Gender Differences: Association of Sex Drives and Marital Satisfaction

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Abstract Men and women are very different in nature and preferences of their sexual behavior. Sex drive refers to the strength of sexual impulse in one’s body and significantly impact marital satisfaction/relationship. The main purpose of conducting present study was to identify differences in strength of sexual desire between men and women and what impacts it has on marital satisfaction in Pakistani context. This study took place in the twin cities of Pakistan (Rawalpindi & Islamabad). Data was collected from married individuals using convenient sampling technique. The participants reported on demographic sheet, Sexual Desire Inventory- 2 (Spector, Carey & Steinberg, 1996) for assessing sexual desires and ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (Flowers & Olsen, 1993) for evaluating marital satisfaction among married couples after signing formal consent from each participant. Present study is cross-sectional, descriptive and quantitative in nature, was administered on a sample of 200 married individuals ranging between 22 to 46 years age. To test the hypotheses, independent samples t-test, ANOVA and Pearson’s bivariate correlation coefficient was used from SPSS version 21. It was assumed that males will score higher on sexual desire than females. The results show no significant difference between the level of sexual desire between male and females. The second hypothesis assumed that sexual desire and marital satisfaction are positively correlated. The results confirmed this assumption as there was a small positive correlation between sexual desire and marital satisfaction. Current research also tested whether level of education is associated with sexual desire. However, results indicate that education level does not predict sexual desire.

Keywords: sex drives, marital satisfaction, quantitative study


1. Introduction

Men and women are very dissimilar in nature and partialities. These differences fluctuate from their corporal needs to their psychosomatic desires and wants. The gender-based discernments are deeply rooted and are very significant. This disparity of nature and interests in Males and females can be best described with their different physiological and hormonal roots [9]. Similar is the case of in differences between sex drives in men and women. It is evident in literature review that thoughts and feelings influence sexual motivation for both sexes (males and females) [22]. Gender difference exists in regard with brain responses including thoughts and feelings, genital changes and sexual desires [35]. As compared to men, women are not easily sexually aroused due to the fact that genital changes may not lead to subjective experience of excitement [15]. One of the previous study demonstrated that testosterone has positive effects on sexuality and that higher doses show greater effects [21]. Vasopressin, oxytocin and neuropeptides that connect brain and peripheral responses with sexual need and desires, may be the cause of gender differences in sexual motivation [22]. Men and women have also been found to have differences in sexual desire on the basis of emotional and relationship factors. Women have been found to show higher levels of psychopathology and significantly more emotions of hurt during sexual activity, while men presented more fear and shame in the similar context [10].

It is evident in previous studies that male partners are more expected to have sexual drives and thoughts than their female counterparts. Whereas, it is also mentioned that while in a relationship, generally men interact more assertively and aggressively in sexual dealings. Moreover, male partners are more likely to initiate a sexual mating than their female partners [25]. Higher level of prevalence and frequency of masturbation at all ages have been reported by men. Additionally as compared to women, men are more likely to report having erotic material like porno graph, sex toys, magazines etc. Some researchers consider that this is because of male’s greater need for having multiple sexual partners and stimuli while other suggests that males are more likely to have most erotic material [15].

Marriage is the novel site for investigating sexuality which is associated to the sexual activities of satisfied married life. Marriage is historically reported as patriarchal as it is entitled and honored with women’s sexuality and emotions that is highly debated by many researchers [24]. Number of past literature demonstrated
that the frequency of intercourse and orgasm is positively linked with sexual satisfaction [6]. The amount of sexually satisfied married life is directly associated with higher quality of life a couple is spending in relation and level of sexual satisfaction. While, it is also believed that sex is more important to men activities like passionate kissing, hugging, and touching is thought to be more significant for sexual lives of females because it is still unacceptable for females to take lead in a relationship [28]. Moreover, in another studies it is evident that this gender disparity in terms of sexuality is a potential cause of conflicts in married males and females [13]. In 2006 it is revealed by the studies that sexual satisfaction is strong predictor of marital satisfaction, conducted over five waves spanning of data collection (1991 to 2000) researchers [4,36].

