

## A Survey of Relationship Between Self-Monitoring, Sensation Seeking and Mental Health with Family Function

M. Ghaffari, J. Zolfalifam and A. Rezae  
Department of Psychology, Pyam-e-Noor University, Iran

**Abstract:** The main aim of current study is evaluating of relationship between self-monitoring, sensation seeking and mental health with general family function. Statistical sample includes 369 married students of Tabriz universities within the 2008-2009 and the method applied is correlation. In this research, self-monitoring, sensation-seeking and mental health are regarded as predictor variables and family function is regarded as criterion variable. For data collecting, researcher-made questionnaire, Snyder's self-monitoring; Arnet's sensation-seeking, Goldberg's mental health and Family Analysis Device (FAD) are used. In data analysis, Pierson's correlation and multi-variable regression with enter way by using SPSS software are applied. The results indicate that there is negative and meaningful relationship between family function and sensation seeking, mental disorder and their factors ( $p < 0.05$ ), but there is a positive relationship between family function and self monitoring ( $p < 0.05$ ). The results of multi-variable regression analysis, by using entrance method shows that the rate of prediction of family function by using variables like self monitoring, sensation seeking and mental health is meaningful but the rate of prediction of self-monitoring is more than others.

**Key words:** Self-monitoring, sensation seeking, mental health, family function, FDA

---

### INTRODUCTION

Family as origin of emersion, evolution and planning and self-ordering of its members is one of the most important foundations of mankind's social life (Ghamari and Ghaffari, 2008). Weak family function in recent decades is not only an alarm for married men and women and persons who want to make family, but also seems as one of the greatest social problems in our society (Nazari, 2008). Different factors influence family function and one of them is self-monitoring. Research on self-monitoring is based upon Snyder's beliefs. He believes that in adjusting social behavior, individuals who are conducted by circumstantial factors (high self-monitoring) are sensitive to social signs and interpersonal relations in social relations and their behavior differ in different circumstances. In contrast to them, individuals who are conducted by rather inner tendencies (low self-monitoring), response weakly to interpersonal and circumstantial characteristics (Ghaffari, 2005). DeBono and Packer (1991) shown that individuals who are in extremes have less adaption, compared with the average. While, individuals with low self-monitoring remain the same in a consolidated manner, family inconsistency seems to be more in low self-monitored individual, compared to others (Narimani, 2008). High self-monitoring in couples increases family's general function and brings marriage satisfaction (Ghaffari, 2009). Another factor influencing family function is sensation-seeking. Moradi and Dozhkam (2006) shown that there is

a relation between sensation seeking and family function and marriage consistency. Sensation seeking in coherent families is less than that in incoherent families. And incongruence in sensation-seeking affects marriage satisfaction negatively. Sarabadani's (2003) findings indicate that high rate of sensation seeking has negative impact on marriage satisfaction. High rate of sensation seeking in childhood leads to divorce in adulthood (Coie and Dodge, 1998; Kazdin, 2005). Family function in sensation seeker couples is less than that in others (Ghaffari, 2009). Many of the couples who have rate of sensation seeking and impulsivity, have been reported of have higher family violence (Holtzworth-Munroe *et al.*, 2000a). The relation between marriage dissatisfaction and physical aggression with sensation seeking is negative (Lawrence and Bradbury, 2001). The results of the research made by Malamuth and *et al.* (1995) indicated that the relation between marriage dissatisfaction and physical aggression with impulsivity (sensation seeking factor) is meaningful. One of the main factors of marriage dissatisfaction and aggression in couples is high-rate of sensation seeking (Stuart and Holtzworth-Munroe, 2005). Wingrove and Bond (1997) believed that marriage dissatisfaction and weak family function is seen more in Sensation seekers and individuals with impulsivity is higher, compared with other groups. High rate of aggressiveness and lack of control on behavior in sensation seeking couples, increases marriage dissatisfaction (Testa and Leonard, 2001). Inability in controlling the sexual behavior outside matrimony

