



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***DYADIC EFFECT OF GOTTMAN'S PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL
INTERVENTION AND MEDIATED EFFECT OF ADULT ATTACHMENT
STYLE ON MARITAL COMMUNICATION AMONG IRANIAN COUPLES
IN SHIRAZ, IRAN***

NEDA DEYLAMI

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By

NEDA DEYLAMI

**Thesis Submitted To the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

August 2016

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DEDICATION

This thesis is cordially dedicated to the most important people in my life; my husband, my children, my mother and the great soul of my father, for their infinite love and passion.



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

DYADIC EFFECT OF GOTTMAN'S PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION AND MEDIATED EFFECT OF ADULT ATTACHMENT STYLE ON MARITAL COMMUNICATION AMONG IRANIAN COUPLES IN SHIRAZ, IRAN

By

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August 2016

Chairman : Assoc. Prof. Siti Aishah Hassan, PhD
Faculty : Educational Studies

The accumulated evidence on marital quality indicates that marital communication patterns (MCP) and its training is necessary to reduce emotionally and economically cost of marital problems. However, despite the high effectiveness of Gottman's intervention as one of the most effective family education, the interpersonal and intrapersonal factors that may influence on it, were not included in the previous studies. Indeed, dyadic interaction between couples as an interpersonal factor and the effect of the spouse's characteristics on their partner such as adult attachment style (AAS) as an intrapersonal factor on MCP have been ignored.

The aims of study were examined the effect of Gottman's Psychoeducational Intervention (GPI) on MCP and also the simultaneous dyadic evaluation of Acquired Skills of Gottman's Psychoeducational Intervention (AS-GPI) on MCP as well as assessing of multiple mediating effect of AAS on the association between AS-GPI and MCP that would significantly fill these knowledge gaps. This quantitative study with two sub-researches on experimental and correlation designs attempted to provide a more comprehensive understanding of improvements in marital communication among 72 couples in Shiraz –Iran.

The first sub-research was an experimental-longitudinal design with 144 spouses. The experimental group underwent eight weeks of continual sessions and a one-year follow-up. Participants' MCP were evaluated by CPQ. The results of RM-ANOVA indicated that GPI can improve significantly participants' constructive communication (CC) and decrease their total demand-withdraw communication (TWDC) and mutual avoidance communication (MAC) across the time. This improvement was maintained after a one-year period among the participants without any gender biased effect.

The second sub-research followed the correlational design in two parts; the first, an Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM) using path analyses procedure was used to evaluate the dyadic effect of AS-GPI on MCP among 36 couples. Couples were evaluated by CPQ for their MCP and SRHs for their AS-GPI. APIM analyses indicated that actor effect for CC was significant, while the partner effect was supported for men only. Actor effects in TWDC were significant for both spouses, however the partner effect was just only significant for wives. Furthermore, wives' AS-GPI significantly decreased their own and partners' MAC; while for husbands were not significant.

In the second part the correlational design with Multiple Mediation Model using the PROCESS Macro was evaluated the multiple mediation effect of adult attachment style (AAS) on the association between AS-GPI and MCP among 72 spouses. Participants were assessed by RAAS for their AAS and also assessed by CPQ and SRHs. Through PROCESS Macro a path in which AS-GPI led to marital communication patterns, mediated by adult attachment style was found. The findings showed that all three sub-scales of attachment styles, including close, depend, and anxiety, significantly mediated the effect of AS-GPI on CC, while they partially mediated the MAC and did not mediate the TWDC.

Marriage counselors can use these results and its theoretical and practical implications to achieve a holistic and deep understanding of the underpinnings of marital life and, ultimately, reduce the high rate of divorce in Iran and other countries. This study highly recommends for more generalization to select a more ethnically diverse population, and cross-national evaluation of another population of Iran and another countries. It is suggested to increase sample size for studying dyadic interaction with SEM and for considering of limitation in the experimental research, to be better to select two or three experimental groups instead of only one group. This study suggests to utilize APIMeM for achieving more information about dyadic mediated effect of AAS. This study encourages the interdisciplinary researches on the legal necessity for GPI among couples in dissolution situations.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi Keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KESAN DIADIK INTERVENSI PSIKOPENDIDIKAN GOTTMAN DAN
KESAN MEDIASI STAIL PERTAUTAN ORANG DEWASA TERHADAP
KOMUNIKASI PERKAHWINAN DALAM KALANGAN PASANGAN IRAN
DI SHIRAZ, IRAN**

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Bukti terkumpul kepada kualiti perkahwinan menunjukkan bahawa corak komunikasi perkahwinan (MCP) dan latihannya adalah perlu untuk mengurangkan emosi dan menjimatkan kos masalah perkahwinan. Namun begitu, walaupun keberkesanan yang tinggi campur tangan Gottman sebagai salah satu pendidikan keluarga yang paling berkesan, faktor-faktor interpersonal dan intrapersonal yang boleh mempengaruhinya tidak dimasukkan dalam kajian sebelum ini. Sesungguhnya, interaksi diadik antara pasangan sebagai faktor interpersonal dan kesan ciri-ciri pasangan ke atas pasangan mereka seperti *Adult Attachment Style (AAS)* sebagai faktor intrapersonal ke atas MCP telah diabaikan. Tujuan kajian telah dilihat pada kesan yang dibuat oleh Gottman iaitu *Psychoeducational Intervention (PI)* ke atas MCP dan juga penilaian diadik secara serentak *Acquired Skill Psychoeducational Intervention (AS-PI)* oleh Gottman ini pada MCP serta menilai pelbagai kesan pengantara AAS kepada persatuan antara AS-GPI dan MCP yang secara ketara akan mengisi jurang pengetahuan. Kajian kuantitatif dengan dua sub-kajian mengenai reka bentuk eksperimen dan korelasi cuba untuk memberi kefahaman yang lebih komprehensif tentang penambahbaikan dalam komunikasi perkahwinan antara 72 pasangan di Shiraz -Iran.

