

Development of Perceived Sex Taboos Scale

Mehak Arif^{1*}, Shahnaila Tariq², Sadia Huda³**Abstract**

There are many taboos, especially those connected to sexual features of societal standards, yet little is known about how they affect people's private lives. For the better understanding of these perceived taboos, there is need to assess their impact on sexual behavior. Therefore, the aim of the study was to explore the sex taboos prevailing in our society and develop a tool to measure them. Focus group was conducted including 6 participants who were Muslim married men and aged 25 and above. Developed scale was then administered on 340 participants. Sample was selected by purposive sampling strategy. The results showed that the Perceived Sex Taboos scale has 33 items in total, with two variables discovered by Exploratory Factor Analysis. Significant correlations between all components were found by comparing the subscales. Findings have practical implications for the identification of taboos, to provide new dimensions for future researches and to help in developing a sense of strong emotional connection with the spouse.

Keywords: Infidelity, Lack of Awareness, Lack of Communication, Sex Taboos

Received: 07 August 2023; Revised
Received: 18 September 2023; Accepted:
20 September 2023

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Introduction

There are different types of taboos which are mysterious in its nature. Little research has been done on the social norms which are sexual in nature and the effect on someone's private life. To gain a better understanding of the perceived norms and to assess how social norms influence sexual behavior, as well as how these norms impact individuals' perceptions of their own

behaviors. (Hertlein et al., 2020). This viewpoint is especially evident in context with Pakistani Society where these attributes are considered gendered and are closely associated with ability to take care of home, doing chores, and providing emotional care for others in an enclosed system.

It has been observed that behaviors based on transvestism, homosexuality, and bestiality have raised concerns throughout society, being considered as potentially dangerous to the whole community (Brown, 1952). The pressure to adopt softer behaviors that more willingly adapt to the prevailing societal standards can result from the discrepancy between norms. With respect to the behaviors which are sexual norms in nature are less observed in our social circle. Numerous studies have been conducted regarding this specific behavior. People often try to appear average when it comes to their number of sexual partners, avoiding riskier situations compared to their peers (Hertlein et al., 2020).

Homosexuality is strongly opposed in the ideologies based on religion specifically in the majority culture of Muslims including opinions based on Islam and all the Muslim

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cultures in the whole world. Islam's opposition to homosexuality is clear from the divine revelation contained in the Holy Book. This word, coming from God, categorically denounces the homosexual conduct displayed throughout the period of Lot's people (Ramadhani et al., 2018). In that situation, the males who performed certain activities with other men were not classified as homosexuals (Dunne, 1998). However, Muslim societies are not the only ones where someone is classified as gay based purely on such behavior. This type of behavior-based categorization can be found in Latin America (Murray et al., 1995). Masturbation is considered one of the most traditional practices that need to be treated separately from society. It is one of the most disturbing topics concerning the violation of human rights. The human organ like genitals is stimulated by their selves are most practiced commonly in the world. The emerging issue is now making its place in the concerns of society and morality. It is now considered as one of the biggest sins which can lead to the decay of moral and physical behavior of the whole society (Allan & BurrIDGE, 2006).

Premarital sex is discouraged in all the cultures of India. For the population of half of India premarital sex is still considered as a taboo. The rules that have come into society are based on gender bias. In India, men are found to be more frequent than women when it comes to sexual satisfaction. As a result, men frequently have more freedom to live their life as they like, including having several romantic relationships and engaging in more liberated sexual activities (Pandey & Mayuri, 2013).

The phenomenon wherein inhabitants of a society individually assume that their opinion regarding cultural norms and proceedings correspond to general majority is known as pluralistic ignorance. Considering researcher O'Gorman's words, this concept entails a situation that constitutes a cognitive error which makes people believe that their intuition regarding

a certain matter is corroborated by majority of that particular society and that it is similar to the one held by others regardless of their age, or gender (O'Gorman, 1975). Concept of pluralistic ignorance finds its roots in the social norm theory that states that individuals of a society operate on their belief that their opinions are like other residents of that culture or that it is culturally or socially acceptable by everyone (Berkowitz, 2004).

