

Comparing Self-Efficacy and Responsibility-Taking in Couples with and without Family Conflicts

Maryam Ojaghi* and Mohammad Narimani

Department of Psychology, Ardabil Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ardabil, Iran

Corresponding Author: **Maryam Ojaghi**

Abstract:

This study was conducted to compare the self-efficacy and responsibility-taking in families going through divorce and normal families. The research method was scientific-comparative. The research population included normal individuals and individuals going through divorce. The research sample included 50 individuals going through divorce and 50 normal individuals, and the individuals going through divorce were chosen through simple random sampling by referring to the family courts and Dispute Settlement Councils. Subsequently, the normal individuals were also chosen through simple random sampling and matched with the other group for comparison. In order to study and collect data, the following questionnaires were used: 1. Sherer and Adams Self-Efficacy Scale 2. Responsibility Attitudes Scale. The collected data was analyzed by MANOVA. The findings suggested that self-efficacy had a significant difference in individuals going through divorce and normal individuals in all aspects at 0.05. However, there was no significant difference observed in the component of responsibility-taking in individuals going through divorce and normal individuals. Hence, the research results indicate that the individuals going through divorce have lower self-efficacy and higher marital conflicts. Hence, due to creating conflict situations in the family system, whole these issues could interfere with the increase in the risk towards gaining pleasure by the normal marital duties.

Keywords: self-efficacy, responsibility-taking, family conflicts

Introduction

Family has special educational and social status. Individuals enter the society through families and the society is formed by the individuals. The family foundation creates the human force and it is considered as the pathway for other social institutions and as the main pillar for any society. The society being normal or abnormal highly depends on the general condition of the families. None of the social vulnerabilities could be formed without the influence of family and no society could claim it is healthy, unless it is consisted of healthy families. (Ya'qublu, 2015) Hence, the real wealth in any country is benefiting from responsible, decent and grown individuals that are found in healthy families with high performance. (Abolqasemi, 2011) When any of the functions of family, such as biological, social, cognitive or emotional functions is damaged, the family members lose their sense of satisfaction, gradually. The gradual decrease of satisfaction in family members could initially lead to mental beak and subsequently to social break and ultimately to a legal event that is called divorce. (Fatehi Dehaqani and Nazari, 2010) Today, the machine life

has increased the divorce rate in the society and the global statistics prove that divorce rate has increase in many societies and it has had a growing trend (Meshki et al., 2010), so that according to the official statistics, among every 1,000 marriages, around 200 of them lead to divorce and Iran is introduced as the fourth ranking country in regards to divorce to marriage rate. (Yusefi and Sohrabi, 2011) Family cohesion refers to the family members having a sense of emotional solidarity, closeness and commitment towards each other. (Elson, 2011) The sense of responsibility in the family is expressed through the sense of belonging and acceptance in the family system. (Vaillant, Templeton, Ardelt and Meyer, 2016) The decrease in the cohesion of families and increase in interpersonal conflicts could lead to a decrease in the flexibility of family and as a result this leads to formation of distances in the family and specially between couples. (Vendetta et al., 2015)

Among the most significant components that were influential in reaching success and adaptability and has a position in positive psychology is self-efficacy, which is derived from Albert Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory. In this approach, the human behavior is not only not controlled by the external and environmental factors, but the cognitive processes have a determining role in behavior. (A'rabiyan et al., 2004) Self-efficacy, both as the trust in self capabilities and also a component, could have a relationship with the perception of the individuals' tension from different situations. (Clark, 2010) Self-efficacy beliefs are beliefs that influenced the individuals' efforts, patience and resistance against hardships and also their stresses. (Farid and Salibi, 2013) There has been some research carried out on the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and mental health or adaptability, and among them could be referred to Stadinger, Felson and Balts (1995), Kim and Park (2003) that showed that there is a direct relationship between self-efficacy and the sense of having a control on events and life satisfaction. (Quoted by Ahadi et al., 2009) In a study entitled "Sexual Self-Efficacy and Marital Satisfaction", Vaziri et al. (2010) showed that there is a significant correlation between the sexual self-efficacy of the couples and marital satisfaction. In a study entitled "Modeling Loneliness Based on the Structure of Spiritual Wellbeing of Self-Efficacy and Life Satisfaction", Human et al. (2010) showed that general self-efficacy has a negative and significant influence on loneliness in the individuals. Various studies have shown that approaches, fears or memories of individuals are among the main factors in sexual problems and 30 percent of the divorces are related to the sexual inadaptability (Desrochers et al., 2009) and individuals with higher sexual satisfaction have higher life quality. Results of Guerra, Cumsille and Martinez (2014) research on post-traumatic stress and self-efficacy perception shows that there is a relationship between self-efficacy beliefs of the individual and fear and post-traumatic stress. The results derived from this study suggest that preventive interventions aiming at raising awareness on how to deal with post-traumatic stress not only helps the individuals, but also, they are effective in decreasing the emotional reaction and increasing the personal self-efficacy. Accordingly, the research of Pietrantonio and Cicognani (2010) on the impact of tension and self-efficacy mediation on the life quality of rescue workers showed that among the workers who had a higher self-efficacy, the tension was lower and they had a desirable work life quality. These results approved the self-efficacy social cognitive theory on the impact of perceiving stressful encounters on work life quality.