Researchers who are studying sexuality and relationships with respect to gender variability focused on the significance of the changeable nature of the phenomenon [30]. Also, research studies have emphasized that while studying these gender based differences in sexuality and relationships the effects of one’s different background like their social and ethnic groups should also be considered [37].

The foundation of happy and satisfied married life is constructed on sexual activities takes place between husband and wife, but if these sexual affairs disturbs it automatically misshaped the happiness of marriage life [29]. Researchers believe that the newlywed couples are more likely to show higher marital satisfaction because of the fact that it is time of more recurrent and pleasing sexual activities [37]. Furthermore, these sexual activities fades away with time as evident from a research conducted on young parents that the occurrence of sexual drives becomes lower after birth of first child [2]. The differences can also be noticed in terms of loss of sexual desire in married couples. In a Norwegian study performed on married couples between the ages of 22 and 67, it was found that in 26% of the couples the female partner had lost the sexual desire while as compared to 8% of the couples in which the male partner experienced the loss of sexual desire [33].

The notion that men thinks and wants more sex is more explained by the study which was conducted by Fisher, Moore, and Pittenger [16]. They concluded that men experience not only sex but also hunger and sleep more often than women. So their thinking pattern is based on personal and basic needs. Recently, researchers have started realizing sexual drive as playing an important role in romantic attraction between couples. Since only a few decades ago sexual drive or desire has been labelled as a distinct and vital component of sexual behavior. Among the various factors studied by social scientists, gender is supposed to be most associated with sexual desire [35]. Another cause of this gender difference in sexuality is the household burden that women have on their shoulders. This work burden decline the amount of time and energy they want to give to the fulfillment of their sexual desires with their male counterparts [13].

A study conducted on the students of American university found that men reported to have higher sexual desire level than women [26]. Gender differences were noticed with respect to both frequency and intensity of sexual desire, with men reporting a higher frequency of experiencing sexual desire per week (37) than women (9) [26]. Previous researches about differences in sexual behavior showed that as compared to females, males stated sexual activities at younger ages more frequently but new researches demonstrate that these variations are changing. It has been reported that men are more involved in extramarital sexual activities and they think more about sex as compared to women [15].

Researchers have suggested many theories for the explanations of differences in sexuality [12]. In 2012, The Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality elaborated that some theorists argues that biology and genetics is involved in gender difference in sexual behaviors and they suggest that gender differences in sexuality are mainly due to biologically based difference. While other theorists consider that these difference are due to double-standard in society stemming from social and cultural variations. Many other theorists suggest that gender differences in sexual behaviors are due to the combination of both biology and culture [14].

### 1.1. Rationale

Rationale of the present study is to identify the frequency and strength of sexual desire of married individual associated with satisfied marital life. This study looked for the differences exist in the responses of male and female married individuals.

By reviewing the literature about gender differences in sexual drives and its impact on one’s marital life, the significance of our research is clarified. Abundance of literature is available on our respective area of study but Pakistani studies are lacking in this field. Sex is a basic need of human which need to be explored in depth regarding the fact that people in Pakistan are reluctant to talk about sex issues as it is consider as taboo. Religion also plays its role in discussion or investigation of such area of studies as religiosity guilt hinders to express and investigate such bold issues. But unfortunately people are not sensing the generated marital and psycho-social issues budding in response of unsatisfactory number of studies.

It is ideally believed that sex drive of individuals would be equally strong in men and in women. In that case, only individual similarities and variations are the determinants of marital satisfaction. On the contrary, in the real world, gender differences in the strength and frequency of sexual drive might result in conflicts in a marital relationship. For instance if one partner in marriage has a stronger and more frequently desiring for sexual activity as compared to his or her spouse, a conflict may arise as one partner struggles to fulfill the sexual needs of the other. It might also be the case that the partner that needs more sex will most likely to be in a weaker position as the desire for sex creates dependency on the partner.

At last, the significance of this research is to find gender differences giving attributes to their sexual desires. In the scenario of increased rate of divorces due to poor sexual relationships between spouses, it is very valuable to find the difference that how males and females would response and evaluate their sexual drives which may help in couple’s marital relationship.