Miller and McFarland, (1987) found that the rates of pluralistic ignorance and its prevalence in the society was linked to the commonly held idea that people believed they were capable of experiencing higher social embarrassment when they were reluctant as compared to others.

In a similar pursuit, Novak and Crawford, (2001) discovered that higher levels of comparative behavior in individuals was linked with higher levels of dissatisfaction. The concepts of homosexuality and the role of Western influence in contributing to these practices within Islamic countries has been a subject of conflict on political and social fronts. The concepts of gay ideologies within these cultures were rejected based on a research methodology developed by Hamdi et al. (2018) who studied these notions for the first time. Homosexuality as an identity basis for individuals has been a subject of great controversy and conflicts and less explored in prehistoric Islam and is unspoken of as regarded by historians (Schnabel et al., 2022).

Through a number of research papers, the relationship between premarital sex and religiosity was examined. It was shown that there is an inverse correlation between a person's premarital relationship engagement and how frequently they attend religious events or engage in religious practices (Teo & Simon, 2019). Following in the footsteps of the research stated earlier, it was concluded that young adults who were more active in religious services and who were keen on religious ideologies practiced abstinence more as compared to

the ones that did not actively participate in religious services (Salviana et al., 2020). Due to the controversies and taboos created and associated with sexual and reproductive health in Pakistan, it has become a subject of less awareness among the population.

A large-scale study set in Pakistan discovered that amongst the 10,760 adolescents and young adults who participated only 41% males and 33% females were provided information about the specifics of puberty prior to it and a high rate of stigma attached to sexual problems was seen (Nadeem et al., 2021). About half of the participants showed adversity towards providing information regarding puberty to adolescents and a lack of awareness about sexual disorders was discovered. The laws, ethics, and social standards guiding people's behavior in Pakistani culture are heavily influenced by the combination of religious guidelines. Homosexuality as well as extramarital sexual relationships are unacceptable or any relations that do not involve a husband and a wife. Openly identifying as a homosexual or engaging in such acts has a negative consequence and results in social isolation, criticism, or even judiciary action against the individuals involved (Al Zaabi et al., 2022).

The taboo power can be observed only by analyzing its practice in any society. Specifically in the societies of the west the harshness of these types of taboos are on another level of punishment. There are various factors that have fueled this perspective which are both sociological and religious in nature. In a collectivistic culture such as Pakistan, these gendered roles find its roots in societal and religious norms of codependency and morality (Anjum et al., 2019).

Significance of Study

This study includes the development of the scale for the first time that unveils the perceived sex taboos with different factors in Pakistan. The study sheds light on participants' perspectives on social values

and various societal norms in Pakistan. The research reveals aspects that contribute to the significance of taboos and their influence on marital relationships by examining focus group discussions.

Rationale of the Study

There is still much to learn about the factors contributing to the rise of infidelity in society. It could be attributed to factors like marital dissatisfaction or particular behaviors that aggravate it. Although our religion permits men to have four marriages at a time but still men move towards infidelity even after getting married (El Azayem & Hedayat-Diba, 1994). To evaluate infidelity, we need to see the main reasons behind the occurrence of infidelity in men, especially when they are in marital relationship too. It may be because of the sex taboos prevailing in the society due to which they are unable to discuss their problems in marital relationships with anyone. Those taboos might prevent men to share the problems emerging in marital relationship with their partner which eventually results in lack of satisfaction with their spouse, leading them towards infidelity. The question arises why this occurs in some couples? All dissatisfied men do not get involved in infidelity. Hence, this area of research is needed to be explored more in our society. Therefore, this study aims to investigate significance and influence of the prevailing sex taboos in our society.