The second criterion in his study is responsibility taking. Certo (1989) defines responsibility taking as an internal requirement and commitment for desirable performance of all tasks assigned to the individual and he believes that responsibility taking has its roots in the individual. This sense is fully displayed in all life aspects of the individuals in whom the sense of responsibility taking is internalized, since they have accepted that the sense of responsibility is a great support for realization of their goals and successes. Even in critical situations, such individuals try harder, instead of backing off and being afraid of failure. Presence of responsibility taking spirit among the couples is one of the main conditions for their marital success. They have to bear in mind that they are responsible for their spouses and family and they have to carry out their tasks. Having the sense of responsibility influences all aspects of life, including family life. (Abutalebi, 2010) Humans cannot evolve without taking responsibility and they have to take responsibility in order to succeed. (XXX, 2014) Responsibility taking is constituted of dynamic elements and elements of control and behavioral inhibition. (Roland, 2010)

Yunesi et al. (2010) studied the responsibility taking of female students in divorced and normal families in Firuzabad County. The results from this study showed that there is a significant difference between responsibility taking of students in divorced and normal families. In a study entitled "Housekeeping Responsibility in Paternal Family and its Relationship with Self-Efficacy in Children and Teenagers", Riggio et al. came to this conclusion that there is a positive correlation between family responsibilities (house chores, shopping, etc.) and general self-efficacy and also there was a positive relationship observed between the quality of relationship with parents and self-efficacy.

By studying the previous studies, it could be concluded that there is a significant relationship between individuals' life satisfaction and mental health and also adaptation of family members with each other and the self-efficacy of the couples, that is the belief in the capabilities of self in effective performance and being desirable for their partners, decrease the marital problems and conflicts. Responsibility taking has a positive effect on the family relationships and lack of responsibility and commitment lead to dissatisfaction and divorce in couples. Hence, the main objective in this study is to compare self-efficacy and responsibility taking among families with and without family conflicts.

Methodology:

Considering the fact that the main objective in this study is to compare the self-efficacy and responsibility taking in the two groups of families going through divorce and normal families, using causal-comparative method of cross-sectional-comparative seems necessary. The objective in analytic studies is to determine and identify the causes and risk factors that interfere in creation of a problem. This could be carried out by comparing two or more groups that are dealing with a problem with one or more groups that are not dealing with any problems.

Statistical Population

The statistical population in this study included all couples who were admitted at the Conflict Resolution Council of Ardabil County Justice during the first 6 months of 2014.

Research Sample

The research sample included 100 individuals from families going through divorce and normal families that were chosen through simple random sampling. (N = 100) The participants were chosen as the following: among the individuals going through the processes of divorce who were admitted at the Conflict Resolution Council of Ardabil County Justice, 50 individuals (25 males and 25 females) were randomly chosen. In this study, 50 individuals were chosen for each of the groups (filed for divorce and normal).

Data Collection Instruments:

- 1. Self-Efficacy scale developed by Sherer and Adams:** This scale was constructed by Sherer and Adams (1983) and it is a paper-pencil questionnaire. The Cronbach’s alpha and retest reliability for this scale were reported to be 79 percent and 39 percent, respectively. Mehrabizade Honarmand and Abolqasemi (2000) reported the Cronbach’s alpha and retest reliability of the scale to be 81 percent and 79 percent, respectively. It evaluates the self-efficacy of the individuals in three levels of: 1. The desire for behavior initiation 2. The desire to try for completing the behavior 3. Their resistance towards the obstacles (Sherer and Adams, 1982)

This scale includes 17 items and the participants respond to each item in a 5-point scale (from Completely Disagree to Completely Agree). The validity of this scale was reported to be 91 percent by A’rabiyan et al. (2004)

- 2. Responsibility Attitude Scale (RAS):** This scale includes 26 items for assessing the general beliefs on responsibility and it is scored based on a seven-point Likert scale. In this questionnaire, the participant is asked to determine to what extent they agree with the statements. (Salkovskis et al., 2000) The reliability of the scale was reported to be X percent and the inner consistency of the questionnaire items was reported to be 29 percent based on Cronbach’s alpha.