This study also gives an opportunity to budding researchers, sexologists, psychologists and marital councilors for further researches and can help Pakistani couples to nourish their marital relationship, problem solving, minimize the cases of divorces generated in
response of sexual imbalance in a couple and to generate awareness programs in order to enhance satisfactory and healthy married life and lessen issues generated in response of unfulfilled sex derives.

1.2. Objectives
The objectives of the present study are as under:
- It attempts to identify the frequency and strength of sexual desire of married individuals and also identify if differences exist in the responses of male and female partners.
- Present study also tries to investigate the effect of demographic variables on sexual desires of married individuals and their level of marital satisfaction.

1.3. Hypotheses
The hypotheses of the present study are as under:
- Married male individuals will have more sex derive than female married individuals.
- There will be a positive correlation between sex derives and marital satisfaction.

2. Method

2.1. Operational Definitions

2.1.1. Sexual Desire
Sexual desire can be understood broadly as an interest in sexual objects (e.g., other people) or activities, or as a wish, longing, or craving to seek out sexual objects or to engage in sexual activities. Sexual desire is not the same as sexual activity (e.g., kissing, masturbation, intercourse) or sexual arousal (e.g., vaginal lubrication, erections) [8].

2.1.2. Marital Satisfaction
Marital Satisfaction refers to multi-dimensional concepts including safe and pleasurable sexual relationship; and favorable and convenient marital relationship [37].

2.2. Research Design
The design of the present study was cross-sectional, descriptive and quantitative. Study was divided into two phases. Phase I was performed as pilot study that meant to carry out to measure psychometric properties primary involved to assess reliability and content validity of SDI-2 [31] and ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (Flowers & Olsen, 1993). Whereas, phase II of study was conducted as main study. Aim of main study was to test objectives and hypotheses of the study i.e., to identifying differences between the sexual desires of men and women, in order to determine a gender differences in sex drives, and its correlation between marital satisfaction and demographic variables (age, number of married years, number of legal sex partners and level of education).

2.3. Characteristics of Participants
A convenient sampling technique was used for data collection from men and women (N = 200), age range 22-46 of Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

2.4. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria
- Keeping in view the cultural context of Pakistan; only married people were allowed to participate in present study.
- Individuals who can read and write in English were taken part in present study.
- Individuals other than resident of Rawalpindi and Islamabad were not added in study.
- Single, divorced and widowed men and women were also unable to participate in present study.

2.5. Measures
To measure objectives and to test hypotheses of the present study data was collected on following measures.

2.5.1. Demographic Sheet
First part was of demographic sheet in Urdu language that was consisted of age, gender, marital status, occupation, level of education, number of married years and number of legal sex partners.

2.5.2. Sexual Desire Inventory- 2 [31]
A self-report measure was administered to the participants. Sexual Desire Inventory- 2 [31] was used to measure the frequency and strength of sexual desire among the participants. A few questions asked the participants to state the frequency of their sexual desire, while others asked them to rate the strength of the desire on a scale of zero to eight (0 = No Desire, 8 = Strong Desire). Apart from these, the questionnaire booklet asked the participants to report their gender, age, number of legal sex partners, and level of education and how long have they been married. The Cronbach alpha reliability of Dyadic Scale is r = 0.86 and is of Solitary Scale is r = 0.96. whereas, test retest reliability is 0.76.

2.5.3. ENRICH Marital Satisfaction Scale (Flowers & Olsen, 1993)
This scale is a 15 item measure scale meant to measure marital quality/satisfaction of a married individual. 10 items measure the 10 domains of marital quality, while 5 items are meant to check the tendency to endorse unrealistically positive description of the marriage. Cronbach’s alpha revealed internal reliability of 0.86. Its concurrent validity scores are 0.71 for men and 0.77 for women; and construct validity scores are 0.71.

2.6. Procedure
The data was collected by using the English version of Sexual Desire Inventory-2 and ENRICH Marital satisfaction scale along with demographic sheet. Men and Women approached and assured the confidentiality of their provided information as per the ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association. Participants will be given instructions about the questionnaire and the reason for why the survey is being carried out. After signing of written formal inform consent, demographic sheet along with set of questionnaires will be handed over to participant to respond at their best knowledge. In order to make sure the participants understand the variable under study, the participants were explained operational
definition of the term ‘sexual desire’ and ‘marital satisfaction’.

