Predictors of Marital Satisfaction in Married Teachers: Tendency to Cheat and Interpersonal Cognitive Distortions

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine whether the tendency to cheat and interpersonal cognitive distortions have a predictive effect on the marital satisfaction level of married teachers. The sample of the study consisted of 107 (28.1%) male and 271 (71.9%) female married teachers working in Gaziantep. In the study, a Personal Information Form was used to collect data on the demographic characteristics of married teachers, the Marriage Life Scale to measure marital satisfaction level, the Cheating Tendency Scale to measure the level of infidelity tendency, and the Interpersonal Cognitive Distortions Scale to measure interpersonal cognitive distortions. A survey model was used in this study. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Multiple Regression analysis methods were used in the analysis process of the obtained data. As a result of the research, it was concluded that the tendency to cheat and interpersonal cognitive distortions were significant predictors of marital satisfaction. As a result of the analysis, it was concluded that the tendency to cheat and interpersonal cognitive distortions explained 30% of married teachers' marital satisfaction. At the same time, there is a negative and significant relationship between marital satisfaction and the tendency to cheat; a positive and significant relationship exists between the tendency to cheat and interpersonal cognitive distortions. It has been determined that there is a negative and significant relationship between interpersonal cognitive distortions and marital satisfaction.

Keywords:
Marriage satisfaction, tendency to cheat, interpersonal cognitive distortions

1. Introduction

According to Spanier and Lewis (1980), marital satisfaction corresponds to the perception that includes friendship and sexual satisfaction in marriage as well as the satisfaction obtained from the whole marriage. It is also possible to define marital satisfaction as a process that encompasses the satisfaction of individuals in environmental dimensions such as earning, expressing problems, having a joint say in decision-making, and individual dimensions such as effective communication, sexual satisfaction, self-expression of partners, and the style of love they show to each other (Çelik, 2006). The increase in the satisfaction of the spouses from marriage ensures that the relationship they have is strong. At the same time, the increase in satisfaction also supports the physical and mental well-being of individuals. While individuals with high marital satisfaction have low stress levels, their happiness in life is high, and they are more resistant to negative life experiences (Kirby, 2005). Contrary to this situation, the decrease in marital satisfaction may cause individuals to begin to wear out both themselves and their spouses psychologically and physically, and as a result of the situation, the relationship may reach the stage of divorce (Broman, 2000; Cihan-Güngör, 2007). After the divorce process, individuals face life difficulties and experience adjustment problems. Marriage satisfaction is not just a factor that affects individuals. The decrease in the satisfaction of the partners in marriage affects both the physiological and psychological resilience of the children. Therefore, the level of marital satisfaction of the

spouses has an important place in terms of both the continuation of the family institution and the peace of society (Sayan Karahan, 2012).

Decreased marital satisfaction is one of the important reasons for the termination of marriages, as is the concept of infidelity, among other reasons (Kubat, 2012). Hall and Fincham (2006) define cheating as the deterioration of the existing sense of agreement and trust between partners when a third person is involved in the relationship in an emotional, sexual, or romantic way. Blow and Hartnett (2005) refer to cheating as an act that the person performs outside of the relationship that disrupts trust in the relationship and breaks the existing rules in a romantic, emotional, or sexual relationship.

Theories explaining the tendency to cheat define this concept differently. Evolutionary psychology sees the concept of cheating as an evolved method in which individuals try to increase their reproductive success despite the risk of losing their partner (Davies, Shackelford, & Goetz, 2007). According to the developmental systems theory, cheating is an experience that people try for an interventional purpose in adulthood and a method they resort to to eliminate the feeling of freedom that they cannot satisfy in their romantic relationship (Norona, Olmstead, & Welsh, 2017). Psycho-social development theory talks about eight developmental stages in which individuals must live hierarchically. It states that if an individual's needs, such as hope, goal, competence, love, care, and wisdom, are not met at these stages, they will resort to deceptive behavior (Erikson, 1963). The psychoanalytic theory explains the concept of deception from the perspective of the oedipal complex and narcissism. According to this theory, the child perceives the sexual relationship of his parents as a betrayal of his parents against him. This emotion leads to a narcissistic injury and a feeling of revenge in the child, and they develop defense mechanisms as a result of this emotion. As a result of this situation, the child identifies with the unfaithful parent, and this situation causes the urge to cheat (Freud, 1910). When the perspective of attachment theory on the concept of cheating is examined, this theory states that individuals develop relationships in the form of secure and insecure attachment. While individuals with secure attachment have positive beliefs that they can communicate effectively with their spouses, individuals with insecure and anxious attachment state that they resort to cheating because they cannot meet their intimacy needs from the relationship they have (Bowbly, 1973).

