

THE RELATION OF EARLY MALADAPTIVE SCHEMAS WITH FIVE-FACTOR PERSONALITY TRAITS AND THEIR DIFFERENCE AMONG FIRST, MIDDLE AND LAST BORN CHILDREN (A CASE STUDY OF AMOL CITY- IRAN)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of present study was to investigate the relation between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits and their difference among the first, middle and last born children. This work is a descriptive and correlation (to evaluate the relation of maladaptive schemas and personality traits)-post event (to evaluate the difference of variables relative to the order of birth). The statistical population includes 18-40 years people living in Amol City. Using the table of Morgan and Krejcie, the sample size has been computed to be 120. The sample has been selected using clustering sampling method. To gather required data, a researcher-made questionnaire of birth order, NEO inventory and Young early maladaptive schemas questionnaire have been used. The obtained data have been analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics through SPSS-18 Software. According to Pearson correlation test, there is a relation between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits. Additionally, early maladaptive schemas have been compared with children's birth order. As the finding revealed, there is a significant difference between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits among the first, middle and last born children. Briefly, the significances of the present study are summarized as follow; there is a noticeable positive relation between agreeability and emotional inhibition and entitlement/grandiosity, and between conscientiousness and the six schemas. Moreover, there is a meaningful difference between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality trait with the birth order whereas some of early maladaptive schemas such as emotional deprivation, abandonment/instability, and etc are mainly different in the first, middle and last born children. We predict that the significant difference of schemas and five-factor personality traits in the first, middle and last born children is a new subject of research pursuing psychologists to further investigations over the two new questions arising from; 1) the effect of birth order on the intensity and weakness of schemas and personality traits and; 2) the possible implications of the lack of relation between personality dimensions and some of schemas.

Keywords: *Early Maladaptive Schemas, Five-Factor Personality Traits, the First, Middle and Last Born*

INTRODUCTION

Schema is considered as an element in the cognitive structure of individuals and includes systematic elements of previous reaction and experiences which can direct perception and evaluate behaviors. The attitude of individuals towards their surrounding world is influenced (Manesh *et al.*, 2010). Although schemas are formed from the beginning of life and influence individual during the life, early schemas are those beliefs that people have about themselves, others and environment and usually derive from not satisfying primary needs, particularly emotional needs during childhood (Zhang *et al.*, 2010). According to Young early maladaptive schemas are deep and comprehensive patterns or themes formed during childhood or adolescence, continue during the life, related to interpersonal and intrapersonal relations, and are intensely inefficient (Young *et al.*, 2007).

He considers these schemas as self-harm cognitive and emotional patterns which begin from the primary growth process and continues during the life (Young *et al.*, 2003; Young, 1996; cited in Nordahl, Holthe *et al.*, 2003).

Young (2005) and Young *et al.*, (2003) propounded fifteen early maladaptive schemas organized in five groups:

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The first group (disconnection and rejection) involving subsets of emotional deprivation (ED), abandonment/instability (AI), mistrust/abuse (MA), social isolation/alienation (SI), defectiveness/shame (DS); the second group (impaired autonomy and performance) such as failure, dependence/incompetence (DI), vulnerability to harm as illness (VH), enmeshment/undeveloped self (EM); the third group (impaired limits) including insufficient self-control/self-discipline (IS), entitlement/grandiosity (ET); the fourth groups (other-directedness) involving subjugation (SB) and self-sacrifice (SS), and the fifth group (over vigilance and inhibition) entailing emotional inhibition (EI), and unrelenting standards/hypocriticalness (US) (Manesh *et al.*, 2010).

According to therapy schemas approach, early maladaptive schemas are formed during childhood and it is believed that the interaction of life experiences and temper leads to the formation of schemas (Yaung *et al.*, 2007). Since schemas are used as framework for information processing and determine individuals' emotional interactions relative to life situations and interpersonal relations (Yousef *et al.*, 2011), it seems that they are associated with individuals' personality traits.

One of the theories propounded regarding conceptualizing personality, five-factor personality theory. This model is mostly considered in traits theory and includes neuroticism (N), extraversion (E), openness (O), agreeableness (A), and conscientiousness (C) (McCare and Costa, 1992).

