



The structural model of emotional divorce based on the dark triad traits of personality and conflict resolution styles with the mediation of marital boredom

Marjan. Sadegh Khani¹

Susan. Emamipour^{2*}

Malek. Mirhashemi³

1. PhD Student in Counseling, Department of Psychology, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
2. *Corresponding author: Department of Psychology, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran
3. Department of Psychology, Roudhen Branch, Islamic Azad University, Roudhen, Iran

Email: emamipursd@yahoo.com Received: 29.04.2023 Acceptance: 25.08.2023

Journal of
Applied Family Therapy

eISSN: 2717-2430
<http://aftj.ir>

Vol. 4, No. 2, Pp: 459-487
Summer 2023

Original research article

How to Cite This Article:

Sadegh Khani, M., Emamipour, S., Mirhashemi, M. (2023). Comparison of the Effectiveness of Couple Therapy in the Way of Psychodrama and Integrative Behavioral Couple Therapy (IBCT) on Improving Conflict Resolution Tactics in Contradictory Couples. *aftj*, 4(2), 459-487.



© 2023 by the authors. Licensee Iranian Association of Women's Studies, Tehran, Iran. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0 license) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

Abstract

Aim: The present study was conducted with the aim of modeling the structural equations of emotional divorce based on dark personality traits and conflict resolution styles with the mediation of marital dissatisfaction. **Method:** The research method was descriptive correlation type based on structural equations. The statistical population of this research consisted of all married women in the age group of 25-50 years of Tehran Azad University, Yadgar Imam (RA), Abol Fattouh Razi (Mothers) and North Tehran units in the first half of 2021, which was available online through the sampling method. (due to the spread of the corona virus) were chosen. The research tools were Gottman's Emotional Divorce Questionnaire (1994), Dark Triangle of Personality Johnson and Webster (2010), Rahim's Conflict Resolution Styles (1983) and Pines Marital Boredom (1996). Analyzes were done using SPSS and AMOS software. **Result:** The results of structural equation modeling showed that the assumed research model fits the experimental data (RMSEA=0.063). A significant relationship was observed between Machiavellian trait and emotional divorce ($\beta=0.149$) and between constructive style ($\beta=0.441$) and non-constructive style ($\beta=0.264$) with emotional divorce. The coefficient of the indirect path of marital boredom was significant in the relationship between narcissistic trait ($P = 0.007$) and constructive conflict resolution styles ($P = 0.043$) with the dependent variable of emotional divorce, but the mediating role of marital boredom in the relationship between non-constructive was not confirmed by emotional divorce ($P = 0.536$). **Conclusion:** Dark traits and constructive conflict resolution styles, in addition to having a direct effect on emotional divorce, can indirectly affect marital boredom.

Keywords: Conflict resolution styles, dark personality traits, emotional divorce, marital boredom.

Introduction

From the review of research related to conflict resolution behaviors, there are continuous findings that marital satisfaction and quality are under serious threat when one or both spouses show unregulated or hostile behaviors. However, the question that remains unanswered in previous research is which combination of conflict resolution styles in the marital unit leads to positive outcomes and which combination leads to negative outcomes. A noteworthy point about research in the field of marital conflict resolution styles is that in most of these researches, the couple is considered as the unit of analysis. Some believe that although people may respond differently in different conflict situations, each person has a dominant style of facing conflict that can be observed and studied. Therefore, conflict resolution strategies can be considered as one of the variables related to emotional divorce.

