

## Investigating the Relationship of Forgiveness and Religious Orientation to Marital Conflict

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### Abstract

**Background and Objective:** Since marital conflicts have numerous destructive effects on the family and mental and even physical health of the people in community, it is necessary to know the factors that affect it. Therefore, the present study was an attempt to investigate the relationship of forgiveness and intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation with marital conflicts.

**Methods:** This study is correlational and the statistical population consists of married teachers with children from Qom, who were taking part in an in-service training program in the summer of 2016. Out of them, 224 participants were selected based on Morgan's table by simple random sampling. The participants were evaluated using Allport's religious orientation, Rye's forgiveness and Barati and Sanaei's marital conflict questionnaires. Data were analyzed by Pearson correlation test and multiple regression with backward method. In this study, all the ethical considerations have been observed and no conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

**Results:** The results showed that marital conflicts had a significantly negative relationship with forgiveness and intrinsic religious orientation. There was no significant relationship, however, between marital conflicts and extrinsic religious orientation.

**Conclusion:** Based the findings, it can be concluded that paying attention to the couple's religious orientation and teaching forgiveness skills will play an important role in reducing marital conflicts.

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### Summary

#### Background and Objective

Marriage is one of the most important events in human life, and almost all couples get married in hope for a life with welfare; but during the time, many marriages end in separation. The precursor to couples' separation is marital conflicts. The Conflicts happen when the couples show different degrees of independence and solidarity because of the common decisions they make (1). What is important in the conflict is how to manage it. Forgiving the spouse for his/her offence can be a

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powerful means of managing the conflicts and ending the disturbed relationship (2).

One of the other effective factors in marital conflicts is religion because it includes the guidelines for life and presents a system of beliefs and values which can affect the marital life (3). Based on Allport's view (4), religion can have an intrinsic orientation, which is an end in itself while extrinsic religion is a means of satisfying personal needs.

Regarding the religious context of our society and the religious teachings such as forgiveness in order to establish healthy relationships, the

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present study tries to examine whether there is a meaningful relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation with marital conflict and whether there is any meaningful relationship between forgiveness and marital conflict?

## Methods

**Compliance with ethical guidelines:** In order to observe ethical considerations, while providing sufficient explanations about the importance of the study and the method of implementation, the participants were ensured about the confidentiality of information and were allowed to quit whenever they wanted.

The present study is a correlational study. The statistical population studied in this study included all married teachers with children in Qom who were receiving in-service training in the summer of 2016. From this community (N=627), based on Morgan's table, a sample of 240 people was selected by simple random sampling method. Sixteen questionnaires were excluded from analysis as they had not been appropriately filled in and a total of 224 questionnaires (156 males and 68 females) were submitted to statistical analysis. Data were collected using Alport's Marital Conflict, Voter Forgiveness, and Religious Orientation questionnaires.

## Results

In order to study the relationship between marital conflict with religious orientation and forgiveness, Pearson correlation test was used.

Based on the findings, there was a negative and meaningful relationship between forgiveness and intrinsic religious orientation and the scores related to marital conflict and some of its subscales. However, there was no meaningful relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and marital conflict scores.

Linear regression was used to determine the effect of variables on one another. The results of regression analysis are presented in Table 1.

**Table1. Linear Regression between Marital Conflict Scores and Forgiveness and Religious Orientation**

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	β	B	P-value
Forgiveness	.217	.047	-.217	-.148	.001
Intrinsic religious orientation	.209	.044	-.209	-.069	.002
Extrinsic religious orientation	.02	.000	-.02	-.148	.386

4.7% of the variance in the scores related to marital conflict can be explained by forgiveness, and 4.4% of the variance in conflict can be explained by intrinsic religious orientation.

Regarding the result of two-variable regression by backward method, extrinsic religious orientation variable was removed from the model because it had no meaningful effect on the scores related to conflict.

## Conclusion

Findings of the study show that there was a negative and meaningful relationship between forgiveness and marital conflict, which is in line with the results of Di Blasio and Banda (5), McCullough (6), Afkhami (2), and Salahian (7). There was also a negative and meaningful relationship between marital conflict and internal religious orientation, which is matched with the findings of Marsh and Dallas EN CITE, Butler (9), Sullivan (10), Hunler and Gensoz (3), Mahoney (11), and Nikooi and Seif (12), but external religious orientation did not have any meaningful relationship with marital conflict, which is consistent with the results from the study by Nikooi and Seif (12). In explaining these findings, it can be stated that forgiveness is the process of transforming the negative emotional state into acceptance state (affinity) (13). The role of forgiveness in transforming the emotional states leads to more positive emotional reactions in generous people.

Because individuals with inner religious orientation have deeply accepted religious concepts, whenever a family conflict happens on a particular subject, religion can moderate the disagreements between individuals through spiritual and common religious values (14). But those who have an extrinsic religious orientation are often concerned with their own interests. They even see religion as an instrument for achieving their goals; they likely pay attention to their personal interests in married life as well.

As a result, paying attention to the couples' religious orientation and teaching them forgiveness skills will play an important role in reducing marital conflicts.

