

## Studying the relationship between personality's dimensions and family relation patterns in married college students

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**Abstract:** The present study aims to investigate the relationship between personality's dimensions and family relation patterns by using descriptive-correlational approach. So the family relation pattern questionnaire by Fitz Patrick Veritchy in 1994 and the Chick Berger's personality's dimensions questionnaire in 1981 were used. The population consists of all married M.A. students of 1391 and 1392 academic year. A total of 100 students were selected using multistage cluster sampling. And the questionnaires were given to them. Data Analysis was performed using Pearson's correlation coefficient and in deductive level, path analysis method of Baron and Kenny. The results of Pearson correlation analysis showed that among the family relation patterns, the dialogue pattern has a meaningful relationship with national-religious personality and personal identity. Other personality dimensions have no significant relationship with marital adjustment. Conformity pattern has straight and positive relationship with people identity and has reverse relationship with national identity.

**Key words:** Identity dimensions, Family relation patterns; Conformity pattern; Dialogue pattern

### 1. Introduction

The family is more than a collection of individuals who live in a particular mental and physical environment. Family is a natural and social system that has its own characteristics. This social system creates a set of rules and principles and ensures a variety of roles for its members. In such a system, people are attached and connected with strong, lasting and mutual emotional ties and interests. The severity and acuity of the attachment might be reduced over time, but still it will survive across the family life (Goldenberg, translated by Barvati and Naqshbandi, 1392).

Relationship pattern is a central pillar in families and if the base of this pattern be correct, many problems will be solved. In every society, the family is a social entity. In fact, the growth of each individual is formed from the family and this growth needs connection and relationship. The family has great and important duties. And it is responsible to take care of children and their upbringing, create secure relationships among family members with each other and help children and teens to be independent (Ebadi and Motamedi, 1386).

The concept of family relation patterns with family relation schemas is scientific structure from the visual world of the family, which is defined on the basis of the relationship between family members, and what members say to each other, and

what they do, and the meaning of which they are related to (Fitzpatrice and Koerner, 2002; Barel and Fitzpatrice, 1990; Fitzpatrice, 2004).

According to Fitzpatrice and Ritche (1994), two key dimensions that determine how the relationship between family members is in this theory include: conversation orientation, and conformity orientation. Conversation orientation, a situation that families provide, where all family members participate freely and easily in interactions and are encouraged to have discussion on a range of issues (Fitzpatrice and Koerner, 2002).

Conformity orientation is kind of the applied family relation patterns that push the members of the family to have the same attitudes, values and beliefs (Fitzpatrice and Koerner, 2002).

The combination of these two dimensions (conversation and conformity), forms four family relation schema (Fitzpatrice and Ritchie, 1994), which is called family relation patterns ((Fitzpatrice and Koerner, 1997; 2002). These family four schemes are: consensual family, pluralistic family, protective family, lasses-faire family.

Pluralistic families have high scores in conversation orientation and low scores in conformity orientation. These families encourage their children to express their ideas and not be afraid of punishment. Conversely protective families have high scores in conformity orientation and low scores in conversation orientation. These families emphasize on obedience and maintaining harmony among family members, but they are not interested

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to discuss various issues. Consensual families earn high scores in both dimensions. As long as the harmony within the family is not endangered, the children are allowed to express their opinions. The *lasses-faire* families do not encourage conversation and conformity. The children talk very little with their parents, and the relationship between members is weak.

Since conversation and conformity orientation have an important role in families performance. Fundamental aspects constitute different types of families and define them. Their importance and impacts on families' performance though not necessarily in the same topics\_ were discussed by a number of experts. For example, Noler (1995, quoted by Fitzpatrice and Koerner, 2002), have discussed about the socializing functions in adolescent - parents relationships and the importance of conformity with the family. He explains how the way of establishing a balance between adolescents' desire for autonomy and their dependence, and the desire of their parents to control them parents on the other hand, determines the appropriate socialization of adolescents by the family. Particularly, Noler discussed the conformity control by family and its relationship to identity, self-esteem, problem solving and decision making in adolescents.

Family members achieve their unique specific identity during growth; still, they are attached to the family. Therefore, they maintain the identity with a particular image (Rice, 2001).

It cannot be claimed that the identification of men and women is the panacea to all problems. But a big part of our society issues including the people of Iran and many countries relates to personal identity and their problems. Many people enter into their lives without answering basic identity questions. Then they marry. They grow and become old, but still do not know who they are.

According to Marcia, personal identity is organizing one's inner self, including creating oneself, system of beliefs, desires, thoughts, skills and personal history which is in fact the result of a crisis (quoted by Oskuei and Ansari, 1380).