Sub-penyelidikan pertama adalah satu reka bentuk eksperimen-membujur dengan 144 pasangan. Kumpulan eksperimen menjalani sesi berterusan selama lapan minggu dan satu tahun susulan. MCP peserta telah dinilai oleh CPQ. Keputusan RM-ANOVA menunjukkan bahawa GPI boleh meningkatkan dengan ketara komunikasi membina (CC) peserta dan mengurangkan jumlah komunikasi permintaan menarik balik (TWDC) dan komunikasi mengelak bersama (MAC) sepanjang masa. Peningkatan ini dikekalkan selepas tempoh satu tahun di kalangan peserta tanpa apa-apa kesan berat sebelah jantina.

Kedua sub-penyelidikan diikuti dengan reka bentuk korelasi dalam dua bahagian; pertama, seorang *Actor-Partner Interdependence Model* (APIM) menggunakan menganalisis prosedur untuk menilai kesan diadik daripada AS-GPI ke atas MCP di kalangan 36 pasangan. Pasangan dinilai oleh CPQ untuk MCP dan SRHs bagi mendapatkan AS-GPI. Analisis APIM menunjukkan bahawa kesan pelakon untuk CC adalah penting, manakala kesan rakan kongsi disokong lelaki sahaja. Kesan pelakon dalam TWDC adalah penting bagi kedua-dua pasangan, bagaimanapun kesan rakan kongsi yang penting ialah untuk isteri. Tambahan pula, isteri AS-GPI menurun dengan ketara dan rakan-rakan MAC mereka sendiri; manakala bagi suami tidak ketara. Dalam bahagian kedua Model Pelbagai Pengantaraan menggunakan Macro PROSES melihat kesan pengantaraan pelbagai *Adult Attachment Style* (AAS) kaitan AS-GPI dan MCP antara 72 pasangan. Para peserta telah dinilai oleh RAAS untuk AAS mereka dan juga dinilai oleh CPQ dan SRHs. Melalui PROSES Macro laluan kepada AS-GPI kepada corak komunikasi perkahwinan, perantaraannya ialah *adult attachment style* yang ditemui. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa semua tiga skala sub *attachment style*, termasuk rapat, bergantung, dan kebimbangan, menjadi pengantaraan yang besar kepada kesan AS-GPI di CC, sebahagiannya pengantaraan MAC dan tidak menjadi pengantaraan TWDC.

Kaunselor perkahwinan boleh menggunakan keputusan ini dan implikasi teori dan praktikal untuk pemahaman yang menyeluruh dan mendalam asas perkahwinan dan akhirnya mengurangkan kadar perceraian yang tinggi di Iran dan negara-negara lain. Kajian ini sangat sesuai untuk lebih generalisasi bagi memilih penduduk yang pelbagai kaum, dan penilaian merentas penduduk Iran dan negara-negara lain. Adalah dicadangkan untuk meningkatkan saiz sampel untuk mengkaji interaksi diadik dengan SEM dan untuk mempertimbangkan had penyelidikan eksperimen, untuk menjadi lebih baik untuk memilih dua atau tiga kumpulan eksperimen selain hanya satu kumpulan. Kajian ini mencadangkan untuk menggunakan APIMeM untuk mendapat lebih banyak maklumat mengenai diadik pengantaraan kesan AAS. Kajian ini menggalakkan penyelidikan antara disiplin kepada keperluan undang-undang untuk GPI di kalangan pasangan yang mengalami masalah.

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My mom, dad, and grand mom – Your love has given me the strength to push through in my life and encourage me always to be an effective human and a good follower for my God. I am appreciated you and request Allah to give the merciful rest for my dad and grand mom.

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Thank you.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APIM	Actor-Partner Interdependence Model
AAS	Adult Attachment Style
AMOS	Analysis of Moment Structures
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CPQ	Communication Patterns Questioner
CC	Constructive Communication
RDAS	Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale
GPI	Gottman's Psychoeducational Intervention
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SRHT	Sound Relationship House Theory
SRHs	Sound Relationship House scales
MAC	Mutual Avoidance Communication
MCP	Marital Communication Patterns
RAAS	Revised Adult Attachment Style
TWDC	Total Withdraw Demand Communication

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter introduces the research background, problem statements, general and specific objectives, research questions and hypotheses. In addition, it addresses the limitations and significance of the study. Terms and relevant variables are conceptually and operationally defined, marking the end of the chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study

In general, humankind tends to gain well-being through developing and maintaining romantic and close relationships and forming families through marriage. Marriage is the most fundamental and extensive human relationship. It provides the initial structure that establishes family relations and trains future generations. Marriage as teamwork can bring either great satisfaction and overwhelming joy or dissatisfaction and terrible pain for couples, individuals, families, children and the society.

Olson, Defrain, and Skogrand (2008) introduced various advantages of marriage, for instance, longevity, deeper happiness, a higher level of physical and emotional satisfaction in sexual relationships, greater career satisfaction and financial earnings, lower rates of domestic abuse experiences and more wealth. More to the point, such positive outcomes are unlikely to be achieved by single individuals and cohabiting couples. Collectively, the significant observational studies provide evidence that low marital quality can significantly predict low levels of emotional and mental health (Proulx, Helms, & Buehler, 2007), low levels of financial well-being (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003; Hawkins & Booth, 2005), and poor health (Woszidlo & Segrin, 2013).

A relation in marriage does not occur in a vacuum but depends on the interaction between couples' interpersonal skills, intrapersonal characteristics, personal experiences, and a set of socio-economic-cultural factors (Halford, Markman, Kling, & Stanley, 2003; Sanders, 2010). Obviously, insufficient knowledge about the abovementioned factors and low quality of dyadic interaction between couples can deconstruct the marital relationships and lead to dissolution and divorce.

Globally, divorce rates are dramatically increasing. In Europe and the United States, the divorce rate has reached between 30 and 50% (Bodenmann, Pihet, Shantinath, Cina, & Widmer, 2006). In Malaysia, the divorce rate has reached 22% among married couples from 18 to 50 years old (Hassan, 2015). Similarly, the divorce rate in Iran is substantial. The National Organization for Civil Registration in Iran (2015) has reported that divorce occurs 18 times per hour and the recorded divorces were 155, 369 cases in 2014. While marriage rates have declined in the last three and one-half

years: down 1.9% in 2012; 5.1% in 2013; 6.7% in 2014; and 7.2% in the first months of 2015 (Iran's Ministry of Interior, 2015).