When looking at the types of cheating, it is seen that Yeniceri and Kökdemir (2004) consider the concept of cheating as emotional cheating and sexual cheating. According to Lawson (1988), it is possible to define three titles: parallel, traditional, and recreational cheating. Parallel cheating includes conditions where cheating is known to the partner, and this situation is accepted. In the traditional type of cheating, the individual is unaware of being cheated on, does not accept this situation, and sees cheating as a problem for the marital structure. In recreational infidelity, the marriage of the partners has the characteristics of an open relationship. It is based on both parties' knowledge of cheating and mutual acceptance of the extramarital affair. Blow and Hartnett (2005) defined it as sexual, emotional, and both sexual and emotional. Emotional deception is defined as the individual's emotional contact with a third person, having feelings for that person, and sharing with that person while having an existing relationship. Sexual cheating is defined as having sexual intercourse with a third person while a relationship is ongoing. Levine (1998) defines cheating behavior under four headings: love affair, only sexuality, manipulation, and imaginary homosexuality.

Although the theories interpret the concept of cheating in different ways from their own perspective, some individuals exposed to cheating are more attentive in terms of sociability and personal care, but as a result of this event, this process can develop destructive effects in most individuals (Polat, 2006). At the same time, Gordon and Baucom (1998) state that cheating can create a traumatic effect on individuals. In addition to post-traumatic stress disorder, cheating can also cause feelings such as depression, anger, embarrassment, avoidance of new relationships, and emotional bluntness (Glass & Wright, 1992; Gordon, Baucom, & Synder, 2005). When the reasons for cheating are considered, it is possible to list various reasons such as blame, social structure, seduction, sexuality, revenge, and stimulus seeking, but in this study, the concept of interpersonal cognitive distortions, which is a concept related to marital satisfaction and the tendency to cheat, is considered.

Individuals' unrealistic evaluations of the outside world and themselves, their automatic thoughts, and the emotions, thoughts, and behaviors that emerge as a result of these thoughts are called cognitive distortions (Fair, 1986). As a result of these unrealistic and dysfunctional thoughts, various problems occur in the lives of individuals. There is a possibility that individuals' cognitive distortions and irrational thoughts in

interpersonal relationships may cause problems in their relationships (Stackert & Bursik, 2003). Married individuals have various beliefs about how their marital relations should be and how they should progress. The fact that these beliefs of these individuals are far from realism causes married people to experience various problems in their relationships. Dysfunctional beliefs in relationships reflect the behaviors of the partners in the communication process, and the positive or negative communication reactions of the partners to the problems they experience in their relationships arise from their beliefs about the partner (Leahy, 2004).

Cognitive distortions that occur in marriage are a structure that includes more than one concept, such as the concept of marriage itself, attributions about the spouse, unrealistic thoughts, and problem-solving processes in marriage (Güven & Sevim, 2007). It is possible to define unrealistic beliefs, which are an important factor in predicting marital satisfaction, as hard and resistant to change. It is possible to say that individuals who have these irrational beliefs have low marital satisfaction and cannot take an active role in the problems experienced in the marriage process (Christian, OLeary, & Vivian, 1994).

In the study supporting this finding, it was concluded that individuals who experience problems in the marriage process develop cognitive distortions about their spouses, and their marital satisfaction decreases as a result of these negative attributions (Tutarel-Kışlak, 1997). Bradbury and Fincham (1990) revealed that there is a significant relationship between marital satisfaction and negative cognitive attributions towards the spouse. It has been revealed by various studies that marital satisfaction should be high in order for individuals to conduct their marriages in a healthy way. When the literature was examined, no study was found that examined the concepts of marital satisfaction, infidelity tendency, and cognitive distortions related to relationships at the same time. Therefore, it is thought that such a study will contribute to the literature. It is thought that the marital satisfaction of teachers, who are one of the building blocks in the formation of new generations and who are taken as role models by society, will also affect their professional lives. Therefore, selecting teachers as the sample and the fact that there is no previous study that deals with the issues of marital satisfaction, infidelity tendency, and cognitive distortions related to relationships involving only teachers are important in terms of the contribution of this study to the literature With this study, it is important to determine the factors affecting teachers' marital satisfaction and to conduct various studies for teachers, one of the most important elements of society.

