



Comparison of Psychological Profiles of Couples Applicants for Divorce with Cohabitation Less than Five years and More than Five years

Maryam Rameshifar^{1*}, Anahita Sefidgaran², Maryam Rezaei³, Molood Charkhabi⁴, Hadi Asadi⁵

1- Master of Clinical Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Andimeshk Branch, Andimeshk, Iran

2- Master of General Psychology, Payam Noor University, Karaj Branch, Karaj, Iran

3- Master of Clinical Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Electronics Department, Iran

4- Master of Personality Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz branch, Ahvaz, Iran

5- Master of Science in Clinical Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Research Sciences Branch, Tehran (Semnan), Iran

* Corresponding author's Email: Mgramesh16@gmail.com

Abstract: In recent studies, psychological factors, personality traits and emotional and cognitive profiles of couple's applicants for divorce have been considered. The current study aimed to examine the psychological profile of couples applying for divorce. This study in the first part was a survey type that evaluates the psychological profile of couples applying for divorce with cohabitation. In the second part and in a causal-comparative study, we compared the profiles of couples applying for divorce with cohabitation less than and more than five years. The statistical population includes all couples applying for divorce of Tehran in 2022. Participants were 60 volunteers were selected by purposive sampling method, and finally 32 cases were selected as the sample. Data was collected by Cattell's 16 Personality Factors Test. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and one sample T-test. The results indicated that between the couples applying for divorce with less than and more than five years of marriage there are significant differences in most of the psychological characteristics except for the spontaneous versus restrained, suspicious versus trusting and inpatient versus relaxed. In general, the findings support the role of psychological factors in the tendency and attitude towards divorce in couples.

Keywords: Psychological profile, couples, divorce applicants

Introduction

The family is a primary and vital social institution that stabilizes and guarantees the health of the individual and the survival of the society (Lee & McLanahan, 2015). Unfortunately, today this institution is involved in various types of conflicts and severe differences that cause the family to not function well and healthy; So that in recent decades we have witnessed an increase in marital problems and, as a result, an increase in divorce among couples (Sha'bani & Tat, 2017; Vahedi, 2021). (Hollingshead, 1950) with referring to the multitude of factors that accompany a couple in all stages of their marriage, believes that although the lack of love and intimate relationships does not cause the deterioration of the family, it is necessary for family happiness. This is why the coexistence and relationships of a perfect marriage without a halo of love leads to the crystallization of difficulties, disruption in communication and ultimately the weakening of the building of the house (Sarukhani, 2012). Psychodynamic theory, which originates from Freud's model of psychoanalysis, considers marital problems to be the consequences of spouses' internal psychological problems. One of the contemporary perspectives of psychodynamics is the theory of individual relationships. Based on this

point of view, people who join each other in marriage bring a unique and separate psychological heritage to that relationship. Each of them has a personal history, a unique personality and a set of internalized characters that involve them in all the subsequent exchanges they will have with one another ([Colarusso & Nemiroff, 2013](#)). Problematic and unstable marital relationships are influenced by traumatic introjections, i.e., effects or memories related to parents or other people. These introverts are the result of relationships that each spouse had in the past with the members of the previous generation and now nested inside him ([Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1983](#)).

Psychological profile is one of the psychological structures that are important for people's well-being and social well-being, which includes all aspects of life from home to school, university, work environment and so on. On this basis, the psychological profile helps people to adapt to their environment by creating the correct psychological and emotional methods and to use the best ways to solve problems (([Khodarahimi et al., 2009](#)). The psychological profile of couples who have incompatibility and dissatisfaction in their relationships has been reported to be unfavorable, and the prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders has been reported to be much higher than that of the control group, which prepares for divorce ([Carrere et al., 2000](#)).