Navara (2011) suggests that the main predictor cause of the rise in divorce rates and marital dissolutions is the lack of dyadic competencies, such as communication skills, conflict management, problem-solving capacities, and emotional disengagement in both partners. To prevent dissolution and divorce, education, counseling or family therapy is vital. Recent developments in family counseling have heightened the necessity of couples' training and family education programs instead of family therapy (Hudson, 2009; Sillars Canary, & Vangelisti, 2013). A long-lasting marriage will be achieved if couples attend family education training programs, learn skills and do their best accordingly to improve their own intrapersonal characteristics and other relevant interpersonal skills (Sanders, 2010).

Family researchers (Blanchard, Hawkins, Baldwin, & Fawcett, 2009; Uebelacker, Courtnage, & Whisman, 2003) argue that couples who are dissatisfied with their relationships and have low marital skills most probably suffer from clinical disorders, such as depression, as compared to couples who are satisfied with their relationships. Consequently, couples with relevant marital knowledge can regulate affection, manage conflicts and achieve health and happiness more than couples who are in discordant marriages and avoid learning these skills (Proulx et al., 2007). The works of Kiecolt-Glaser, Bane, Glaser, & Malarkey (2003) as well as Richardson (2009) indicate that marital knowledge, such as information about constructive-destructive marital communication patterns and adult attachment style, is essential to a successful marriage.

Marital communication patterns are a central component and a major predictor of marital quality. Gottman suggests that predictability of a successful marriage depends on how couples communicate with each other (Gottman & Swanson, 2002). Widespread agreement in the field of couple and family theories clarifies three dimensions: cohesion, flexibility, and communication. These elements are important cores in understanding the dynamics of family interaction (Arroyo & Segrin, 2011; Ledermann, Bodenmann, Rudaz, & Bradbury, 2010; Matthews, 2010). The dyadic interaction exists between couple, when one spouse can effect on his partner's feeling as well as is effected by his feelings (Arcuri, 2013; Arroyo & Segrin, 2011).

Heene (2003) focuses on the substantial research studies on communication that have demonstrated the negative interactions of distressed marital couples, which are characterized by disturbed communication patterns in their families. Couples with low skills in constructive communication are dissatisfied and unhappy with their marital life and are at a high risk for divorce within three years (Olson & Olson, 2000).

Constructive communication as well as destructive (demand-withdraw or mutual avoidance) communication patterns may be infrequent, observable processes that provide insights into the structure of family relationships (Siffert & Schwarz, 2011;

Sillars, Canary, & Vangelisti, 2013). Understanding the nature of these patterns might infer a couple's general characteristics (Berns, Jacobson, & Gottman, 1999; Christensen & Shenk, 1991; Hardy, 2012), such as their attachment and self-management style. It is vital that couples know how to maintain a context of intimacy and emotional engagement. Basically, constructive marital communication will allow couples to experience a sense of trust, commitment, and security. It is necessary to clarify, this study evaluates the effects of relevant factors to improve marital communication and categorizes them in two sub-researches that will be discussed in two parts or sub-researches as below:

1.2.1 Sub-research 1: GPI Effect on MCP (Individual-Level)

The first sub-research, it was focused on marital communication training that can be used to achieve a positive marriage and can prevent marital ills (Schrodt, Witt, & Shimkowski, 2014). Programs such as the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP) create trustworthy tools for enhancing friendship and fondness between couples, while enabling them to manage conflict and de-escalate negative interactions (Blanchard et al., 2009). Evidence from a study of Iranian couples who participated in preventive or psycho-educational training programs suggests that training can have an effect on improvement of marital satisfaction and, thus, decrease divorce rates (Askari, 2010; Kalantarkousheh, Hassan, Kadirc, & Talib, 2011).

Gottman's psycho-educational intervention under the theory of "The Sound Relationship House Theory (SRHT)" is one of the most effective marital psycho-educational trainings, with a low relapse rate of less than 20%. The aim of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention is to improve satisfaction and stability between couple. It is expected couples by this intervention learn how to be more validating and nonjudgmental of each other; to enhance own emotions positively and regulate their emotional expression and manage their conflicted issues (Henderson, Robey, Dunham, & Dermer, 2013). Furthermore, couple, by Gottman's intervention, learn how can express their empathy and understanding to each other (Gurman & Jacobson, 2015). They will be able to strengthen the emotional engagement (attachment) in their relationship. This intervention is a research-based approach that is designed in an educational, skill training model.

Gottman (2013a) explains that therapy should be designed to minimize the possibility of the couple's relapse after treatment, and his approach is effective for helping couples stay together and making unhappy marriages more satisfying. It addresses the most significant current discussions on the topic of marital quality, exploring what leads to marital dissolution and how to ensure marital longevity (Babcock, Gottman, Ryan, & Gottman, 2013; J. M. Gottman & Gottman, 2011).

The purpose of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention is to replace destructive marital communications with constructive ones between men as well as women (Gottman, 2016). Gottman described destructive and negative communication that include of demand-withdraw communication and mutual avoidance communication

are corrosive communication patterns and predict lower relationship quality (Gottman, 2014a). Gottman introduces three important skills in his intervention that couples need to learn for having a constructive communication and avoid of destructive ones for successful marital quality: 1) how to prevent conflict whenever possible, 2) how to reach an agreement and ensure positive dialogue during an unavoidable conflict, and 3) how to recover when partners become distanced from each other (J. M. Gottman & Gottman, 2011).

Therefore, in the first sub-research of study, it was supposed to answer the first linked question to the literature, that was whether Gottman's psychoeducational intervention can increase constructive communication pattern and reduce deconstructive communication patterns among spouses and would maintain its effects across the time. This aim was tested and will be discussed, subsequently, in chapter three in the individual level with experimental research design.