Many internal and foreign studies have been performed regarding the relation between personality factors and early maladaptive schemas in adults.

The results obtained by Morice (2006); Sava (2009); Jens (2010) revealed that there is a significant relation between the components of early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits including neuroticism, extroversion, agreeability, conscientiousness, and openness.

Given the aforementioned, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the relation of early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits of neuroticism, extroversion, agreeability, conscientiousness, and openness among the first, middle and last born children and also birth order of respondents as the first, middle and last children.

Accordingly, the research variables can be presented as follow:

1. There is a significant relation between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits of the first, middle and last born children and with the birth order of the children.
2. There is a significant relation between five-factor personality traits among the first, middle and last born children.

Methodology

The present study is a descriptive and correlation (to evaluate the relation of maladaptive schemas and personality traits)-post event (to evaluate the difference of variables relative to the order of birth). The statistical population includes 18-40 years people living in Amol City. Using the table of Morgan and Krejcie, the sample size has been computed 120. The sample has been selected using clustering sampling method. To gather required data, the following instruments were used:

Birth Order Questionnaire: This researcher-made questionnaire included 9 items evaluating some information such as the birth order in the family.

NEO Personality Inventory: this scale was proposed by McCare and Costa (1992) and has two forms of short and long. The questionnaire employed in this study was short form (NEO-FFI) entailing 60 items evaluating five-factor personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeability, and conscientiousness). Implementing this test is affordable in terms of time and cost. Its scales have a high validity and on the contrary of other personality test, it has been less criticized. Also, in the study performed by (Molazade 2002; cited in FathiAshtiani, 2010), validity (test-retest) and reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the test were evaluated at a good level.

Young Schema Questionnaire-Short Form (SF-YSQ): This questionnaire was used to measure early maladaptive schemas. It contains 75 items with 6 Likert scale-based alternative (completely false = 1 to completely true = 6). Fifteen sub-scales including emotional deprivation, disconnection/rejection, mistrust/abuse, social isolation/alienation, defectiveness/shame, failure, dependence/incompetence, vulnerability to harm, enmeshment, obeying, subjugation, insufficient self-control/self-discipline, entitlement, self-sacrifice, and emotional inhibition were provided to be implemented. Each item of the questionnaire is related a schema and to obtain schemas' score, mean score is computed in each 5 items. Using Cronbach's alpha and bisectional method, Yousefi *et al.*, (2010) reported a good level of reliability for this scale.

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After distributing the questionnaires among the subjects, each of them were coded and scored and analyzed through SPSS software using descriptive and inferential statistics. to test the research hypotheses, Pearson Correlation test, step-wise regression and t-test were employed.

Findings

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Frequency Distribution Based on Gender of the Subjects

Percent	frequency	dimension	Variable
33.3	40	First child	order of birth
33.3	40	middle child	
33.3	40	last child	

According to Table 1, out of 120 subjects, 38.3% (46 people) was female and 61.6% (74 people) was male.

Table 2: Frequency Distribution Based on Birth Order of the Subjects

Percent	frequency	dimension	Variable
33.3	40	First child	order of birth
33.3	40	middle child	
33.3	40	last child	

As shown in Table 2, 33.3% (40 people) of the sample was the first child, 33.3% (40 people) was the middles child and 33.3% (40 people) was the last child of the family.

Table 3: Statistical Mean Related To the Scores of Early Schemas among the Subjects

mean score			statistical index group
19.8	22	emotional deprivation	first group
	19	abandonment/instability	
	17	mistrust/abuse	
	21	social isolation/alienability	
	20	defectiveness/shame	
15.25	18	Failure	Second group
	15	dependence/incompetence	
	12	vulnerability to harm	
	16	undeveloped self/enmeshment	
18	16	entitlement/grandiosity	Third group
	22	insufficient self-control/self-discipline	
	15	Subjugation	
10.5	19	self-sacrifice	Fifth group
	11	emotional inhibition	
	10	unrelenting standards/hypocriticalness	

Shown in Table 3, the highest mean score belongs to the first group of early maladaptive schemas, i.e. disconnection/rejection.

The lowest mean score also belongs to the fifth group, i.e. vigilance and inhibition (10.5). Moreover, it is observed that in emotional deprivation and self-control, the respondents gained the highest mean score (21) and in unrelenting standards, they obtained the lowest mean score (10).