2. Methodology

2. 1. Research Model

In this study, a survey research design was used. This study research model is a research model that helps to determine the change between two or more variables and the degree of this change (Balcı, 2009). Screening models are approaches that aim to determine the past or the current situation as it is (Karasar, 1995). In this study, a relational survey model was used to determine the relationship between marital satisfaction, cheating tendencies, and interpersonal cognitive distortions. In the study, multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether the tendency to cheat and the cognitive distortions related to relationships predicted marital satisfaction.

2. 2. Research Sample

The study group for this research consists of 381 married teachers, 274 women, and 107 men working in Gaziantep. It has been taken into account that the individuals participating in the study have been married for at least one year and are currently living with their partners. A simple random method was used while selecting the research group. In this sampling method, individuals have the same chance of being in the study group, and the selected individuals do not affect the chances of other individuals taking part in the research (Büyüköztürk et al., 2018). While 107 (28.1%) of the participants in the research process were male, 274 (71.9%) were female. In the age variable, 138 (36.2%) of the participants were between 20 and 30 years old, 157 (41.2%) were between 31 and 40 years old, and 86 (22.6%) were 41 years old and older. There were 151 (39.6%) participants between 0 and 1 year, 123 (32.3%) between 1-3 years, and 107 (28.1%) after 3 years. As for the duration of marriage, which is another independent variable, there are 163 (42.8%) participants between 1-5 years, 80 (21%) between 6-10 years, 63 (16.5%) between 11-15 years, 44 (11.5%) between 16-20 years, and 31 (8.1%) participants 21 years and over. Participants' age at marriage was between 20 and 30 years for 345 (90.6%) participants and between 31 and 40 years for 36 (9.4%) participants. According to the type of marriage of the

participants, 277 (72.7%) of the participants met and married for love, while 104 (27.3%) of the participants married through arranged marriages. While 89 (23.4%) of the participants did not have children, 129 (33.9%) had one child, 133 (34.9%) had two children, and 30 (7.9%) had three or more children.

2.3. Data Collection Tools and Procedure

Personal Information Form: The Personal Information Form prepared by the researcher was presented to the individuals participating in the research. The personal information form includes the participants' gender, age, duration of premarital cohabitation, duration of marriage, age of marriage, type of marriage, number of children, and perceived socioeconomic status.

Marriage Life Scale: The Marriage Life Scale developed by Tezer (1996) was used to determine the marital satisfaction level of the married individuals included in the study. The scale, consisting of 10 items, is in the form of a 5-point Likert type. An increase in the score obtained from the scale means that the satisfaction of individuals with their marriage increases. The test-retest reliability coefficient of the scale was determined to .85, and the Cronbach Alpha value was determined to .91 for the female sample and .88 for the male sample. When the obtained values are examined, it can be said that the scale is reliable (Tezer, 1986). Within the scope of this research, the Cronbach Alpha value of the scale was determined to .94.

Cheating Tendency Scale: The levels of deception tendencies of the individuals included in the study were determined by the Deception Tendency Scale developed by Polat (2006). The scale developed to measure the level of cheating tendency of married individuals consists of 30 five-point Likert-type items. While the highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 150, the lowest score is 30. An increase in the score to be obtained from the scale means that the tendency of individuals to cheat increases. When the Cronbach's Alpha and bipartite reliability of the scale were examined, it was concluded that the scale's Cronbach's Alpha and bipartite reliability were 0.95. When the values obtained are examined, it can be said that the internal consistency value of the scale is high (Polat, 2006). In this study, the Cronbach Alpha value was determined to .95 in the current participant group.

*Cognitive Distortions Related to Relationships Scale***:** It was developed by Hamamcı and Büyüköztürk (2003) to determine the level of cognitive distortion in the interpersonal relationships of individuals. This scale, which is in the form of a five-point Likert type, consists of a total of 30 items. The highest score an individual can get from the scale is 95, and the increase in the scale score means that the individual's cognitive distortions towards their relationships increase. The scale has sub-dimensions such as "avoiding intimacy", "unrealistic relationship expectations," and "mind reading". Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient: .67;.70 for the proximity avoidance sub-dimension; .76 for the unrealistic relationship expectation sub-dimension; and .74 for the mind reading sub-dimension (Hamamcı and Büyüköztürk, 2006). Within the scope of this research, the overall Cronbach Alpha value of the scale was determined to .84. When the internal consistency coefficients for the sub-dimensions are examined, values of .81 for the proximity avoidance sub-dimension, .80 for the unrealistic relationship expectation sub-dimension, and .75 for the mind-reading sub-dimension are obtained.

