

Original research

Investigating the Mediating Role of Primary Maladaptive Schemas in the Relationship between Attachment Styles and Marital Burnout in Couples Referring to Counseling Clinics in Tehran

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Abstract

Introduction: The present study aimed to determine the mediating role of primary maladaptive schemas in the relationship between attachment styles and marital burnout in couples referred to counseling clinics in Tehran.

Research Method: The descriptive research method was a correlational type. The research population included all the couples who referred to psychological and counseling clinics in six and seven districts of Tehran in 1400-1402. According to Cochran's formula, the sample size was equal to 186 couples (186 men and 186 women) who were purposefully selected from Raha Counseling Center, Mehr Taban Counseling Center, Noyan Counseling Center, and Rwannema Counseling Center. Pines Marital Exhaustion Scale, Collins and Reed's Attachment, and Young Schema Questionnaire (YSQ-SF) were used to collect data. Pearson's correlation coefficient test and multivariate regression with the simultaneous entry method and structural equation modeling were used, and the results were analyzed with SPSS_28 and Amos_26 software.

Results: The results showed that attachment styles are related to couples' marital burnout both directly and through the mediation of primary incompatible schemas ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: According to the results of this research, it can be said that early maladaptive schemas play a mediating role in the relationship between attachment styles and marital burnout in couples referring to counseling clinics in Tehran.

Keywords: Attachment, Attachment Styles, Maladaptive Schemas, Marital Burnout, Schema

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Introduction:

Marriage is a sincere and deep social bond between a husband and wife, which can be a source of happiness or deep suffering for them [1]. Marriage and marital relationship are the source of human support, intimacy and pleasure, and during the last decade, the question of how marriage is formed and which factors affect its success or failure has become one of the research concerns of psychologists [2], finding a suitable and ideal spouse has been one of the most important concerns of young people since the old days because they are supposed to be proud and evolve together for years and walk the path of progress and progress together calmly and in complete comfort and security [3]. Therefore, marriage is the first and most important stage in the family life cycle where the choice of a spouse is made and success in other stages of life depends on success in this stage [4] and the family is the solid foundation of social bonds and the main focus of development and The appearance of human emotions; Love is the vital element of this smallest but most important social unit and the subsystem of husband and wife, the first and most important subsystem of the family, and the quality of the relationship between husband and wife is the strongest predictor of family health [5].

The lack of intimate and supportive marital relations in the family can have serious consequences and stop love in the resting stage, in such a way that the family members in the cold of communication tension, boredom, boredom and exhaustion, whose only justifying guarantee is a paper document, tend to do not understand each other and solve problems; mental health is not realized; And not only the psychological-social actions of the husband and wife, but also the growth and development of the children and teenagers of that family were not spared from its irreparable damages [6].

Marital burnout is one of the psychological disturbances and abnormalities that dims or even fades the love and interest between couples over time and causes physical, mental, and communication problems, and finally, their official divorce [7]. Relationships do not end suddenly, and with the signing of a divorce document, they face wear and tear over time and for various reasons, and this leads people to the end of the relationship, which creates an urgent need to identify and deal with these sources of wear and tear. It suggests exhaustion [8]. The research of family experts shows that today the prevalence of marital burnout is more than in the past, so that 50% of couples face burnout in their marriages, and marital burnout is very common in marital relationships that lead to divorce [9].

Love always begins with abundant hopes and dreams; The hope of being recognized and accepted, the hope of belonging, supporting, and being supported, the hope of deep love and lasting connection, which sometimes contradicts the realities of life [10]. The needs do not read together; Anger causes separation and distance; Judgments prevent acceptance and loneliness casts a shadow on parallel lives but far from each other [11], after passing through the first emotional and emotional stage of marriage and failure to achieve romantic expectations, feelings of disappointment are directly attributed to the spouse, intimacy and commitment are analyzed. Exhaustion replaces love, and a person despairs that dream love and marriage will give meaning to his life [12].

Exhaustion from love is a gradual process that is experienced as a painful state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion. In this case, the intimacy and love of life lose color and general fatigue, and in its most severe form, the relationship collapses [13].