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Inferential Statistics

The First Research Hypothesis: there is a significant relation between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits of the first, middle and last born children.

Table 4: The Results of Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the Relation between Early Schemas and Five-Factor Personality Traits among the Subjects

Conscientiousness	Agreeableness	Openness	extraversion	Neuroticism	Variables
-0.451	-0.543	<u>0.007</u>	<u>-0.635</u>	0.810	emotional deprivation
-0.853	-0.791	<u>0.015</u>	<u>0.690</u>	0.687	abandonment/instability
-0.804	-0.451	<u>0.067</u>	<u>0.084</u>	0.531	mistrust/abuse
-0.650	-0.394	<u>-0.005</u>	<u>-0.875</u>	0.753	social isolation/alienability
-0.796	-0.567	<u>0.097</u>	<u>-0.741</u>	0.754	defectiveness/shame
-0.604	-0.871	<u>0.008</u>	<u>0.098</u>	0.512	Failure
-0.597	-0.659	<u>0.075</u>	<u>-0.824</u>	0.698	dependence/incompetence
-0.780	-0.741	<u>0.081</u>	<u>0.651</u>	0.812	vulnerability to harm
0.558	0.743	<u>0.098</u>	<u>0.374</u>	0.017	undeveloped self/enmeshment
0.763	-0.565	<u>0.066</u>	<u>0.549</u>	0.672	entitlement/grandiosity
0.665	-0.627	<u>0.017</u>	<u>0.368</u>	0.873	insufficient self-control/self-discipline
0.602	-0.741	<u>0.067</u>	<u>0.785</u>	0.715	Subjugation
0.738	-0.416	<u>0.037</u>	<u>0.542</u>	0.664	self-sacrifice
-0.881	0.877	0.012	-0.853	0.714	emotional inhibition
0.654	-0.549	0.004	0.415	0.637	unrelenting standards/hypocriticalness

According to Table 4, there is a significant positive relation between schemas (except than enmeshment/undeveloped self and neuroticism. In other words, individuals with neuroticism have obtained high score in all schemas except than enmeshment/undeveloped self. Further, the intensity of the correlation between emotional deprivation, vulnerability to harm and self-control/insufficient self-discipline and neuroticism is higher compared to other schemas. There is also a significant negative relation between motional deprivation, social isolation/alienation, defectiveness/shame, dependence/incompetence, and emotional inhibition and extroversion.

In other words, the increase of extroversion trait leads to the decrease of scored obtained in motional deprivation, social isolation/alienation, defectiveness/shame, dependence/incompetence, and emotional inhibition and vice versa. Subjugation and other-directness is the only schema which have a significant positive relation. It has been also found that there is no significant relation or there is a weak relation between none of schemas and openness. Additionally, there is a positive and direct relation between emotional inhibition and entitlement/grandiosity but there is a significant negative relation between other schemas and agreeability. As the research findings revealed, there is a significant positive relation between enmeshment/undeveloped self, entitlement/grandiosity, self-control/self-discipline, self-sacrifice, and unrelenting standards/hypocriticalness and conscientiousness. But, there is a significant negative relation between conscientiousness and emotional deprivation, abandonment/instability, mistrust/abuse, social isolation/alienation, defectiveness/shame, failure, dependence/incompetence, vulnerability to harm, and emotional

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inhibition. The Second Research Hypothesis: there is a significant relation between five-factor personality traits among the first, middle and last born children.

Table 5: The Results of Independent T-Test Compared to 5-Factor Personality Traits with the Birth Order of the Subjects

level of significance of P	statistic	Mean	number	groups	five-factor	personality characteristics
0.072	-0.051	11.05	40	first child		Neuroticism
		12.40	40	middle child		
		11.68	40	last child		
0.004	7.45	17.34	40	first child		Extraversion
		11.35	40	middle child		
		11.09	40	last child		
0.064	-1.02	16.25	40	first child		Openness
		15.83	40	middle child		
		16.47	40	last child		
0.002	5.08	14.87	40	first child		Agreeableness
		16.40	40	middle child		
		18.12	40	last child		
0.094	0.008	15.49	40	first child		Conscientiousness
		15.82	40	middle child		
		16.61	40	last child		

According to Table 5, there is a significant difference between openness and agreeability of the first, middle and last born children ($P < 0.05$). However, comparing neuroticism, openness and conscientiousness revealed that there is no significant difference between these personality traits and birth order ($P > 0.05$).