limitations in sensation seekers leads to increase of marriage dissatisfaction (Bancroft, 2004). Divorce rate among sensation seekers is higher than the others for times (Hoyle *et al.*, 2000). Another variable, which has been studied in this research is mental health. Rahmatollahi *et al.* (2006) shown in a research named pathology of Isfahanian couples that personality and mental disorders are among the main factors of marriage dissatisfaction and disorder in family function. Ceremonial and whimsical behaviors end in reduction of social relations and finally increase of marriage dissatisfaction (Schneier, 1992). Individuals with socio-phobia have lower position in terms of satisfaction and family function index (Stein and Keen, 2000). In Asghari and Rafiinia's (2006) research, physical diseases, mental and moral problems have been taken as predictive variable of abnormal family efficiency. Correlation between mental health and marriage adaption in university students is higher (Taghavi and Fouroutan, 2006). There is a meaningful difference between general family function and its factors in schizophrenic and non schizophrenic patients (Ahmadi and Sheikhalizadeh, 2006). Mental illness of mothers and theme risk predicts family function in best ways (Dickstein *et al.*, 2004). Extrovertivity, impulsivity, hyper-introvertivity, being controller, containment domineer and lack of efficient contrastive skills against stress are the personality factors that are related to divorce and weak family function (DeBono and Packer, 1991; Rodrigues and Hall, 2006).

Given the relation between self monitoring, sensation seeking and mental health with family function, the question, which arose was this: are their relations between self-monitoring, sensation seeking and mental health variable with family function?

To achieve the mentioned goal, these hypotheses are predicted:

- There is relation between self-monitoring and married students' family function
- There is relation between sensation-seeking and family function of married students
- There is relation between mental health and family function of married students
- What is the share of each self-monitoring, sensation seeking and mental health variables in family function of married students?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, correlation method is applied. Statistical population includes 18-40 years old students of Tabriz universities in 2008-2009. Statistical sample in this study includes 369 married students of Tabriz universities and were chosen randomly. For data collection, researcher made questionnaire, Schnider's self-monitoring, Arent's

sensation-seeking, Goldberg's mental health and Family Analysis Device (FAD) are used. The information regarding self-monitoring is gathered by Snyder's questionnaire, which is a 25-items scale. To measure its perpetuity, retesting method has been applied. So, the results show that the perpetuity scale is 0.72 (Snyder, 1974). Hmzelooi (1993) in his study, calculated correlation coefficient of two halves of the test by using split of even and odd materials and after amending by Spearman-Brow formula, the result was 0.58 ( $p < 0.001$ ). The second measure used in this study is Arent's sensation-seeking scale, which has 20-items and includes two subscales of novelty and intensity. Internal stability of whole scale by Arent was 0.70, but subscales of intensity and novelty are reported to be 0.64 and 0.50, respectively. Poorvafai *et al.* (1997) obtained 0.50 correlations between this measure and Zakermen measure. The other questionnaire was mental health scale, which questionnaire has 28-items that has created by Goldberg and Hillier (1979) with factor analysis method and has four criterions. It evaluates somatization, anxiety, depression and social action disorder and every criterion has seven questions. Performed studies indicate high reliability and validity of this questionnaire. Results of meta-analysis of 43 surveys that have performed by Williams and Goldberg (1988) shown mean sensitivity and mean specificity of 0.84 and 0.82, respectively. Also, preliminary study of Yaghoobi and Shahmohammadi (1999) at Gilan shown that sensitivity of this test in best distinguishes between health and disorder score of 23 was 86.5% and its specificity was 82%. Reliability coefficient with Cronbach's method in this study was 0.88 (Noorbala *et al.*, 2001). In current study, internal consistency coefficient of GHQ-28 test with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  method was obtained 0.89 that is at optimum limit. Also, reliability coefficient of this questionnaire in each sub-scale (somatization, anxiety, social action disorder and depression) with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  method was 0.75, 0.73, 0.80 and 0.85, respectively. The last scale was FAD. The test includes 60-items and seven subtests, which consist: problem solving, relation, roles, emotional companionship, emotional converse, control of behavior and overall function, which in terms of justifiability with Philadelphia Oldster morale scale has the correlation of 0.60 and its predictive justifiability, is seen as suitable.  $\alpha$ -coefficient of subscales is reported to be 0.72-0.90 (Epstein *et al.*, 1983). In data analysis, Pierson's correlation coefficient and multi variable regressions in entrance method using SPSS software were applied.