Method

Phase 1

Focus Group Discussion and Item Generation

For focus group discussion sample comprised of 6 ($N=6$) participants including Muslim married men aged of 25 years and above. The marriage duration of the participants was 5 years and above. Sample was gathered by employing purposive sampling strategy. Initially total 85 items were generated from the focus group discussion then further on problematic, similar and the confusing

items were eliminated that gave us 33 items in total for further analysis.

Phase 2

Data Collection and Factor Analysis

Preliminary scale items from phase 1 were administered as follows. Data Collection for Scale was collected from 340

participants ($N= 340$) including Muslim married men aged 25 years and above. Participants with a minimum marriage duration of 5 years were included. Data was contributed by participants through a cross-sectional survey that included 33 items developed during phase 1.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N=340)

Characteristics	<i>M(SD)</i>	<i>f(%)</i>
Age	33.87(4.261)	
Gender		
Male		175(51.5)
Female		165(48.5)
Education		
Undergraduate		109(32.1)
Postgraduate and Above		132(38.8)
Below Undergraduate		99(29.1)
Profession		
Government		37(10.9)
Private		214(62.9)
Self		81(23.8)
Not applicable		8(2.4)
No. of Siblings		
None		1(.3)
1-4 Siblings		214(62.9)
5 and More		125(36.8)
Family System		
Nuclear		160(47.1)
Joint		180(52.9)
Residence		
On Rent		146(42.9)
Own House		194(57.1)
Any Psychological Issue		
Yes		152(44.7)
No		188(55.3)
Your Type of Marriage		
Arranged		128(37.6)

By Choice	115(33.8)
Mix	97(28.6)
Years of Marriage	
Less than 5 Years	242(71.2)
6-10 Years	79(23.2)
10 Years and Above	19(5.6)
No. of Children	
0	61(17.9)
1	127(37.4)
2	80(23.5)
3	69(20.3)
4	3(.9)

Demographics

A consent form was used for permission from the participants that they were willing to take part in the research. The focus group protocol was included in the process to provide consistent guidelines for departments within the division of student affairs who plan to conduct focus groups. Attendance sheet was included for taking the attendance of the participants that took part in the focus group. The initial step of this investigation required the participants to finish a short arrangement of inquiries including age, gender, education, profession, marital status, years of marriage, and religious values etc. This permitted us to file variety of our participants in this investigation. The scale was developed by conducting focus group online and running the thematic analysis to get themes and codes which were then used to develop a scale to identify the prevailing sex taboos in Pakistani society.

Procedure

Focus group discussion was conducted including 6 participants that were married men with the mix of highly and moderately practicing religious practices. According to research, there is a conflict between a person's engagement in premarital relationships and how frequently they participate in religious events or activities

(Teo & Simon, 2019). Using this earlier study as a foundation, it was shown that young adults who actively attended religious services and had strong religious convictions were more likely to practice abstinence than those who did not (Salviana et al., 2020).

A series of open ended research questions were asked. Focus group discussion questions comprised of following open ended questions. Extra probing questions were added during the focus group discussion. The focus group was conducted in the time frame of 50 minutes. All participants were encouraged to speak freely, and express their point of views that was recorded with their consent. The focus group was conducted online through zoom app for the sake on anonymity and due to the reason of pandemic. Thematic Analysis and exploratory factor analysis was used for the analysis of results and the scale was developed at this stage.

A scale consisting of 33 items was created. The scale was then administered on 340 participants. The analysis of the acquired data was analyzed on SPSS v.22. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted and to check the reliability of the scale internal consistency coefficient was analyzed by Cronbach's alpha.

Research Questions

1. What are the main prevailing sex taboos in Pakistani society?
2. What is the factor structure of the Perceived Sex Taboo Scale (PSTS), as revealed by the results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis?
3. Do participants who report higher levels of "lack of communication" also tend to report higher levels of "lack of awareness" when it comes to sex taboos?

Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines by American Psychological Association was followed to conduct research involving human beings. Informed consent was taken from the concerned participants and they were be briefed about research. Participants were presented anonymous and confidentiality of data was maintained. Participants were given the right to withdraw at any stage without any penalty. Results were reported accurately. The prior information was also be granted by the ethical review board committee of University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan to start the research process.

Results

For the qualitative phase of the data focus group was conducted and thematic analysis was used. Exploratory factor analysis was used to deduce factors for the development of the scale. Table 1 lists the themes, sub-themes, and narratives that emerged from the thematic analysis of the participant responses, which were resulted from two main themes: Lack of Communication and Lack of Awareness. Figure 1 displays a thematic map of the main themes, highlighting what we believe to be a novel finding from the current study. The main themes and subthemes are being discussed in the text below with the purpose of better organizing the findings and the information is completed by the narratives shown in Table 2.

Lack of Communication

Within this theme, we included those responses that highlighted the connection between the marital relationship between the couples and importance of

communication between them. It stressed on the importance of communication in a marital relationship. For example: Majority of participants reported to have lack of communication amongst their partners regarding their needs and rights which has impact on infidelity.

Lack of Awareness

Lack of awareness was also a main theme which included the answers from the participants involving the significance of information regarding sexual and marital relationship. Individuals reported that lack of awareness about the sexual relationship with their partner and their needs have an impact on infidelity.

Phase 1**Table 2***Main Themes, Sub Themes and Narrative Emerging from Thematic Analysis (N=340)*

Main Themes	Sub-themes	Narratives
		80% of men who cheat in relationships is because of no sexual satisfaction
	1.1. lack of sexual satisfaction from your spouse	
	1.2. lack of information on sexual satisfaction	
	1.3. lack of sharing about the sexual desires	
Lack of sexual satisfaction	1.4. lack of understanding about the preference of fantasies	
	2.1. Excitement of going out with new person	2.1.1. Everything is new and exciting in new relationships that's why people cheat.
	2.2. Exciting feelings upon meeting new person	
Excitement of going out with new person?	2.3. Trying new things all over again in relationship	
		When people get tired of living with same person they look for new people
	3.1. boredom of living with same person	
	3.2. looking for new people to go out with	
Boredom of living with same person	3.3. people feel better about themselves when go out with new person	
	4.1. Communication gap in couples	4.1.1. People do not express things with their partner because there is communication gap in them
	4.2. Reluctance in communication	
Reluctance due to communication gap in couples	4.3. Communication gap due to lack of privacy	
	4.4. No communication due to shyness	

lack of religious teachings	5.1.	Lack of info about sex from Islam	5.1.1.	People involve in things that are prohibited because of they have no knowledge regarding Islam
	5.2.	Lack of info on religious obligations		
	5.3.	Lack of religious scholars		
	5.4.	Lack of religious lifestyle		
Personality factors	6.1.	Personality factors	6.1.1.	Some people like to cheat because it's in their nature
	6.2.	Some people have habits to cheat		
	6.3.	People cheat to feel good about themselves		
Lack of awareness about marital relationship	7.1.	Lack of awareness about marital relationship	7.1.1.	Most of the couples have no information regarding rights of spouses in the marriage
	7.2.	Lack of information on marriage		
	8.1.	Lack of sharing things with parents	8.1.1.	Parents do not allow for sex education because of conservative mindset
	8.2.	Lack of communication b/w parents and kids		
Generation gap in understanding imp of sex education in parents and children	8.3.	Lack of acceptance for sex education from parents		
	8.4.	Lack of friendly relation among parents and children		
	9.1.	Lack of sex education from parents	9.1.1.	People do not get satisfy from their relationship because of no information regarding sex
Lack of sex education	9.2.	Lack of professional teachers to provide sex education		
	10.1.	Lack of good education system	10.1.1.	There is no sex education because of what society thinks
	10.2.	lack of Provision of gender based sex education		
10. Cultural boundaries/restrictions to get sex ed	10.3.	lack of awareness about cultural and society norms		
11. Difference of mentality in rural & urban areas	11.1.	Difference of mentality in rural & urban areas	11.1.1.	Things are change in cities than villages. In cities people are more flexible in getting sex education.
	11.2.	Difference of mentality in giving sex education among rural & urban institutes		