Divorce is defined as the dissolution of marriage, which ends the married life of two people during a legal process ([Maharaj, 2009](#)) and causes guilt and lower self-confidence ([Smith-Greenaway & Clark, 2017](#)). Divorced couples feel their emotional security is threatened and experience frustration, guilt, anger and low self-esteem (([Farghadani et al., 2010](#)); Therefore, many researchers consider divorce to be a critical event in a person's life ([Dudak, 2012](#)). According to [Sayers et al. \(2001\)](#), marital conflict and divorce can have various forms, and depression is one of them. In this situation, addiction and disordered behavior among children can occur and also affect the mental health of family members ([Olson et al., 2013](#)). Iran's latest statistical information on divorce shows an increase in divorce cases; In such a way that Iran currently ranks fourth in the world in terms of divorce statistics ([Moshki et al., 2011](#)). Divorce has unfortunate consequences for divorced people and their ([Amato, 2014](#)) and often leads to mental health problems in adults and children and lowers their quality of life (([Khan et al., 2019](#)). Every family faces its own psychological pressures. For many couples and families, psychological pressure is considered an unavoidable part of modern life and a high percentage of these pressures cannot be removed from the life of today's families.

Some couples and families successfully overcome the factors that cause psychological pressure, while others cannot adapt to it alone and suffer from marital dissatisfaction and disorders such as psychological symptoms ([McCubbin & Patterson, 2014](#)). Marital issues may be a reason for individual treatment of the husband or wife by mental health professionals. In such cases, probably one of the parties has referred to a family therapist or counselor, or the referring person does not consider marital issues as the cause of their current problems. Therefore, such a couple who do not have the necessary acceptance and cooperation to solve their marital problems and conflicts, suffer from depression, anxiety and substance

abuse disorders ([Ólafsdóttir et al., 2018](#)). Statistics show that the number of divorces has increased significantly in recent years ([Motataianu, 2015](#)), so that 55% of marriages in the United States, 40-45% in Australia, England, Germany and Switzerland lead to divorce ([Ozouni-Davaji et al., 2018](#)). According to official statistics in Iran, out of every 10,000 marriages, about 200 cases lead to divorce ([Aghajanian & Thompson, 2013](#)) and Iran is the fourth country in the world in terms of the ratio of divorce ([Dudak, 2012](#)).

In addition to husband and wife, divorce affects children and society's economy ([Perry & Schleifer, 2018](#)) and the dissolution of marital relations has important consequences for the health of the individual and society ([Lundberg, 2012](#)). It seems that divorce to be one of the most important factors in shaping and changing the shape of society. The complex nature of divorce and its impact on men, women, children and their families make divorce an important factor in the mental health of individuals and society ([Maharaj, 2009](#)). In this regard, in continuation of the confirmation of the effect of the psychological profile of people on divorce, some studies that have been conducted in the field of the underlying factors of divorce have come to the conclusion that one of the most important and deepest roots of divorce is the characteristics of personality and psychological disorders of couples ([Chehreh et al., 2017](#); [Donnellan et al., 2004](#); [Humbad et al., 2010](#); [Solomon & Jackson, 2014](#); [Watson et al., 2000](#); [Whisman et al., 2008](#)); because some personality traits and mental disorders increase tensions and conflicts between couples and threaten the continuity of married life; For example, neuroticism, lack of conscientiousness, interpersonal sensitivities, high levels of narcissism, paranoid, depression, anxiety and obsession are among the unhealthy characteristics that increase the likelihood of divorce ([Burman & Margolin, 1992](#); [Lemmens et al., 2007](#); [Solomon & Jackson, 2014](#); [Whisman et al., 2008](#)).

Also, some researchers have investigated the impact of mental disorders on couples' relationships; For example, [Lemmens et al. \(2007\)](#) divided 77 couples into clinical and normal groups in their research. In this division, couples in which at least one of them was depressed were placed in the clinical group and non-depressed couples in the normal group and were tested. The results of their research indicated that depressed patients had more psychological disturbance and attachment problems and less marital satisfaction. The research of [Solomon and Jackson \(2014\)](#) also shows that personality traits shape the overall quality of a relationship, which in turn affects the probability of relationship dissolution, and there is a strong relationship between personality traits and marriage satisfaction. The research of ([Chen et al., 2007](#)) exhibited that the personality characteristics of the life partner can predict the compatibility of couples. In the study of [Bayrami and Jamali \(2011\)](#), in a study entitled comparing personality disorders in couples applying for divorce with ordinary people, showed that there is a significant difference between people applying for divorce and those not applying for divorce regarding cluster C personality disorders. Also, the results of [Valiee et al. \(2020\)](#) in the investigation of personality characteristics in couples applying for divorce and normal couples, the findings showed that there is a negative relationship between the psychotic factor and marital satisfaction and between agreeableness

and openness with marital satisfaction and there is a significant difference between normal couples and divorce applicants in terms of personality traits. According to finding of earlier studies, the present study aimed to compare psychological profile of couples applying for divorce with a life together of less than 5 years and more than 5 years.