1.2.2 Sub-research 2: Acquired Skills of GPI, AAS, and MCP (Individual and Dyadic Level)

The second sub-research was focused on significant interpersonal and intrapersonal factors that can effect on Gottman's intervention for improving of marital communication patterns. The core concept of this study was to consider family as a system. Regarding to family systems theory as a foundation of Gottman theory (Gurman & Jacobson, 2015), no elements within the system can ever be understood in isolation, since elements never function separately. In deed individual behaviour is related to and dependent upon the behaviour of others in the family system (Wickham & Knee, 2012). Gottman indicated that using of intervention can improve the whole system of family. Gottman believed both spouses are being linked in a system in which one person's behaviour becomes the other spouse's information. In turn, this spouse's information provides the relevant information on which future actions are taken for another partner. Meaning that Gottman interests on reciprocal interaction and communication between couple as an interpersonal factor that fundamentally is dyadic and not happen in a vacuum (J. M. Gottman & Gottman, 2013; Levesque, Lafontaine, Caron, Flesch, & Bjornson, 2014).

Dyadic data were studied in many aspects of social and family by using the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model. The APIM is being increasingly used in the social sciences, in emotion evaluation (Butler et al., 2003), health (Lewis & Butterfield, 2007), communication competence (Lakey & Canary, 2002), personality (Robins, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2000), attachment style (Campbell, Simpson, Kashy, & Rholes, 2001; Marshall, Bejanyan, Di Castro, & Lee, 2013), and leisure activities (Berg, Trost, Schneider, & Allison, 2001). APIM also has been attracted in the field of the study of families (Friedlander, Kivlighan Jr, & Shaffer, 2012; Sagan, 2015), close and romantic relationships (Pelucchi, Paleari, Regalia, & Fincham, 2013) and as a framework for evaluating treatment outcomes in couple therapy (Biesen & Doss, 2013; Friedlander et al., 2012; Wittenborn, Dolbin - MacNab, & Keiley, 2013). This model is a very

new and expanded model, just growing number of researches (319 articles) have indicated since past five years.

In all dyadic phenomenon, an interdependence exist in a relationship when one person's feeling, thinking, or behaviour influences on the feeling, thinking, or behaviour of a partner (Cook & Kenny, 2005; Ferrer, Steele, & Hsieh, 2012). The interdependence between persons has a consequence so that the observations between persons are correlated and information about one person provides knowledge about the other person's information. For example, the marital satisfaction scores of husbands and wives tend to be positively correlated. This linkage of scores is more generally referred to as nonindependence of observations (Cook & Kenny, 2005).

Therefore, in the second sub-research as a highlight point of this study, it was supposed to answer the linked expletory question to the literature, that it was addressed nonindependence of observations between two spouses. It was supposed to discover, if husbands/wives with acquired skills from Gottman's intervention can effect in enhancing individuals' communication patterns and or can enhance their partners' communication patterns. The first effect is described as an "actor effect" in the conceptual framework of actor-partner interdependence model (APIM) as a best feet model for evaluation nonindependence between observations. The second effect in APIM is called "partner effect". The evaluation of these two effects was the aim of the second sub-research of this study. It was tested and will be discussed, subsequently, in chapter four in the dyadic level with correlational research design.

In the second sub-research, also another factor is considered to study for improving marital communication. Although it is impossible to have a satisfying marriage without constructive communication, consequently, it is important to understand that constructive communication does not guarantee such a marriage. This is because it is a vital factor but not sufficient on its own. It must be noted, based on previous studies, the dyadic interaction between couple as an interpersonal factor (Arcuri, 2013), and some intrapersonal variables, such as adult attachment style (Brock & Lawrence, 2014; Steuber, 2005) have a mediated effect on marital communication. The considerable amount of literature evidences has been published on attachment that indicate a significantly close association between adult attachment style and relationship satisfaction (Brock & Lawrence, 2014).

Adult attachment style is one of the most widely used factors in the marital life that related to many aspects of interaction between couple. Because attachment styles contribute significantly to marital quality, expanding knowledge about attachment is an important addition to the marital quality. For examples, research conducted by Bretz (2009) shows that spouses who were accustomed to negative communication patterns were characterized as having an insecure attachment style. They have negative defenses for acquiring marital skills compared to secure couples that can accept easily appropriate skills for developing constructive communication patterns. Family researches explain couples with secure attachment style are happier, friendlier, and more supportive (Hazan & Shaver, 1987), more satisfied and more committed

(Givertz, Woszidlo, Segrin, & Knutson, 2013), more intimate and more trusting (Ng & Smith, 2006) in their relationships than couples who are insecure. This factor can confound the relation between communication and family trainings.

Additionally, another researches findings indicate that insecurely attached people have relatively unhappy and unstable romantic relationships that has guard against any changes (Chung, 2014; Overall & Simpson, 2015). Also, research conducted by Chung (2014) shows there is significant mediating effect of attachment on marital quality. It means a significant association exists couple with insecure attachment strategies and rumination and lack of empathy and friendship. In 2015, Leclerc with his collages demonstrated that both anxious and avoidant attachment were associated with lower marital interaction such as sexual satisfaction (Leclerc et al., 2015).

Adult attachment style and its evidence of a theoretical relationship with communication patterns have been revealed over the past decades and demonstrated to be effective factors in interpersonal interactions that have a significant mediated effect on marital function and relationships (Bowlby, 1990; Butzer & Campbell, 2008; Crowley, 2008; Deylami, Khalatbary, & Hashemian, 2007). Mediated effect of attachment and communication patterns are study subjects that concentrate on interpersonal behaviors from both psychological and sociological perspectives.

In one study on Iranian couples, Honarian, Younesi, Shafiabadi, and Nafissi (2010) claim that the attachment approach can explain how and why problems appear in relationships; they have shown men with secure attachment style were less avoidant, blaming, and rejecting than men with an insecure style. Additionally, secure women were more supportive, friendly, and constructive with their partners than insecure women. Findings of another Iranian study (Moshtagh, Teimourpour, & Pourshanbaz, 2013) showed that there is a significant relationship between sexual desire and secure attachment style ($r=0.283$, $P<.01$), insecure-avoidant attachment style ($r=-0.321$, $P<.01$), insecure-ambivalent attachment style ($r=0.144$, $P<.05$), marital satisfaction ($r=0.512$, $P<.01$), and sex guilt ($r=-0.442$, $P<.01$).