2.4. Data Analysis

The data obtained as a result of the study were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) V22 program. Pearson Correlation Coefficient analysis was used to determine the relationship between marital satisfaction, tendency to cheat, and interpersonal cognitive distortion scores of married individuals who participated in the research. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine whether the tendency to cheat and cognitive distortions related to relationships are predictors of marital satisfaction**.** Before performing the multiple regression analysis, it was checked to see if there was multicollinearity. For this, VIF and Tolerance values were examined. The analysis was continued because the VIF value was less than 10 and the Tolerance value was greater than 0.2 (Field, 2005).

2.5. Ethical

The participants were informed about the study, and the approvals for participation in the study were received. The compliance of the research process with ethical rules was ensured with the approval of the ethics committee obtained from the Gaziantep University ethics committee with the number 24718.

3. Findings

Descriptive values of the variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics Table*

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SS	Min	Max	Skewness	Kurtosis
1.Marriage Life Scale	381	36,80	8,99	10	50	-,696	-,067
2.Cheating Tendency Scale	381	52,65	20,5	30	142	1,27	1,30
2.Cognitive Distortions Related to Relationships Scale	381	49,19	10,41	19	91	,068	,490
4.Avoidance of intimacy	381	19,08	5,44	8	36	,223	-,199
5.Unrealistic relationship expectation	381	20,90	5,82	8	40	,040	-,140
6. Mind reading	381	9,20	2,57	3	15	-,110	,097

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the dependent and independent variables. Deciding whether the data is normally distributed or not is based on the kurtosis and skewness values being between +1.5 and -1.5 (Tabanchnick and Fidell, 2013). The data were checked with the histogram and the normal probability graph, and it was determined that the data were normally distributed.

Table 2. *Results of Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Analysis Showing the Relationship between Marriage Satisfaction, Cheating Tendency, and Married Teachers*

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1.Marriage Life Scale	1					
2.Cheating Tendency Scale	-.530**	1				
2.Cognitive Distortions Related to Relationships Scale	-.282**	.239**	1			
4.Avoidance of intimacy	-.320**	.288**	.779**	1		
5.Unrealistic relationship expectation	-.230**	.199**	.851**	.412**	1	
6. Mind reading	.058**	-.094**	.474**	.106*	.309**	1

(**p<0.01, *p<0.05 level of correlation)

When Table 1 is examined, it is seen that there is a moderately negative and significant relationship between married teachers' marital satisfaction levels and their tendency to cheat (r=-.530, p<0.01). Based on the results of this analysis, it can be said that as the marital satisfaction of married teachers increases, their tendency to cheat decreases.

As a result of the analysis, it was found that there was a weak negative significant relationship between marital satisfaction and interpersonal cognitive distortions (r=-.282, p<0.01). Based on this finding, it is possible to say that the decrease in individuals' cognitive distortions about relationships will increase marital satisfaction. When the sub-dimensions of the scale are examined, it is seen that there is a negative and weakly significant relationship between married individuals' levels of avoidance of intimacy and marital satisfaction (r=-.320, p<.01). The meaning of this analysis is that as the intimacy avoidance scores of married teachers increase, their marital satisfaction decreases. When the relationship between unrealistic relationship expectation scores and marital satisfaction is examined, a negative and weakly significant relationship is obtained (r=-.230, p<0.01). Based on the findings, it can be said that the increase in married teachers' marital satisfaction will decrease their unrealistic relationship expectations. As a result of another analysis, it is seen that there is no significant relationship between married teachers' marital satisfaction and mind reading levels (r=.058, p<0.01 Based on the results of this analysis, it can be interpreted that as the marital satisfaction of married teachers increases, their cognitive distortions about relationships decrease, and as their cognitive distortions about relationships decrease, their marital satisfaction increases. When the results of the analysis are examined, it is seen that there is a weak negative significant relationship between the tendency of married teachers to cheat and their cognitive distortion levels related to relationships (r=-.282, p<0.01). As a result of the analysis conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between the sub-dimensions of the cognitive distortions scale related to relationships, it is seen that there is a weak negative significant relationship between the sub-dimension of avoidance of intimacy and the tendency to infidelity of married teachers (r=-.320; p<.01). When the relationship between unrealistic relationship expectations and the tendency to cheat, which is another sub-dimension of the scale, is examined, it is seen that there is a weakly significant relationship in the negative direction (r=-.230;

p<0.01). It was found that there was no significant relationship between the tendency of married teachers to cheat and their mind reading levels (r=.058; p>0.01).