Material and Methods

The present study is a description of a survey type that deals with drawing the psychological profile of couples applying for divorce with cohabitation, and in order to compare the profiles of couples applying for divorce with cohabitation of less than and more than five years it is considered as a causal-comparative study. The statistical population of the research includes all couples applying for divorce in Tehran. According to the methodological nature of the present research, 60 candidates selected with the purposeful sampling method. Participants completed an informed consent form before answering the questionnaires. After collecting the data, through comprehensive software "Fars Rowan" to describe individual characteristics (including individual profile, explanation and interpretation of first and second order factors) and then comprehensive software "Sina" for analysis and collective comparison of personality traits was used (such as mean, standard deviation and comparative profile). In the second step, the data were analyzed with descriptive statistics methods, one-sample t-test that results of which are presented in the following tables. Also, to make the findings clearer and objective, a comparative profile of the couple's personality traits was drawn. To collect data, Cattell's 16-factor questionnaire (16PF) ([Zarakovskii & Zatsarnyi, 2000](#)) was used. This test has 187 questions and each question has three options: A, B and the middle option. Cattell did an extensive factor analytic research and as a result, he concluded that there are approximately 16 source traits that constitute the underlying structure of personality. These traits include (1) warmth (2) Reasoning (3) Emotional stability (4) Dominance (5) Liveliness (6) Rule Consciousness (7) social boldness (8) Sensitivity (9) vigilance (10) Abstractness (11) Privacy (12) Apprehension (13) Openness to change (14) Self-reliance (15) Perfectionism (16) Tension. In Iran, [Ebadi et al. \(2003\)](#) examined the validity of the four factors (i.e., new sub-scales of the Farsi version of 16-PF-E) by factorial validation, and their reliability coefficients were assessed by Cronbach Alpha. On the whole, the reliability coefficients were satisfactory and validity coefficients were significant.

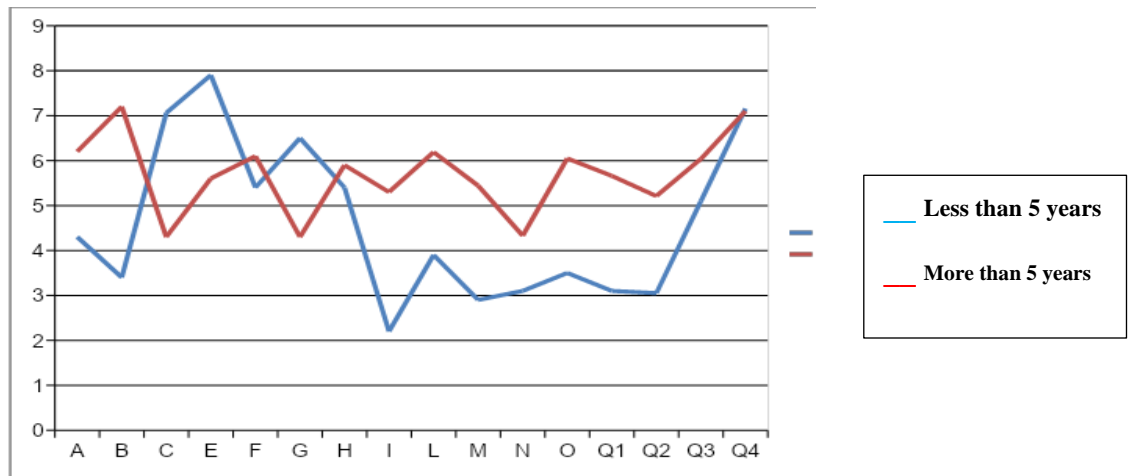
Results

The descriptive results include the mean and standard deviation of the personality characteristics of couples applying for divorce with less than 5 years and more than 5 years of marriage provided in table 1.