Finally, based on the theoretical and empirical analysis, one of the underlying factors of emotional divorce is marital boredom. The disproportion between expectations and reality causes this state, and its extent depends on the couple's compatibility and beliefs. Therefore, in the definition of boredom, it is a state of physical, emotional and psychological exhaustion and exhaustion. Physical weariness and exhaustion, caused by boredom manifests as chronic fatigue that sleep cannot resolve. Regarding emotional breakdown, the sufferers of depression are always immersed in the idea that they are emotionally destroyed and are constantly annoyed and discouraged. Emotional collapse caused by boredom usually occurs in the form of a decrease in self-confidence and negativity towards relationships, especially the relationship with the spouse. This phenomenon begins with the collapse of the relationship and the growth of awareness and attention to things that are not as pleasant as before, and if something is not done at this stage to prevent the progress of this process, everything will go from bad to worse (Pines, 1996). In fact, the accumulation of frustrations and tensions in life causes erosion and leads to burnout. In other words, marital burnout is a gradual decrease in emotional attachment to one's spouse, accompanied by alienation, disinterest and indifference to each other and the substitution of negative emotions instead of positive ones. The current research with the following conceptual model aims to investigate the following question: Is the structural model of emotional divorce based on the dark triad of personality and conflict resolution styles suitable for mediating marital boredom and marital conflicts?

Method

The indirect coefficient between the narcissistic variable and the constructive style with the main dependent variable (emotional divorce) through the mediator variable of marital boredom is significant. Therefore, marital boredom plays a mediating role in the relationship between narcissistic personality trait and constructive conflict resolution styles with emotional divorce. However, the mediating role of marital boredom in the relationship between antisocial traits, Machiavellian and non-constructive styles with emotional divorce was not confirmed. The sum of the squared multiple correlation of the main dependent variable of emotional divorce is equal to 0.53 and this result shows that about 53% of the variance of this variable is explained through the predictor and mediator variables defined in the model.

Results

The results of Bonferroni's post hoc test show that the experimental groups had a significant decrease in the scores of the components of physical attack and psychological violence of the victim and aggressive form compared to the control group; The experimental group of psychodrama couple therapy has decreased more scores in these components than the combined behavioral couple therapy group.

The results also show that the experimental groups had higher scores in the non-violent negotiation component than the control group, and the psychodrama-based couple therapy experimental group had higher scores in this component than the integrated behavioral couple therapy group.

Conclusion

In this research, the structural model of emotional divorce was elaborated based on the dark triad traits of personality and conflict resolution styles with the mediation of marital dissatisfaction in a sample of married women in Tehran. The results showed that the Machiavellian trait is related to emotional divorce and the indirect coefficient between the narcissistic trait and the dependent variable (emotional divorce) through the mediator variable of marital dissatisfaction is significant.

According to the findings of the present research, there is a relationship between emotional divorce and the dark trinity of personality with the mediation of marital dissatisfaction. It is suggested that trainings be given to control these negative characteristics so that the relationship between couples can be improved and emotional divorce can be reduced in them. Considering the existence of a relationship between emotional divorce and positive conflict resolution styles with the mediation of marital dissatisfaction, in the present study, it is suggested to help couples in learning positive conflict resolution styles so that they can use these styles effectively when differences arise in their marital relationships. This can reduce marital boredom in couples, and as a result, it will be effective in reducing emotional divorce between them.

References

- Afkhami Poostchi, M., & Alidosti, F. (2022). The moderating role of conflict resolution to marital conflicts and emotional divorce. *Iranian Islamic studies of the family*, 2 (4): 1-18. (In Persian)
- Akbari, E., Azimi, Z., Talebi, S., & Fahimi, S. (2015) Prediction of Couples' emotional divorce Based on Early Maladaptive schemas and emotion regulation's Component. *Clinical Psychology and Personality*, 14(2): 92-97. (In Persian)
- Alibakiyan, A., & Afsharineya, K. (2020). Evaluating model of mediating marital boredom role in the relationship between self-differentiation conflict resolution styles and marital expectations in predicting marital adjustment in married men and women in Kermanshah, *Journal of psychological methods and models*, 10(4): 225-246. (In Persian)
- Atan, A., & Bulus, M. (2019). Aile İletişim Becerileri psikoegitim programini Eslerin Evliki Doyumuna Etkisil the Effect of Family Communication Skills Psycho-Educational program on couples' Marital Satisfaction. *Elementery Education Online*, 18(1): 226-240.
- Azadifard, S. (2014). The Relationship sexual knowledge and attitude, relationship beliefs and styles of conflict resolution with emotional divorce in nurses