In the analysis conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between married teachers' tendency to cheat and their interpersonal cognitive distortions, it is seen that there is a positive, weakly significant relationship between married teachers' interpersonal cognitive distortions and cheating tendency (r=.239; p<0.01). The meaning of this analysis is that as married teachers' interpersonal cognitive distortions increase, so does their tendency to cheat. As a result of the analysis conducted to determine whether there is a relationship between the sub-dimensions of the tendency to cheat and the interpersonal cognitive distortions, it is seen that there is a weakly significant positive relationship between the scores of the intimacy avoidance sub-dimension and the propensity to cheat of married teachers (r=.288; p<.01). As a result of the analysis, it is understood that as the level of avoidance of married teachers increases, their tendency to cheat also increases. When the relationship between unrealistic relationship expectation and cheating tendency, which is another sub-dimension of the cognitive distortions scale, is examined, it is seen that there is a weakly significant positive relationship (r=,199; p<.01). This means that as married teachers' unrealistic relationship expectations increase, their tendency to cheat also increases. Another finding obtained as a result of the analysis is that there is no significant relationship between the tendency to cheat in married teachers and mind reading, which is a sub-dimension of the cognitive distortions related to relationships scale (r=-.094; p<0.01).

Table 4. *Multiple Regression Analysis Results on Whether the Variables of Cognitive Distortions Related to Relationships and Cheating Tendency Predict Marriage Satisfaction*

Variables	B	Standard error	β	t	p	r	partial r
Constant	55,142	1,946		28,332	,000*		
Marriage Life Scale	-215	,019	-,491	-11,125	,000*	-,530	-,497
Cognitive Distortions Related to Relationships Scale	-,142	,038	-,165	-3,733	,000*	-,282	-,189
R=0,554, R²=0,306, f²= 0.44, F=83,519, p=0,000							

When the results of the analysis were examined, it was determined that the independent variables, the tendency to cheat and interpersonal cognitive distortions, significantly predicted marital satisfaction (R= 0,554, R²= 0,306, F=83,519 ; p<.001). Based on this result, it can be said that 30% of the variance in married teachers' marital satisfaction scores is explained by the tendency to cheat and interpersonal cognitive distortions. When the relative importance of the predictor variables on the predicted variable is considered, it is found that the tendency to cheat (β= -,491) is a higher predictor than interpersonal cognitive distortions (β= -,165). According to Cohen's (1988) classification, the value of 0.35 ≤ f2 shows a wide effect. Since f² = 0.44 was obtained in this study, it is possible to say that the result obtained has a wide effect.

4. Conclusion and Discussion

When the results of the study were analyzed, it was found that infidelity tendency and interpersonal cognitive distortions were significant negative predictors of marital satisfaction. It was concluded that infidelity tendencies and interpersonal cognitive distortions explained 30% of married teachers' marital satisfaction. When the relationship between marital satisfaction, infidelity tendency, and interpersonal cognitive distortions was examined, it was seen that there was a significant and negative relationship between marital satisfaction and infidelity tendency level, a significant and positive relationship between infidelity tendency and interpersonal cognitive distortion level, and a negative and significant relationship between marital satisfaction level and interpersonal cognitive distortion level.

As a result of the correlation analysis, it was determined that there was a moderately negative and significant relationship between marital satisfaction and infidelity tendencies. According to this result, as the marital satisfaction levels of individuals increase, their tendency to infidelity decreases. This result is similar to many studies in the literature (Çavuşoğlu, 2011; Atkins, Baucom, & Jacobson, 2001; Buss & Shackelford, 1997). Polat (2006) found that marital adjustment explained 25% of the tendency to cheat. This result emphasizes the importance of the relationship between marital satisfaction and the tendency to cheat. Christensen and Heavey (1990) revealed in their study that the stress experienced during the marriage process and negative attributions

towards the relationship cause various conflicts between spouses. They stated that this conflict situation decreases the marital satisfaction of the spouses and that after the decreased satisfaction, individuals seek happiness in different individuals, and thus they can perform infidelity behavior. In addition, Previti and Amato (2004) revealed in their 17-year study on infidelity that there is a bidirectional relationship between individuals' satisfaction in their relationships and their tendency to cheat. In addition to this finding, Kantarcı (2009) stated that during the marriage process, individuals' relationship quality decreases, marital satisfaction decreases, communication problems and conflicts decrease marital satisfaction, and this situation increases the tendency to infidelity by pushing individuals to search for new partners. In contrast to these findings, Özcan (2014) found that there was a positive and significant relationship between marital satisfaction and the tendency to cheat.

