

Correlation Between Multi-Dimensional Sexual Perfectionism and Sexual Satisfaction in Women Undergoing Long Distance Marriage

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ABSTRACT

In Indonesia there is very few study on sexuality related to personality aspects. One form of personality aspects in sexuality is Sexual Perfectionism. Long distance marriages are often found to contribute to the sexual life of a partner. This study aims to determine the relationship between each form of sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction in women who undergo long distance marriage. The hypothesis in this study is that there is a positive and significant relationship between sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction. The subjects in this study were 86 people who underwent long distance marriage. Data collection instruments used were the sexual perfectionism scale that was modified by Stoeber, Harvey, Almeida, Lyons, & Emma (2013) and the sexual satisfaction scale developed by Stullhofer, Busko, & Brouillard (2010). Both of these scales have been translated and validated using professional judgment. The results of this study indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction with $p > 0.05$.

Keywords: *Sexual Perfectionism, Sexual Satisfaction, Long Distance Marriage.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans are biological creatures, according to Freud, as cited in Hurlock (2011). Based on the life span, humans children are considered asexual creatures and will experience changes into sexual creatures when they reach adolescence (puberty). Regarding sexual matters, humans become creatures with an instinct to reproduce as a way to maintain their existence. For individuals, sexual activity has not only reproductive functions but also physiological functions as basic needs. Sexual topics in Indonesia are still taboo to be discussed. Therefore, in Indonesia, sexual satisfaction needs more attention due to a lack of research on this topic. Indonesia is a country with the lowest sexual satisfaction compared to other countries (Laumann, Paik, and Rosen cited in Lehmler, 2017). Sexual satisfaction is a form of intimate interpersonal sexual bonding in a romantic relationship, which includes the quality of sexual communication, the attitude of sexual activity and balance in sexual intercourse (Byers and Demmon cited in Jones, 2016). Sexual satisfaction can also be gained from physical and psychological touch by a couple (Jones, 2016).

The result of a study conducted by Warnawan (2018) showed a positive correlation between self-oriented sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction in middle-aged couples. Most previous studies only examined sexual perfectionism in unmarried women (Kluck, et.al, 2016). In western culture, premarital sexual intercourse is indeed common and acceptable, however in Indonesia premarital sexual intercourse is still considered negative and violates the societal norms and values (Widaryanti, 2014), which leads to the researchers assuming that such research is not appropriate to be generalized to individuals with Indonesian cultural backgrounds. The cultural background in Indonesia might influence the results of this study. The increasing living cost and high competition in the job market leave no choice for many married couples but to live separately to pursue careers out of town or even in different countries. Long distance marriages are held to keep their jobs, or for more income (Asmarina & Lestari, 2017). LDM or long distance marriage is a situation where one partner lives in a different location on work days and sometimes for a long time for their career (Putra & Afdal, 2020). Kariuki (quoted in Calypatra, 2017) in his research explained that as many as 81% of

respondents who undergo long-distance marriages have problems related to the fulfillment of sexual needs. The study also discovered other negative effects, including weakens the relationship between partners, causes loneliness, causes friends and relatives to be suspicious, stretches family ties, prevent the opportunity to have children, causes frequent conflicts, divorce, and even lack of money (Kariuki, in Rachman, 2017).

However, there are studies that show positive results, such as a study conducted by Dargie (in Rachman, 2017) which stated that long distance marriage provides intimacy, and high sexual satisfaction due to strong commitment between partners. The lack of research on long-distance marriages, especially in Indonesia, compelled the researchers to research the topics of sexuality. In this study, the sexual perfectionism variable and sexual satisfaction variable are considered to be the accumulation of perceptions that originate from experience of individuals in their sexual relationship with their partner which is not directly linked to sexual intercourse. Measurements were made based on the experience of each individual in their sexual relation with their partner. Research with this variable can be considered possible in the case of long distance marriage because previous studies had found the correlation between sexual satisfaction and long distance marriage relationships based on gender differences (Anand & Steve, 2017).