This study was constrained by certain limitations. First, it was limited to the statistical society of teachers and, second, the differences between men and women has not been studied in terms of the relationship of variables. Therefore, caution should be practiced in generalizing the findings.

## Acknowledgements

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## Ethical considerations

The Ethics Committee in Biomedical Research of Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences has confirmed this research.

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### Conflict of interest

The authors reported no conflict of interest.

### Author's contributions

Collecting data and writing a research report: first author; Design idea: second author; Statistical analysis of data: third author

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## دراسة العلاقة بين التسامح و التوجه الديني و النزاع الزوجي

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### معلومات المادة

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### الكلمات الرئيسية:

التسامح

التوجه ديني

النزاع الزوجي

### الملخص

**خلفية البحث وأهدافه:** إن للنزاعات الزوجية آثاراً مدمرة عديدة على السلامة الروحية والعائلية وحتى الجسدية لأفراد المجتمع؛ فلذلك تبدو معرفة العوامل المؤثرة عليها أمراً ضرورياً و عليه، فإن هذه الدراسة تهدف إلى البحث عن العلاقة بين النزاع الزوجي وبين التسامح والتوجه الديني الباطني والخارجي.

**منهجية البحث:** هذا البحث من النوع الترابطي وتضمن المجتمع الاحصائي (N=٦٢٧)، المعلمين القميين المتزوجين ذوي الولد والذين كانوا في التدريب أثناء الخدمة في صيف عام ٢٠١٦. استناداً إلى جدول مورغان، تم اختيار عينة مكونة من ٢٢٤ معلم بطريقة أخذ العينات العشوائية البسيطة وتم تقييمهم عن طريق اوراق استبيان "آلبورت" للتوجه الديني و استبيان "راي" للتسامح و استبيان "نثاني" و "براتي" للنزاع الزوجي وبعد ذلك تم تحليل المعطيات عن طريق اختبار الارتباط لـ "ليرسون" واختبار الانحدار الخطي المتعدد على منهج Backward. تمت مراعاة جميع الموارد الأخلاقية في هذا البحث و إضافة إلى هذا فإن مؤلفي البحث لم يشيروا إلى أي تضارب في المصالح.

**الكشوفات:** تشير نتائج البحث أن هناك علاقة سلبية ذات معنى بين النزاع الزوجي والتسامح والتوجه الديني الباطني، و بالتالي النتائج حاكية عن عدم وجود ترابط قوي ذي معنى بين النزاع الزوجي وبين التوجه الديني الخارجي.

**الاستنتاج:** وفقاً للكشوفات يمكن الإستنتاج بأن الاهتمام على قضية التوجه الديني عند الزوجين و السعي وراء تعليم مهارة التسامح اليهما له دور مهم في تقليل النزاعات الزوجية.

يتم استناد المقالة على الترتيب التالي:

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## بررسی رابطه بخشش و جهت‌گیری مذهبی با تعارض زناشویی

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### واژگان کلیدی:

بخشش

تعارض زناشویی

جهت‌گیری مذهبی

### چکیده

**سابقه و هدف:** از آنجاکه تعارضات زناشویی تأثیرات مخرب بی‌شماری بر سلامت روانی، خانوادگی و حتی جسمی افراد جامعه وارد می‌سازد؛ شناخت عوامل مؤثر بر آن امری ضروری به نظر می‌رسد. از این‌رو، پژوهش حاضر با هدف بررسی رابطه تعارض زناشویی با بخشش و جهت‌گیری مذهبی درونی و بیرونی انجام شده است.

**روش کار:** این پژوهش از نوع همبستگی است و جامعه آماری شامل معلمان متأهل و دارای فرزند شهر قم بودند که در تابستان سال ۱۳۹۵ آموزش ضمن خدمت می‌دیدند. از میان این جامعه ( $N=627$ )، بر اساس جدول مورگان نمونه‌ای به حجم ۲۴۰ نفر با روش نمونه‌گیری تصادفی ساده انتخاب شد. آزمودنی‌ها با استفاده از پرسش‌نامه‌های جهت‌گیری مذهبی آلپورت، بخشش رای و تعارض زناشویی ثنایی و براتی ارزیابی شدند و داده‌ها با آزمون همبستگی پیرسون و رگرسیون چندگانه به روش بکوارد تجزیه و تحلیل شد. در این پژوهش همه موارد اخلاقی رعایت شده است و مؤلفان مقاله تضاد منافی گزارش نکرده‌اند.

**یافته‌ها:** نتایج نشان داد که تعارض زناشویی با بخشش و جهت‌گیری مذهبی درونی رابطه منفی و معناداری داشت ولی بین تعارض زناشویی و جهت‌گیری مذهبی بیرونی رابطه معناداری وجود نداشت.

**نتیجه‌گیری:** با توجه به یافته‌ها می‌توان نتیجه گرفت که توجه به جهت‌گیری مذهبی زوج و تلاش برای آموزش مهارت بخشش به آنان نقش مهمی در کاهش تعارضات زناشویی خواهد داشت.

استناد مقاله به این صورت است:

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### مقدمه

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