The Third Research Hypothesis: there is a significant relation between early maladaptive schemas among the first, middle and last born children.

Table 6: The Results of Independent T-Test Compared to Early Maladaptive Schemas with the Birth Order of the Subjects

Birth Order of the Subjects			P	level of significancy	statistic	mean	number	groups	five-factor	personality characteristics
0.001		23.4	16	29	40	first child	middle child	last child	emotional deprivation	
0.038		9.61	21	18	40	first child	middle child	last child	abandonment/instability	
0.86		1.07	16	18	40	first child	middle child	last child	mistrust/abuse	
1.54		-0.62	17	23	40	first child	middle child	last child	social isolation/alienability	

		21	40	last child	
		23	40	first child	
0.028	3.11	18	40	middle child	defectiveness/shame
		19	40	last child	
		17	40	first child	
0.94	1.02	19	40	middle child	failure
		18	40	last child	
		12	40	first child	
1.23	0.037	16	40	middle child	dependence/incompetence
		17	40	last child	
		10	40	first child	
0.006	8.44	18	40	middle child	vulnerability to harm
		8	40	last child	
		15	40	first child	
0.029	39.08	14	40	middle child	undeveloped self/enmeshment
		19	40	last child	
		19	40	first child	
0.041	8.53	13	40	middle child	entitlement/grandiosity
		16	40	last child	
		22	40	first child	
1.85	-0.87		21 40	middle child	insufficient self-control/self-discipline
			23 40	last child	
			18 40	first child	Subjugation
0.002	5.09		14 40	middle child	
			13 40	last child	
			20 40	first child	
0.51	0.48		19 40	middle child	self-sacrifice
			18 40	last child	
			9 40	first child	
0.044	9.10		10 40	middle child	emotional inhibition
			14 40	last child	
	6.29		8 40	first child	
0.026			9 40	middle child	unrelenting standards/hypocriticalness
			13 40	last child	

According to Table 6, there is a significant difference between emotional deprivation, abandonment/instability, defectiveness/shame, vulnerability to harm, undeveloped self/enmeshment, entitlement/grandiosity, subjugation, emotional inhibition, and unrelenting standards/hypocriticalness and the birth order ($P < 0.05$).

Additionally, it was revealed that there is no significant difference between mistrust/abuse, social isolation/alienability, failure, dependence/incompetence, self-control/self-discipline, and self-sacrifice ($P < 0.05$).

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CONCLUSION

As the research findings revealed, there is a relation between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality traits such that neuroticism (as an element of undeveloped self/enmeshment) has a direct relation with other schemas and subjugation is the only schema which has a significant relation with introversion. Further, there is a significant positive relation between agreeability and emotional inhibition and entitlement/grandiosity, and between conscientiousness and the six schemas. These findings are consistent with the findings reported by Montazeri *et al.*, (2012); Morice (2006); Sava (2009); Jens (2010).

Yaung *et al.*, (2007) proposed that children's emotional temper plays a fundamental role in the formation of schemas. In this study and previous studies, the personality dimensions do not totally predict maladaptive schemas. According to Yaung *et al.* (2007), only a vulnerable temper causes the formation of schemas.

The present research also found that there is a significant difference between early maladaptive schemas and five-factor personality trait with the birth order such that some of early maladaptive schemas such as emotional deprivation, abandonment/instability, defectiveness/shame, vulnerability to harm, development self/enmeshment, entitlement/grandiosity, subjugation, emotional inhibition, and unrelenting standards/hypocriticalness are significantly different in the first, middle and last born children. Furthermore, there is a significant difference in the first, middle and last born children regarding introversion and agreeability.

The research findings provide appropriate information for researchers about the relation between schemas and personality factors. Also, since investigating the significant difference of schemas and five-factor personality traits in the first, middle and last born children is a new subject of research, new questions are raised including the effect of birth order on the intensity and weakness of schemas and personality traits and the reason of lack of relation between some of schemas and personality dimensions.

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