- Khorramabad of city. Master's thesis. Department of Psychology. *Faculty of social Sciences Razi University*. (In Persian)
- Basharpoor, S., Farivar, M., & Ebadi, M. (2020). The casual modeling of affective divorce in women based on dark personality traits: with mediating role of sexual self- esteem. *Women and Society Quarterly*, 9 (1): 37-58. (In Persian)
- Basharpoor, S. (2015). *Personality traits: Theory and Testing*, Tehran. Savalan Publication. (In Persian)
- Bayrami, M., Fahimi, S., Akbari, E., & Amiri Pichakolaei, A. (2012). Predicting marital satisfaction on the basis of attachment styles and differentiation components. *Journal of Fundamentals of Mental Health*, 1(53): 64-77. (In Persian)
- Bravo, I. M., & White Lumpkin, P. (2010). The complex case of marital infidelity: An explanatory model of contributory processes to facilitate psychotherapy. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 38(5): 421-432.
- Busby, D. M., & Holman, T. B. (2009). Perceived match or mismatch on the Gottman conflict styles: Associations with relationship outcome variables. *Family process*, 48(4): 454-531.
- Bulton, R. (2002). *Psychology of human relations*. Translator: Sohrabi, H.R. Roshd Publication.
- Campbell, W. K., & Baumeister, R. F. (2006). Narcissistic personality disorder. In *Practitioner's guide to evidence-based psychotherapy* (pp. 423-431). Springer US.
- Carton, H., & Egan, V. (2017). The dark triad and intimate partner violence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 105: 84-88.
- Cheng, C. C. (2010). A study of inter-cultural marital conflict and satisfaction in Taiwan. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34(4): 354-362.
- Dibaj Froshany, F. S., Emamipour, S., & Mahmudi, GH. (2009). The relationship between attachment styles and conflict resolution strategies on women's conflict management method, *Andishe va Raftar*, 3(3):87-111. (In Persian)
- Dildar, S., Sitwat, A., & Yasin, S. (2013). Intimate enemies: Marital conflicts and conflict resolution styles in dissatisfied married couples. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 15 (10): 1433-1439.
- Etemadi, O., Jaberi, S., Jazayeri, R., & Ahmadi, S.A. (2014). Investigation of structural relationship between communication skills and communication patterns and conflict resolution styles with marital intimacy in Isfahanian women. *Women and Society Quarterly*, 5 (1): 63-74. (In Persian)
- Faramarzi, Z., Jafarinia, GH., & Pasalarzadeh, H. (2020). Determining the relationship between social capital and new social communication media with marital conflicts in Bushehr city in 2019. *Journal of health and society*, 14(1):41-49. (In Persian)
- Fallesen, P. (2021). Decline in rate of divorce and separation fillings in Denmark in 2020 compared with previous years. [http://doi.org/ 10.1177/23780231211009991](http://doi.org/10.1177/23780231211009991).
- Foster, J. D., Shrira, I., & Campbell, W. K. (2006). Theoretical models of narcissism, sexuality, and relationship commitment. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 23(3): 367-386.
- Fox, J., & Rooney, M. C. (2015). The Dark Triad and trait self – objectification as predictors of men's use and self – presentation behaviors on social networking sites. *Personality and Individual Difference*, 76: 161-165.
- George, F. R., & Short, D. (2018). The Cognitive Neurosciences of Narcissism. *Journal of Brain, Behavior and Cognitive Sciences*, 1 (1): 1-9.
- Gobadi, S., & Goudarzi, M. (2023). The effectiveness of EIS couple therapy training on marital conflict and marital boredom in infertile women during quarantine due to COVID-19, *Journal of Applied Family Therapy*, 2(5): 74-93. (In Persian)