Nevertheless, the researchers believe that this situation is dependent on the psychological characteristics of the couple, and in fact, the researchers seek to know what the psychological factors are that cause the feeling of exhaustion in the couple and to determine the exact mechanism of their communication [14]. The results showed that personal factors are one of the effective reasons for marital burnout, which include personality traits [excessive excitement, self-centeredness, low self-esteem, and weak secretarial ability] and ineffective cognitions [ineffective communication beliefs and unrealistic expectations] [15].

One of the important factors that has been paid attention to in recent years and has a significant impact on reducing marital exhaustion and increasing marital satisfaction is the person's early experiences with their parents or the type of emotional relationship a person has with their parents during childhood. Some studies have tried to answer the question of how a person's early experiences in childhood can affect their relationships in adulthood [16]. Among the concepts that express the relationship between parents and children well is attachment [17]. The concept of attachment expresses the value and strength of the stability of relationships between children and their parents, how these relationships are formed, and the quality of these relationships, which can affect the health of children's growth and continue until adulthood [18]. According to attachment theory, cognitive structures, or action patterns developed in people, represent the extent to which they can rely on important people in their lives. It seems that these action models play a critical role in people's relationships [19]. Attachment figures allow the child to explore from a safe base, provide security when faced with threats, and allow the child to learn to regulate their stress levels. Attachment behaviors are thought to be behaviors that lead to gaining or maintaining closeness to distinct and preferred others. Attachment behaviors contribute to a person's survival by keeping them in contact with caregivers, thereby reducing the risk of injury [20].

Attachment styles can be secure, insecure-ambivalent, or insecure-avoidant and affect the child's development and ability to communicate throughout life. These three styles have been confirmed in adulthood as well [21]. Mikulincer, Florian, Cowan, and Cowan [22] have described secure attachment as an internal resource that can help a person evaluate stressful experiences positively, deal with stressful events constructively, and promote well-being and adjustment. Improve yourself. People with avoidant attachment style have a more pessimistic view of relationships, themselves, and others, and people with anxious-ambivalent style have a negative view of themselves [23].

One of the most famous research projects in this field is the research of Hazan and Shaver [24] and Ainsworth [25], who, inspired by Balbi's theory about the nature of emotional bonds, investigated the role of mutual attachments of adults in couples' relationships. The results showed that the characteristics of the emotional bond between couples are comparable to the characteristics of child-mother emotional bonds, and the well-known styles of secure, avoidant, and ambivalent attachment affect their thoughts, feelings, and behavior in marital relationships.

Different people who have different attachment styles experience different experiences in romantic relationships [26]. Studies conducted on the characteristics of people belonging to different attachment styles and their effect on relationships with others, including marriage and relationships with spouses, confirm this. Is that the two indicators of fear of rejection and feeling comfortable in relationships are important elements of attachment behavior in marriage, so that feeling comfortable in relationships and lack of fear of rejection indicate secure attachment. Ambiguous people are

usually afraid of being rejected in their relationships, and avoidant people do not feel comfortable in their intimate relationships [27]. Because secure adults choose partners who have a history of secure attachment, their solutions to disagreements are more beneficial, their relationships and marital lives are more satisfying and stable, and they feel more loving towards each other [28].

Unfavorable internal working models are thought to gradually form self-injurious emotional and cognitive patterns, referred to as "primary maladaptive schemas" [29]. Primary maladaptive schemas arise due to the failure to satisfy the basic emotional and emotional needs of childhood, such as secure attachment, self-management, freedom in expressing healthy needs and emotions, spontaneity, and realistic limitations. Also, schemas operate in the deepest layers of the level of cognition, usually outside the level of awareness, and make a person psychologically vulnerable to the creation of disturbances and psychological problems such as dysfunctional marital relationships [30].

The review of the research background shows that regarding the relationship between each of the variables of this research, few studies have been conducted, and their findings are inconsistent, for example, Makhanova and McNulty et al [31]. Marital burnout has a significant positive relationship, and avoidant and anxious-ambivalent attachment styles have a significant negative relationship with marital burnout; While Sarkhabi Abdolmaleki, Dokanei Fard, and Behbodi [32] reported that secure attachment style and avoidant attachment style are unable to predict marital burnout. Also, regarding the relationship between attachment styles and primary maladaptive schemas, the findings of the conducted studies are inconsistent. For example, the results of the Garavand study [33] indicate that secure attachment style has a significant negative relationship with primary maladaptive schemas, and avoidant and anxious-ambivalent attachment styles have a significant positive relationship with primary maladaptive schemas, while Ebrahimi, Makvand Hoseini, and Tabatabaee [34] It was found that there is a negative correlation between avoidant attachment style and early maladaptive schemas.