When the relationship between marital satisfaction and interpersonal cognitive distortion level was examined, it was found that there was a negative and significant relationship. When the relationship between the sub-dimensions of the cognitive distortions scale and marital satisfaction was examined, it was found that the dimensions of intimacy avoidance and unrealistic relationship expectancy had a negative and significant relationship with marital satisfaction. The mind-reading sub-dimension was not found to have a significant relationship with marital satisfaction. In the literature, there are studies showing that interpersonal cognitive distortions are significantly related to the level of marital adjustment of spouses or relationships (Baucom, Sayers, & Sher, 1990; Slavinskiene & Lithunia, 2012; Fincham & Bradury, 1990; Küçükçelik, 2015). Möller et al. (2001) concluded that individuals with unhappy marriages have more cognitive distortions than happy individuals. Sullivan and Schwebel (1995) examined the relationship expectations, irrational beliefs, and relationship satisfaction levels of young adults. As a result of the study, they concluded that interpersonal cognitive distortions regarding optimistic expectations about their future lives may cause stress, problems, and disappointment in individuals' lives, and as a result, they may experience problems in their relationships. In another study, it was revealed that married individuals' cognitive distortion general score and its sub-dimensions of intimacy avoidance, unrealistic relationship expectations, and mind reading levels showed a negative and significant relationship with marital satisfaction (Yalçın Koçkan, 2015). In another study, it was found that there was a significant and negative relationship between intimacy avoidance cognitive distortions and marital adjustment in married men (Hamamcı, 2005). Ebrahimi et al. (2012) concluded in their study that as the cognitive distortions of spouses about relationships increase, the level of marital conflict also increases. In contrast to these findings, Düz (2009) found that there was no significant relationship between marital adjustment and individuals' beliefs about their relationships. There are also different results in the literature from the results of this study. There are also studies that conclude that irrational beliefs and cognitive distortions are predictors of marital satisfaction (Metts & Cupah, 1990; Addis & Bernard, 2002). There are also studies that conclude that unrealistic relationship expectancy among cognitive distortions related to relationships is a predictor of marital satisfaction (Emmelkamp et al., 1987; Güven, 2005; Güven & Sevim, 2007). In contrast to this finding, Çetin (2010) concluded that unrealistic relationship expectancy was not a significant predictor of marital satisfaction. In this study, both infidelity tendencies and interpersonal cognitive distortions were found to be significant predictors.

When the relationship between the infidelity tendencies of married individuals and their interpersonal cognitive distortions is examined, it is evident that there is a positive and significant relationship. It is possible to interpret this result as meaning that as the infidelity tendencies of married individuals increase, their interpersonal cognitive distortions will also increase, or as their interpersonal cognitive distortions increase, their infidelity tendencies will also increase. When the sub-dimensions of the scale were analyzed, a significant relationship was found between intimacy avoidance, unrealistic relationship expectancy, and the tendency to cheat, while no significant relationship was found with the mind-reading sub-dimension. It is an expected result that cognitive distortions of married individuals towards their spouses and relationships negatively affect satisfaction in the marital process and lead individuals to illicit relationships. However, the small number of studies on cognitive distortions related to infidelity and relationships in the literature causes the results obtained to be insufficient for comparison.

5. Recommendations

This study is limited to 381 married teachers working in Gaziantep. The data obtained as a result of the research are limited to the qualities measured by the Marriage Life Scale, the Cheating Tendency Scale, and

the Interpersonal Cognitive Distortions Scale. Since the research covers the province of Gaziantep, it will be useful for future studies and literature to carry out studies covering the same subjects in different regions in order to reveal regional and cultural differences and to conduct new research with married individuals working in different occupational groups. As a result of the research, it was concluded that the tendency to cheat and interpersonal cognitive distortions predict marital satisfaction. However, marital satisfaction is a rich concept, and there are many variables that can predict marital satisfaction. In future studies, it will be useful to study different subjects that are thought to be related to marital satisfaction. The lack of research on the concept of deception in Turkey due to both individual and social myths is among the most important problems in terms of the working process. It will be useful for researchers to work in this field to concentrate on this subject for further elaborating on the issue. As a result of the research, it was revealed that marital satisfaction, the tendency to cheat, and cognitive distortions are important predictors. This result indicates that these issues occupy an important place in marriage life. It would be beneficial for mental health professionals working with married individuals to address these issues in couple therapy in terms of helping clients more actively.

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