Statistical Methods

In order to analyze the data, SPSS software was used and since there are more than one dependent variable in this study and the independent variable is constituted of two independent levels, MANOVA was used. MANOVA was used in data analysis of H₂.

Findings

Table 1. Results of Mean and Standard Deviation of Self-Efficacy and Responsibility Taking Based on Research Groups (Filed for Divorce and Normal)

Variable	Groups	Mean	Standard Deviation	Number
Self-Efficacy	Filed for Divorce	57.84	10.44	50
	Normal	70.58	7.32	50
	Total	64.21	11.02	100

Responsibility Taking	Filed for Divorce	129.62	25.30	50
	Normal	135.74	16.15	50
	Total	132.68	21.34	100

MANOVA was used in order to determine the significance among the groups (filed for divorce and normal) in each of the components of self-efficacy and responsibility taking, and since for MANOVA test the presupposition of equality of variances should be met, initially Levine test was used and its results are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Levine Test for Testing Equality of Variances

Variables	F	Df ₁	Df ₂	Significance Level
Self-Efficacy	1.502	1	98	0.214
Responsibility Taking	0.859	1	98	0.427

As it could be observed in Table 2, the presupposition of equality of variances for MANOVA is met, so that this test was not significant for any of the variables, and as a result, parametric MANOVA could be used. However, initially Wilks' lambda test was used to determine the general influence of group variable on the research variables, and its results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. MANOVA Significance Test

Test	Value	F	Degree of Freedom	Error Degree of Freedom for	Significance Level	Eta-Square (Δ^2)
Wilks' Lambda	0.281	48.091	5.000	94.000	0.001	0.719

Considering the results provided in the table above, in which the general influence of the groups is significant, since the F related to Wilks' lambda with 48.091 is significant with degree of freedom of 5 at $p < 0.001$; that is, there is a significant difference between the two groups (filed for divorce and normal) at least in one of the research variables.

Table 4. MANOVA test for Determining the Difference between Groups in the Studied Variables

Change Source	Variables	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean of Squares	F	Significance Level	Eta-Square
Groups	Self-Efficacy	4057.690	1	4057.690	49.838	0.001	0.337

	Responsibility Taking	936.360	1	936.360	2.077	0.153	0.021
--	-----------------------	---------	---	---------	-------	-------	-------

According to the table, it could be inferred that there is a significant difference in self-efficacy at $p < 0.001$. Hence, by referring to the mean of the two groups it could be concluded that normal families have a considerably higher self-efficacy, comparing to the families that have filed for divorce.

There is no significant difference between the studied groups in the variable of responsibility taking at $p > 0.05$.

Discussion and Conclusion:

The first hypothesis in this study was that there is a significant difference in the self-efficacy of the couples between the two groups of families with family disputes and normal families. Based on the derived results, the mean differences between these two groups were significant. Hence, this hypothesis is approved. Therefore, it could be claimed that the couple self-efficacy is higher in the normal individuals, comparing to the individuals going through family disputes. In fact, the findings show that individuals who consider themselves more efficient, have a higher life satisfaction and in addition to having more control in life difficulties, they show a higher effort and persistence in performing their marital tasks and duties, have better performance and can fulfill a desirable future. Hence, the results from this study are in accordance with the findings of Kim and Park (2003), DiThomas et al. (2003), Whitie and McLogin (2007), that suggest individuals with higher self-efficacy, in addition to achieving more successes in their lives in performance, have a higher life satisfaction in their marital life.

The second hypothesis in this study was that there is a significant difference in the responsibility taking of the couples between the two groups of families with family disputes and normal families.

Based on the derived results, the difference between the two groups was not statistically significant. Hence the hypothesis is not approved and it could not be said that the responsibility taking in the normal individuals is not higher than the individuals with family conflicts, since most individuals consider themselves responsibility taking. In psychology, the uniqueness of human has been considered as lot and humans cannot evolve without responsibility and for success, human must take responsibility. As a result, there should be accurate measures taken in order to make individuals responsibility takers. The findings of this study are not in accordance with the findings of Sanai Zaker and Baqeriyani (2003) that suggest that the lack of responsibility towards the relationship and protecting it leads to dissatisfaction and divorce.

References

Abolghasemi, S., Fallahi, S., Babae, T., Hojjat, S. K. (2012). Comparison of the effectiveness of empathy training and life skills on self-efficacy of addicted spouses, *Journal of North Khorasan University of Medical Sciences*, 4 (3): 293-300.