Moreover, Iranian family researchers found marital communication and attachment style are related and can predict successful marriage and marital maladjustment (AhmadiGatab & Khamen, 2011; Bidokhti & Pourshanbaz, 2012; Ebrahimi & Kimiaei, 2014; Honarian et al., 2010b; Shaker, Heshmati, & Rahimi, 2010; Reyhani et al., 2016). They suggest that adult attachment theory should be integrated with supported therapeutic methods and strategies toward the goal of developing a richness of therapy interventions. Another research on group couple therapy on 36 dyads has shown securely attached couples are significantly more likely to respond positively to couple therapy than are insecurely attached couples (Conradi, De Jonge, Neeleman, Simons, & Sytma, 2011).

Secure attachment behaviors also mediate the relationship between mindfulness and marital satisfaction. Researchers suggest that secure attachment behaviors can be as

the pathway through which one spouse experiences and responses of the other and plays an integral role among couples (Knapp, 2013; Pepping, O'Donovan, Zimmer Gembeck, & Hanisch, 2014). Therefore, those evidences makes sense that adult attachment style would mediate the association between acquired skill from Gottman's intervention and marital communication patterns. Consequently in the second sub-research of study, it is supposed to answer the third linked question to the literature, that it will be tested and discussed, subsequently, in chapter four in the individual level with correlational research design.

Given the abovementioned research results, three main objectives were considered in this study, one of them was considered in the first sub-research and the rest were considered in the second sub-research. Firstly, enhancing and changing marital communication was evaluated by the effect of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention. Additionally, maintenance of long-lasting change was considered across a one year follow up. In the second sub-research, one of the aim was revealing whether improving wife/husband's marital communications depends on acquired skills from Gottman's psycho-educational intervention or partners' acquired skills. This aim was assessed by utilizing the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model or APIM (Kenny, Kashy, & Cook, 2006). Another objective in the second sub-research, considered whether acquired skill of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention had a direct or indirect effect on marital communication patterns. Therefore, adult attachment style was introduced as the mediator on relationship between Gottman's intervention and marital communications and evaluated by the multiple mediation method. (Hayes & Preacher, 2014). It was recognized that if adult attachment style has an effect on marital communication, then the result of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention will be deteriorated, unchanged, improved, or recovered. Hence, for more effective psycho-educational intervention, three effects should be considered: the long-lasting or maintained effect of intervention, the dyadic effect of intervention, and the mediated effect of adult attachment style on intervention.

1.3 Problem Statement

Marriage is the most fundamental relationship in a family institution especially among Muslim population. Nevertheless, low marital quality inhibit the advantages of marriage. The accumulated data (Askari, 2010; Blanchard et al., 2009; Gottman, 2013a, 2014a; Gottman & Swanson, 2002; J. M. Gottman & Gottman, 2011; Kalantarkousheh et al., 2011) illustrates the necessity of marital communication skills training for prevention of marital problems and divorce. Despite numerous researches have been conducted on marital communication, some main research gaps exists in the literature about marital communication skills and relevant factors to improve them that three of them were discussed in the two parts or sub-researches as below:

1.3.1 Sub-research 1: GPI Effect on MCP (Individual-Level)

The first knowledge gap was based on the theoretical advancement in family and marriage counseling as proposed by Gottmans for enhancing marital communication (J. M. Gottman & Gottman, 2011). Gottmans suggest for prevention of divorce and

any marital problems, both spouses have to learn marital skills by attending either in counselling-therapeutic sessions or training sessions (Gottman, 2016); however, far too little attention has been paid to empirically evaluation of Gottman's psychoeducational intervention on marital communication especially in Iran. Iranian couples are rarely inclined toward couple therapy. Indeed, among Iranian, training is more preferable as compared to family therapy or counseling. "Training" is a preferable alternative for them. However, Iranian spouses still have low attendance in family training programs specially, with each other. They usually want to attend in training sessions alone without their spouses.

Iranian research to date has tended to evaluate of Gottman approach in the individual counseling sessions, rather than empirically evaluation of the couple psychoeducational training. Evaluation of psycho-educational approach to Gottman method is yet to be studied among Iranian couples. Therefore, in this study the effect of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention for improving Iranian marital communication patterns was experimentally evaluated.

1.3.2 Sub-research 2: Acquired Skills of GPI, AAS, and MCP (Individual and Dyadic-Level)

The second sub-research faced with two research gaps. One of them was based on the dyadic approach instead of individual approach. Despite research on Gottman's intervention has been consistently linked to effective consequences for spouses' marital communication, little is known about the evaluation of dyadic effects of intervention on marital communication. Most of these studies tend to focus on an individualistic approach rather than a dyadic approach. In these researches the dyadic interaction of couples is ignored and not evaluated and this kind of information has been limited. Therefore, too little attention has been paid to dyadic interaction systematically (Arcuri, 2013; Levesque et al., 2014).

The association between the effects of Gottman's intervention and individual marital communication patterns were hypothesized in a considerable number of studies; however, the possible effects of acquired skills from Gottman's intervention on the other partner's marital communication are unclear (Delsol & Margolin, 2004; Gottman & Shapiro, 2010; Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002). Little is known about the simultaneous and reciprocal effects of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication patterns. Therefore, in the second sub-research of this study was tested whether husbands' and wives' acquired skills from Gottman's psychoeducational intervention influence on own communication patterns as well as their partners' communication patterns.

Another gap in the second sub-research was due to the confounding mediation role of attachment on marital communication. Although empirical reports of family studies support the association between Gottman's psychoeducational interventions on marital communication patterns, the mechanism by how Gottman's intervention is associated with communication quality is unknown. Adult attachment style is a logical

choice as a mechanism that could account for the association between Gottman's intervention and marital communication. Since research findings in Iran and other countries (Deylami et al., 2007; Ebrahimi & Kimiaei, 2014; Gottman & Levenson, 2002; Isanezhad, Ahmadi, & Etemadi, 2010; Janbaz Fereidouni, Tabrizi, & Navabinezhad, 2008; Kazemi, 2008; Leclerc et al., 2015; Matthews, 2010; Ostenson, 2008) have shown adult attachment style is associated with marital communication patterns, the mechanism by which the multiple mediating effect of these variables are not discussed in detail (Smith & Ng, 2009), particularly as they are utilized in the intervention.

