# AN APPROACH TO THE MARITAL QUALITY AND THE FACTORS INFLUENCING

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**ABSTRACT**

*Marital life has always been the influence on the quality of life when the factors satisfying the same are to be considered. Various impacting factors are analysed to their relevance when it comes to the marital life quality as a basis and factor for the overall life quality and satisfaction of the life. This paper analyses the relevance and vitality of the marital quality.*

***Keywords:*** *Marital Quality, Factors Influences, Marital Model.*

## INTRODUCTION

Human ambition has always intended to have a desirable quality of life which is one of the most important issues the world is facing today. Quality of life is an active, dynamic and multifaceted flow of perceptions, attitudes and behavioral changes and can be achieved from a variety of experiences that happen in life (Simon et al., 2003; Peterson and Bedew, 2004; NickPour, 2007; Nourani et al., 2012).

One of the domains of quality of life is marital quality to describe which, the terms such as adjustment, satisfaction, happiness; integrity and commitment are used (Lewis and spinier, 1979; Ails, 2004; Truxel, 2006; Yousefiet al., 2010; Shahsiahet al.2011black; Khwaja et al.2013).

Quality of marital life is a dynamic concept, because the nature and quality of relations between the spouses will change over time (Larson and Holman, 1994; Gholamalyan et al., 2007; Khwaja et al., 2013).

Therefore we cannot predict, a couple of high degree of marital quality will reserve their status forever. It should be noted that the quality of marital life is not a still image of separate classes, i.ethemarriage of high quality and marriage of low quality, but it is graded on a continuum from high to low (Amato & Rogers, 1999).

The quality of the marital relationship dependents on the elements creating stability and continuity of the relationship and understanding (Khojasteh Mehr, 2013).

Some of the factors that affect the marital quality include:

1. Individual factors including gender, health, status of the child bearing, socio-economic status, employment, attitudes to marriage and divorce, premarital relationships.
2. Relational Factors: marriage, interactions, relationships before marriage, the children attending, the division of tasks.
3. External factors including the characteristics of parents, divorced parents, most important people of life (befriends and family), stressful events (Booth & Johnson, as quoted by Shahsiah et al., 2011).

Another important factor that affects the sexual life quality is value and belief systems of spouses. Similarities or differences in beliefs and values of the spouse affect the dynamics of the marital life. These cultural elements can be related to social class, race or process of socialization (Tabrizi, 2006).

Ails (2004) describes the marital quality as success and performance of a marriage while other psychologists today know this issue as an important predictor of continuity, stability and sustainability (Shahsiah et al., 2011; Khwaja et al., 2013).

Zhang and Tsang (2012), consider marital quality as one of the most important aspects of family life among married couples.

Given the multiple definitions contained in books and articles, marital quality in this paper is defined as "the subjective feelings, attitudes and priorities that people expect from the impartial life".

Marriage has been approved as the finest social tradition to achieve security and emotional needs for the adults. But all the marriages are not concomitant with pleasure and happiness to the couples because it depends on marital status and marital quality. Despite the fact that one of the most important factors in mental health of community is sat is factory marriage, but marriage and family life conditions are unsuitable to meet the psychological needs of couples, mental health is not only not realized, but it sometimes leaves

irreversible negative effects on the leaves, So that nervous disorders, depression and suicide are the disorders, including physical, cognitive, behavioral ones and stress are brought about by marital turmoil (Wissmann and Sheldon 2000).

The quality of the marital relationship affects not only mental health of couples but also that of children and other their social roles (Mollahzadeh1993).The high quality of life leads to the desired consistency, good communication and a high level of marital satisfaction (Tabrizi2006).

Jennifer and Vicki (2014) showed that there is a good relationship between marital quality and psychological distress. Thus, in higher marital quality marriages, the couples are protected against psychological distress. Generally, marital quality and mental health are related.

In another research, which was conducted by Segrin and Flora, it was found that marital quality is reduced when the expression of negative feelings and complaints of living are increasing.

Beck and Jones (quoting from Sapengtun, 2001), found that poor marital quality is the most common and bothersome problem in problematic marriages.

The study on marital quality is for a reasonable understanding of it centrality in the family and individual health (Khojasteh Mehr, 2013).

