to see whether marital satisfaction predicts sexual satisfaction. This resulted in a significant change in  $R^2$  with  $R^2 \text{ change} = .36$ ,  $F \text{ Change} (1,196) = 123.5$ ,  $p < .001$ . Marital satisfaction added 37% of the unique variance, suggesting that level of sexual satisfaction were accounted for, mostly, by the subject's level of marital satisfaction. Although marital satisfaction was entered into the equation after locus of control, its contribution was still very important, which indicates that it is a very powerful predictor of sexual satisfaction. Moreover, with all the predictor variables in the equation, 44% of the variance in the sexual satisfaction of the married persons was accounted for (Also see Table 16 which displays  $R^2$ ,  $R^2 \text{ change}$  and  $F \text{ change}$  after each step of the analysis)

**Table 1.** Correlation Matrix for the Variables in the First Regression Analysis

Variables	Sexual Satisfaction	Marital Satisfaction	Locus of Control
Sexual Satisfaction	1.00		
Marital Satisfaction	-.73**	1.00	
Locus of Control	.22**	-.20**	1.00

\*\* $p < .01$

**Table 2.** Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results: Predicting Sexual Satisfaction from Marital Satisfaction, and Locus of Control

Step	Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> change	F change
Step1	Locus of Control	.063	.035	7.39**
Step 2	Marital Satisfaction	.43	.36	123.5***

\*p< .05;                      \*\* p< .01;                      \*\*\* p< .001

### Discussion

In this research, the relationship between locus of control and marital satisfaction with sexual satisfaction of couples was examined. Research findings show that there is a significant relationship between internal locus of control and marital satisfaction sexual satisfaction of couples.

The current research found that locus of control orientation significantly related to sexual satisfaction and contributed to the prediction of this variable. Subjects reported higher sexual satisfaction when they report internal locus of control orientation. Lachman & Weaver (1998) concluded that, spouses with greater sense of control are more likely to engage in more sexual relations. It was also found in this study that, locus of control and marital satisfaction significantly related to each other, meaning that the internal the locus of control, the greater the marital satisfaction. In addition, locus of control significantly contributed to the variance in the marital satisfaction. Based on the relevant literature, it is not surprising. It is reported by several researchers that, the greater the internal locus of control, the higher the relationship and marital satisfaction (Bugaghis, Schumm, Bollman, & Jurich, 1983; Doherty, 1981; Lachman & Weaver, 1998; Myers, 1999; Ross, 1991) which is similar to the current findings of the study. According to Ross (1991), marriage has a powerful effect on the sense of control. It may increase the sense of control by increasing social support, as well as social and economic resources. On the other hand, marriage may decrease the sense of control by decreasing autonomy, freedom and independence. Madden & Janoff-Bulman (1981) reported that, wives who feel they have control over the negative marital events experience greater marital satisfaction. Similarly, Doherty (1981) argues that, because they experience more personal control on marital events, internals may try more to achieve success in their marriages. They are more likely to behave in a positive and active way to make their marriage happier. In contrast, externals exhibits a passive stance toward

their marriage which may be the result of their belief in personal ineffectiveness. Studying the effects of marital locus of control on marital quality, Myers (1999) found that, the most satisfactory and less conflictual marriages occur among spouses who feel they have control over marital events. Spouses with lower levels of marital locus of control reported more marital strains and poorer marital quality. Similarly, Crandall and Crandall (1983; cited in Carton & Nowicki Jr., 1994) concluded that, internal locus of control is generally found to facilitate better interpersonal relationships and higher self-esteem. On the contrary, in terms of marital quality, external locus of control was found to be related to higher frequency of negative tactics to resolve conflict, being less committed to the relationship, lower levels of marital satisfaction and higher levels of verbal aggression, physical violence, and angry response style (Scanzoni & Amett, 1987; Winkler & Doherty, 1983) (cited in Myers, 1999). It is also reported by some studies (Hünler & Gençöz, 2003) that, when a spouse regard the marital problems as “unsolvable” his/her level of marital satisfaction is likely to decrease. Similarly, it is also stated that blaming other spouse and not taking the responsibility for marital problems is harmful for the marriage, since marital problems are interactional (Berg-Cross, 2001).