Some other research evidence also shows that early maladaptive schemas may be able to mediate the relationship between attachment styles and marital burnout. For example, in their study, Rahiman, Qamari, Babakhani, and Jafari [35] concluded that early maladaptive schemas play a mediating role in attachment styles and marital conflicts among couples facing divorce. Also, in another study, the mediating role of primary maladaptive schemas in the relationship between attachment styles and marital intimacy was confirmed, and it was reported that the indirect paths of insecure attachment styles are also significant through primary maladaptive schemas with marital intimacy [36].

In addition, the research evaluation also shows that the mediating role of primary maladaptive schemas in the relationship between attachment styles and marital exhaustion has not been investigated. Also, in most similar studies, only one gender [mostly married women] has been evaluated, while in the present study, both men and women referring to counseling clinics in Tehran have been measured. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the mediating role of primary maladaptive schemas in the relationship between attachment styles and marital burnout in couples referring to counseling clinics in Tehran.

Research Method:

The current research is a part of applied research in terms of its purpose and descriptive and correlational studies in terms of method. The statistical population in this research included all couples who referred to psychological and counseling clinics in the 6th and 7th districts of Tehran, from which 120 couples were selected by purposive sampling. The criteria for entering the research are: couples referring to clinics in Tehran, interest and consent to participate in the research, and non-participation in psychotherapy sessions. The criteria for exiting the research were refusal to continue cooperation in the research and distorted questionnaires. Also, in this research, to consider ethical considerations in this research, a code was assigned to each participant, and the participants could use pseudonyms to participate in the research. And the private information of the participants in the research, which was not in line with the purpose of the research, any participant. Also, after the distribution, it should be noted that all the ethical considerations of the research were observed, including that the couples participating in the research were assured that all research information would remain confidential with the researcher, and this information would be used only for research evaluation. The data obtained from the research were analyzed using SPSS version 26 and the statistical method of regression analysis.

The research tool was the **Primary Maladaptive Schemas Questionnaire (YSQ-SF)**: to measure primary maladaptive schemas from the 75-question questionnaire of Yang (2005) with a 6-point Likert response scale (completely false = 1 to completely true = 6) and 15 subscales including emotional deprivation, rejection/mistreatment, mistrust/mistreatment, social isolation, defect/shame, failure, dependence /incompetence, vulnerability to harm, entanglement/trapping, information, Self-sacrifice, emotional inhibition, stubborn standards, entitlement, self-restraint and insufficient self-discipline were used. Total Cronbach's alpha for the present test in Bech et al.'s research [37] was reported as 0.96, and for subscales above 0.80. In Ghiasi, Molavi, Neshatdost, and Salavati's research [38], the concurrent validity of the questionnaire with the ineffective attitudes scale was reported as 0.65. Its Cronbach's alpha in the subscales was reported between 0.60 and 0.90, and its total Cronbach's alpha was 0.94. Also, the Cronbach's alpha of this questionnaire in the present study was 0.86 for the whole questionnaire and between 0.78 and 0.82 for the subscales.

Attachment Questionnaire (RAAS): The attachment questionnaire of Collins and Reed (1990) consists of 18 items, which are scored on a 5-point scale (Likert type) from 1, which does not match my characteristics at all, to completely match my characteristics. =5 is measured. It has 3 subscales named: dependence (D), closeness (C) and anxiety (A) anxiety subscale (A) corresponds to anxious-ambivalent attachment and closeness subscale (C) is a dimension It is a dichotomy that contrasts the basis of safe and avoidant descriptions; Therefore, closeness is compatible with safe attachment and under the scale of attachment (D) can be almost the opposite of avoidant attachment [39]. Collins and Read [39] showed that the subscales of closeness, dependence and anxiety remained stable over 2 months and even during 8 months; The validity of the questionnaire through content validity is 0.85 and regarding the reliability of the adult attachment scale, Collins and Reed reported Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 for the secure attachment subscale, 0.80 for avoidant attachment, and 0.83 for anxious attachment. On the other hand, in Qelich Beiki Apakdaman, Karashki's research [40], the validity of the test was evaluated using appropriate retesting. Considering that Cronbach's alpha values are equal to or more than 0.80 in all cases, the test has high reliability. Construct validity was measured using divergent validity. The results showed that the correlation coefficient between subscales A and

C, A and D, at the significance level of 0.001 is -0.313 and -0.336, respectively, and the correlation coefficient between subscales C and D at the significance level is 0.14. A value of 0.246 was obtained.