Therefore, a more realistic understanding of the quality of Iranian couples in married life seems to be necessary. On the other hand, most psychiatrists and psychologists, to identify and measure various indicators of family, need to have an accurate and reliable tool in the shortest time possible, to achieve the desired goals. In this regard, one of the most important structures family counselors face in counseling centers to deal with is the marital quality.

Now, in the family counseling centers, to identify the marital quality therapists use various tools without being validated in Iran.

Since religious, social and cultural beliefs affect the priorities and expectations of every person and the questionnaires that are available on marital quality use more general questions in assessing the marital quality while the details are very effective in high and low marital quality,

Psychologists and family counselors rein dire need of a questionnaire on marital quality which can detect different aspects of marital quality in families accurately and with minimal errors while consistent with our culture.

The present study seeks to provide the scale of reliability for measurement of marital quality. The necessity of this research becomes evident when studies show overseas researches in the field of marital quality are increasing, but less attention has been paid to this issue in the country. And most of researches have been in connection with the validation and reliability of questionnaires that have been developed abroad.

result of a family conflicts. Many psychiatric

According to the surveys conducted by reputable sources, a good measure of the marital quality was not found in Iranian society.

Therefore, to measure marital quality of Iranian couples, questionnaire tailored to the Iranians `value system, based on cultural beliefs and priorities of society, was created .

## Methodology:

This study is applied in terms of the purpose and of data collection; it is a descriptive method of factor analysis. The study population was couples referring to counseling centers in Hamadan, From March to the end of August 2014.

In order to obtain an appropriate sample size, random sampling was used. Thus, public announcement was carried out at counseling centers in Hamadan.

The couples referring to the centers were asked to participate in this study.43 married men and women referring to centers participated in the study for consultation in the six months of 2014.

Three of them were women with drawing from the study and the remaining 40 patients completed questionnaires about marital quality.

For research ethics, all participants participated in the study with the full knowledge that the information is collected for research purposes and the identity of the respondents participating in this study would be kept. Before carrying out the questionnaire, a sheet as a guide and justification of the couples was given to each person.

Quality of life questionnaire was structured as follows:

1) Determine the objectives of making the questionnaire of marital quality-Determination of marital quality in the study was based on the theoretical and research foundation and reviewing the articles related to marital quality.

2) study of quality of life and marital quality questionnaires.

3) Providing a pool of marital quality questionnaire. In this study, using data collected the experimentally and interviews with experts and information from texts, articles and, existing questionnaires, 88 questions about marital quality were developed.

4) Preparation of questionnaire executive instructions to the subjects and the experimenter.

5) Random distribution of the questions in the questionnaire.

6) The key and the scoring.

7) Determining the factor structure of questionnaire.

8) The implementation of the final version of the questionnaire and its psychometric properties:

Validation of marital quality question for which the content formal and structure contents were used:
-To measure the content validity, the questionnaire was provided to 12 experts. After application of their opinion to remove, add, and modify questions, content validity of the questionnaire was obtained.
-To determine face Validity, a smooth and fluent writing style was used and wording of the questionnaire was simplified for, so in this section, 10 experts` opinions were used.
-To determine construct validity, factor analysis was used and the results were presented in Table1.
-The reliability of marital quality was determined in which for the internal consistency of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each scale and for the total questionnaire, which is presented in Table2.

Psychometric properties of the test consisted of convergent validity, factor loadings, reliability and significance of the coefficients in the results.

In this study, to analyze data, Smart PLS or partial least squares were used. Partial least squares are known as the second generation of structural equation modeling techniques.

This approach .due to less dependence on the sample size, measurement level of variables, normal distribution and using established devices, is a reasonable approach.

The exploratory nature of this approach, on the other hand, helps the researchers to discover and develop theories based on local culture.

Finally, the use of this method is related to dealing with the formative measurement models (Ringle et al, 2012). The attraction of this structural equation modeling in various fields of science is for two reasons:

1. Indealing with multiple relationships simultaneously, this model provides a direct way with a statistical efficiency.
2. The ability of the method to comprehensively assess the relationship

has caused the research to transfer to confirmatory analysis from exploratory analysis. This in turn caused the transition to a more systematic approach in more general problems to appear (Klein, 2011).

