
Investigate the Role of Differentiation of Self in Predicted of Family Function in Women with Marital Conflict

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of differentiation of self in predicted of family function in women with marital conflict. The population consist of all women referred to counseling centers and dementia clinics in Tabriz. 120 women were selected with sampling method. The students answered the same questionnaire including: questionnaire of marital conflict, Family Assessment Device (FAD), and differentiation of self. Data analysis included multivariate regression, pearson's r correlations, regression analysis, ANOVA analyses with SPSS software (package of Spss / pc + + ver18). The results of this study show the there is a significant relationship between differentiation of self in predicted of family function in women with marital conflict. According to the results there is a significant relationship between differentiation of self with problem solving, communication, emotional companionship, emotional involvement, overall performance and predicted of family function in women with marital conflict.

Keywords: Differentiation of self, Family function, Marital conflict.

Introduction

Differentiation of self is defined as the capacity of a system and its members to manage emotional reactivity, act thoughtfully under stress, and allow for both intimacy and autonomy in relationship (Skowron and Schmitt, 2003). Differentiation of self is thought to operate on both an intra-personal (psychic) domain and interpersonal/relational level. Within the intra-psychic dimension, differentiation

of self entails a capacity for self-regulation-that is, an ability to distinguish between thinking and feeling systems, comfort with one's feelings and capacity to access them freely, along with the ability to achieve a solid sense of self and identify or express one's personal thoughts and perspectives (Skowron and Schmitt, 2003). On an interpersonal level, differentiation of self refers to the ability to experience intimacy with and

independence from others (Skowron & Friedlander, 1998). [On this level] more differentiated individuals are comfortable with intimacy in close relationships and therefore, the need to regulate feelings of anxiety with fusion or emotional cut off in relationships is decreased (Skowron and Schmitt, 2003).

With another point of view, differentiation has four underlying factors. More differentiated people have one, more "emotional reactivity" which is the degree to which a person responds to environmental stimuli with emotional flooding, emotional lability, or hypersensitivity (Skowron et al, 2003). Two, better ability to take "I" position in important relationships (Skowron et al, 2003). Three, less "Emotional cutoff"; and four, less "fusion with others", they are comfortable with intimacy in close relationships and refrain from using fusion or emotional cutoff as relational mechanism for regulating anxiety (Skowron et al, 2003).

Skowron, Stanley & Shapiro (2009) found that high levels of differentiation was associated with high psychological symptoms and lower inter personal problems. Depression levels were negatively correlated with differentiation of self (Elieson, & Rubin, 2001). Non-depressed people showed higher levels of differentiation of self than depressed people. Differentiation is basic theory of Bowen that refers to person's ability to experience intimacy with others and stay in emotional atmosphere to maintain the independence. In other words, differentiation represents inter personal performance, the ability to separating the logical and emotional processes and inter personal performance, the ability to experience intimacy with independence and the good balance between them

(HeidenRootes, Jankowski & Sandage, 2010). In other words, people with differentiation of self can make healthy relationships with others, control their emotions, to maintain their own identity, and they think, feel and act for themselves. (Tuason & Friedlander, 2000)

They are able to distinguish between emotional and rational processes and respond to stressor situations in efficient and adaptive manner (Gushue, & Constantin, 2003). In a series of studies an inverse correlation between differentiation and anxiety (Skowron & Friedlander, 1998), psychiatric symptoms and depression (Jankowski & Hooper, 2012 ;), physical symptoms (Peleg & Rahal, 2012) and stress (Bartle-Haring & Lal, 2010) was found.

Research methods

This research is descriptive and correlational. The population consist of all women referred to counseling centers and dementia clinics in Tabriz. 120 women were selected with sampling method. The students answered the same questionnaire including: questionnaire of marital conflict (Alson et al, 2011) (including 10 questions), Family Assessment Device (FAD) (Epstein et al, 1983) (including 60 questions), and differentiation of self (Skowron and Friedlander, 1998) (including 46 questions). The cronbach's alpha that obtained from the pilot data was 0.72 for marital conflict, 0.83 for FAD, and 0.85 for differentiation of self. Data analysis included multivariate regression, pearson's r correlations, regression analysis, ANOVA analyses with SPSS software (package of Spss / pc + + ver18).

Results

The results showed that the mean age of the subjects was 27.97 and SD was 6.261. According to the findings, 2.4 percent of respondents were M.Sc with the lowest frequency and 31.7 percent were diploma with the most frequent. The results of this study show the there is a significant relationship between

differentiation of self (R=0.71) in predicted of family function in women with marital conflict. (p<0.01). According to the results there is a significant relationship between differentiation of self with problem solving, communication, emotional companionship, emotional involvement, overall performance and predicted of family function in women with marital conflict (p<0.01).

Table 1. The mean and standard deviation of family functions and its components

Statistic	Solving problem	Communicative	Roles	Affective Response	Affective involvement	Behavior control	Overall performance	Family function
Mean	18.25	22.35	28.48	20.63	31.21	30.40	43.49	194.48
SD	6.34	7.06	9.6	7.48	8.92	9.54	11.71	49.66

Table 2: The mean and standard deviation of differentiation of self and its components

Statistics	Emotional reactivity	My position	Emotional escape	Confluence	Itself differentiation
Mean	42.18	41.80	39.29	44.85	168.14
SD	7.41	6.90	6.86	7.74	12.77

Table 3: The correlation coefficient between differentiation of self with Family function

Family function	differentiation of self
Solving problem	0.62**
Communicative	0.68**
Roles	0.23**
Affective Response	**0.72
Affective involvement	0.74**
Behavior control	0.26**
Overall performance	0.82**
Family function	0.71**

Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the role of differentiation of self in predicted of family function in women with marital conflict. The results showed that the mean age of the subjects was 27.97 and SD was 6.261. The results of this study show the there is a significant

relationship between differentiation of self in predicted of family function in women with marital conflict. (p<0.01). According to the results there is a significant relationship between differentiation of self with problem solving, communication, emotional companionship, emotional involvement,

overall performance and predicted of family function in women with marital conflict ($p < 0.01$).

These results are in good agreement with results, Kwon (2000), Najafloei (2004), Skowron and Dandy (2004), Pelage (2009) and Sadeghi (2014). Kwon (2000), reports the couples who have high levels of differentiation of self are more consistent. Najafloei (2004), show that there is significant relationship between differentiation of self and marital conflict. Pelage (2009), reports the there is significant relationship between differentiation of self and marital conflict. Sadeghi (2014) reports the there is significant positive correlation between emotional reactions and emotional cutting, invariance wife, gender differences with conflict resolution. Sorbom et al, (2015) show that women with conflicts in the components of emotional reactivity, fusion with others received lower scores than women without marital conflict. Also differentiated couples in dealing with the problems of life have the ability to deal rational. The results showed that differentiation of self are ability to explain 84 percent of family function. As a result, it can be said that the family functions of women with marital conflict can be improved through their distinctiveness. The use of convenience sampling method and used questionnaires to collect information is limitations of this study. Hence it is recommended in future research other methods are also used for data collection. Because the data is collected

through a questionnaire and like other self-report research results may be making the possibility of abuse.

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