



# The prediction model of borderline personality based on complex trauma and object relation with mediating role of ego strength in conflicting couples

Bitā. Bayani<sup>1</sup>

*Asghar. Jafari*<sup>2\*</sup>

Abdollah. Shafie Abadi<sup>3</sup>

Simin. Hoseinian<sup>4</sup>

1. PhD student, Consulting Department, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
2. \*Corresponding author: Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran
3. Professor, Department of Counseling, Allameh Tabatabaee University, Tehran, Iran
4. Professor of Counseling Department, Alzahra University, Dehe Vanak, Tehran, Iran

Email: a.jafari@kashanu.ac.ir | Received: 10.08.2022 | Acceptance: 04.11.2022

*Journal of Applied Family Therapy*

eISSN: 2717-2430  
http://Aftj.ir

Vol. 4, No. 5, Pp: 1-20  
Winter 2023

**Original research article**

## How to Cite This Article:

Bayani, B., Jafari, A., Shafie Abadi, A., & Hosseinian, S. (2023). The prediction model of borderline personality based on complex trauma and object relation with mediating role of ego strength in conflicting couples. *aftj*, 4(5), 1-20.



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## Abstract

**Aim:** The present study aimed to study the predicting model of borderline personality based on complex trauma and object relation with mediating role of ego strength in conflicting couples. **Methods:** Method was descriptive-correlational. Population was all refereeing couples to counseling and psychological clinics in 2021 in Tehran. Using multi cluster sampling and cutting point >75 in MCMI-3, 205 participants with borderline and inclusion criteria were selected and completed the questionnaires of Markstorm and et al, s (1997) PIES, Milon-3, s (1997) MCMI-3, Bell's (1995) BORI, Borneshtian & et al, s (2003) CTQ. Data were analyzed by Pearson correlation and SEM. **Findings:** There is a positive and significant relationship between trauma and borderline and there is a negative and significant relationship between ego strength and borderline ( $p < 0.01$ ). The results of SEM showed that the prediction Model of borderline based on complex trauma and object relation with mediating role of ego strength is fit ( $p < 0.01$ ). **Conclusion:** Ego strength effect on borderline through moderating object relation and effacing the dimension of cognitive and emotional of childhood trauma. Therefore, it was suggested, pay attention to trauma, object relation in etiology and therapy of borderline, and promote ego strength by training and counseling.

**Keywords:** *Borderline, Complex Trauma, Object Relation, Ego Strength, Conflicting Couples.*

## Introduction

Conflicting spouses are dissatisfied with their partner's habits and personality, and they have communication problems in various areas (Liu, Fang, & Guang, 2020). Personality disorders are a category of disorders defined by persistent, pervasive, and inflexible patterns of behavior and internal experience that often conflict with cultural expectations. These problematic patterns are at least apparent in two areas: cognition, affectivity, interpersonal relationships, and impulse control. Obsessive-compulsive disorder has a negative impact on marital conflicts (Soot, Boudriouk, & Oltmanns, 2020). Many psychological disorders, such as physical, cognitive, behavioral, and stress disorders, are affected by marital turmoil and interpersonal relationships (Moradi & Chardavoli, 2016).

As the ego is responsible for managing the psychological system, all mental problems arise when the ego cannot fulfill its responsibilities. Ego capacity is indicative of an individual's ability to tolerate stress without experiencing crippling anxiety (Kim & Park, 2016). Ego capacity refers to one's ability to effectively deal with competitive demands and challenging situations despite conflicting forces and expectations. The presence of a capable ego means that individuals exhibit fewer symptoms of mental distress and can tolerate the stresses of high-pressure life situations (Kouchaki Ravandi, Monirpour, & Arj, 2015).

Given that the core of personality disorders' etiology is complex trauma resulting from unpleasant childhood experiences and that special relationship styles and ego capacity take shape in childhood based on the parent-child relationship, conducting this research was necessary. In addition, the study of ego capacity's mediating role can provide guidelines to explain the deeper relationship between childhood complex trauma, attachment relationships, and borderline personality disorder in conflicted couples. Therefore, this study aimed to design a predictive structural model of borderline personality disorder based on complex trauma, attachment relationships, and ego capacity's mediating role in conflicted couples. hypothesized that the structural model of predicting borderline personality disorder based on complex trauma and attachment relationships with ego capacity's mediating role in conflicted couples has a suitable fit.

## Method

Method was correlation. Population was all refereeing couples to counseling and psychological clinics in 2021 in Tehran. Using multi cluster sampling and cutting point  $>75$  in MCMI-3, 205 participants with borderline and inclusion criteria were selected and completed the questionnaires of Markstorm and et al, s (1997) PIES, Milon-3, s (1997) MCMI-3, Bell's (1995) BORI, Borneshtian et al, s (2003) CTQ. Data were analyzed by Pearson correlation and SEM.

## Results

There is a positive and significant relationship between trauma and borderline and there is a negative and significant relationship between ego strength and borderline ( $p < 0.01$ ). The results of SEM showed that the prediction Model of borderline based on complex trauma and object relation with mediating role of ego strength is fit ( $p < 0.01$ ).

## Conclusion

Ego strength effect on borderline through moderating object relation and effacing the dimension of cognitive and emotional of childhood trauma. Therefore, it was suggested, pay attention to trauma, object relation in etiology and therapy of borderline, and promote ego strength by training and counseling. Individuals with borderline personality utilize defense mechanisms that are inflexible, leading to a decrease in the ego's capacity as a psychologic agent. Since the present study was conducted on married men and women who had sought counseling in Tehran, it seems that the participants may differ from other married individuals in terms of family factors and lifestyle, and these variables were not controlled in the present study, which may have affected the results. Therefore, limitations are imposed on inferring, explaining, and generalizing the results. It is suggested that in future studies, the role of these variables should be controlled or studied in order to recognize, etiology, and treat borderline personality disorder, with serious attention given to the role of complex childhood trauma and attachment relationships, and by providing training to enhance and strengthen self-abilities.

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