**Findings:**

Firstly, after are view of the literature, the concept of marital quality was obtained. Secondly, from the empirical data collected through interviews with experts and information from texts, articles and surveys available, significant units were extracted and categorized based on the subject.
The significant data obtained from the literature and texts were used to design the questions of questionnaire of marital quality. 89 questions in eight scales were determined Communication and marital expectations; Respect and empathy; Religious activities; Health; Leisure; Sexual relations; Emotional Reaction; Food Habits, which represents marital quality (attitudes and perceptions of people with mental illness in marital status, objectives, expectations, communication and needs in the context of the culture and value systems in which they live).
The questionnaire responses were as the 5-point Likert scale (very high, high, somewhat, a little, not at all).Thirdly, two question of content validity based on Waltz and Baseland the experts` opinions did not obtain their scores and were excluded from the initial questionnaire.
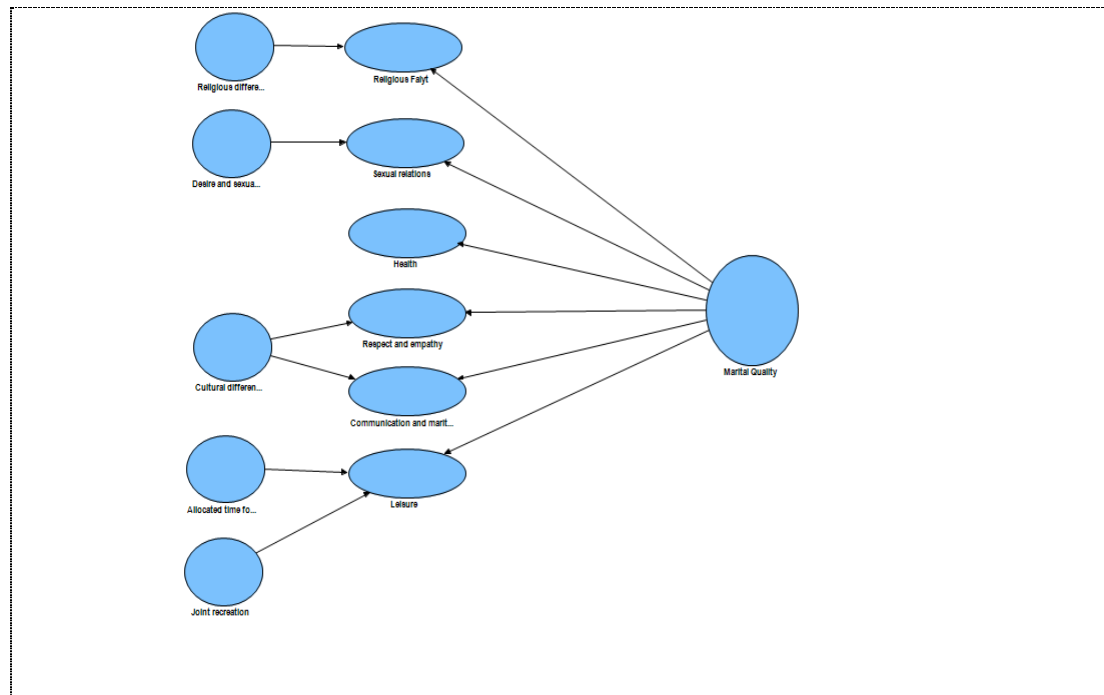At this stage, 87questions were analyzed by statistical software of Smart PLS.
After the factor analysis, 12 questions failed to reach the minimum factor loading of 0.40, so they were excluded from the questionnaire and following statistical analysis process, 2 scales (Food Habits and Emotional Reaction) were deleted from the original 8 scales.
As a result, the final version of the questionnaire consisted of 65questionson, 6 scales in which marital quality was evaluated.

