

## **INVESTIGATION OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN DYADIC EMOTIONAL DIVORCE AND CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study aims at investigating the correlation between the dyadic emotional divorce and controlling-behavior. Therefore, 172 married men and women are selected as the samples through random cluster sampling in Tehran. The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS) and Controlling Behavior Scale (CBS) are the utilized tools in this research. The obtained data is analyzed through multiple regression and Pearson correlation coefficient. The results indicate that among the controlling behavior components, two components, namely, the coercive and economic control significantly predict the emotional divorce. Furthermore, the results indicate that there is a positive and significant correlation between the components of economic, coercive and intimidating control with emotional divorce, but there is no significant correlation between two components, namely, the emotional control and isolating control, with emotional divorce.

**Keywords:** *Emotional Divorce, Controlling Behavior*

### **INTRODCUTION**

The marriage creates the ability to access to the smallest social unit leading to satisfaction of physiological and social needs. Despite the fact that the family creation is considered to be crucial, unfortunately the way for achieving this aim is not often taken into account, and thus it leads to the extended tension and conflict which sometimes go beyond the reason boundaries. However, identifying the young people, who have successful and satisfactory marriage, can prevent numerous unpleasant consequences (Yousefi, 1997). The emergence of side and partially redundant expectations along with the realistic expectations of life and thus affecting the mutual behavior in providing or failing to meet the expectations and the creation of these expectations play the maximum role in disturbing the main rules of life. Therefore, if a person is faced with a certain moral constraints and is not possible to get a legal divorce, the life seems to be continued, but with a bunch of internal problems. These problems and conflicts practically encounter the life with a kind of hostile separation and the parties only get a kind of mental separation. If this issue is taken into serous account, it is found that it has more devastating mental and psychological effect than divorce (Mirzakhani, 2008). The controlling behavior is among the examples of domestic violence (Stark, 2007). The studies have found that the domestic violence is a factor can maximally destroy a relationship. The domestic violence against the other member(s) refers to the aggressive hegemonic behavior by a family member. Based on the sociological studies, the young children are the main target of domestic violence. The domestic violence is a typical form of violence in family and the husband's violence against the wife is the second type of violence and a more general model of violent behavior. Most of the men, who physically do violence against their wives and children, have the violence background in other fields. Divorce is one of the most important family injuries, but the official statistic of divorce does not merely indicate the spouses' failure in marriage because the emotional divorce makes the larger statistics belonging to the cold lives and hollow families, wherein the man and woman have a soulless life, but they are not legally divorced (Bagheri, 2007). The silent or emotional divorce is a kind of separation wherein despite the fact that the couple live together, there is no love and affection between them. In this type of life, the contract which is accepted early in life is the only thing connecting the couples. This contract had usually been felt by both couple at the time of signing, but this warm and sweet relationship had been faded now after several years (Bastani *et al.*, 2010). The controlling behavior leads to the increased violence and conflict between spouses, thus they can have a

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large impact on the disintegration of relationship (Krantz and Vung, 2009). This behavior can range from the economic and emotional control to coercive and isolating control (Graham-Kevan & Archer, 2003). In this study, the researcher aims to investigate the correlation between the controlling behavior and emotional divorce.

The researcher's question asks whether there is a correlation between the controlling behavior such as the emotional and economic control with emotional divorce, and whether the increased controlling behavior will lead to the increased emotional divorce.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research has descriptive-correlative type and the statistical population of research includes all married women and men with 10 to 15 years of marriage living in Tehran City in 2013. The following formula is utilized to determine the sample size in the case that the population size is not specified and the variance of population is unknown:  $n = (z \cdot d / \delta)^2$ , in which  $z = 1.96$  and  $d = 3.77$  and  $\delta = 25.16$ .

Therefore, the sample size is equal to 172 based on the formula above. The Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (RDAS), as a 32-item tool for evaluating the quality of dyadic relationship in terms of couple's views, is utilized to evaluate the emotional divorce.

This scale was designed by Spanier in 1976. The factor analysis of test indicates that this scale measures four dimensions. These dimensions are as follows: Dyadic satisfaction (the rate of satisfaction with various aspects of relationship), Dyadic cohesion (the rate of participation in shared activities), Dyadic consensus (the rate of dyadic agreement in issues associated with the marital relationship such as the financial affairs, child upbringing, etc.) and affectional expression.

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the total score of this test is equal to 0.96 indicating the significant internal consistency of test. The Controlling Behavior Scale (CBS) is utilized to evaluate the controlling behavior.