## RESULTS

The results presented in Table 1 show that there is a negative and meaningful relation between general family function with anxiety ( $r = -0.132$ ), disorder of social

Table 1: Simple correlation coefficient of somatization disorder, anxiety, disorder of social function, depression and mental disorder with general function of family

Predictor	Criterion variable	Somatization disorder	Anxiety	Disorder of social function	Depression	Mental disorder	General function of family
Somatization disorder	r	1.000	0.421	0.436	0.158	0.669	-0.085
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.104
Anxiety	r	1.000	0.434	0.434	0.337	0.763	-0.132
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.011
Disorder of social function	r	1.000	0.422	1.000	0.422	0.753	-0.150
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.004
Depression	r	1.000	0.690	1.000	1.000	0.690	-0.135
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.009
Mental disorder	r	1.000	0.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	-0.114
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.028

Table 2: Simple correlation coefficient of intensity, novelty and sensation-seeking and self-monitoring with general function of family

Predictor	Criterion variable	Intensity	Novelty	Sensation seeking	Self-monitoring	General function of family
Intensity	r	1.000	0.817	0.949	0.567	-0.378
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Novelty	r	1.000	0.957	0.957	0.559	-0.473
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Sensation-seeking	r	1.000	0.590	1.000	0.590	-0.448
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Self-monitoring	r	1.000	0.564	1.000	1.000	0.564
	Sig.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Table 3: Multi variable regression coefficient with entrance method for predicting general family function regarding variables like, sensation-seeking, self-monitoring and mental disorder

Predictor	Non standard co-efficients				Standard co-efficients	Sig.
	B	SE	(β)	t		
Sensation-seeking	-0.488	0.158	-0.161	-3.082	0.002	
Self-monitoring	2.534	0.279	0.475	9.076	0.000	
Mental disorder	-0.403	0.131	-0.130	-3.067	0.002	

function (r = -0.150), depression (r = -0.135) and mental disorder (r = -0.114) and (p<0.05). In other words, the couples whose family function is balanced and suitable have fewer rates of mental disorder and physical disorder and its subsystems. But, the relation of this variable with somatization disorder in level 0.05 was not meaningful and the relation between mental disorder and its subsystem was meaningful.

Results presented in Table 2 indicate that there is a negative and meaningful relation between general function of family and categories like intensity (r = -0.378) novelty (r = -0.473) and sensation-seeking (r = -0.448), (p<0.05). In other words, the couples with balanced and suitable family function have less sensation-seeking and its categories, but the relation between this variable and self-monitoring is positive and meaningful.

As shown in Table 3, one can say that self-monitoring is the most powerful variable in predicting general family function (df = 3.365, f = 66.961; p<0.005, r = 0.596).

## DISCUSSION

The first finding of the research was that there is positive and meaningful relation between self-monitoring and general family function. Obtained results, along with

DeBono and Packer (1991), Narimani (2008), Ghaffari (2009) studies, which indicate that family inconsistency in families with very low self-monitoring is higher than that of other groups is consistent. To clarify these findings, we can say that individuals with high self-monitoring react to control and regulation of their own behavior to their spouse view point and ideas and display pragmatism and they don't act much according to their inner manners and values and beliefs. This factor increases family function and marriage satisfaction in couples. Another finding was that there is negative and meaningful relation between sensation-seeking and general family function. The obtained results are congruent with studies of Sarabadani (2003), Coie and Dodge (1996), Kazdin (2005), Ghaffari (2009), Holtzworth-Munroe (2000b), Lawrence and Bradbury (2001), Malamuth *et al.* (1995), Stuart and Holtzworth-Munroe (2005), Wingrove and Bond (1997), Testa and Leonard (2001), Bancroft (2004) and Hoyle *et al.* (2000). Research evidences prove that sensation-seeking is linked with hypomania and impulsive tendencies. Zakermen have found positive and meaningful relation among sensation-seeking with psychopathic, antisocial, aggressiveness and lack of discipline and impulsivity. Therefore, these factors impede warm and favorite family relations in sensation-seeking individuals and ends in increase of marriage dissatisfaction. The obtained results also show that there is negative and meaningful relation between mental disorder and general family function. These findings are consistent with studies of Rahmatollahi *et al.* (2006), Schneier (1992), Stein and Keen (2000), Asghari and Rafiinia (2006), Taghavi and Fouroutan (2006), Ahmadi and Sheikhalzadeh (2006), Dickstein *et al.* (2004), Marvin *et al.* (1994), DeBono and Packer (1991) and Rodrigues and Hall

(2006). To explaining this result, we can say that low function of family and marriage inconsistency disturbs families' emotional balance and hinders meeting their emotional needs and this leads to low mental health in couples of inefficient families. But, if family and environment, acts as a supportive environment for them and couples help each other in hardship, this factor in turn brings about mental growth and personality balance and the results of multivariable correlation coefficient indicate the meaningfulness of rate of productivity of self-monitoring, sensation-seeking and mental health in predicting family function. But, rate of productivity of self-monitoring is more powerful than the others.