The final conceptual model which was obtained by the PLS approach, is as follows:

Figure1: Conceptual model of marital quality questionnaire



This model contains 6 scales: The scale of Communication and marital expectations, Scale of Respect and empathy; Scale of Religious activities; Scale of Health; Scale of Leisure; Scale of Sexual relations. High scores on each of the scales in the questionnaire indicate that marital quality is good.
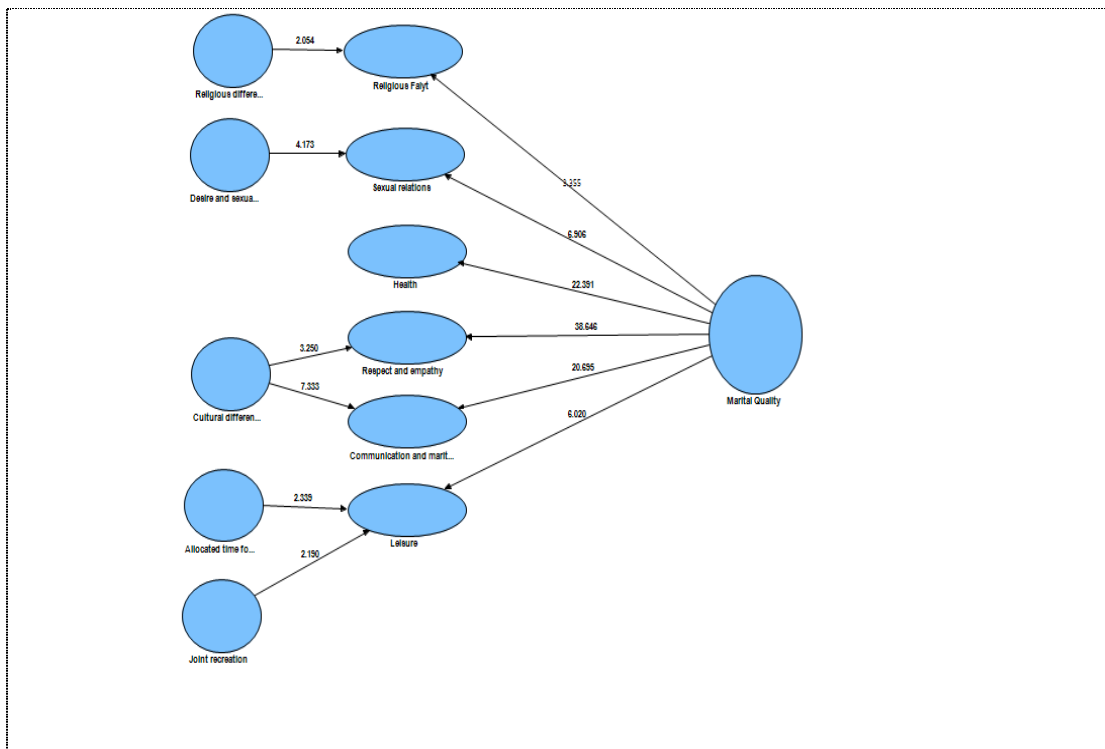
Each scale consists of the following items:
-18 questions assess the scale of Communication and marital expectations
- 8 questions assess the scale of Respect and empathy
- 5 questions assess the scale of Religious activities
**-** 6 questions assess the scale of Health
- 7 questions assess the scale of Leisure
**-** 11 questions assess the scale of Sexual relations

This model includes five independent variables, in addition to scales; the application of each variable is for measurement of each variable effect on the scale desired:
- One question assesses the variable Joint recreation
- One question assesses the variable Religious differences
- One question assesses the variable Cultural difference
- Three questions assesses the variable Desire and sexual satisfaction
- Two questions assesses the variable Allocated time for leisure

Significance models based on PLS approach was obtained as follows.

Figure2: Model of significance of marital quality questionnaire



As shown in Figure2, significantcoefficients of each of the dimensions are listed in the questionnaire, so that the scale of Communication and marital expectations is 20.695, the scale of Religious activities, 9.355, scale of Health, 22.391 , scale of Leisure, 6.020; scale
Of Respect and empathy, 38.646, scale of Sexual relations, 6.506.

The variable Joint recreation, was 2.150 in relation to the scale of Leisure; Variable Religious differences, 2.054in relation to the scale of Religious activities; Variable Cultural difference, 7.333 in relation to the scale of Communication and marital expectations and 3.250 in relation to the scale of Respect and empathy; variable Desire and sexual satisfaction, 4.173 in relation to the scale of Sexual relations; variable Allocated time for leisure, 2.339 in relation with Leisure.