- Ghomrani, A., Sanadi, M., Taghinejad, M., & Shamsi, A. (2015). The Study of the Validity and Reliability of the dark personality scale in students, *Journal of psychological methods and models*, 6(20): 73-86. (In Persian)
- Gottman, J. M. (1994). *Why marriage succeed or fail: What you can learn from the break through research to make your marriage last*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Gottman, J., M. (2008). *Success or failure in marriage*. Translator Jazayeri, A. Besat publisher Tehran.
- Haghnasab, SH., & Pourfarokh, M. (2021). Relationship between dark triad traits of personality and attachment styles with marital boredom, *journal of Rooyesh-e Ravanshenasi*, 9(12):215-224. (In Persian)
- Hansen, B., Solem, S., & Himle, J. A. (2011). The role of early maladaptive Schemas in Predicting exposure and response prevention outcome for obsessive-Compulsive disorder. *Behavior research and therapy*, 49(11): 781-788.
- He, Q., Wang, Y., Xing, Y., & Yu, Y. (2018). Dark Personality, interpersonal rejection, and marital stability of Chinese couples: AN actor – partner interdependence mediation model. *Personality & Individual Differences*, 134: 232-238.
- Henning, M. (2003). Evaluation of Conflict Resolution Questionnaire. Master Thesis, Auckland University of Technology.
- Horan, S. M., Guinn, T. D., & Banghart, S. (2015). Understanding relationships among the dark triad personality profile and romantic partners' conflict communication. *Communication Quarterly*, 63(2): 156-170.
- Hosseini Nasab, D., Badri, Rahim., & Ghaemian Oskoei, A. (2009). An investigation in to the relationship between personality characteristics and interpersonal conflict solving styles with marital adjustment of the married students at Tabriz Islamic Azad University, 1(2)57-87. (In Persian)
- Inancsi, T. Lang, A. & Bereczkei, T. (2016). A darker shade of love: Machiavellianism and positive assortative mating based on romantic ideals. *Europ's Journal of Psychology*, 12(1): 137-152.
- Isanejad, O., Alipour, E., Rostami, M., & Tajmiri, M. (2021). The Effect of Halford Couple Relationship Education (CRE) on the Spouse Preservation Behaviors and primary Marital Relationship. *Journal of Assessment and Research in Applied Counseling*, 3(3), 45-54. (In Persian)
- Jalil Babapour, Kh., Nazari, M. A., & Rashidzadeh, L. (2011). The effect of Cognitive-Behavior therapy on Marital satisfaction and Intimacy of Chemical Patient Couples, *Quarterly Journal of New Researches in Psychology*, 6(24): 8-25. (In Persian)
- Jalil Babapour, Kh. (2006). Study of Relationship Between Communicational Conflict Resolution Styles and Psychological Well-being Among University Student, *Quarterly in Psychology*, 1(4):27-46. (In Persian)
- Jonason, P. K., Webster, G. D. (2010). The dirty dozen: A concise measure of the dark triad. *Psychological Assessment*, 22(2): 420-432.
- Kaiser, R. B., LeBreton, J. M., & Hogan, J. (2015). The dark side of personality and extreme leader behavior. *Applied Psychology*, 64(1): 55 -92.
- Kanter, J. B., Proulx, C. M., & Monk, J. K. (2019). Accountingfor Divorce in Marital Reacarch: An Application to Growth Mixture Modeling. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 81(2), 520-530. Issues, 33(3): 341-368.
- Karairmak, O., Duran, N. O. (2008). Gender differences in attachment styles regarding conflict handing behaviors among Turkish late adolescents. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 30(4): 220-234.