### CONCLUSION

The results show that there is a positive and meaningful relation between general performance of family and self-monitoring and a negative and meaningful relation between general performance of family and sensation-seeking and mental disorder. On the other hand, high self-monitoring among couples will increase general performance of family and high sensation-seeking and mental disorder will increase couples inability in solving the problems. Whereas, surveying the quality of family performance is one of the major indices of development, if the family knows how to deal with problems and has required flexibility for adapting with situation, it will survive. So, it is necessary for the development of societies to increase self-monitoring and mental health of couples and to modify their sensation-seeking by the help of sport and teaching required skills.

### REFERENCES

- Ahmadi, E and S. Sheikhalizadeh, 2006. A survey of schizophrenic and non-schizophrenic patients' family function. Third Congress of Family Pathology in Iran, pp: 30-32. <http://fri.sbu.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=1322&ctl=Detail&mid=4243&Id=636>.
- Asghari, A. and P. Rafiinia, 2006. Factors predicting unsuccessful marriage from university students' Point of view. Third Congress of Family Pathology in Iran, pp: 40-42. <http://fri.sbu.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=1322&ctl=Detail&mid=4243&Id=636>.
- Bancroft, J., 2004. Sexual activity and risk taking in young heterosexual men: The relevance of sexual arousability, mood and sensation seeking. *J. Sex Res.*, pp: 57-62.
- Coie, J.K. and K.A. Dodge, 1998. Aggression and Antisocial Behavior. 5th Edn. In: Damon, W. and N. Eisenberg (Eds.). *Handbook of Child Psychology, Vol 3. Social, Emotional and Personality Development*. John Wiley and Sons, New York.
- DeBono, K.G. and M. Packer, 1991. The effects of advertising appeal on perceptions of product quality. *Personality Soc. Psychol. Bull.*, 17 (2): 194-200. DOI: 10.1177/014616729101700212.
- Dickstein, S., R. Seifer, K.E. Albus, 2004. Attachment patterns across multiple family relationships in adulthood: Associations with maternal depression. *Dev. Psychopathol.*, 16: 735-752. DOI: 10.1007/s10896-005-6605-6.
- Epstein, N., L. Baldwin and D. Bishop, 1983. The McMaster family assessment device. *J. Marital Family Ther.*, 9: 171-180.
- Ghaffari, M., 2005. Comparison of self-monitoring, sensation-seeking and mental health in professional and non-professional athletes. M.A. Thesis, Mohagheg Ardebili University, Iran.
- Ghaffari, M., 2009. *Theories of Personality Limited Range*. 2th Edn. Bagh-e-Rezvan Publications. Ardebil, pp: 100-105.
- Ghamari, H. and M. Ghaffari, 2008. Study factors of a dissolution family. Project the Center of Women and Lady President of Republic, Iran.
- Goldberg, D. and V.C. Hillier, 1979. A scaled version of the general health questionnaire. *Psychol. Med.*, 9: 139-145. DOI: 10.1002/1097-4679(198803)44:2<215::AID-JCLP2270440221>3.0.CO;2-I.
- Hmzelooi, V., 1993. Assessing the credibility of Schnider's questionnaire among Tehran university student. Project of Tehran University.
- Holtzworth-Munroe, A., J.C. Meehan, K. Herron, U. Rehman and G.L. Stuart, 2000a. Testing the Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart batter typology. *J. Consulting and Clin. Psychol.*, 68: 1000-1019.
- Holtzworth-Munroe, A., U. Rehman and K. Herron, 2000b. General and spouse-specific anger and hostility in subtypes of maritally violent and nonviolent men. *Behav. Ther.*, 31 (4): 603-630. DOI: 10.1016/S0005-7894(00)80033-7.
- Hoyle, R.H., M.C. Fejfar and J.D. Miller, 2000. Personality and sexual risk taking: A quantitative review. *J. Personality*, 68: 1203-1231.
- Kazdin, A.E., 2005. *Parent Management Training: Treatment for Oppositional, Aggressive and Antisocial Behavior in Children and Adolescents*. New York: Oxford University Press (in Korean and Arabic), pp: 105-106.
- Lawrence, E. and T.N. Bradbury, 2001. Physical aggression and marital dysfunction: A longitudinal analysis. *J. Family Psychol.*, 15: 135-154.
- Malamuth, N., D. Linz, C. Heavy, G. Barnes and M. Acker, 1995. Using the confluence model of sexual aggression to predict men's conflict with women: A 10 year follow-up study. *J. Personality and Soc. Psychol.*, 69 (2): 353-369.