Identification, various dimensions and its formation are psychologists' interests because of its role in life quality, and numerous studies have been done though (Ericson, 1968; Marcia, 1983; Shahrayay, 1386; Berzonsky, 2003).

Empirical evidence suggests that identity formation begins in adolescence, lasting until late adolescence and early adulthood, before the process is established in adulthood (Kercher et al., 2010).

Erickson (1963, quoted by Hesampour, 1388), believes the identity as an organized a sense of "self", which consists of values, beliefs and goals that the individual made a commitment to. Erikson's theory of psycho - social, is about the identity. He was the first to perceive the identity as an important achievement of adolescent personality and an important step towards becoming an effective and fresh individual (Burke, 2001; quoted Hesampour 1388).

Marcia has identified four identity status based on the presence or absence (Crisis and Commitment):

1. Identity moratorium (Commitment by pursuing self-exploration)
2. Identity moratorium (Lack of self-exploration commitment)
3. Identity foreclosune (There is little sign of self-exploration or no self-exploration.)
4. Identity diffusion (Lack of commitment and continuous self-exploration)

Marcia's approach in the identity created many researches on the characteristics of individuals in each state (Seligman, 1999).

Archer Studies (1985) showed that the processes of identification results are different for girls and boys. For example, while boys and girls are similar in their career decisions, Girls (in their career expectations) try to establish a balance between their needs with others especially their future family.

studying the relationship between family relation patterns with the communication atmosphere, and the exchange of information and maintaining a balance between the family, Hulk (1999) concluded that the structure of family relation patterns affects encouraging children and their aggression and interest in politics, political affairs, political activities, campaigns and political choices and the interpretation of medias' content (according to the Ahmad Chalichehi, 1390).

Farzaneh Khow, Yar mohammadian and Maulavi (1388), studied the general impact of family performance on the status of student's identity. This research was descriptive, and was conducted on 140 high school girl students from first to third grade using multistage cluster sampling. The results showed that not only the family performance, but also cultural factors and the individual's separation are effective in achieving the identity and can affect its formation. And the child's influence on parents' behavior, and their bilateral relations in problematic behaviors and adolescents identifying should also be considered.

The family relation pattern and identity can have a lot of relationships and roles to each other. The present study aims to examine this issue that whether there is a significant relationship between identity dimensions and the family relation patterns?

## **2. Research method, population, samples and sampling method**

We used correlational descriptive method. The population includes all married male and female students in 1391-92 academic years who were studying Educational Sciences in Azad University of Marvdasht. Participants' ages were between 25 and 40. In this study, a total of 100 students from Educational Sciences subfields (in each year 1 subfield and in each subfield 1 class) were selected using multistage cluster sampling. And the questionnaires were given to married students.

### 3. Research Tools

#### 3.1. Identity dimensions scale

The questionnaire was designed in 1981 by Chick Berger, and it was repeatedly revised since then. The fourth edition of this questionnaire (Chick et al., 1994), which is known as the three X, was applied. The revised form of this scale consists of 35 items. 10 questions are about personal identity, for example, values and moral standards in shaping my personality ... 7 questions are about social identity, for example my fame in the formation of my

personality.... 8 question are about collective identity, for example my living place the place where I grew up in the formation of my character. And other questions are considered as sub-items. In this study, 10 questions relating to sub-items were not used.

To determine questionnaire's reliability, Jokar and Latifian (1382) used the Cronbach's alpha and obtained the coefficients of individual identity, social identity and national-religious identity respectively 0.63, 60.60, 055. The reliability of this questionnaire for personal identity, social identity, ethnic identity and national-religious identity are 83%, 50%, 39% and 50% respectively.

**Table 1:** The statistical indicators of research variables

Research variables	Cronbach's alpha	Quantity
Total compatibility	0/924	22
Personal identity	0/832	10
Social identity	0/688	7
Ethnic identity	0/290	4
National Religious Identity	0/507	4
Total Identity dimensions	0/872	25

#### 3.2. Relation patterns scale

In order to measure the dimensions of family relation patterns or the dimensions of conversation and conformity orientation, the revised tool of family relation patterns (Fitzpatrice and Ritchie, 1994; Fitzpatrice and Ritchie, 1990; quoted by Fitzpatrice and Koerner, 2002 a) will be used. Additionally, this scale has been adapted for use in Iran by Koroush Nia and Latifian (1387). This tool is a self-report questionnaire. That questions the success or failure of the respondent with 26 statements about the

status of his family relations. The first 15 statements were related to the conversation orientation. 11 The next 11 statements were related to conformity orientation. The revised tool of family relation patterns had content validity (Fitzpatrice and Koerner, 2002 a).

The reliability of this scale has been confirmed in many studies. Conversation orientation subscales have shown greater reliability compared with conformity orientation subscales.