What is not yet clear is the mechanism of confounding mediating role of adult attachment style that is impact on association between Gottman's interventions on marital communication (Leclerc et al., 2015; Ledermann, Macho, & Kenny, 2011; Millings & Walsh, 2009; Parker, Johnson, & Ketrang, 2012). Therefore, in the second sub-research of this study it was found a notable gap in the literature, which called for an evaluation of the multiple mediated effects of attachment style on association between acquired skills from Gottman's psychoeducational intervention and marital communication patterns.

1.4 Research Questions

This study answered the following these researched questions based on the relevant sub-researches.

1.4.1 Sub-research 1: GPI Effect on MCP (Individual-Level)

1. Are the mean scores of marital communication patterns significantly different between female and male in both experimental and control groups across the time?

1.4.2 Sub-research 2: Acquired Skills of GPI, AAS, and MCP (Individual and Dyadic Level)

1. Does acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention have dyadic effect on couples' marital communication patterns?
2. Does adult attachment styles mediate the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and marital communication patterns between female and male?

1.5 Research Objectives

Regarding to problem statement and research question supposed to evaluate objectives. In the follow they are described.

1.5.1 General Objective

The main purpose of this study was to examine dyadic effect of the Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and mediated effect of adult attachment styles on marital communication patterns among Iranian couples in Shiraz by considering both individual and dyadic levels.

1.5.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives were described in two sub-researches:

1.5.2.1 Sub-research 1: GPI Effect on MCP (Individual-Level)

To evaluate the effectiveness of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication patterns among individual female and male at T2, T3, and T4.

1.5.2.2 Sub-research 2: Acquired Skills of GPI, AAS, and MCP (Individual and Dyadic Level)

Part1:

To examine the dyadic effect of acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication patterns among couples.

Part2:

To assess the mediated effect of adult attachment styles on the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and marital communication patterns between female and male.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

Regarding to problem statements, the main hypotheses that each of them had some sub-hypotheses were tested and introduced separately based on two sub-researches as below:

1.6.1 Sub-research 1: GPI Effect on MCP (Individual-Level)

H1. The mean scores in marital communication patterns (CC, MAC, and TWDC) for both genders and both groups at T2, T3, and T4 are significantly different than at T1. This hypothesis include of nine sub-hypotheses.

1.6.1.1 Constructive communication (CC)

1. The mean CC scores between participants in the experimental group would be significantly higher than those of the control group at T2.

2. The mean CC scores within participants at T2, T3, and T4 would be significantly higher than at T1.
3. The mean CC scores of males and females would be significantly interact with time and group.

1.6.1.2 Total Withdraw/Demand Communication (TWDC)

4. The mean TWDC scores between participants in the experimental group would be significantly lower than in the control group at T2.
5. The mean TWDC scores within participants at T2, T3, and T4 would be significantly lower than at T1.
6. The mean TWDC scores of male and female would be significantly interact with time and group.

1.6.1.3 Mutual Avoidance Communication (MAC)

7. The mean MAC scores between participants in the experimental would be significantly lower than those of the control group at T2.
8. The mean MAC scores within participants at T2, T3, and T4 would be significantly lower than those at T1.
9. The mean MAC scores of male and female significantly interact with time and group.

1.6.2 Sub-research 2: Acquired Skills of GPI, AAS, and MCP (Individual and Dyadic Level)

Part 1:

H1. There is a significant dyadic effect of acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication patterns (CC, MAC, and TWDC) among couples.

This hypothesis include of six sub-hypotheses.

1.6.2.1 Constructive Communication (CC)

Actor effect:

1. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly increase own CC.

Partner effect:

2. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly increase partner's CC.

1.6.2.2 Total Withdraw/Demand Communication (TWDC)

Actor effect:

3. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease own TWDC.

Partner effect:

4. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease partner's TWDC.

1.6.2.3 Mutual Avoidance Communication (MAC)

Actor effect

5. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease own MAC.

Partner effect

6. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease partner's MAC.

Part 2:

H1. There is significant mediated effect of adult attachment styles on the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and marital communication patterns between female and male.

This hypothesis include of three sub-hypotheses.

1.6.2.4 Constructive Communication (CC)

1. Adult attachment styles (close, depend, and anxiety) significantly mediated the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and CC.

1.6.2.5 Total Withdraw/Demand Communication (TWDC)

1. Adult attachment styles (close, depend, and anxiety) significantly mediated the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and TWDC.

1.6.2.6 Mutual Avoidance Communication (MAC)

1. Adult attachment styles (close, depend, and anxiety) significantly mediated the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and MAC.

As it can be seen the Table1.1 provides an overall view about research questions and hypotheses in both sub-researches.



Table 1.1: Specific Objectives, Research Questions, and Research Hypotheses

Research Questions	Specific Objectives	Research Hypotheses
Sub-research 1:		
1. Are the mean scores of marital communication patterns significantly different between female and male in both experimental and control groups across the time?	1. To evaluate the effectiveness of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication patterns among individual female and male at T2, T3, and T4.	<p>H1. The mean scores in marital communication patterns (CC, MAC, and TWDC) for both genders and both groups at T2, T3, and T4 are significantly different than at T1.</p> <p>CC</p> <p>1. The mean CC scores between participants in the experimental group would be significantly higher than those of the control group at T2.</p> <p>2. The mean CC scores within participants at T2, T3, and T4 would be significantly higher than at T1.</p> <p>3. The mean CC scores of males and females would be significantly interact with time and group.</p> <p>TWDC</p> <p>4. The mean TWDC scores between participants in the experimental group would be significantly lower than in the control group at T2.</p> <p>5. The mean TWDC scores within participants at T2, T3, and T4 would be significantly lower than at T1.</p> <p>6. The mean TWDC scores of male and female would be significantly interact with time and group.</p> <p>MAC</p> <p>7. The mean MAC scores between participants in the experimental would be significantly lower than those of the control group at T2.</p> <p>8. The mean MAC scores within participants at T2, T3, and T4 would be significantly lower than those at T1.</p> <p>9. The mean MAC scores of male and female significantly interact with time and group</p>

Sub-research 2:
Part1

1. Does acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention have dyadic effect on couples' marital communication patterns?