2. METHOD

2.1 Participants

Subjects of this study were married women in Indonesia who have been in a long distance marriage relationship for at least 3 months, with criteria such as 1) Individuals who were in early adulthood (aged 20-40 years). At 40 years old, it is assumed that people still actively engage in sexual intercourse with their partners. 2) not limited by race, religion, or, ethnicity, 3) couples who actively engage in sexual intercourse with a legal partner, 4) have been in long distance marriage for at least 3 months. As many as 86 subjects from several cities in Indonesia were recruited.

2.2 Measuring Instruments

Multidimensional Sexual Perfectionism Questionnaire (MSPQ) is an instrument created by Snell (1997). This instrument consists of two parts with approximately 30 items in each part that measures five forms of sexual perfectionism. The instrument was then modified by Stoeber, Harvey, Almeida, Lyons, and Emma (2013) by eliminating one form of sexual perfectionism and one part of the

instrument to make it shorter and simpler. The instrument also has better reliability than before (Stoeber, et al., 2013). The modified MSPQ scale measures four forms of sexual perfectionism, namely self-oriented sexual perfectionism, partner-oriented sexual perfectionism, partner-prescribed sexual perfectionism and socially-prescribed sexual perfectionism. Each form of sexual perfectionism is measured by 6 items, therefore, this scale has a total of 24 items.

Scoring was done by adding up the score of items in each form of sexual perfectionism so that a total score is obtained for each form. The form of sexual perfectionism with the highest score indicates the tendency of sexual perfectionism. After testing the items of the measuring instrument, Cronbach's Alpha of 0.961 was obtained. None of the items had to be discarded because the result of the corrected item-total correlation of all items from the measuring instrument showed a value above 0.2.

For measuring the sexual satisfaction variable, the NSSS (New Sexual Satisfaction Scale) scale developed by Alexander Stulhofer, Vesna Busko, and Pamela Brouillard (2010) was adapted. The researchers chose to use the NSSS scale because it has been proven capable of measuring sexual satisfaction across different cultures and genders. The NSSS scale is a scale on 5 dimensions of conceptual model that emphasizes the importance of several domains of sexual behavior including sexual sensation, sexual awareness / sexual focus as an individual aspect, sexual reciprocity and emotional closeness as an interpersonal aspect, and sexual activity as a behavioral aspect.

The NSSS scale is a Likert scale consisting of 20 items. The options range from not at all satisfied, a little satisfied, moderately satisfied, very satisfied, to extremely satisfied. After testing the items of the measuring instrument, Cronbach's Alpha of 0.956 was obtained. For this measuring instrument, no item had to be removed because the results of the corrected item-total correlation of all items showed a value above 0.2.

3. RESULT

First, the researchers examined the relationship between the dimension of self-oriented sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction using Spearman's rho because one of the variables was not normally distributed. The results of the correlation calculation yielded the value of $r = 0.491$ and $p = 000 < 0.05$ which means that there is a significant and positive

relationship between the dimension of self-oriented and sexual satisfaction. A positive relationship between the dimension of self-oriented sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction means that the higher the self-oriented sexual perfectionism, the higher the satisfaction with overall sexual quality. So it can be concluded that when individuals set increasingly higher standards of expectation in their sexual relationship, individual sexual satisfaction will rise, or individuals can feel the expected sexual satisfaction.

Variable	r	p	Description
Self-oriented Dimension with Sexual Satisfaction	.491	.000	There is a Positive and Significant Relationship

Then, a correlation test between the partner-oriented dimension and sexual satisfaction showed the value of $r = 0.251$ and $p = 0.020 < 0.05$ (appendix 5b). This shows that there is a positive, yet poorly significant relationship between the dimension of partner-oriented sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction. This means that the higher the partner-oriented sexual perfectionism, the higher the satisfaction with overall sexual quality. It can be said when individuals set increasingly higher standards for their partners to be a perfect sexual partner for them, the higher the sexual satisfaction felt by the individual.