No more information was given regarding the research and variables under study. The participants were given ample time to complete the questionnaires. After those participants have filled out the questionnaires, they were debriefed about the complete purpose of the study.

3. Results

Main objective was to identify the frequency and strength of sexual desire of married individuals and also identify if differences exist in the responses of male and female partners. The results derived are subject to statistical analysis for testing the hypotheses presented in the research.

Married individuals (\(N = 200\), age range: 22 – 46, \(M\) age = 29.54, \(SD = 4.761\)) were selected from Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The participants responded to two self-report tests and provided their demographic information. Following is the list of all the sections that are part of the results.

Section 3.1: Descriptive Statistics
Section 3.2: Tests for Normality
Section 3.3: Testing of the Hypotheses
Section 3.4. Summary of the Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

A convenient sampling technique was used for data collection from men and women (\(N = 200\)). Table 1 shows frequency and percentage of various demographic variables of participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>(f)</th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>(41.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>(58.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification of Participant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matric</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>(8.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>(22.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>(28.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Graduation</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>(41.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualification of Spouse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matric</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(6.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>(28.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduation</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>(29.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Graduation</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>(36.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Married Years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>(87.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>(12.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Legal Sex Partners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>(98.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than One</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>(2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No child</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>(19.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>(49.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>(18.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(10.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>(2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>(1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of Last Born Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No child</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>(19.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>(66.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 years</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>(14.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>(61.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>(39.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with Partner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>(94.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (posted)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>(6.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Chronic Illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>(0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>(100.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other mental or physical illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>(9.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>(90.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. (\(\%\) = Percentage), and \(f\) = Frequency of each variable.

The two main variables quantified in this research are sexual desire and marital satisfaction.
findings. Mean sexual desire reported by the 83 male participants is 60.036 (SD=6.9007), whereas 117 female participants’ mean sexual desire is 59.3419 (SD=7.1452). Martial satisfaction reported by the participants was also quantified and Table 2 depicts mean marital satisfaction reported by males as 46.0964 (SD=4.3326) and females’ mean marital satisfaction is 45.7949 (SD=4.5477).

3.2. Test for Normality

Data on sexual desire and marital satisfaction was tested to check for normality of distribution. Both the variables were tested using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests of normality. The results are reported in the following Table 2.

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk values for the Sexual Desire and Marital Satisfaction Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Desire</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Satisfaction</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.099</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Note: The table represents the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk values, displaying the respective normality of the measures.

As depicted, data on Sexual Desire Inventory-2 scale portrays a normal distribution as the significance values are above .05 levels. The kurtosis and skewness values of data on sexual desire is .158 and -.131 respectively. On the contrary, data from marital satisfaction shows a non-normal distribution as the significance value is below .05 in both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk test. However, this alone does not justify the use of non-parametric tests as the skewness value is -.240 with kurtosis of .949. Since the skewness and kurtosis values are in the acceptable range, parametric tests can be applied. Whereas, the range of the sexual desire inventory is between 31 to 39 and of marital satisfaction scale is 31 to 62. Additionally, reliability of sexual desire inventory-2 and marital satisfaction scale is .62 and .73 respectively.

3.3. Testing of the Main Hypotheses

The first hypothesis iterated by the study is that married male individuals have stronger sex drive than married female individuals. Since the variable under consideration is normally distributed, independent samples t-test is applied in order to test the hypothesis.

On applying independent sample t-test, results reveal that there is no significant difference between male (n=83, M=60.036, SD=6.901) and female (n=117, M=59.342, SD=7.145) participants, t (198)=.687, p=.493, at .05 significance level. Table 3 shows no difference between the scores on sexual desire of male and female participants, disconfirming the hypothesis.

Table 3. Independent-Samples t- Test Analysis on scores of Sexual Desire Inventor-2 among Gender (N = 220)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>95% CI</th>
<th>Cohen’s d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>M=60.03, SD=6.9</td>
<td>M=59.34, SD=7.1</td>
<td>t=0.68, p=.49</td>
<td>1.29, 2.68, 0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: M = Mean, SD = Standard deviation, p = Significance level at 0.05, df = 198.