- Marvin, L. *et al.*, 1994. Relationship between need achievement sensation seeking and cognitive performance. *Personal Individ. Differ.*, 16(6): 861-867. DOI: 10.1016/0191-8869(94)00133-D.
- Moradi and H. Dozhkam, 2006. Factors Predicting Unsuccessful Marriage from University Students' Point of view. Baccalaureate Thesis of Tehran University, Iran.
- Moradi, H. and M. Dejkam, 1998. A survey of relationship sensation-seeking health and amount of marital satisfaction among married students. The first congress of psychology in Iran, Tehran University, pp: 70-73.
- Narimani, M., 2008. Factors Predicting Divorce and Weak Family Function. Project of Mohageg Ardebili University, Iran.
- Nazari, K., 2008. A survey of relationship between life skill and spouse annoying in families. M.A. Thesis, Roodehen Azad University.
- Noorbala, A., S.A. Bagheryazdi and K. Mohammad, 2001. Assess in the credibility of Public health questionnaire as a screening instrument for psychiatric disorders in Tehran. *Hakim Quart.*, 11 (4): 47-50.
- Poorvafai, P. *et al.*, 1997. A Survey of relationship between music form and creation in Tehran musicians. Project of Tehran University.
- Rahmatollahi, F., M. Fatehizadeh and S.A. Ahmadi, 2006. Pathology of marital life of isfahamian couples and a model for recognizing and classifying marital disorders. Third Congress of Family Pathology in Iran, pp: 25-27. <http://fri.sbu.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=1322&ctl=Detailandmid=4243andId=636>.
- Rodrigues, E.A. and H.J. Hall, 2006. What Predicts Divorce and Relationship Dissolution. 3rd Edn. Florida State University.
- Sarabadani, Z., 2003. The Role of Sensation-Seeking in the Occurrence of Marital Incoherence. M.A. Thesis, Faculty of Psychology and Pedagogy, Tarbiat-e-Moallem University.
- Schneier, F.R., 1992. Quality of Life in Anxiety Disorders. In: Katschnig, H., H. Freeman and N. Sartorial (Eds.). *Quality of Life in Mental Disorders*, New York: Wiley, pp: 149-163.
- Snyder, M., 1974. Self-monitoring of expressive behavior. *J. Personality Soc. Psychol.*, 30 (4): 526-537.
- Stein, M.B. and Y.M. Kean, 2000. Disability and quality of life in social phobia: Epidemiologic findings. *Am. J. Psychiatry*, 157: 1606-1613.
- Stuart, L.G. and A. Holtzworth-Munroe, 2005. Testing a theoretical model of the relationship between impulsivity, mediating variables and husband violence. *J. Family Violence*, 20 (5): 291-303.
- Taghavi, M. and M. Fouroutan, 2006. Factors Influencing Marital Consistency among Married Students in Shiraz University. Third Congress of Family Pathology in Iran, pp: 30-32. <http://fri.sbu.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=1322andctl=Detailandmid=4243andId=636>.
- Testa, M. and K.E. Leonard, 2001. The impact of husband physical aggression and alcohol use on marital functioning: Does alcohol excuse the violence? *J. Violence Victims*, 16 (5): 507-516.
- Williams, M. and D.P. Goldberg, 1988. A user's guide to the general health questionnaire. Windsor: nferNelson.
- Wingrove, J. and A.J. Bond, 1997. Impulsivity: A state as well as trait variable. Does mood awareness explain low correlations between trait and behavioral measures of impulsivity? *Personality Individ. Differ.*, 22: 333-339. DOI: 10.1016/S0191-8869(96)00222-X.
- Yaghoobi, N., M. Nasr and D. Shahmohammadi, 1999. A survey of epidemiologic mental disorders in sumeesaray and its village. *Raftar va Andishe Mag.*, 11 (2): 55-65.