The association of locus of control with both sexual and marital satisfaction may be best understood from the Marks' (1998) point of view. Marks (1998) defines the locus of control construct as a learning process and claim that people with internal locus of control can change their behaviors easily since they believe that they can control the reinforcements. From this perspective, it is reasonable that internals experience more satisfactory relationships. They are likely to change their behaviors to reach the desired outcomes since they believe that personal efforts can be effective for their sexual and marital satisfaction. Marital satisfaction strongly correlated to sexual satisfaction, meaning the greater the marital satisfaction, the greater the sexual satisfaction. In addition, contributing to a large

portion of variance in sexual satisfaction, marital satisfaction occurs as a very powerful predictor of sexual satisfaction. This finding is consistent with a large body of previous research. Although there are few studies indicating no relationship between sexual satisfaction and marital satisfaction (e.g., Colebrook Seymour, III, 1998) there are many studies which indicates that these two variables significantly predict each other (Brezsnyak, 2001; Fielder, 2001) and there is a consistent positive association between these variables (Meadow, 1982; Renaud & Byers, 1977; Timm, 1999). It is reported that relationship problems negatively effect the couple's sexual satisfaction (Crowe, 1995; Hawton, 1985; Dziegielewski & Resnick, 1998). Crowe (1995) suggests that, sexual relationship of a couple is the microcosm of their general relationship. As a result, sexual relationship and general relationship may be affected by each other. In a recent study, Timm (1999) sampled married individuals and found a relationship between marital satisfaction and sexual satisfaction. In another study, Renaud & Byers (1997) reported that, the greater the relationship satisfaction, the greater the level of sexual satisfaction. Indicating the strong relationship between sexual and marital satisfaction, some researchers (Uçman, 1982) suggest that, if a couple experience serious marital problems, these problems must be solved before starting the sex therapy process. Uçman (1982) also reported that, individuals who give up the sex therapy before they resolve sexual problems are generally the persons who want to continue their power to manipulate the other spouse who is responsible for the sexual problems. Moreover, when Turkish marriages are considered, the strong relationship between marital and sexual satisfaction that was found in this study is not surprising indeed. As it was indicated by this study, in Turkey, individuals generally gain a continuous sexual life with the marriage. For many Turkish people, marriage and sexuality are overlapped. As a result, the finding in this study which indicates the strong association between sexual and marital satisfaction is expected.

**Corresponding Author:**

Askari Asghari Ganji  
Education University, Babol Iran  
E mail: [asghariganji@yahoo.com](mailto:asghariganji@yahoo.com)

**References**

1. Ackerman, M.D. (1995). Introduction to the special section on contemporary issues in human sexuality: Research and Practice. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 63(6), 859-861.

2. American Psychiatric Association. (1994). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (4th ed.). Wasington DC: Author
3. Amato, P.R. & Booth, A. The legacy of parents' marital discord: Consequences for children's marital quality. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(4), 627-638.
4. Baumeister, R.F. & Leary, M.R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychology Bulletin*, 117(3), 497-529.
5. Barash, D.P. & Lipton, J.F. (2002). *Gender gap: The biology of male-female differences*. London: Transaction Publishers
6. Bird, G. & Melville, K. (1994). *Families and intimate relationships*. London: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
7. Berg-Cross, L. (2001). *Couples therapy*. Binghamton: The Haworth Press, Inc.
8. Carton, J.S. & Nowicki, Jr., S. (1994). Antecedents of individual differences in locus of control of reinforcement: A critical review. *Genetic, Social and General Psychology Monographs*, 120(1), 13-21.
9. Cetin, S. (1995). Farkh vas gruplarmdaki erkeklerde antropozu iliskin belirtilerin cinsel doyumun ve vasama bakis acisinin incelenmesi. Ankara.
10. Christopher, F.S., & Sprecher, S. (2000). Sexuality in marriage, dating, and other relationships: A decade review. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 999-1017.
11. Christopher, F.S., & Sprecher, S. (2000). Sexuality in marriage, dating, and other relationships: A decade review. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 62, 999-1017.
12. Crow, M. (1995). Couple therapy and sexual dysfunction. *International Review of Psychiatry*, 7, 195-205.
13. Crowe, Michael, Reedly, Jean (2000). *The applied couple therapy with systemic-behavioral procedure*. Translation by Ashraf al sadat Mousavi. Mehr Kaviyan publications.
14. Colebrook Seymour, III, J. (1998). Sexual satisfaction in marriage during the childbearing years. Unpublished masters thesis, University of California.
15. Dokmen, Z.Y. & Tokgoz O. (2002). Cinsiyet. Egitim. Cinsiyetroluilevlikdoyumu. algılananbenzerlikarastindakiiliskiler. XII. Ulusal Psikoloji Kongresi. Ankara.
16. Dziegielewski, S.F., & Resnick, C. (1998). Treatment of sexual dysfunctions: What social workers need to know. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 8, 685-698.
17. Ellis, Albert, Harper, Robert (1995). *Ways of successful marriage*. Translation by Elham Shafiee. RASA cultural services institution, page 45.6.