1. To examine the dyadic effect of acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication patterns among couples.

H1. There is a significant dyadic effect of acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication patterns (CC, MAC, and TWDC) among couples.

CC

1. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly increase own CC.

2. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly increase partner's CC.

TWDC

3. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease own TWDC.

4. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease partner's TWDC.

MAC

5. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease own MAC.

6. Husband's/wife's acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention significantly decrease partner's MAC.

Part 2:

2. Does adult attachment styles mediate the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and marital communication patterns between female and male?

2.To assess the mediated effect of adult attachment styles on the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and marital communication patterns between female and male

H1. There is significant mediated effect of adult attachment styles on the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and marital communication patterns between female and male.

CC

1. Adult attachment styles (close, depend, and anxiety) significantly mediated the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and CC.

TWDC

2. Adult attachment styles (close, depend, and anxiety) significantly mediated the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and TWDC.

MAC

3c. Adult attachment styles (close, depend, and anxiety) significantly mediated the relationship between acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and MAC.

1.7 Research Significance

The results of this study contributed empirical and applicable information to the existing body of literature and extends previous studies on marital communication in a number of meaningful ways. First, by examining the role of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention on marital communication at the individual level. Second, this study attempted to extend beyond of traditional assessment for achieving a more holistic and deeper understanding about marital communication with considering of association between Gottman's intervention and marital communication in the dyadic level. Additionally, these associations were mediated by adult attachment style. The results of study will be significant in a number of meaningful ways that are described below.

This study is significant in its methodological advances over some of the previous studies for four reasons. First, unlike the previous research on couple relationships, a novel approach utilized in this study is to consider a dyadic approach, APIM, to treat the couple or dyad as the unit of analysis rather than the individual married person. Thus, such an analytic framework is a significant issue toward a deep understanding of couples' functions and predicting outcomes. These results may help future researchers explore how marital quality is related to the interaction of both partners' characteristics, directly or indirectly.

Second, utilizing a special new version of the mediator is called "multiple mediator analyzing," (Chow, Ruhl, & Buhrmester, 2013; Hayes & Preacher, 2014) which was used to examine the effect of three styles of adult attachment on marital communication patterns. This study describes a multiple mediation model by including adult attachment style as the mediator between Gottman's psycho-educational intervention and marital communication patterns.

Third, this investigation is significant because it will improve existing knowledge about marital communication through a longitudinal analysis. Such a longitudinal design will facilitate greater understanding on how distinguishing influences of intervention effect on the marital communication of both partners in obtaining improved marital quality.

Fourth, since the present study focuses on normal married couples in the community without explicit signs of disengagement, dissolution, or divorce, along with their attachment style, the results should better inform researchers and clinicians as to how attachment processes can predict improved marital communication among typical couples.

Furthermore, this study has advanced the family therapist's understanding of differences in couples' manners. This is because adult attachment is introduced as an effective factor showing how couples interact with one another, regulate their conflicts, and bond emotionally (Cutler, 2009). Therefore, in order to plan for more effective

interventions, these results are important and can provide applied insights for increasing the outcomes of intervention for couple therapists.

The evaluation of the role of adult attachment on marital communication might be important and valid for parents to realize that this variable can cause future problems in their children's marital life. Therefore, they should endeavor to raise their children in a manner that avoids negative future consequences (Eslinger, Sprang, & Otis, 2014; Overall, Fletcher, Simpson, & Fillo, 2015), and create a healthier environment for their children and other family members' secure growth.

The implications of this study are important for governmental and non-governmental institutions, counselors, researchers, lecturers, and religious preachers who prepare young people and train them for satisfied marital lives (Farmam & Pakgozar, 2011; Gottman, 2013a, 2013b). The current study can encourage Iranian and Malaysian legislators to instigate and enforce laws regarding the necessity of "marital educational programs" before marriage, requiring every new couple to pass training programs and to be evaluated very carefully before entering married life.

There are several strengths of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention for couples, especially in the context of Iran. Gottman's training encourages couples to build intimate and close relationships and manage conflict by balancing both negative and positive feelings. As a result, Iranian couples with Gottman's intervention-based skills can manage their own and partners' marital problems and potential conflicts, thereby greatly reducing the levels of marital distress and divorce (Kazemi, 2008).

1.8 Research Limitations

Although this study enhances knowledge on psycho-educational intervention by suggesting a predictor for marital communication patterns and illustrates the influence of both Gottman's intervention in dyadic analytic framework, and adult attachment style on marital communication, it has faced three main limitations in terms of:

1. Sample characteristics
2. Methodology
3. Measurement tools and intervention.

These are illustrated in the following paragraphs:

Research limitations based on sample characteristics; a number of important limitations need to be noted regarding the sample of the present study. First, the generalizability of this study is limited only to Iranian couples who reside in Shiraz. Second, the population of Iranian couples in Shiraz is large and diverse with differing socioeconomic statuses and ethnicities. Therefore, a precise estimation of Iranian couples in Shiraz is impossible. They stay in different places and their accessibility is difficult. Third, it is highly likely that participants in this study had other information sources such as friends, the Internet, TV, and books, which could be used to improve

their marital quality. This is not something that the researcher could control. Fourth, the level of education of each spouse may be reflected in the process of intervention and result in a better understanding of the questionnaires by the more educated population.

Research limitations based on methodology; regarding the experimental design of this research, randomization and minimization of individual differences were conducted; however, it was impossible to rule out all confounding variables. For example, economic and social problems that may insert an effect on the emotional and mental state of the participants were impossible to control. In addition, this study needs to have a sample with appropriate requirements for inclusion criteria, so these factors will unavoidably limit the generalizability. Despite all efforts made by the researcher to recruit couples who were equally engaged and attentive, it is possible that some individuals had low cooperation rates in group activities because perhaps, they feared being ignored or judged by the participants, researcher, or even their own spouses. Additionally, regarding to the experimental research design, this study was limited to select more adequate and bigger sample size for advanced statistical analysis.