This scale is designed by Graham-Kevan and Archer in 2005 to evaluate the controlling behavior. This tool is a 24-item scale which investigates the dyadic controlling behavior in marital life. Five other items (five items at the end of test) are added for couples with children. The controlling behavior scale is designed based on the information of an interventional program against the domestic violence in England with the results indicating that the controlling behavior is the key behavior in such these families. This scale pays attention only to behavioral issues, but it does not consider the physical aggression. This questionnaire is designed in a way that a person can report both his spouse's and his own controlling behavior.

The total alpha coefficient of this test is equal to 0.90 for women and 0.89 for men. Pearson's correlation coefficient is utilized for data analysis and the multiple regression analysis is applied for predicting the emotional divorce through controlling behavior.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

**Main Hypothesis:** There is a correlation between the controlling behavior and dyadic emotional divorce.

The multiple regression analysis is utilized to investigate the correlation between dimensions of controlling behavior and dyadic emotional divorce.

**Table 1: Summary of statistics for model fit**

Model	R	R square	Standard error of approximation
2	0.261	0.068	10.79

Table 1 shows the summary of statistics for model fit. According to the results of table, the Multiple Correlation Coefficient is equal to 0.261 between the sum of independent and dependent variables. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (R square) is equal to 0.068 indicating the rate of explaining the variance and changes in emotional divorce variable by dimensions of controlling behavior.

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**Table 2: Results of analysis of variance**

Model		Sum squares	of Degrees freedom	of Mean square	F	Significance level
2	Regression	1420.327	2	710.164	6.09	0.01
	Residual	9474.326	167	116.613		
	Total	20894.653	169			

Table 2 shows the results of analysis of variance to investigate the presented regression model. Based on the results listed in Table, the obtained F-value is equal to 6.09 which is significant at alpha level of less than 0.01 indicating that the controlling behavior can properly explain the changes associated with the emotional divorce variable and this indicates the appropriateness of regression model.

**Table 3: Stepwise regression analysis for predicting the dyadic emotional divorce through controlling behavior**

Model		Non-standardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Significance level
		B	Standard error	Beta		
1	Constant value	93.331	3.667		25.387	0.001
	Coercive control	0.605	0.214	0.213	2.820	0.005
	Constant value	89.947	4.01		22.433	0.001
2	Coercive control	0.464	0.224	0.163	2.077	0.039
	Economic control	0.395	0.195	0.159	2.02	0.045

Table 3 represents the results of stepwise regression analysis for predicting the dyadic emotional divorce through controlling behavior. According to the contents of table, among the controlling behavior, the coercive and economic control variables significantly predict the emotional divorce variable. In Final model, the value of standardized regression coefficient (Beta) is equal to 0.464 for coercive control variable and 0.395 for economic control variable. According to the t statistic value, which is significant at the alpha level of 0.05, it is concluded that these variables can significantly predict the emotional divorce. The final regression equation is as follows:

$$Y = 89/947 + 0/464x_1 + 0/395x_2$$

**First Hypothesis:** There is a correlation between the economic control and dyadic emotional divorce.

$$\begin{cases} H_o: \rho_1 = 0 \\ H_A: \rho_1 \neq 0 \end{cases}$$

**Table 4: Results of Pearson correlation test between economic control and emotional divorce variables**

Statistical index of variables	No.	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
Economic control and emotional divorce	172	0.204	0.01

Table 4 shows the results of Pearson correlation test for investigating the correlation between the economic control and dyadic emotional divorce. Based on the results listed in Table 4, the value of correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.204 which is significant at the alpha level of 0.01. Thus, the research hypothesis is approved and it can be concluded that there is a significant direct correlation between the economic control and emotional divorce components.

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**Second Hypothesis:** There is a correlation between the coercive control and dyadic emotional divorce.

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \rho_1 = 0 \\ H_A: \rho_1 \neq 0 \end{cases}$$

**Table 5: Results of Pearson correlation test between coercive control and emotional divorce variables**

Statistical index of variables	No.	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
Coercive control and emotional divorce	172	0.216	0.01

Table 5 shows the results of Pearson correlation test for investigating the correlation between the coercive control and dyadic emotional divorce. Based on the results listed in Table 5, the value of correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.216 which is significant at the alpha level of 0.01. Thus, the research hypothesis is approved and it can be concluded that there is a significant direct correlation between the coercive control and emotional divorce components.