The second hypothesis of the present study states that there is a positive correlation between sexual drive and marital satisfaction. The degree to which the two variables were correlated was measured by Pearson’s product-moment coefficient. The results indicate a small, yet significant, positive correlation between sex drive and marital satisfaction variables (r=.227, N=200, p = 0.001). Therefore, the second hypothesis was confirmed. The correlations are depicted in the following Table 4.

Table 4. Pearson’s Correlation values for Sexual Desire and Marital Satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Sexual Desire</th>
<th>Marital Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Desire</td>
<td>.227**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

One of the demographic variables the current research focused on is education level of the participants. This secondary hypothesis states that education level predicts the level of sexual desire. Therefore, one-way-between-groups ANOVA test was utilized in order to examine the difference between the sexual desires of participants with different educational levels.

The results portray that at p<.05 level there is no significant difference between the sex drive of participants based on their different education levels [F(3,196) = 1.038, p = 0.377]. This indicates that education level does not predict sexual drive and thus, the results fail to confirm this hypothesis.

3.4. Summary of the Results

The first main hypothesis that stated that males will score higher on sexual desire than females was not confirmed. Whereas second hypothesis, that stated that there is a positive correlation between sexual desire and marital satisfaction, was confirmed as there is a small but positive correlation between sexual desire and marital satisfaction. In addition to the two main hypothesis current research also tested whether education level was associated with sexual desire. Results indicate that education level does not predict sexual desire as participants in different education level groups had no significant differences in the level of sexual desires.

4. Discussion

The current study examined the frequency and strength of sexual desire of married individual associated with satisfied marital life and the Gender-based differences in responses were observed. Moreover, relationship between two variables i.e. sexual desires and marital satisfaction was measured. The hypotheses were tested using statistical analysis and results were derived. Inconsistent with prediction, married men and women in this research study from different educational background showed no significant differences on strength of sexual desire.
Most of the past studies regarding sexual life of males and females were established with a view that corresponds with the statement given by a German scholar, Richard von Krafft-Ebing, (1886-1945) “Man has beyond doubt the stronger sexual appetite of the two”. This point of view has now-a-days become dated as with time men and women both show sexual desires equally which is evident from the current study. Each individual has a unique experience of sexual desire [17] and this notion is sometimes studied as being not gender specific. In the present study, the hypothesis about strength of sexual desire in married couples is viewed in terms of improved strength of women’s sexual desires. As persistent with the previous study by Pamela C. Regan and Leah Atkins (2006) the current study also presented the notion that sexual desires among women vary on the basis of internal and external factors such as physical and mental health, situational factors and hormonal level. So, keeping in mind these factors, the findings can be explained as women and men both have almost same strength of sexual desires on a given time which indicated by no significant difference in their sexual desires. Another recent study by Goldhammer and McCabe [17] heterosexual women with age range of 20 to 61 stated that women participants explained sexual desires in various ways. Therefore it is also possible that improved strength of sexual desire reported by the female participants of this study can be inferred on various interpretations unlike their male counterparts, which consequently made results of women in various terms comparable to men. This can also be understood by the verity that incidence of sexual desire doesn’t necessarily directed towards the actual sexual behavior and this is more associated with females [20]. Thus, for female participants in this study sexual desires may not mean the actual sexual behavior which therefore, leads to more frequent reporting of sexual desires. On contrary to this, males overestimate the sexual desire as leading towards actual sexual desire [20], so they report less frequent sexual desires. As a result, the difference between both genders minimized.

The nature of women’s sexual desire is complex as it has many components. Sexual desires of women are influenced by social aspects of nurturing and intimacy unlike men who experience desires not because of sexual drive but also to show power [34]. It is believed that biological pattern of male and female bodies follow almost same pattern of sexual responses still there are some differences lies. Sexual desires of females tend to respond directly to physical stimuli and are more related to situations such as closeness to the male partner, whereas sexual desires of males are more spontaneous in nature [7].