Variable	r	p	Description
Partner-oriented Dimension with Sexual Satisfaction	.251	.020	There is a Positive and Significant Relationship

Another correlation test between the third dimension of sexual perfectionism, which is partner-prescribed, and sexual satisfaction showed the value of $r = 0.373$. This shows a significant relationship between the two variables. Meanwhile, p value obtained was $0.000 < 0.05$ (appendix 5c). A positive relationship means that the higher the partner-prescribed sexual perfectionism, the higher the satisfaction with overall sexual quality. It is found that when individuals perceive that their partner set high standards for them as a perfect sexual partner, the higher the sexual satisfaction felt by the individual.

Variable	r	p	Description
Partner-prescribed Dimension with Sexual Satisfaction	.379	.000	There is a Positive and Significant Relationship

Lastly, the researchers measured to correlation between the last dimension of sexual perfectionism, namely social-prescribed and sexual satisfaction. A correlation test showed the value of $r = 0.294$. This shows a significant relationship between social-prescribed sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction, while p value obtained at $0.006 < 0.05$ shows a positive relationship between the social-prescribed sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction (appendix 5d). A positive relationship means that the higher the social-prescribed sexual perfectionism, the higher the sexual satisfaction. It is found that when individuals perceive that their social environment set high standards for them as a perfect sexual partner, the higher their sexual satisfaction.

Variable	r	p	Description
Social-prescribed Dimension with Sexual Satisfaction	.294	.000	There is a Positive and Significant Relationship

Additional analysis was performed using a comparative test. Comparative test on sexual perfectionism variable based on educational level was conducted using the Kruskal-Wallis Test because the data was not normally distributed by having more than two distinguishing groups. Comparative test on sexual perfectionism variable based on educational level showed values of 12,146 and $p = 0.002 < 0.05$. This means that there is a significant difference in sexual perfectionism in terms of education level.

Level of Education	N	Mean Rank	P	Description
D3	28	39.63	.002	There is a significant relationship
S1	48	50.36		
S2	10	21.40		

Comparative test on sexual satisfaction variable based on educational level was conducted using the Kruskal-Wallis Test because the data was not normally distributed by having more than two distinguishing groups. Comparative test on sexual perfectionism variable based on educational level showed values of 1.794 and $p = 0.408 > 0.05$. This means that there is no significant difference in sexual satisfaction in terms of education level.

Level of Education	N	Mean Rank	P	Description
D3	28	47.29	.408	There is no significant difference
S1	48	43.09		
S2	10	35.10		

The first step for this test is to make 2 geographical categories based on the distance, which are: 1) same country but different provinces (Indonesia) and 2) different countries (Indonesia-Overseas). Comparative test on sexual perfectionism variable based on education level was conducted using the Mann-Whitney Test because the data is not normally distributed by having only two distinguishing groups. A comparative test on sexual perfectionism variable with the geographical category of long distance showed the value of 647,000 and $p = 0.055 > 0.05$. This means that there is no significant difference in sexual perfectionism variable based on the geographical categories.

Geographical category of LDM	N	Mean Rank	P	Description
Indonesia	4 9	39.02	.05 5	There is no significant difference
Overseas	3 7	49.43		

Comparative test on sexual satisfaction variable based on education level was conducted using the Mann-Whitney Test because the data is not normally distributed by having only two distinguishing groups. A comparative test on sexual satisfaction variable with the geographical category of long distance showed the value of 644,000 and $p = 0.034 < 0.05$. This means that there is a significant difference in sexual satisfaction variable based on the geographical categories.