	12.1. Long distance marriages	12.1.1. Long distance marriages are huge reason why people cheat on their spouse.
	12.2. Need for partner	
12. Long distance marriages	12.3. Incapable of maintaining honest relationship	
	13.1. Focus of people on material things rather than marriage	13.1.1. Women want more money and material things so they look for different people.
13. Focus of people on material things rather than marriage	13.2. Women seek for money and material things	
	14.1. Lack of communication in couples due to family/society	14.1.1. Both men and women cheat because of no communication with each other
14. Lack of communication	14.2. Why can't couple communicate?	
	15.1. Sex word being a taboo	15.1.1. People cannot discuss about their sexuality because of society norms and what people will think about them
	15.2. Conservative mindset of society regarding sex education	
15. Reluctance in discussing sexuality	15.3. Presence of taboos in society	
	16.1. Reluctance in discussing sex taboos.	16.1.1. We cannot use the word sex because people judge us on that as society does not allow us to use these words.
16. Reluctance in discussing sex due to societal norms	16.2. Reluctance in discussing sex due to societal norms	
	17.1. Reluctance in discussing sexual orientation	17.1.1. Male teachers cannot give sex education to females because of conservative mindset of parents
	17.2. Restrictions in providing sex education to females	
17. Reluctance in teaching sex ed to females/girls	17.3. Lack of sex education from teachers	
	18.1. Male dominance in the culture/ society	18.1.1. Society is male dominant that is why people cannot get sex education
	18.2. Lack of sex education due to pressure from males	
18. male dominance in the society	19.1. Reluctance in teaching sex education to girls by male tutors	19.1.1. Females do not want sex education from males because they are shy and there is lack of professional teachers
	19.2. Sex education is offensive to females	
19. Perception of females regarding sex education		

			20.1.1. Main reason to receive incorrect information about sex is because of media.
		20.1. YouTube as a source of sex education	
		20.2. Incorrect use of media	
		20.3. Wrong/unsafe source of info on sex	
20.	Misuse of social media	20.4. Role of media in providing info on sex	
		21.1. Lack of information from religious scholars about sex	21.1.1. Molvis have given misguided information about sex. Although Islam gives all the information but parents do not provide us with it.
		21.2. Molviism	
21.	Misinterpretation about sex by religious practitioners	21.3. Misguided information on sex from religion by religious scholars	
		21.4. Lack of religious scholars	. Our sexual expectations are really high because of the western culture.
22.	Cultural impact of west	22.1. Cultural differences regarding ways of sex in us and western culture	
		23.1. Lack of awareness about culture of society	23.1.1. People are engaging in such activities because they have no knowledge about what their culture teaches them
23.	Lack of awareness about cultural norms	23.2. Lack of knowledge about demands of their culture	
		24.1. Role of internet in providing information on sex	24.1.1. Men use internet for wrong purposes rather than getting information about sex their friends are misguiding them
		24.2. Use of internet for knowledge about sex	
24.	Internet misuse	24.3. Use of internet for information on sex is good	