Pines Marital Burnout: To check the level of marital burnout, different people are asked to answer a 21-item questionnaire that includes the three main components of physical exhaustion (for example, feeling tired, lethargic, and having sleep disorders), emotional exhaustion (feeling depressed, hopeless), being trapped), and psychological exhaustion (such as feelings of worthlessness, frustration and anger towards the spouse). All these items are answered on a seven-point scale. Respondents must indicate how often they have experienced each of these items in their marital relationship (from 1 = never, 4 = sometimes, to 7 = always). The degree of burnout is calculated by determining the average of the answers. The scoring of 4 items is also done in reverse, and a higher score for the subject in this scale is a sign of more exhaustion. Grade 4 represents the state of exhaustion. With grade 3, there is a risk of burnout. Grade 5 indicates a crisis. A score of more than five indicates the need for immediate help. A score of 2 or less indicates a good relationship [40] The construct validity of this questionnaire was found to be favorable in Pines and Nunes' research, and Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the subscales were reported as 0.84 to 0.90 by Pines and Nunes [41] In examining the psychometric properties of this questionnaire Rakhshany and et al (42) found the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of this scale to be 0.81 and the reliability through Cronbach's alpha to be 0.77.

Findings:

186 couples participated in the present study. The mean and standard deviation of men's ages were 37.29 and 6.42 years, respectively, and women's ages were 33.95 and 5.70 years, respectively. The level of education of 13 men (7 percent) is below diploma, 58 men (31.2 percent) have a diploma, 12 men (856 percent) have a master's degree, 54 men (29 percent) have a bachelor's degree, and 32 men (17.2 percent) have a master's degree. And 17 people (9.1 percent) were Ph.D. Also, the level of education of 18 people (9.7 percent) of the women participating in the research was below diploma, 52 people (28 percent) had a diploma, 9 people (4.8 percent) had a post-graduate diploma, 59 people (31.7 percent) had a bachelor's degree, 37 19.9 percent had a master's degree and 11 (5.9 percent) had a doctorate. It should be noted that the average length of marriage among couples was 10.21 and 6.27, respectively, and 91 couples (48.9 percent) had no children, 55 couples (29.6 percent) had one child, 29 couples (15.6 percent) had two children, and 11 couples (5.9%) had more than two children. Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients between attachment styles, primary maladaptive schemas, and marital burnout.

Table 1: Average, standard deviation, and correlation coefficients between research variables

[illegible]

Attachment	-0.10	0.32*	-								
-		*									
ambivalent											
Schema-	-	0.24*	0.29*	-							
cutting/	0.21*	*	*								
rejection	*										
Schema-	-	0.15*	0.33*	0.51*	-						
self-	0.20*	*	*	*							
management	*										
and											
impaired											
performance											
Schema -	-	0.19*	0.30*	0.54*	0.52*	-					
reorientation	0.27*	*	*	*	*						
	*										
Scheme -	-	0.19*	0.28*	0.62*	0.59*	0.68*	-				
listen to the	0.25*	*	*	*	*	*					
bell	*										
Schema-	-	0.21*	0.18*	0.44*	0.38*	0.55*	0.64*	-			
Disruptive	0.21*	*	*	*	*	*	*				
limitations	*										
Marital	-0.06	0.15*	0.20*	0.15*	0.13*	0.14*	0.23*	0.27*	-		
exhaustion,		*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
physical											
exhaustion											
1Marital	0.01	0.12*	0.17*	0.22*	0.18*	0.26*	0.38*	0.44*	0.73*	-	
exhaustion,		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
emotional											
collapse											
Marital	-0.02	0.08*	0.11*	0.17*	0.14*	0.21*	0.30*	0.35*	0.71*	0.76*	-
exhaustion,		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
mental											
collapse											
Average	17.43	15.28	15.85	69.61	63.86	28.41	27.87	29.20	28.75	31.18	29.5
											0
Standard	3.22	3.52	3.47	12.09	10.39	7.16	6.77	7.24	6.20	7.05	6.42
Deviation											

Table 1 shows that the direction of correlation between the variables was in line with the expectations and the theories of the research field. Next, Table 2 shows the values of skewness and kurtosis of the variables and the values of the variance inflation factor (VIF) and the tolerance coefficient of the predictor variables.