- Abutalebi, Sh. (2003). Accountability and how it is shaped. *The Bank of Science and Culture Journal* (497): p. 28-30.
- Ahadi, B., Narimani, M., Abolghasemi, A., Asiaei, M. (2002). The Relationship between Emotional Intelligence, Documentary Styles and Self-efficacy with Life Satisfaction in Working Women, *Journal of Educational Studies and Psychology*, Ferdowsi University, 10 (1): 130-150.
- Arabian, A., Khodapanahi, MK., Heydari, M and Sedghpour, S. (2004). The Study of the Relationship between Self-Efficacy Beliefs on Mental Health and Academic Achievement of Students, *Journal of Psychology*; 8 (32): 360-371.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Freeman.
- Cereto, S.C. (1989). *Principles of modern management, functions and systems*. Massa chasethe: allyn & Bacon, Inc.
- Clark, K. D. (2010). The Relationship of Perceived Stress and Self-Efficacy Among Correctional Employees in Close-Security and Medium-Security-Level Institutions. Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Psychology, Walden University.
- Erikson, E. H. (1959). *Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers*. Psychological Issues.
- Farid, Hadith & Crusader, Jassent. (2013). The Relationship between Conceptual Self-efficacy and Emotional Intelligence with Stress Coping Styles among Gifted High School Girl Students in Qom Province. *Cultural Community Studies, Humanities Research Institute and Cultural Studies*.4(
- Fatehi Dehaghani, A and Nazari, M. (2010). Sociological Analysis of Factors Affecting Couples Orientation to Divorce in Isfahan Province, *Journal of Social Security Studies*. Page 31-49.
- Franken, R. (1998). *Human Motivation, chapter thirteen* Brook/cole publishing company U.S.A.
- Hooman, H A., Ahadi, H., Sepah Mansour, M and Sheikhi, M. (2010). Modeling of loneliness based on the structure of spiritual well-being of self-efficacy and life satisfaction, *Scientific-research journal of psychological research*, (7): p. 19- 33.
- Kim, Y.M.(2002).correlation of mental health problems with psychological constructs in adolescens. *International Journal of Nursing studies*,139-193.
- Moshki, M., Nouqabi, D and Moslem, A. (2010). Study of the characteristics and factors related to divorce from the viewpoint of divorced couples in Gonabad city in the years 87-88. Center for Social Development and Health Promotion affiliated to Gonabad University of Medical Sciences.
- Olson, D. H. (2011). Circumplex model of marital and family systems. *Journal of Family Therapy*, 22, 144-167.
- Pietrantonio, L., & Cicognani, E. (2010). Self-efficacy moderates the relationship between stress appraisal and quality of life among rescue workers. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*. 23(4): 463 – 470. 1)

- Riggo, Heidi & Valenzuela, ann marie & Weiser, Dana. (2010). Household responsibility in the family of origin: Relatins with self- efficacy in young adulthood, *Journal homepage*, (48): 568-573.
- Roland, J.P. (2010). *The cross-cultural generalizability of the five-factor model of personality*. New York, NY, USA: Kluwer Academic / Plenum Publishers.
- Sanei Zaker, B and Bagherinejad, Z. (2003), Survey on the dimensions of marital dissatisfaction among women and men seeking divorce in Isfahan, *Journal of Psychology and Research in Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran* (15): 61-78.
- Vandita, L. Rajesh, G. Pamela, M. Diamond, H.Margaret, R. Spitz, K. Anna, V. Wilkinson, L. (2015). Smoking Initiation among Mexican Heritage Youth and the Roles of Family Cohesion and Conflict. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 57, 1, 2015, Pages 24-30 .
- Vandita, L. Rajesh, G. Pamela, M. Diamond, H.Margaret, R. Spitz, K. Anna, V. Wilkinson, L. (2016). Smoking Initiation among Mexican Heritage Youth and the Roles of Family Cohesion and Conflict. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 57, 1, 2015, Pages 24-30 .
- Vaziri, Sh., Lotfi Kashani, F., Hosseinian, S and Bahram Ghaffari, S. (2010). Sexual self-efficacy and marital satisfaction, *Quarterly of Thought and Behavior*, 4 (16): Page 1-19.
- Wubbolding, R.E., Robey, P., & Brickell, J. (2014). A partial and tentative look at the future of choice theory, reality therapy and lead management. *International journal of choice theory and reality therapy*, 19(2): 25-34.
- Yaghoblu, Ali. (1394). Effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral group therapy on self- esteem, behavioral behavior and life satisfaction in parents of mentally retarded children. Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Qom.
- Younesi, F., Moin, L and Shamshirinia, T. (1389). Comparison of mental health, self-esteem and accountability of female students of divorced and normal families in Firoozabad city, *Women and Society Quarterly*, 1 (2): p. 168-102.
- Yousefi, N and Sohrabi, A. (2011). Comparison of the Effectiveness of Family Therapy Approaches Based on the Presence of Mind and Meta-Cognition on the Quality of Marital Relationships among Patients on the Eve of Divorce, *Quarterly Journal of Counseling and Psychotherapy*.