		25.1. Misguided information about sex from friends	25.1.1. Friends misguide men about marital and sexual relationships
		25.2. Problems in relationship because people get double minded by friends	
25.	Misguided info about sex from friends		
		26.1. Parents do not allow institutions to provide sex education to children	26.1.1. Parents do not provide sex education because of communication gap in children and parents
26.	Lack of sex education from teachers/parents	26.2. Lack of budget to hire teachers for sex education	
		27.1. Stress at home	27.1.1. Men cheat on their spouse when they face frustration at home on daily basis
		27.2. Financial problems	
		27.3. Disturbance at home	
27.	Frustration at home	27.4. Backward thinking of family members	
			28.1.1. People do not communicate about their needs because of shyness from their partner
		28.1. Lack of communication about needs	
		28.2. Need time to adjust with partner	
28.	Shyness from spouse	28.3. Shy from spouse about needs	
			29.1.1. Men do not communicate about their desires to their partner because they think that their partner will share it with their family or friends
		29.1. Lack of sharing to partner because of shame/guilt	
29.	Shame/guilt	29.2. Fear of partner he/she will violate privacy	

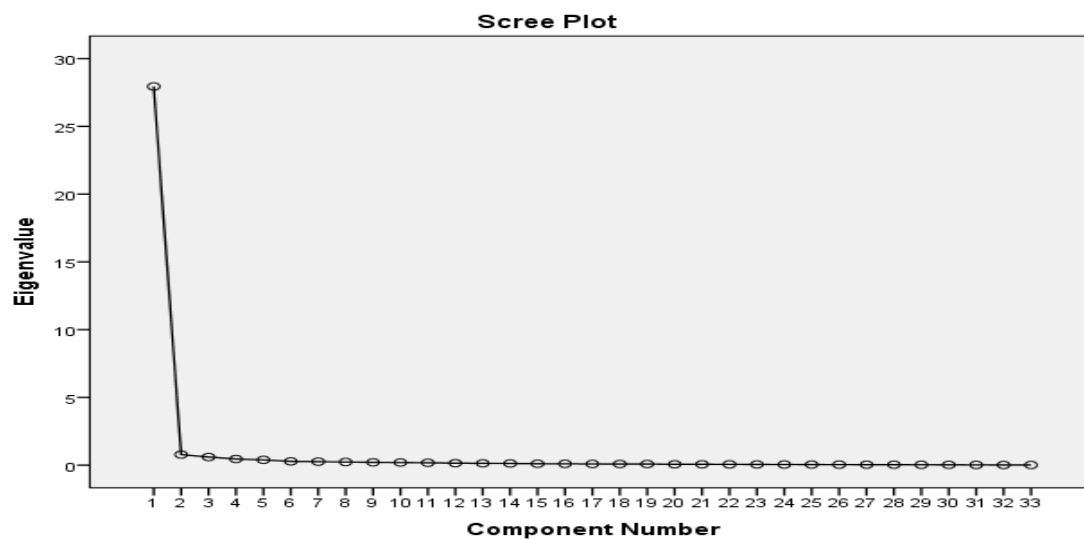
		30.1.1. People do not communicate about their fantasies because they fear that their character will be judged
	30.1. Fear of judgment from spouse side	
	30.2. Fear of character assassination from spouse side	
30.	Fear of character assassination	30.3. Fear of humiliation
		31.1.1 People cheat in relationships because their rights are not being fulfilled
	31.1. Lack of provision of rights to spouse	
31.	Lack of spousal rights	31.2. Fail to provide basic rights to spouse
		32.1.1. Lack of personal space is the reason that people indulge in prohibited activities.
	32.1. Involvement of others in marital relationship	
	32.2. Lack of freedom at home	
32.	Lack of personal space at home	32.3. Lack of personal space
		33.1.1. When people cannot give time to their relationship they cheat on their spouse
	33.1. Lack of time for spouse due to joint family system	
	33.2. Hurdles in communicating due to joint family	
33.	Lack of time for couples	33.3. Lack of time for couples

On the basis of these themes 33 items of the scale were generated and further evaluated by using Exploratory Factor Analysis. By using the extraction method i.e., principal component analysis and rotation

method i.e., varimax the factor loadings, communalities, and eigenvalues for the factor solution were determined.