Table 2: Assumptions of normality of data distribution and collinearity

variable	Normal distribution	Multicollinearity
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	Skewness	Kurtosis	Tolerance	variance inflation
Attachment - safe	-0.67	0.42	0.91	1.10
Attachment-avoidance	-0.51	0.83	0.86	1.16
Attachment - ambivalent	-0.59	0.98	0.82	1.22
Schema - cut/exclusion	-0.47	-0.62	0.57	1.75
Schema-self-regulation and impaired functioning	-0.67	-0.41	0.57	1.76
Schema - reorientation	-0.39	-0.56	0.48	2.91
Scheme - ear to bell	0.08	-0.87	0.35	2.90
Schema - Disruptive Constraints	0.19	-0.45	0.56	1.78
Marital exhaustion - physical exhaustion	-0.32	-0.58	-	-
Marital burnout - emotional collapse	-0.47	-1.13	-	-
Marital burnout - mental collapse	-0.12	-0.52	-	-

Table 2 shows that the skewness and kurtosis values of all variables are in the range of ± 2 . This finding indicates that the assumption of normality of univariate data distribution among the data is valid. Also, considering that the tolerance coefficient values of the predictor variables were greater than 0.1 and the variance inflation factor values of each of them were smaller than 10, it can be said that the assumption of collinearity was also established among the research data. In this research, to determine the establishment/non-establishment of the assumption of normality of the distribution of multivariate data, the analysis of information related to the "Mahalanobis interval" was used. The values of skewness and kurtosis of the information related to the Mahalanobis distance were obtained as 1.07 and 0.87, respectively, which shows that the assumption of normality of multivariate data distribution among the data is valid. Finally, to evaluate the establishment/non-establishment of the assumption of homogeneity of variances, the scatter diagram of the standardized variances of the errors was examined, and the results showed that the mentioned assumption is established among the data.

Model analysis

Measurement model: In the research measurement model, 8 indicators were considered to reflect 2 existing structures. It was assumed that the latent variable of primary maladaptive schemas, by indicators of cut/rejection, impaired self-direction and performance, other-orientedness, ringing ears, and disturbed limitations, and the latent variable of marital exhaustion, by indicators of physical fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and psychological distress, are measured. The fit of the measurement model was evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis, AMOS 26.0 software, and maximum likelihood (ML) estimation. Table 3 shows the fit indices of the measurement model and the structural model of the research.

Table 3: Model Fit of the measurement model and structural model

Fitness indicators	Measurement model	Structural model	cut point
Chi-Square	40.29	90.15	-
Df of the model	19	37	-

df/ χ^2	2.12	2.44	> 3
GFI	0.930	0.957	0.90 >
AGFI	0.867	0.922	0.850 >
CFI	0.954	0.970	0.90 >
RMSEA	0.078	0.062	0.008 <

Table 3 shows that the fit indices obtained from the confirmatory factor analysis support the acceptable fit of the measurement model with the compiled data ($df/2.12=2.12$, $CFI=0.930$, $GFI=0.954$, $AGFI=0.867$, and $RMSEA=0.078$). In the measurement model, the largest factor load was related to the indicator of emotional exhaustion ($\beta=0.960$), and the smallest factor load was related to self-management and impaired performance ($\beta=0.652$). Thus, considering that the factor loadings of all indicators were greater than 0.32, it can be said that all of them had the necessary power to measure the current research variables.

b) Structural model: After ensuring the acceptable fit of the measurement model with the data, the fit of the structural model with the data was estimated and evaluated. In the structural model, it was assumed that attachment styles are related to marital burnout both directly and through the mediation of primary maladaptive schemas. Table 3 shows that the fit indices obtained from the analysis of the acceptable fit of the structural model with the collected data ($df/2.44=2.44$, $CFI=0.970$, $GFI=0.957$, $AGFI=0.922$, and $RMSEA = 0.062$) support. Table 4 shows the path coefficients in the structural model.