Another possibility of this non-significant gender difference is related to age of the participants. Consistent with previous studies which stated that younger couples (especially women) show higher level of sexual desires [18], couples in our study were mostly young and newlywed, tend to score high on sexual desires which made the differences least. Another study by Aggarwal [1], stated that there is equal existence of sexual desires in young males and females and gender differences appear around age of 41 to 50 years, thus endorsing the findings of present study.

There is also the importance of role of hormones among women with this non-significant gender difference. Recent literature reviewed that after awareness of birth control, the intake of birth control pills has increased among women. These birth-control pills while restricting pregnancy among women may enhance their sexual drives [32]. Consistent with this study it is a possibility that women in our current study have sexual desire equal of their male counterparts due to the sense of freedom from pregnancy and thus both male and female partners had more or less similar experience of sexual desires. Moreover, women tend to fantasize more about sexual activities and researches show that with more sexual thoughts and fantasy the amount of testosterone increases among women which consequently strengthen sexual desires among women [19]. In addition, both males and females need a sufficient amount of testosterone which is required biologically for sexual desires. These levels of hormones are also related to psychological and social aspect as well. Men have many times more amount of testosterone in their body than women which make them feel sexual interests among males [22]. Though, this testosterone is also directly linked with women’s desires and needs as well. These hormonal roots of gender differences in sexual desires give good reason for the results our study has yielded.

Another aspect of these non-significant differences is related to culture and publication years of most researches. One of three theories about differences of men and women in sexuality as explained by DeLamater & Hyde [12] explains the effects of culture and biology on the gender differences in sexual desires. According to recent researches the size of differences in men and women is getting lower with time. Also these differences are least rooted in culture so the cultural aspect of sexuality is kept almost constant in our research study.

In addition current study also proved that, there was a significant positive correlation between sexual desire and marital satisfaction among married couples. These results are consistent with many past studies in which it was emphasized that consistency in sexual functioning leads to a better and healthy marital life [3,5,11]. Hence, the current study provides significant positive relationships between both variables which mean that those married individuals who have consistent and frequent sexual desires for their partners live more happy and satisfied married life

5. Limitations and Recommendations

Although this study has provided many significant results for future researchers, there are some limitations of this study as well. Firstly, the sample was taken from localities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad which make the findings generalized to only specific part of country. Most of the participants of our study are educated and well-aware of the aspects of variables we were studying, so the study is limited to only urban areas and cannot be generalize to rural population of the respective study and this is one of the reason results reveled no gender difference on sexual desires. A sample taking account of both urban and rural localities can provide a better and comparable picture of the whole population. Another limitation is that sample taken in this study mostly was young couples and individuals who may have particular
view of sexuality. Hence, this limitation can be minimized by representing different age group in the study. Furthermore, our study was focused on two variables i.e. sexual desires and marital satisfaction so it provided very limited insight about broad field of human sexuality. By incorporating more aspects of human sexuality in research for instance, biological and hormonal factors, researchers can explore the comprehensive picture of human sexuality inclusive of its all features. Also, the current study was unable to give assumptions about direction and casual relationship between sexual desires and marital satisfaction. For instance, the research doesn’t provide the information about either marital satisfaction increase sexual desires or direction is opposite i.e. sexual desires improve the satisfaction among married couples. Lastly, all of the participants of the study are healthy, none of them are chronically ill and ignorable participants have physical and psychological issues so it limits the findings and give positive result.

It is also recommended for future researches to conduct qualitative study along with quantitative study for in depth population, translate scales into Urdu language so understanding of English language may eliminate and maximum people participate of all class and education level. Then future researchers may further enhance the procedure of data collection as its very challenging topic to handle in field and many people hesitate to participate, so it is suggested to use snow ball sampling technique in order to get maximum data.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, inconsistent with previous literature, this study shows that there is no significant gender difference in sexual desires and marital satisfaction because of several reasons. Although the hypothesis predicting males having higher sexual desires than females was rejected by research findings, this study has provided an insight about different aspect of increasing sexual desires in women. Based on present data, the study accepts the hypothesis about a positive correlation between marital satisfaction and sexual desire which as predicted in previous studies explains the notion that with increased sexual desires the marital satisfaction also increased among married couples.

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Conflict of Interest

None declared.

References