In this model, each questionnaire has a separate factor load and T-Value as can be seen in the table below:

Table1: Factor load and T-statistic for each question

| Question | Factor load | T-Value | Question | Factor load | T-Value | Question | Factor load | T-Value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q1 | 1.000000 | 14.479208 | Q27 | 0.780295 | 22.214595 | Q64 | 0.555493 | 7.788288 |
| Q2 | 1.000000 | 14.479208 | Q28 | 0.691712 | 13.168590 | Q65 | 0.718091 | 9.946906 |
| Q3 | 1.000000 | 14.479208 | Q29 | 0.561578 | 4.964564 | Q66 | 0.739242 | 13.691613 |
| Q4 | 1.000000 | 14.479208 | Q31 | 0.711635 | 10.748728 | Q67 | 0.693454 | 9.400481 |
| Q5 | 0.944189 | 88.558855 | Q33 | 0.759559 | 14.479208 | Q68 | 0.611995 | 6.259078 |

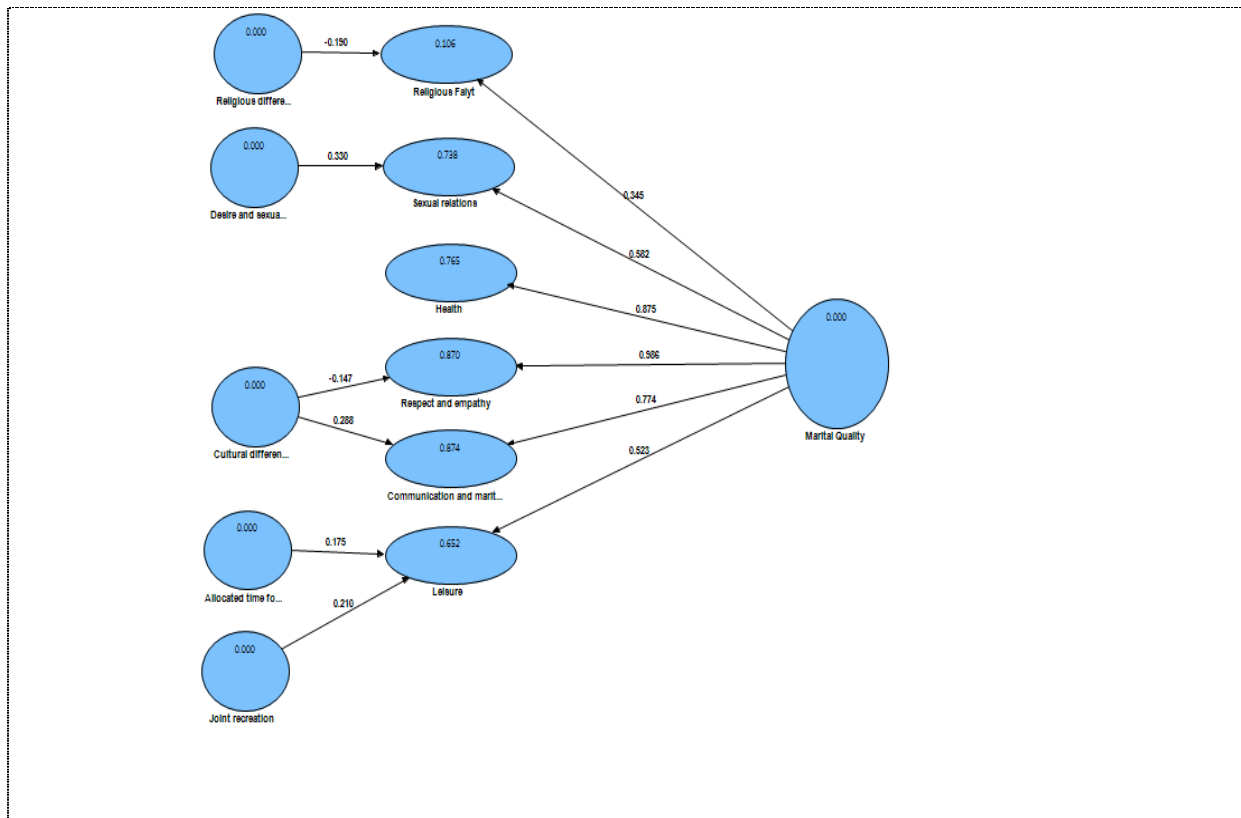| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Q6 | 0.900478 | 47.919055 | Q34 | 1.000000 | 14.479208 | Q69 | 0.781962 | 13.889966 |
| Q7 | 0.799592 | 15.369500 | Q35 | 0.684938 | 13.526821 | Q70 | 0.655110 | 8.199761 |
| Q8 | 0.784714 | 22.279909 | Q36 | 0.399990 | 4.249773 | Q71 | 0.552730 | 7.357954 |
| Q9 | 0.765261 | 12.642267 | Q37 | 0.598848 | 9.536578 | Q72 | 0.669959 | 12.636335 |
| Q10 | 0.814881 | 17.784831 | Q41 | 0.637829 | 8.664315 | Q75 | 0.706109 | 18.151813 |
| Q11 | 0.733181 | 15.928719 | Q43 | 0.896721 | 8.043098 | Q76 | 0.640594 | 6.507396 |
| Q12 | 0.787418 | 14.543270 | Q44 | 0.892828 | 6.330134 | Q77 | 0.430468 | 6.281482 |
| Q13 | 0.804493 | 19.150655 | Q45 | 0.918698 | 6.880412 | Q78 | 0.651375 | 9.065023 |
| Q14 | 0.851307 | 27.232090 | Q46 | 0.698205 | 4.434005 | Q79 | 0.712312 | 13.891687 |
| Q15 | 0.720092 | 13.836546 | Q47 | 0.805161 | 8.520133 | Q87 | 0.484307 | 5.121047 |
| Q16 | 0.895607 | 40.768955 | Q52 | 0.511742 | 6.082062 | | | |
| Q17 | 0.818254 | 22.513935 | Q54 | 0.795716 | 12.568948 | | | |
| Q19 | 0.751520 | 14.148985 | Q55 | 0.901558 | 48.879852 | | | |
| Q20 | 0.867503 | 28.021994 | Q56 | 0.789788 | 12.803958 | | | |
| Q21 | 0.883868 | 44.599817 | Q57 | 0.798405 | 20.263102 | | | |
| Q22 | 0.819940 | 22.940933 | Q58 | 0.673273 | 8.693975 | | | |
| Q23 | 0.802507 | 15.605334 | Q60 | 0.864217 | 39.895253 | | | |
| Q24 | 0.813824 | 17.677504 | Q61 | 0.834460 | 16.638297 | | | |
| Q25 | 0.875665 | 19.460795 | Q62 | 0.742820 | 22.653882 | | | |
| Q26 | 0.961177 | 98.236447 | Q63 | 0.866660 | 36.393492 | | | |