Research limitations based on measurement and intervention; Even though participants were reassured that their responses would be protected and anonymized by the researcher, it is probable that some participants answered questionnaires with low confidence because of nature of some items of questionnaires. Also it is possible that the accurate meaning of questions was misunderstood. In other words, as the instruments of this research were self-reported questionnaires, it is likely that some couples avoided seeking clarification for each question. This might have led to a situation where the couples' responses had some biases regarding their level of insight, comfort, defensiveness, and honesty. Therefore, the research was vulnerable to validity threats such as reaction to measures and social desirability.

1.9 Definition of Terms

The research variables are defined in terms of conceptual and operational aspects.

1.9.1 Marital Communication Patterns (MCP)

Conceptual Definition. Communication patterns are the way couples create and share meaning and exchange information, verbally and non-verbally. Couples typically apply the patterns of communication to deal with problems in their relationships (Christensen, Eldridge, Catta-Preta, Lim, & Santagata, 2006; Christensen & Sullaway, 1984). The patterns of marital communication can be mutual constructive communication, mutual avoidant communication, and or demand-withdraw communication.

Operational Definition. In this research, patterns of marital communication patterns (MCP) were evaluated with the Communication Patterns Questionnaire (CPQ) (Christensen & Sullaway, 1984), which considered only three patterns of it: constructive communication pattern, total demand-withdraw communication, and mutual avoidance communication pattern. The spouse's communication pattern was represented by the highest score in one of above three patterns.

1.9.2 Adult Attachment Styles (AAS)

Conceptual Definition. As proposed by attachment theory, adult attachment style is an emotional bond that develops from infancy through interaction with one's own primary caregiver, and is carried through life and, thus, can affect couples and their marriages (Cutler, 2009). This attachment bonding helps adults to accept both the self and others positively or negatively based on the amount of responsibility and availability of their "attachment figure" during infancy. Collins and Read identify three dimensions in adult attachment style: 1. closeness, the extent to which the adult feels comfortable with closeness, 2. dependency, the degree to which the adult feels that can rely on significant others who are available whenever it is necessary to have their supports, and 3. anxiety, the extent to which the adult is worried about being rejected or unloved (Collins & Allard, 2004).

Operational Definition. The evaluated score was eventuated with Revised Adult Attachment Style (RAAS). The score of adult attachment style (AAS) for each spouses was three scores that belong to the three sub-scales of the RAAS namely; close, dependent, and anxiety (Collins, 1996; Collins & Allard, 2004).

1.9.3 Gottman's Psycho-educational Intervention (GPI)

Conceptual Definition. Psycho-educational interventions encompass education and counseling activities. The purpose of these interventions is to provide an educational experience for audiences (family, couple, or parents) that will enable them to effectively communicate together and solve their problems (Markman, Rhoades, Stanley, & Peterson, 2013).

Gottman's psycho-educational intervention focuses on the theory developed by Gottman and is called "The Sound Relationship House Theory (SRHT)". This encompasses three domains: constructive conflict, friendship/intimacy/positive effect, and shared meaning. To develop a successful relationship, couples must implement these three domains. The target of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention is to prepare applicable skills can bridge the couple chasm and improve marital quality by working on strengthening those mentioned three domains (Gottman & Silver, 2012; J. M. Gottman & Gottman, 2010).

Operational Definition. In the present study, in each sub-research, this concept was operationally defined differently as below: at the first sub-research, Gottman's psycho-educational intervention was defined by eight consecutive intervention sessions that were conducted to improve constructive communication and reduce demand-withdraw and mutual avoidance communication of couples across one hundred and twenty hours. The agenda of each GPI session was related to issues for enhancing friendship, managing conflict and shared meaning system. The score of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention (GPI) was obtained based on the attendance of participants in the all intervention sessions.

In the second sub-research, as Gottman's psycho-educational intervention provided appropriate skills during eight training sessions, therefore acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention (AS-GPI) was considered. These skills are friendship and admiration skills, conflict management skills, and sharing meaning, which are explained in Gottman therapy. The scores of acquired skills of Gottman's psycho-educational intervention (AS-GPI) were obtained from a battery of 16 questionnaires called the "Sound Relationship House Scales" (SRHs) that include the Love Map scale, Fondness and Admiration scale, Turning Towards or Away scale, Negative Sentiment Override scale, Harsh Startup scale, Accepting Influence scale, Effective Repair Attempts scale, Compromise scale, Gridlock on Perpetual Issues scale, The Four Horsemen scale, Flooding scale, Emotional Disengagement scale, Shared Meaning Rituals scale, Shared Meaning Goals scale, Shared Meaning Roles scale, and Shared Meaning Symbols scale.

1.10 Organization of the Research

This study was conducted in the two main phases and presented in two divided sub-researches. In the first sub-research, the effect of Gottman's psychoeducational intervention (GPI) on marital communication patterns (MCP) was evaluated among participants. The research method was experimental research methodology. Participants were followed until one year after the intervention. When the first phase finished, it was supposed to evaluate whether couple with acquired skills from intervention and their characteristics can effect on own and / or partner's communication patterns. Therefore, the second sub-research started with the correlational research methodology. In this phase, the dyadic effect of acquired skills of GPI (AS-GPI) on MCP was evaluated. Furthermore, in this phase, the mediated effect of adult attachment style (AAS) on association between AS-GPI and MCP was assessed.

The structure of this study is organized in seven chapters. The first chapter includes of background and statement of problems, purposes and importance of the study as well as limitation and definition of terms has been explained in the two sub-researches. Chapter two critically reviews the literature including of related studies and theories about MCP, AAS, and GPI. Consequently, the chapters three and four are organized for the methodology of the first and second sub-researches respectively. These chapters introduce methodological issues including research questions and tested hypotheses as well as data collection by appropriate questionnaires. Chapter five

illustrates to report data analysis and results of the appropriate statistical procedures as well as discussing study findings in the first sub-research. Chapter six describes the data analyzing and results in addition to discuss study findings in the second sub-research. Finally, chapter seven describes the background and purpose of the study and implications of the main findings in both first and second phases of this study. The content of the seventh chapter is briefly summarized to draw a holistic approach on the effect of Gottman's psychoeducational intervention (in the individual and dyadic level) and mediated effect of adult attachment style on marital communication patterns.



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