**Table 2:** The statistical indicators of research variables

Research variables	Minimum amount	Maximum amount	Average	Standard deviation
conversation pattern	19/00	75/00	52/24	9/95
conformity pattern	12/00	54/00	34/22	9/79
Personal identity	21/00	48/00	33/43	6/24
Social identity	16/00	35/00	23/57	4/07
ethnic identity	4/00	20/00	13/42	2/60
religious national identity	7/00	20/00	14/15	2/61

### 4. Research findings

The aim of the present study is to investigate the relationship between the personal identity dimensions and family relation patterns of married

students in the Faculty of Educational Sciences in Marvdasht. For this purpose, questionnaires were given to 100 people. The data were analyzed. In this chapter, the data was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics. In the descriptive average level, standard deviation of research variables, and in inferential level of hypothesized model test, using path analysis, Baron and Kenny methods were used.

Descriptive results: in Table 2, the statistical indexes: minimum, maximum, average and standard deviation and in Table 3 the correlation matrix of studied variables and their dimensions are shown.

As we can see in Table 2, among family relation patterns, the highest average was related to conversation orientation and the lowest average was related to conformity orientation. And among identity dimension the highest average was related to personal identity and the lowest average was related to social identity.

Inferential findings: Hypothesis> there is a significant relationship between students' personal identity and family relation patterns. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis; the results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Correlation matrix of identity dimensions family relation patterns in married students

	Personal identity	Social identity	Ethnic identity	National Religious Identity
conversation orientation	0/200*	0/106	0/062	0/290**
conformity orientation	-0/128	0/067	0/270**	-0/233*

\* is significant in 0.01 level

\*\* is significant in 0.05 level

From the output of Table 2, it can be concluded that conversation orientation has a significant positive relationship with national religious identity ( $r = 0/29$ ,  $p < 0/01$ ) and personal identity ( $r = 0/2$ ,  $p < 0/05$ ). Conformity orientation has a significant positive relationship with ethnic identity ( $r = 0/29$ ,  $p < 0/01$ ) and has a negative relationship with national religious identity ( $r = -0/23$ ,  $p < 0/05$ ). National religious and personal identities have the most and the least relation with conversation orientation, respectively. Ethnic and national religious identities have the most and the least relation with conformity orientation, respectively.

### 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the personal identity dimensions with family relation patterns. Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test this hypothesis. According to the results, we can understand that conversation orientation has a significant positive relationship with national religious identity and personal identity. Conformity orientation has a significant positive relationship with ethnic identity and has a negative relationship with national religious identity. National religious and personal identities have the most and the least relation with conversation orientation, respectively. And ethnic and national religious identities have the most and the least relation with conformity orientation, respectively. Archer Studies (1985) showed that the processes of identification results are different for girls and boys. Hulk (1999) concluded that the structure of family relation patterns affects encouraging children and their aggression and interest in politics, political affairs, political activities, campaigns and political choices and the interpretation of Medias' content.

In explanation of this hypothesis, it can be stated that the relation between individuals may be in forms of friendship, group work, group, religion and so on. The relationship between husband and wife is

distinct from all other relations. And by formal marriage legitimacy from the society, the marriage bond is hard to break.

Family relation pattern that was first introduced by McLeod and Kafi (1972), emphasize on the assumption that children's perception and social reality, reflects parents relationships with children. McLeod and Kafi determined just two of the main features of family relation patterns: social trends and conceptual tendencies. Parents – children relation that reflects the harmony among family members and parental authority is known as social trends. In such cases, children are expected to follow the family values, and avoid disputes and discussions with parents. In conceptual tendencies, family members are focused on the topic of conversation. This discussion is affecting all comments speakers. Thus, the children are allowed to debate and talk with their parents. Family relation patterns play an important role in people's lives, because the characteristics of the characters, interaction methods and social behavior within the family are effective as long as people become old enough.

Personal identity indicates individual differences and shows individual's own aspects which lead to individuals distinctions, which distinguish the person from others. Self-congratulation is based on the person's characteristics. While, the social identity shows individuals similarities and the person explains oneself according to the society's dependencies or classes (Latanen and Crocker, 1992). Tajfel as a theorist of social identity defined it: "part of the self-concept which comes from the knowledge of being the members of a group or community groups and is associated with the value and emotional dependencies of the membership" (Tajfel, 1998).

It cannot be claimed that the identification of men and women is the panacea to all problems. But a big part of our society issues including the people of Iran and many countries relates to personal identity and their problems. Many people enter into their lives

without answering basic identity questions. Then they marry. They grow and become old, but still do not know who they are.

One of the limitations of the research was the population study which was the married students of Azad university of Marvdasht.

As we used the questionnaires to obtain the required data, we recommend using other research tools beside questionnaires.

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