



Development of a conceptual model of stable and satisfactory marriage in couples applying for adoption: a qualitative study

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Abstract

Aim: The present study was aimed to develop a conceptual model of satisfactory sustainable marriage in couples seeking adoption.

Method: This research has been done qualitatively using grounded theory of the foundation. Using purposive sampling method, the subjects were selected according to the inclusion criteria and until theoretical saturation, finally 18 couples with satisfied and stable marriages a semi-structured interview was conducted for them and analyzed using Strauss and Corbin continuous comparison method.

Results: The product of the open coding stage was reaching 112 primary codes, 23 sub-categories and 9 main categories and one central category. The central category in this study is infertility acceptance, a dynamic for the experience of genuine and committed love during marriage. Community, strategic support of those relatives the interventionist conditions and the category of personality and educational structure of couples Background and couples used constructive strategies to resolve marital and family conflicts and religious confrontation as constructive strategies and the end result of life satisfaction, acceptance with compassion and commitment to the spouse.

Conclusion: Based on the results of this study, infertility acceptance and the experience of genuine and committed love in infertile couples whose main outcome is satisfaction is not accidental but is possible by constructive and active choice and action and is an individual, family and interactive process that Couples consciously strive for the growth and excellence of marriage and care for it, companionship, marital union and the acquisition of marital skills and effective strategies for health and happiness, and ultimately gain satisfaction and stability in marriage.

Keywords: *Stable marriage, Satisfaction, Infertile couple, adoption.*

Introduction

Infertility seems to be a mutual situation and it causes the husband and wife to share their feelings and thoughts, therefore it has a positive effect on marital intimacy because there is evidence that shows that the issue of infertility is also beneficial for couples. As a common problem, it forces couples to talk more, share their feelings about the problem and possible solutions, which increases intimacy and closeness in their relationship (Schied & Holatin, 2005; Holtzo-Berge-Mueller, 2007). Although there are often no severe emotional problems between infertile couples, the quality of life shared by these couples is usually and largely affected by infertility. Also, the results of some researches show that for many infertile couples, this experience provides an opportunity to improve the quality of their relationship with their spouse and become more intimate with each other (Khan-Abadi, Esmaili, and Farahbakhsh, 2018).

Another importance of quality and marital satisfaction of infertile couples is also significant in that it helps them to increase their chances of success by choosing and planning effective interventions in this field by continuing the assisted fertility treatment process. On the other hand, the satisfaction of relationship and marriage is influenced by the cultural context of the society. Factors influencing marital satisfaction are different in different cultures. Cultural values and beliefs, in addition to shaping people's view of themselves, also shape people's view of intimacy, love, and a good relationship (Hanler and Genkoz, 2005). Therefore, in order to show their effectiveness, research should be done in the cultural-social context of each society. In order to improve the satisfaction level of commitment and stability in marriage, we need to identify the factors that influence it in order to develop a suitable model for it. According to what has been said, it can be said that identifying the factors affecting a stable and satisfying marriage in a context where people have experienced infertility and not having children together and have been able to cope with the adversities and adverse conditions and its stresses, provides a better explanation for the pattern. Considering the importance of stable and satisfying marriage, this research seeks to investigate the experiences, perceptions and attitudes of infertile couples. In this way, he studies the process of forming a stable and satisfying marriage and how the influencing variables affect it when there is no common factor as a child, and presents a qualitative and native model that includes the effective factors and how to create this phenomenon. Therefore, the main question of the current research is as follows: Can the conceptual model of stable and satisfactory marriage be formulated in couples applying for adoption?

Method

This research has been done qualitatively using grounded theory of the foundation. Using purposive sampling method, the subjects were selected according to the inclusion criteria and until theoretical saturation, finally 18 couples with satisfied and stable marriages a semi-structured interview was conducted for them and analyzed using Strauss and Corbin continuous comparison method.

Results

In this research, which lasted for more than a year, the goal was to formulate a conceptual model of stable and satisfactory marriage in couples applying for adoption. The result of the open coding stage was reaching 112 primary codes, 23 sub-categories and 9 main categories. In the central coding stage, the categories obtained from the previous stage were gathered around the central phenomenon of

the research in the three axes of conditions (causal, intervening, contextual), strategies and consequences.

Causal conditions in the current research include efficient couple system, conscious effort to grow and improve marriage and take care of it. Couples have succeeded in creating a satisfying and stable marriage by using efficient couple strategies, including intimacy and love for each other, mutual and common understanding of life, efficient communication, and efficient performance of roles.

1-Intimacy and love towards each other. It means multiple types of intimacy (psychological, sexual and physical, emotional, spiritual, social and recreational intimacy) and making love, loving one's spouse, verbal and non-verbal expression of love, care (prioritizing love and reviving love) in the relationship of couples.

2- Mutual and common understanding of life. Forming a couple's identity and being us in relation to individuality, companionship in problems, trying to understand a common understanding of life, joint decisions and satisfactory financial partnerships, trying to understand each other's phenomenal world and self-disclosure to the spouse are among the sub-categories related to mutual and common understanding of life.