Table 4: Total, direct, and indirect path coefficients between the research variables in the structural model

	route	b	SE	β	p
Direct Route	Attachment ambivalence - incompatible schemas	1.304	0.281	0.278	0.001
	Avoidant attachment - maladaptive schemas	0.588	0.286	0.127	0.045
	Secure attachment- incompatible schemas	-1.321	0.289	-	0.001
	Incompatible schemas - Marital burnout	0.154	0.024	0.493	0.001
	Attachment ambivalence - Marital burnout	0.146	0.088	0.100	0.112
	Avoidant attachment- Marital burnout	0.059	0.083	0.061	0.468
	Secure attachment- Marital burnout	-0.225	0.082	-	0.008
Indirect path	Attachment ambivalence - Marital burnout	0.200	0.045	0.137	0.001
	Avoidant attachment- Marital burnout	0.090	0.042	0.063	0.045
	Secure attachment- Marital burnout	-0.203	0.049	-	0.001
total path	Attachment ambivalence - Marital burnout	0.346	0.092	0.237	0.001

Avoidant attachment- Marital burnout	0.149	0.063	0.124	0.033
Secure attachment- Marital burnout	-0.428	0.117	-	0.001
			0.272	

Table 4 shows that the total path coefficient between ambivalent attachment style ($\beta=0.237$, $P=0.001$) and avoidant attachment style ($\beta=0.124$, $P=0.033$) with positive marital burnout, and the total path coefficient of the total relationship between secure attachment style and marital burnout ($p=0.001$, $\beta=0.272$) is negative and significant. Also, the path coefficient between initial maladaptive schemas and marital burnout ($\beta=0.493$, $P=0.001$) was positive and significant. The results of Table 4 show that the indirect path coefficient of ambivalent attachment style ($\beta=0.137$, $P=0.001$) and avoidant attachment ($\beta=0.063$, $P=0.045$) with positive marital burnout, and the indirect path coefficient The indirect relationship of secure attachment style with marital burnout ($p=0.001$, $\beta=0.129$) is negative and significant. Based on this, the results of the present study showed that primary maladaptive schemas positively mediate the relationship between ambivalent and avoidant attachment styles and marital burnout, and negatively and significantly mediate the relationship between secure attachment style and marital burnout. Figure 1 shows the structural model of the research in explaining the causal relationships between attachment styles and initial incompatible schemas with marital burnout.

Discussion and conclusion:

The results of the research showed that the structural model of the research, in which it is assumed that the attachment styles are related both directly and through the mediation of the initial incompatible schemas with the marital exhaustion of the couples, is suitable with the collected data, and it was concluded that the structural model of the research is suitable with the collected data. The findings of the current research on the role of attachment styles and initial incompatible schemas with marital burnout of couples were consistent with numerous studies. Adlparvar and Safaeirad et al. [43] confirmed the fit of a suitable structural model for predicting marital conflicts based on attachment styles and with the mediating role of cut/rejection schemas and self-management/impaired functioning in women on the verge of divorce, which is consistent with the present study.

In line with the findings of the present study, Afshari, Mootabi, and Panaghi [44] also confirmed the mediating role of primary maladaptive schemas in the relationship between attachment styles and marital satisfaction. In line with the findings of the present study, other researchers, Malm, Oti-Boadi et al. [45], and Brandão et al. [46] confirmed the relationship between attachment style and marital exhaustion. Also, the findings of the current research on the relationship between initial incompatible schemas and marital burnout are consistent with other research findings.