- Karimi, P., Karami, G., & Dehghan, F. (2014). Relationship between attachment Styles and Married employee's marital boredom, *Journal of psychological methods and models*, 5(4): 53-70. (In Persian)
- Keller, L., & Allemand, M. (2020). Personality and divorce. *Encyclopedia of personality and individual difference*, 3608-3613.
- Khosravi, J., Moradi, O., Ahmadian, H., & Yoosefi, N. (2021). The Casual Model of emotional divorce tendency based in couple's communication pattern with the mediation of marital affection, *Women and Society Quarterly*, 2(10): 185-210. (In Persian)
- Koladich, S. J., & Atkinson, B. E. (2016). The dark triad and relationship preferences: A replication and extension. *Personality and individual Differences*, 94: 253-255.
- Lavner, J. A., Lamkin, J., Miller, J. D., Campbell, W. K., & Karney, B. R. (2016). Narcissism and newlywed marriage: Partner characteristics and marital trajectories. *Personality Disorders: Theory, Research, and Treatment*, 7(2): 169-179.
- Meyers, L. s., Gamst, G., & Garino, A. G. (2006). *Applied multivariate research: design and interpretation*, Translators: Pasha Sharifi, H., Farzad, V. A., Rezakhani, S., Hasn Abadi, H. R., Izanloo, B., & Habibi, M. (2016). Roshd Publication.
- Moghimi, H., Sharifi, T., Latifi, Z., & Ahmadi, R., (2023). Comparison of the effectiveness of group therapy for enriching marital relationships and forgiveness on the desire to compensate women involved in emotional divorce in Isfahan. *Journal of Applied Family Therapy*, 4(1): 82-101. (In Persian)
- Muraru, A. A., & Turliuc, M. N. (2012). Family-of- origin, romantic attachment, and marital adjustment: a path analysis model. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 33: 90-94.
- Naderi, F., & Azadmanesh, P. (2012). Comparison of marital dissatisfaction, family function and intimacy of female students, *new discoveries in psychology*, 7(22):97-112. (In Persian)
- Narimani, M., Rahimi, S., & Sedaghat, M. (2021). Prediction of emotional divorce of couples based on family communication patterns and motivational structure, *Family psychology*, 5(27): 97-112. (In Persian)
- Nejat Darabi, H., Yar Ahmady, H., & Faal, F. (2016). Investigating marital boredom and emotional divorce and its relationship with exercise and physical activity, The 5th National Conferences in Sports, *Islam Azad University, Aliabad-e Katul*. (In Persian)
- Nekouei, Z. (2020). Investigate the relationship between early maladaptive schemas and conflict resolution styles with emotional divorce of couples referring to counseling centers in Ahvaz, Master thesis Payame Noor University of Khuzestan. (In Persian)
- Rashidi, F., Monirpour, N., & Dokanehi Fard, F. (2021). The Model of emotional divorce based on differentiation with the mediating Role of personality Structure and attachment styles. *Islamic life styles*, 5(2): 136-151(In Persian)
- Razzaghi Alvandi, E. (2011). The role of mindfulness irrational beliefs and interpersonal conflict resolution styles in couple marital satisfaction, *Master's thesis Tabriz University*. (In Persian)
- Panahi, M., Jamarani, S. K., Shahrababaki, M. E., & Rostami, M. (2017). Effectiveness of integrative behavioral couple therapy on reducing marital burnout and fear in couples of intimacy. *Journal of applied psychology*, 11(3), 43. (In Persian)