Phase 2**Figure 2**

Scree Plot demonstrating Factors of the Items for Sex Taboos

**Table 3**

Factors established following Exploratory Factor Analysis (N=340)

Items	Factor 1	Factor 2
Excitement of going out with new person?	.69	.631
Boredom of living with same person	.65	.628
Personality factors	.82	.482
Lack of awareness about marital relationship	.76	.534
Difference of mentality in rural & urban areas	.80	.428
Reluctance in discussing sex due to societal norms	.80	.488
Perception of females regarding sex education	.79	.509
Misuse of media	.73	.573
Misinterpretation about sex by religious practitioners	.73	.605
Cultural impact of west	.66	.658
Lack of awareness about cultural norms	.68	.620
Misguided info about sex from friends	.78	.551
Frustration at home	.76	.578
Shyness from spouse	.77	.527
Fear of character assassination	.74	.603
Lack of spousal rights	.82	.502
Lack of sexual satisfaction	.513	.79
Reluctance due to communication gap in couples	.477	.83
Lack of religious teachings	.652	.67
Generation gap in understanding imp of sex education in parents and children	.526	.73
Lack of sex education	.616	.73
Cultural boundaries/restrictions to get sex education	.538	.57
Long distance marriages	.627	.65

Focus of people on material things rather than marriage	.603	.61
Lack of communication	.479	.76
Reluctance in discussing sexuality	.557	.74
Reluctance in teaching sex education to females/girls	.464	.82
Male dominance in the society	.516	.80
Internet misuse	.624	.70
Lack of sex education from teachers/parents	.467	.82
Shame/guilt	.613	.70
Lack of personal space at home	.611	.73
Lack of time for couples	.661	.68

Each item was categorized into a specific factor based on its higher factor loading value and the subscales' reliability. Table 3 presents the Cronbach's alpha values for these factors. The results indicated that all items had a factor loading value above .30. The selected values from both factors are highlighted. Overall, all items were incorporated into the two factors.

The first factor, termed Lack of Communication, was characterized by components that discussed the absence of communication between the couple, which is crucial for marital satisfaction. The second factor, labeled Lack of Awareness, comprised items explaining the couple's lack of awareness regarding important aspects of their marital relationship that significantly impact marital satisfaction.

Table 4

Eigenvalues of the Correlation Matrix (N=340)

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	27.9	84.6	84.6
2	.78	2.3	87.0

Table 5

Psychometric Properties for Scale (N=340)

Scale	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	Cronbach's α
Sex Taboo	107.85	45.42	33-165	.99
Lack of Communication	32.56	13.51	16-80	.97
Lack of Awareness	75.29	32.07	17-85	.99

Table 5 shows psychometric properties of all scales and subscales used in this study. The Cronbach's α value for Taboo scale was .99 (>.70) which indicated that the scale has high internal consistency. The Cronbach's α value for Taboo subscale 1

was .97 (>.70) which showed high level of internal consistency whereas Taboo subscale 2 has Cronbach's α value of .99 (>.70) which showed the internal consistency was high.

Table 6*Correlation among Lack of Communication and Lack of Awareness (N=340)*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
Lack of Communication	52.66	22.4	—	.95***
Lack of Awareness	55.1	23.4	—	—

Lack of Communication has significant positive correlation with Lack of awareness ($r = .95$, $p < .001$) which means that Lack of Communication will tend to increase with

the increase in Lack of Awareness and vice versa.