18. Fisher, T. D. & Mc Nulty, J.K. (2008). Neuroticism and marital satisfaction. The mediating
19. Glasser, William. Glasser, Carlin (2007). Eight lessons for happier marital life. Translation by Mehrdad Firouzbakht, Tehran, Virayesh publications. Pp. 111-115.
20. Gottman, J.M. (1993). A theory of marital dissolution and stability. *Journal of family psychology*:
21. Gökmen, A. (2001). Evli eşlerin birbirlerine yönelik kontrolçülük ve bağımlılık algılarının evlilik doyumu üzerindeki etkisi. Unpublished masters thesis, Hacettepe University, Ankara.
22. Hayden, R. L. (1999). Women's orgasm consistency in heterosexual marriage. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University.
23. Hawton. K. (1985). *Sex therapy: A practical guide.* New York: Oxford University Press.
24. Honar-parvaran, Nazanin, (2006). The study of relationship between psychological and family factors in sexual satisfaction of the married women. Shiraz, Second congress for family pathology in Iran, Tehran, university of Shahid Beheshti, Family research Academy.
25. Hunt, M. (1974). *Sexual behavior in the seventies* Chicago, play body press.
26. Judge, T.A. & Bono, J.E. (2001). Relationship of core self-evaluations traits -self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability-with job satisfaction and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(1), 80-92. 99
27. Kiecolt-Glaser, J.K. & Newton, T.L. (2001). Marriage and health: His and Hers. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127(4), 472-503.
28. Karney, B.R. & Bradbury, T.N. (1995). The longitudinal course of marital quality and stability: A review of theory, method, and research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 118(1), 3-34
29. Klermer, R.H. (1970). Marriage and family relationships. New York: Harper & Roe, Publishers.
30. Kohn, I.I. & Kaplan, S.A. (2000). Female sexual dysfunction: What is known and what can be done? *Contemporary OB/GYN*, 45, 25-36.
31. Lachman, M.E.& Weaver.S.L. (1998). Sociodemographic variations in the sense of control by domain: Findings from the Mac Arthur Studies f midlife. *Psychology and Aging*. 13(4)33,37
32. Lefcourt, H. M. (1976). *Locus of Control: Current Trends in Theory and Research* New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. ISBN 0- 470-154044-0.
33. Masters, W.H., Johnson, V.E., & Kolodny, R.C. (1995). *Human sexuality.* Boston: Longman.
34. Meadow. R.M. (1982). Factors contributing to the sexual satisfaction of married women: A multiple regression analysis. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Arizona State University.
35. Myers, S. (1999). Marital strains and marital quality: The role of high and low locus of control. *Journal of Marriage & Family*, 61(2), 45-48.
36. Nurmi. J.F., Pulliainen. H. & Salmela-Aro.K. (1992). Age differences in adults' control beliefs related to life goals and concerns. *Psychology and Aging*. 7. 194-196.
37. Rho. J.J. (1989). Multiple factors contributing to marital satisfaction in Korean-American marriages and correlations with three dimensions of family life satisfaction-marital, parental, and self-satisfactions. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Kansas State University.
38. Renaud, C. & Byers, E.S. (1997). Sexual and relationship satisfaction in Mainland China. *Journal of Sex Research*, 34(4), 67-79.
39. Ross. C.E. (1991) . Marriage and the sense of control.*Journal of Marriage and Family* 53(4).831-839.
40. Rotter, J.B. (1990). Internal versus external control of reinforcement: A case history of a variable. *Amercian Psychologist*, 45(4), 489-493.
41. Samelson, D.A. & Hannon, R. (1999). Sexual desire in couples living with chronic medical conditions. *Family Journal*, 7(1), 29-39.
42. Southern, S. (1999). Facilitating sexual health: Intimacy enhancement techniques for sexual dysfunction. *Journal of Mental Health Counselling*, 21, 15-33.
43. Shapiro. D.H. Schwartz, C.F. & Astin, J. A. (1996).Controlling our selves.Controlling our world: psychologys role in understanding positive and gaining control.*American psychologist*. 51 (12) 1213-1230.
44. Timm.T.M. (1999). The effects of differentiation of self, adult attachment, and sexual communication on sexual and marital satisfaction: A path analysis. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.Purdue University.
45. Tuğrul, C., Öztan, N., & Kabakçı, E. (1993). Golombok-Rust Cinsel Doyum Ölçeği'nin standardizasyon çalışması. *Türk Psikiyatri Dergisi* 4(2), 83-88.
46. Wood, W., Rhodes.N.,& Whelan. M. (1989). SEX differences in positive wellbeing: A consideration of emotional style and marital status. *Psychological Bulletin*. 106(2).249-264.