3- Effective communication. Couples experienced successful communication with pleasant conversation, empathy, not blaming and humiliating, logical conversation, expressing expectations and discomforts, listening to each other, talking about the events of the day, respecting each other's wishes, etc.

4- Efficient performance of roles. Cooperation in daily life affairs, role flexibility, role participation, non-task-oriented roles are some of the things that were expressed by the couples.

The personality and educational structure of couples, including effective personality and individual characteristics, psychological capitals of couples, secure attachment of couples are part of the background conditions in the current research, which we will examine in the following.

1- Effective personality and individual characteristics. The participants in this research considered some personal characteristics to be effective and efficient in the satisfaction and stability of their marriage. These characteristics were: honesty, flexibility, kindness and compassion, responsibility and rationality, being patient, being responsible before marriage, facing difficulties and learning to manage them from childhood, forgiveness, not giving up on the goal, being sociable.

2- Psychological capitals of couples. Psychological capitals include hopefulness, optimism, sense of efficiency and resilience of people. People with a high level of resilience are more likely to experience positive emotions in their lives, have higher self-confidence, compared to people who have a low level of resilience. They also have better psychological compatibility. Resilience makes people use their existing capacities in difficult situations and in spite of risk factors to achieve success and growth in their personal life and take advantage of these challenges and tests as an opportunity to empower themselves. In this research, infertile couples benefited from hope, resilience, sense of efficacy, finding meaning in difficulties, feeling valuable and self-esteem, optimism and positive attitude for the stability and satisfaction of their marriage.

3-Secure attachment of couples. The individual characteristics and traits of each member of the couple can predict the health or failure of the relationship. Among the personal traits that are emphasized the most are self-confidence, faith, purposefulness, logical thinking, secure attachment, and emotional maturity. A person's early relationships with parents have an impact on marital relationships.

Also, the type of relationship a person has with his parents and the level of their support can create pleasant emotions and increase marital satisfaction. What is certain is that marital success and satisfaction will not be stable and reliable without having these qualities.

Intervening conditions

1- Emotional and intellectual support. One of the important aspects of support is the emotional, intellectual, financial and informational support of family members to infertile couples, which plays an important and vital role in comforting and helping them face the stress and pressures caused by infertility and treatment conditions. In the present study, the couples have expressed acceptance of families, empathy of families and help with emotional projection, positive parenting patterns, expression of love and affection, effective support of families, and use of useful experiences of those around them.

2- Financial support and providing facilities. The use of family support helped couples in relation to financial and emotional pressures and issues related to infertility treatment.

3- Building boundaries in relations with the main families. Couples in satisfactory and stable relationships had a successful relationship experience by maintaining privacy and boundary building in relationships with the main families and surrounding people and not expressing problems to the families. Unclear boundaries cause an increase in the intermingling of members so that the marital unit cannot maintain its independence from the main families. Also, they had experienced the following things in relation to the main families. Giving priority to the wife over the family, supporting the wife towards the main families, building boundaries in relation to the main families, a respectful relationship without conflict with the families, effective communication with the main families, interest in the spouse's relatives, honesty and effective communication with the families.

4- Respectful relationship without conflict with the main families.

Conclusion

By studying the research literature, it can be said that successful marriage is a multi-dimensional phenomenon and identifying its dimensions requires a lot of effort and study in various fields. Success in marriage is possible only when couples have a set of interpersonal skills and a set of individual traits. Marital compatibility and satisfaction from a stable relationship and marriage requires that couples are aware of ways to strengthen their relationship and cultivate desirable traits in themselves. In this research, the effective personality and individual characteristics of couples' psychological capitals were secure attachment of couples. Many studies have considered factors such as honesty, communication skills, understanding, equality, purposefulness, responsibility, joint efforts, self-confidence, self-esteem, spirituality, friendships, love and trust) as necessary for a successful life. The individual characteristics and traits of each member of the couple can predict the health or failure of the relationship. On the other hand, among infertile couples, the quality of married life is not only influenced by individual characteristics or infertility. The impact of this challenge on their lives depends to a large extent on the existing or created capacities in the relationship between them. In the present study, couples used strategies to support the marital system and resolve conflicts efficiently in order to resolve marital and family conflicts. Moramos and colleagues (2010) concluded in a study that infertile couples and couples who had successful fertility treatment have more marital satisfaction than fertile couples.

Although these couples had problems in adapting to the stressful conditions of infertility, after adapting to these conditions, they reported high marital quality (Khanabadi & Farahbakhsh, 2018). It can be said that the cohesion and flexibility of a couple's relationship can create a balance between stability and change in a relationship in stressful situations. This category, after the quality of the relationship, i.e. coherence and flexibility, is related to the way the couple organizes the relationship, role-based relationships, communication rules, and the ability to agree and negotiate in the relationship between husband and wife. In such conditions, it means when couples can resolve their conflicts in a favorable way and increase their resilience against stress.

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