Table 1. Mean, standard deviation and one sample t test of the personality characteristics of couples applying for divorce with less than 5 years and more than 5 years of marriage

Factors	Less than five years		More than five years		T value	p
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
(A): Warmth	4.3	2.1	6.2	3.2	+3.256	0.001
(B): Intelligence	3.4	1.3	7.2	3.4	-21	0.001
(C): Emotional Stability	7.06	2.33	4.3	2.25	-4.30	0.001
(E): Dominance	7.9	3.14	5.6	2.75	+5.39	0.001
(F): Impulsivity	5.4	1.1	6.1	3.3	+0.48	NS
(G): Conformity	6.5	2.5	4.3	1.22	-1.3	NS
(H): Boldness	5.4	2.9	5.9	2.85	+5.3	0.001
(I): Sensitivity	2.2	1.01	5.3	2.25	5.50	0.001
(L): Suspiciousness	3.9	1.005	6.19	3.15	-8.10	0.001
(M): Imagination	2.9	1.6	5.44	2.18	+6.25	0.001
(N): Shrewdness	3.1	1.74	4.33	2.33	+0.19	NS
(O): Insecurity	3.5	2.34	6.048	3.14	+1.15	NS
Radicalism Q1	3.1	1.05	5.66	2.55	-3.75	0.001
Self – Sufficiency Q2	3.05	1.38	5.21	2.02	+1.50	0.001
Self – Discipline Q3	5.1	3.17	6.036	2.25	-2.45	0.001
Tension Q1	7.16	2.58	7.1	3.1	+0.28	NS

To analyze the results in this research, a sample t-test was used. whose results are shown in the table 1. As can be seen, there is a significant difference between the personality characteristics of couples applying for divorce with less than 5 years and more than 5 years of marriage, in most of the characteristics except for the factors F, G, N, O and Q1 factors. To make the differences more objective, the comparative psychological profile of the personality of couples applying for divorce with a life together of less than 5 years and more than five years is provided in figure 1.

**Figure 1.** Personality characteristics of couples applying for divorce with less than 5 years and more than 5 years of marriage

Discussion

As seen in Table 1, one sample t-test was used to analyze the results in this research. The results showed that there is a difference between the personality characteristics of couples applying for divorce with less than five years and more than five years in most of the characteristics except for the F, G, N, O and Q1 factors.

Family is one of the main pillars of society. Achieving a healthy society obviously depends on the health of the family and the realization of a healthy family, its people enjoying mental health and having a good relationship with each other ([Ekhtiari Amiri et al., 2018](#)). Marriage is a prelude to the formation of a family, which is formed by marriage and the survival of the society depends on its survival. Marriage is the most humane arrangement of man-woman relations based on proper foundations and agreement and bond between them, which is based on a combination of biological, psychological, social and economic needs ([Lappegård et al., 2018](#)). Despite the fact that today we know more about the success factors of marriage, the situation of marriages is still chaotic and deteriorating. On the other hand, many people choose not to marry and remain single ([Smalley, 2004](#)). The psychological profile of couples who have incompatibility and dissatisfaction in their relationships is reported to be unfavorable, and the prevalence of mood and anxiety disorders is reported to be much higher than that of the control group ([Sayers et al., 2001](#)). In this regard, the research of [Solomon and Jackson \(2014\)](#) also shows that personality traits shape the overall quality of a relationship, which in turn affects the possibility of relationship dissolution, and there is a strong relationship between personality traits and relationship satisfaction and intimacy with a life in partner. The research of [Chen et al. \(2007\)](#) showed that the personality characteristics of the life partner can predict the compatibility of couples. In the study of [Bayrami and Jamali \(2011\)](#) indicated that there is a significant difference between people applying for divorce and those not applying for divorce in personality characters.

It is recommended that other researchers interested in the field of family psychology will follow up this research with a larger statistical sample and investigate the effectiveness of other effective factors involved in the divorce of couples and compare them to deepen the findings. According to the findings of this research and other studies in this field, it is emphasized that cultural and communication media officials and community mental health officials should include skills training in their programs by providing a suitable context by holding training programs, provide the possibility of acquiring and improving its abilities in young spouses and young people who are on the verge of marriage. It is suggested that other researchers repeat this research for larger samples and in different societies with different cultures to increase the generalizability of the results.

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