The fit of the structural model of the current research can be explained based on the cognitive approach. Cognitive biases and distortions are among the factors affecting conflicts and marital exhaustion; thus that negative biases and cognitive distortions, such as pessimism, are closely related to the destruction of interpersonal relationships with marital exhaustion and divorce [23]. These biases may be created and reinforced under the influence of attachment styles; Psychologists believe that some processes in the functioning of the attachment system, such as perception, attention, interpretation and evaluation, work without conscious control; According to Balbi, active internal

patterns unconsciously cause bias in information processing, interpersonal expectations, and design and planning to deal with helplessness and stress [24, 26, 33]. Internal working models of attachment provide a biased framework for directing attentional resources towards attachment-related cues and affect the processes of emotion regulation, emotional closeness, etc. In this way, people with avoidant and ambivalent insecure attachment style have more attentional and cognitive bias towards threats [13], which can affect their interpersonal relationships and increase their marital burnout. On the other hand, incompatible schemas also create and maintain emotional problems by biasing information processing and interpretation [44] and can cause marital exhaustion by affecting interpersonal relationships.

From a biological point of view, the limbic system is the center of emotions, social behavior, and attachment, and its structures, including the amygdala and hippocampus, play a role in attachment. Also, the prefrontal cortex of the brain is heavily involved in homeostatic regulation and attachment functions and plays an essential role in processing interpersonal signals necessary to initiate social interaction between people [11]. Studies conducted on brain biology point to specific areas such as the amygdala and hippocampus, which are triggered by schemas based on traumatic childhood events, such as abandonment or abuse. The amygdala plays a role in this process by storing emotional memories, and the hippocampus and superior cerebral cortex play a role in maintaining cognitive memories [13]. Neuroscientists discovered that burnout was associated with increased volume of the amygdala [a part of the brain that controls emotional reactions], thinning of the prefrontal cortex [a part of the brain responsible for cognitive function], and weakening of parts of the brain that control memory and attention span. They do it together. Fatigue reduces communication between different parts of the brain, which can lead to reduced working memory and problem-solving skills [37]. Therefore, it seems that traumatic events, in addition to being involved in the formation of insecure attachment style and schemas, can also affect burnout by changing brain structures.

It seems that the combination of attachment styles, incompatible schemas, with ineffective coping schemas [the coping styles that people use in different situations and depending on their personality and mentality] can affect marital burnout. People with insecure attachment are quickly aroused and show higher emotional responses when faced with problems and stressful events. According to Balbi, a person's attachment style affects the formation of the method of facing stressful experiences [34]. Therefore, people with an insecure attachment style who have a higher score in the initial maladaptive schemas may use ineffective coping skills and schemas when facing stressful events in their marital life, which increases their marital burnout. For example, the coping schemas or dysfunctional coping mentality of submissive surrender, indifferent protector, and extreme compensation, which are consistent with the three coping styles of submission, avoidance, and extreme compensation [9]; With passivity and despair, emotional detachment and avoidance or misbehavior and passive aggressiveness with ineffective response to events can increase marital exhaustion. Therefore, it seems that the fit of the structural model of the research, in which it is assumed that attachment styles are related to marital burnout both directly and through the mediation of primary maladaptive schemas, can be explained based on the interactive relationships between attachment styles, maladaptive schemas, ineffective coping schemas, and communication skills.

Research limitations : The results of the present study represent the sample of couples referred to psychology and counseling clinics in six and seven districts of Tehran, so the generalization of the findings of the present study to other people is limited, because the sampling method in the present study was targeted, the generalization of the results should be done with caution. The researcher's lack of interview with some of the subjects and the lack of access to the files registered by other colleagues, due to the limitations caused by the codes of ethics about the maintenance of client records, are the limitations of the present research, and not considering the effect of influential factors such as age, gender, economic status and Education on the research model, which can affect the results and reduce their credibility, is one of the limitations of the current research.

Application of research: It is suggested that research similar to the current research be conducted in other cities and statistical communities to provide more and more accurate experimental evidence, and also, the current research model should be observed with non-self-reporting tools such as interviews. Qualitative research should also be used to investigate the role of cultural and social factors on marital burnout; In this way, it is possible to more closely examine the factors affecting marital burnout and their interaction with attachment styles and incompatible schemas, and in future researches, the variable of marriage length should also be examined as a moderating variable in the relationship between attachment styles, incompatible schemas, and marital burnout.

Ethical Considerations: The present research is taken from the doctoral thesis of the first author in the field of psychology and has been approved by the specialized research council with the ethics code IR.IAU.K.REC.1401.070 of the Islamic Azad University of Karaj branch. The researchers of this study consider it necessary to thank all the participants who helped us in this research and made it possible to conduct the study.

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