**Third Hypothesis:** There is a correlation between the emotional control and dyadic emotional divorce.

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \rho_1 = 0 \\ H_A: \rho_1 \neq 0 \end{cases}$$

**Table 6: Results of Pearson correlation test between emotional control and emotional divorce variables**

Statistical index of variables	No.	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
Emotional control and emotional divorce	172	0.139	0.069

Table 6 shows the results of Pearson correlation test for investigating the correlation between the emotional control and dyadic emotional divorce. Based on the results listed in Table 6, the value of correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.139 which is significant at the alpha level of 0.069. Therefore, there is no evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis, and thus the research hypothesis is not approved and it can be concluded that there is no significant correlation between the emotional control and emotional divorce components.

**Fourth Hypothesis:** There is a correlation between the isolating control and dyadic emotional divorce.

$$\begin{cases} H_0: \rho_1 = 0 \\ H_A: \rho_1 \neq 0 \end{cases}$$

**Table 7: Results of Pearson correlation test between isolating control and emotional divorce variables**

Statistical index of variables	No.	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
Isolating control and emotional divorce	172	0.069	0.336

Table 7 shows the results of Pearson correlation test for investigating the correlation between the isolating control and dyadic emotional divorce. Based on the results listed in Table 7, the value of correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.069 which is significant at the alpha level of 0.336. Therefore, there is no evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis, and thus the research hypothesis is not

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approved and it can be concluded that there is no significant correlation between the isolating control and emotional divorce components.

**Fifth Hypothesis:** There is a correlation between the intimidating control and dyadic emotional divorce.

$$\begin{cases} H_o: \rho_1 = 0 \\ H_A: \rho_1 \neq 0 \end{cases}$$

**Table 8: Results of Pearson correlation test between intimidating control and emotional divorce variables**

Statistical index of variables	No.	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
Intimidating control and emotional divorce	172	0.178	0.05

Table 8 shows the results of Pearson correlation test for investigating the correlation between the intimidating control and dyadic emotional divorce. Based on the results listed in Table 8, the value of correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 0.178 which is significant at the alpha level of 0.05. Thus, the research hypothesis is approved and it can be concluded that there is a significant direct correlation between the intimidating control and emotional divorce components.

**Discussion**

The multiple regressions test is utilized to investigate the first hypothesis. The obtained results in first hypothesis indicate that there is the maximum correlation between the coercive and economic control from the variables of controlling behavior with emotional divorce and they significantly predict the emotional divorce. In the final model, the value of standardized regression coefficient (Beta) for coercive control variable is equal to 0.464 and equal to 0.395 for economic control variable. The controlling behavior is among the examples of domestic violence (Stark, 2007). The studies indicate that the domestic violence is among the factors which can maximally destroy a relationship. The domestic violence refers to the violent and hegemonic behavior by a family member against the member(s) in the same family. In the first hypothesis, the economic control is another variable of controlling behavior in which the controller prevents the education, learning a profession, or the ability to find or maintain a job in the opposite party, and the lack of income is the reason why the victim remains in this controlling relationship (Antai, 2011). According the studies, the victims have usually been women and they have reported the feeling of coercion and pressure by spouse; this reduces the mental health and sense of usefulness in people (Pollet, 2011). According to the research by research Krantz and Vung (2009), there is a high level of stress and depression in families wherein the father imposes further economic control. According to the second hypothesis, the coercive control is a strong predictor of emotional divorce. The dyadic relationship is a process in which the couple exchanges the thoughts and feelings either by verbal in the form of speaking or non-verbal relationship in the form of listening, delay, facial expressions and different gestures (Navabinejad, 1998). The third hypothesis concludes that there is no significant relationship between the emotional control and emotional divorce. In the field of studies on the controlling behavior, Follingstad *et al.*, (1990) indicate that the emotional control or abuse, which are the examples of controlling behavior, lead to the creation of the sense of guilt, low self-esteem and depression symptoms. The emotional control includes any control and abuse which is not physical, but includes the types of behavior such as the scurrility, criticism, and dishonor (Goldsmith and Freyd, 2005). According to the fourth hypothesis, the correlation coefficient between these two variables is obtained equal to 0.069, and according to the significance level equal to 0.336, it is concluded that there is no significant correlation between the emotional control component and emotional divorce. According to the fifth hypothesis, the value of correlation coefficient between these two variables is obtained equal to 0.178 which is significant at the alpha level of 0.05 and indicates the significant direct correlation between these two variables. According to the research on Polish women by Pisba (2002), it is found that there is a

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maximum level of fear, anxiety, and other symptoms of abuse among the women who suffer from the emotional divorce.

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