Discussion

In this study we aimed to recognize the prevailing sex taboos in Pakistan so we can develop indigenous scale of perceived taboos that will aid in studying the causes of infidelity in marriage related to sex taboos. To evaluate the prevalence of sex taboos in the Pakistani society for the factor structure of the instrument being created has been discussed. By running the analysis two factors structure have been produced. Each of the two components have been found as highly internally consistent according to the Cronbach's alpha. Also, all the items have acceptable post-extraction commonalities. The factors identified were labelled lack of communication and lack of sexual satisfaction respectively. Total items of the scale were 33 items which were generated by administering Exploratory Factory Analysis (EFA). For each item, respondents are asked to rate their level of likelihood that people involve in prohibited behavior regarding sex related matters using the following 5-point Likert type scale: 1 (Almost never true), 2 (Usually not true), 3 (Occasionally true), 4 (Usually true), 5 (Almost always true). Lack of communication consists of 16 items with Cronbach's α value of .97 ($> .70$) and Lack of sexual satisfaction consists of 17 items with Cronbach's α value of .99 ($> .70$). Overall reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .99$. Lack of Communication (Items 2–3, 6–7, 11, 16, 19–23, 25, 27, 28, 30–31), and Lack of Awareness (Items 1, 4–5, 8–9–10, 12–

15, 17–18, 24, 26, 29, 32–33) are computed by summing the related items, with higher scores representing higher levels of Lack of Communication and Lack of Awareness respectively.

The factors include the items that influence the marital relationships and are considered as taboo in our society. Considering the fact that romantic relationships have the tendency to have high levels of both sexual frequency and relationship satisfaction in the beginning of relationships (Gonzalez-Rivera et al., 2019) which is also found in several studies about the positive relationship between them (Baboo & Mohammadi, 2021).

The results of the study showed that some of the things that are considered taboo in our society impacts the marital and sexual relationship of the couples that lead men towards infidelity. The way how people perceive the sexual conduct of others and how people's real sexual activity is found to have discrepancies between them according to the study's findings. In the domain of sexual norms pluralistic ignorance is at work when these findings imply that true frequencies of their peers' activities have been largely unknown. People's views of others have found to be more recurrent than their own sexual activity for most of the taboo sexual behaviors (Pariera, 2013).

Implications

This study is helpful for identification of taboos by developing indigenous scale. If required can be used for mental health

practitioner in counseling. The results of this study can reduce negative interpersonal outcomes and decrease in mental health problems. Increased awareness of marital relationships can promote positive intrapersonal outcomes inside the partnership by fostering better communication, conflict resolution, emotional support, less stress and improved intimacy. This study provides new dimensions for future researches by providing addition in new indigenous knowledge. The results of the study help in improvement for marital relations that can be used by the counselors. The findings of this study help in developing a sense of strong emotional connection with the spouse.

Limitations and Recommendations

- Infidelity is severely stigmatized in society, even after the major focus on the confidentiality. Potential participants expressed strong reaction to the study upon receiving the initial study requests.
- Obtaining a large sample was difficult due to the reason that it can be difficult to access respondents that fit in our sample criteria.
- There is a lack of researches on sex taboos so obtaining data regarding this field was difficult due to the research gap.
- Future researches should investigate the area of sex taboos and more data is needed to be studied in this domain.
- Future investigations should research the narratives in this domain not only from infidelity participants' perspective but also from the perspective of those who witness infidelity.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the current study takes into account that sex taboos prevailing in our society impacts the marital and sexual relationship of married couples which in turn lead them to infidelity. Social norms which are sexual in nature and the effect on someone's private life. To evaluate infidelity, we needed to see the main reasons behind the occurrence of infidelity in men, especially when they are in marital relationship. The study highlighted the need

to study the aspects of the sex taboos further so that the results could be used in the couples' counseling by the mental health professionals and to create a deep connection with the spouse.

Acknowledgments

The authors extend their gratitude to the Department of Applied Psychology at the University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan for their valuable collaboration and support throughout this study. They would also like to acknowledge and thank all the participants who contributed to this research, making it possible to carry out successfully.

Contribution of Authors

Mehak Arif: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft

Shahnaila Tariq: Methodology, Writing – Reviewing & Editing, Supervision

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Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest declared by the authors.

Source of Funding

The authors declared no source of funding.

Data Availability Statement

The datasets of the current study are not available publicly due to ethical reasons but are available from the corresponding author [M.A.] upon the reasonable request.

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