Geographical category of LDM	N	Mean Rank	P	Description
Indonesia	4 9	38.55	.03 4	There is a significant difference
Overseas	3 7	50.05		

4. DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine the relationship between sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction. Based on the results of data processing, it can be said that the hypothesis of this study is proven, that there is a strong significant relationship between sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction.

The results of this study are consistent with the opinion of Warnawan (2018), that there is a correlation between sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction. This is also supported by the results of a study by Stoeber, et.al (2016), which stated that the dimensions of sexual perfectionism correlate with sexual satisfaction, and quality in sexual intercourse. Sexual satisfaction in marriage serves an important role in marital relationships.

In addition to the main analysis, researchers also conducted additional analysis to see the relationship between each dimension of sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction. The dimension of self-oriented sexual perfectionism there is a significant positive correlation with sexual satisfaction. This is similar to the results of a study conducted by Stoeber, et.al (2016) which stated that the dimension of self-oriented sexual perfectionism has an adaptive perfectionist nature that can enhance sexual satisfaction. The partner-oriented dimension also shows a significant positive correlation with sexual satisfaction, which supports the results of a previous study stating that partner-oriented sexual perfectionism is positively correlated with sexual function and sexual satisfaction (Stoeber & Harvey, 2016).

Furthermore, the partner-prescribed and social-prescribed dimensions show correlation with sexual satisfaction. These results are also found in a previous study which stated that there is a correlation between the partner-prescribed sexual perfectionism, social-prescribed sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction (Stoeber & Harvey, 2016) which became

a different discovery for research with cultural background in Indonesia. Studies previously conducted in Indonesia found that these two dimensions did not have a linear relationship with sexual satisfaction, which is why no correlation test was conducted (Warnawan, 2018).

Furthermore, the researchers also examined the relationship between sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction based on several factors. Correlation tests were conducted on sexual perfectionism with factors such as age, marriage age, number of children, and the frequency of seeing their partner. Correlation test were also conducted on sexual satisfaction with the same factors. Then a comparative test was also conducted for sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction with education levels and geographical categories of LDM.

The correlation test result of sexual perfectionism with marriage age showed a correlation, as well as the results of the correlation test of sexual satisfaction with marriage age showed a significant correlation. This reinforces the result of a previous study which stated that the age of marriage in early adulthood has an influence on perceived sexual satisfaction (Miller quoted in Asmarina & Lestari, 2017).

Furthermore, the results of comparative test between sexual perfectionism and education level show significant differences, in contrast to the result of comparative test between the variables of sexual satisfaction and education level, which showed no significant differences. Then, a comparative test between sexual perfectionism and geographical categories showed no difference between couples undergoing long distance marriage living in different provinces and living in different countries. Lastly, a comparative test between sexual satisfaction and geographical categories showed no difference between couples undergoing long distance marriage living in different provinces and living in different countries. Sexual satisfaction among subjects undergoing long distance marriage living in between different countries and in different provinces shows that differences might be caused by the distance and frequency of meeting each other. The frequency of meeting also influences the frequency of sexual intercourse. A previous study shows that the frequency of sexual intercourse correlates with sexual satisfaction (Zulaikah, 2008).

Apart from collecting data through questionnaire, the researchers also conducted interviews to learn about the participants' sexual relationship with their partners. From the interview summary, the researchers found that participants use sexual messages as an

alternative to channeling sexual desire to their partners. Apart from doing sexual messages, participants also conduct sexual interactions via video call by masturbating with a partner. Greenberg & Neustaedter (2012) found that online masturbation provides positive benefits for couples who undergo long distance marriage such as improving intimacy, and positively related to sexual satisfaction.

5. CONCLUSION

This study was conducted with the aim of finding out the relationship between the dimensions of sexual perfectionism and sexual satisfaction in women undergoing long distance marriage. Based on the analysis it can be concluded that the four dimensions of sexual perfectionism are related to sexual satisfaction in a way that, the higher the dimensions of sexual perfectionism, the higher the sexual satisfaction felt by the individual.

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