



# 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 Khani<sup>1</sup>

*Susan. Emamipour*<sup>2\*</sup>

Malek. Mirhashemi<sup>3</sup>

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](mailto:emamipursd@yahoo.com) Received: 29.04.2023 Acceptance: 25.08.2023

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## 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.

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