In this study, the inflection point of 0.40 was considered as the minimum factor load required for each item in the scales extracted from the factor analysis. After questions were extracted at each scale, the extent of their agreement with the scale and concept of marital quality were assessed.

As can be seen inTable1, factor loadings of 65 items remaining were significant at 0.999 levels. From 87 questions in the original questionnaire, 65 items remained, all of which had suitable loading and proper T-Value.

In order to obtain the effectiveness of each of the 6 scales on the original concept (marital quality), we use Figure 3

Figure3: Coefficients of the impact of different dimensions of marital quality questionnaire



As can be seeninFigure3.The effect coefficient of each scale of the questionnaire on marital quality is mentioned, so that for the scale of Communication and marital expectations, the coefficient is 0.774; for scale of Religious activities, coefficient is0.345, for scale of Health, coefficient is0.875; scale of Leisure, coefficient is 0.523, for scale of Respect and empathy, the coefficient is 0.586; for scale Sexual relations, the coefficientis0.582.

For the variable Joint recreation, the coefficient is 0.210 in relation to the scale of Leisure; for Variable of Religious differences, the coefficient is -0.190 in relation to the scale of Religious activities (the greater religious difference the couples have, the more influence it has on their religious activities negatively), variable of cultural difference has -0.147 related to the scale of respect and empathy (the greater cultural difference the couples

have, the greater the negative impact will be on respect and empathy, also the variable of cultural difference; for Variable Cultural difference, coefficient is 0.288 in relation to Communication and marital expectations and the coefficient is -0.147 in relation to the scale of Respect and empathy; for variable Desire and sexual satisfaction, the coefficient is 0.330 in relation to the scale of Sexual relations; for variable Allocated time for leisure, the coefficient is 0.175 in relation to the scale of Leisure .

