The Impact of Social Networks on Emotional Divorce in Mashhad

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1- Introduction
Life for human beings starts along with social interaction which is changed into group when combined with emotions. These social interactions occur in the social relationships atmosphere. One of these is the marital relationship which is very warm and intimate at the beginning but later emotions cool off and life loses intimacy. According to exploratory studies, this continues until the time when the spouses are only near each other without living or being together. This is called emotional divorce which is the cause of the other kinds of divorce. According to the statistics of the Civil Status Registry Organization of Khorasan Razavi (2011), the number of divorces has progressively increased in the recent decade especially in this province and in Mashhad where it has been more than the average rate of the country. This indicates the importance of this issue. One of the contributing factors, which has received less attention, is the structure of the social network. This study aimed to investigate the impact of social networks on the emotional divorce. It is at the self-centered network level (1.5) and has not been conducted in Mashad yet.

2- Theoretical Framework
The researcher has used a combination of network theories including Bott's network structure and marital relations (1957), Burt's structural holes (1995), Kneip's social asset (2004), Granovetter's strength of weak ties (1983), Isral and Randers's characteristica of social networks (1987), and Olson's intimacy (2011).

3- Methodology
This study was a survey using path analysis for modeling and testing. The sample included the married families in Mashhad consisting of 699 nodes: 181 nodes of

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friendship networks, 395 nodes of spouse family network, and 60 nodes of married spouses who have all answered the questionnaires. The level of the examined network is dual. Due to the lack of cooperation of the families, the researcher had to use purposeful sampling. She has tried to use a standard normalized questionnaire in Iran. The content and face validity of the instruments were substantiated through the referees agreement procedure. The construct validity was also substantiated by conducting exploratory factor analysis.

4- Results & Discussion
Based on the results of the regression analysis, multiple correlation coefficient all the independent variables (intimacy with partner, joint practices, family and friends support, cohesion in friends and family networks) have an explanatory role on the dependent variable (emotional divorce). These six variables correlated with the dependent variable (r = 0.75). The coefficient of determination (R^2) result also shows that 0.51 of changes in the emotional divorce, is the function of the independent variables. Among variable which have a direct impact on emotional divorce, the degree of intimacy with spouse has the greatest influence (0.53). According to the intimacy theory, women feel more intimate with their husbands when they participate in joint activities with them while men feel more intimate with their wives when they are completely satisfied in their sexual relationships. This finding is in complete agreement with the results of Shahrestani, Doostkam, Rahbardar, and Mashhadi (2012), Knipe (2004), Bott (1957), and the theory of Bott, Burt (1995) and Durkhiem (2002). Joint activities with the family (0.51) has a reverse influence on the emotional divorce (here 0.78) and a reverse influence on the intimacy with spouse. Therefore, the more participation in activities with friends and family members and others rather than with the spouse, the more intimacy (0.29) and integrity (-0.25) with them and the less intimacy with the spouse (-0.98). This finding is also in line with the Olson’s (2011) results.

5- Suggestions
According to the results, couples should strive to reduce the emotional divorce through increasing intimacy with their partners. Men can increase intimacy through joint activities with partner and women through sexual relationships with their spouse because the most important influencing factor on the emotional divorce is intimacy.

Key words: Emotional divorce, Social networks, Intimacy, Joint practices, Emotional cohesion.

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