- Paulhus, D. L., & Williams, K. M. (2002). The dark triad of personality. Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. *Journal of research in personality*, 36: 556-63.
- Pen, W., Zhang, Q., Teo, T.S.H., & Lim, V.K.G. (2018). The dark triad and Knowledge hiding. *International Journal of Information Management*, 42: 36-48.
- Pines, A. M., & Nunes, R. (2003). The relationship between Career and couple burnout: implications for career and couple counseling. *Journal of Employment Counseling*, 40, 50-64.
- Pines, A. (1996). What should we do so that the love of a dream does not end in boredom? Translator Shadab, F. Tehran. *Ghoghnos Publication*.
- Pourmohseni Kolouri, F., Zohri, N., Atadokht, A., & Mowlaie, M. (2020). The role of dark personality dimensions, self -differentiation and gender roles in predicting marital boredom. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 6(2):43-56. (In Persian)
- Qavami, R., Mohammadi Fazel, M., Aliyari, Z., & Beiraqdar, SH. (2023). The role of marital boredom and sexual dissatisfaction in love failure in couples with emotional divorce. *Journal of Applied Family Therapy*, 4(1): 2023. (In Persian)
- Rahim, M. A. (1983). A measure of styles of handling interpersonal conflict. *Academy of management journal*, 26(2): 368-376.
- Rahim, M. A., & Magner, N. R. (1994). Convergent and discriminant validity of the Rahim Organizational Conflict Inventory-II. *Psychological Reports*, 74: 35-38.
- Rahim, M. A., & Magner, N. R. (1995). Confirmatory factor analysis of the styles of handling interpersonal conflict: first-order factor model and its invariance across groups. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 80: 122-132.
- Rezvani, H., & Saemi, H. (2019). Correlation between Self – differentiation and Neuroticism with emotional divorce in married Students of Azad Shahr, Azad University, *journal of Health Promotion management*, 8(2): 23-30. (In Persian)
- Sadati, S.E., Mehrabizadeh Honarmand, M., & Soodani, M. (2014). The causal relationship of differentiation neuroticism and forgiveness whit marital boredom through mediation of marital conflict, *Journal of Family Psychology*, 1(2):55-68. (In Persian)
- Safarzadeh Chamachee, M. H. (2021). The relationship between communication styles and conflict resolution styles with couples motional intimacy, *Master thesis of Ahrar Institute of Higher Education*. (In Persian)
- Samari, M., & Nakhaee, N. (2018). Psychometrics characteristics of two questionnaires for measuring emotional divorce in Iranian context. *Journal of Family Medicine*, 5(2):11-37. (In Persian)
- Samoori Ghaeni, E. (2022). Predicting emotional divorce based on attachment styles and conflict resolution styles with the mediation of gender self-efficacy in women, Master's thesis of Payam Noor Isfahan University. (In Persian)
- Shafiee, Z., Ghomrani, A. (2017). The Role of Dark personality and Flourishing in Couples boredom *Women and Society Quarterly*, 8(29): 77-94. (In Persian)
- Shivandi, K., Moslemabadi, M., & Farshad, M. (2016). Predicting Job boredom based on marital conflicts and self-differentiation, *culture and Counseling and Psychotherapy Quarterly*, 7(27): 51-66. (In Persian)
- Smoker, M. & March, F., (2017). Predicting Perpatration of Intimate Partner Cyberstalking: Gender and the Dark Tetrad. *Computer in Human Behavior*, 69: 1-28.
- Somohano, V. C. (2013) Mindfulness, attachment style and conflict resolution behaviors in romantic relationships (Doctoral dissertation, Humboldt State University).

- Sorenson, R. L. (1999). Conflict management strategies used by businesses. *Fam Bus Rev*, 12 (4): 325-39.
- Stevens, J. P. (2012). Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences. Routledge.
- Van Gasse, D., & Mortelmanse, D. (2020). Reorganizing the Single – parent Family System: Exploring the Process Perspective on Divorce. *Family Relations*, 69(5): 1100-1112. Doi:10.1111/fare. 12432.
- Vincent, J.P., Wises, R. L., & Grey, R. (2006). A behavioral analysis of problem solving in distressed marriage and stranger dyads. *Behavior therapy*, 6(4): 475-487.
- Weiss, J. M. (2014). Marital Preparation, Experiences, and personal Qualities in a Qualitative Study of Individuals in Great Marriages.
- Weisskirch, R. S., & Delevi, R. (2013). Attachment style and conflict resolution skills predicting technology use in relationship dissolution. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29(6): 2530-2534.
- Womic, J., Foltz, R. M., & King, L. A. (2019). Relesing the beast within? Authenticity, well-being, and the Dark Terad. *Personality and Individual Difference*, 137: 115-125.
- Uysal, A. N. (2016). Predicting relationship satisfaction: Dark triad personality traits, love attitudes, attachment dimensions, Master's thesis, Doguş Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitusu.
- Yazdanbakhsh, K., Karimi, S., Moulai, A., & Bahramzadeh, M. (2012). The relationship between narcissistic personality disorder and practical obsession with marital satisfaction among teachers in Kermanshah, The first national conference of personality and modern life of Sanandaj Islamic Azad University. (In Persian)
- Yu Y, Di W, Jiang-Meng W, Yu-Chen W. (2020). Dark personality, marital quality, and marital instability of Chinese couples: An actor-partner interdependence mediation model. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 154: 1-14.