Finally, for questionnaire of marital quality, alpha chronbach was obtained to be 0.9544 showing that this tool has high internal reliability.

The output of Cronbach's alpha and convergent validity is shown in Table 2.

Table2: Output of Chronbach's alpha

| | AVE | Composite Reliability | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Religious differences** | 1.000000 | 1.000000 | 1.000000 |
| **Allocated time for leisure** | 0.845325 | 0.916014 | 0.829325 |
| **Communication and marital expectations** | 0.589403 | 0.961849 | 0.956646 |
| **Cultural differences** | 1.000000 | 1.000000 | 1.000000 |
| **Desire and sexual satisfaction** | 0.619261 | 0.827612 | 0.684532 |
| **Health** | 0.679533 | 0.926940 | 0.905242 |
| **Joint recreation** | 1.000000 | 1.000000 | 1.000000 |
| **Leisure** | 0.455678 | 0.851491 | 0.797456 |
| **Marital Quality** | 0.40668 | 0.959856 | 0.954445 |
| **Religious Falyt** | 0.716206 | 0.925928 | 0.904789 |
| **Respect and empathy** | 0.541153 | 0.899589 | 0.868073 |
| **Sexual relations** | 0.461044 | 0.902952 | 0.882979 |

If composite reliability is greater than 0.7, the internal reliability is suitable and less than 0.6, there will be lack of reliability .In this research, CR for marital quality is 0.95 showing that the questionnaire has suitable internal reliability.

To confirm the validity of measuring tool, AVE was used showing the mean of variance shared between each construct with its indexes and the correlation of a construct with its indexes which is obtained as 0.4066 in this research.

**Discussion:**

The purpose of this study is to construct a measure for assessing the marital quality and the validity and reliability of the scale. We can consider as an innovation becauseofdesign and psychometrics of marital quality questionnaire.

Other researchers are in the field of standardization of questionnaires that have been developed abroad.

Content and face validity of items designed was performed with an overview of the studies and the opinions of teachers and scholars. The validity of construct was confirmed by factor analysis. In the factor analysis, 6 scales in this questionnaire were determined as the factors of marital quality consisting: scale of Communication and marital expectations, scale of Respect and empathy, scale of Leisure, scale of Religious activities, scale of Health, and Sexual relations scale.

The Food Habits and Emotional Reaction scales were excluded from the final questionnaire; the questions of these scales did not have the appropriate factor loading sand T-Value.

In Food Habits couples `food habits and styles and preferences of couples were investigated. Food habits and preferences of couples were shown to have little impact on couples`marital quality. In this study, the significant relationship between the scale and the main concept of marital quality was not found. In Emotional Reaction scale, emotional reactions of couples in times of anger and reconciliation, anger and raising children were investigated.

The question of the scale did not have proper factor loading sand T-Value, so they were excluded from the final questionnaire. This scale had no significant relationship with marital quality.

Differences in Education and Native Language were excluded from the questionnaires for the following reasons. Efficacy and significant relationship Differences in Education on the two scales of Respect and empathy Communication and marital expectations were investigated.

It was found that the difference of the spouses 'educational level, with expectations and their relationship with each other has no significant correlation and difference of spouses

'education level does not affect the attention ,compassion, and their empathy. Effectiveness and significant relationship between Native Language were evaluated on a scale of Respect and empathy. The results showed that the difference in the native language of the couples does not attention, love and empathy and there was no significant relationship between them.

## CONLUSION

Variable Religious differences have an inverse relationship with the scale of Religious activities and Cultural difference has an inverse significant relationship with Respect and empathy. Other variables had direct significant relationship with the respective scale.

Also, in this research, the alpha coefficient of chronbach, composite reliability and the convergent validity of the test were determined for each scale and the questionnaire showing high coefficients. The internal consistency and stability of marital quality questionnaire were verified. In the end, the results showed that marital quality questionnaire of Likert-type in 6 scales with 65 questions is valid and reliable.

Due to the lack of valid and reliable instruments in accordance with Iranian cultural conditions, using this questionnaire to measure the quality of marriage can be useful.

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