



## Testing a Causal Model of Domestic Violence Based on Mind Reading Through the Eyes and Childhood Psychological Maltreatment Mediated by the Quality of the Marital Relationship in Traumatized Women

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### Abstract

The aim of this study was to test a causal model of domestic violence based on mind reading through the eyes and childhood psychological maltreatment mediated by the quality of marital relationship in traumatized women. The statistical population of the study consisted of all married women traumatized by domestic violence in Ardabil in 2021. The number of subjects was 300 who were selected via convenient sampling method and participated in the study online. The research method was descriptive and correlational. To collect data, Haj-Yahia Domestic Violence Against Women Questionnaire (2002), "Reading the Mind in the Eyes" Test of Baron and Cohen (2005), Childhood Psychological Abuse Scale of Coates and Messman-Moore (2014), and the Marital Quality Scale of Basbi et al. (1995) were used. Data analysis was performed using structural equation modeling. The results showed that the variables of mind reading through the eyes, childhood psychological maltreatment had a direct effect on domestic violence in traumatized women; And these variables through the quality of marital relationship had an indirect effect on domestic violence in traumatized women. The domestic violence in traumatized women causal model goodness of fit was also confirmed using various indicators.



## Extended abstract

**Introduction:** Domestic violence against women is a widespread phenomenon and affects the lives of millions of women around the world; which includes physical, sexual, psychological, and financial violence as well as controlling or enforcing acts and behaviors. In this regard, the couple interaction with each other requires understanding that personal cognition and knowledge about their world is different from the mental content of another person. In other words, mind reading has a high efficiency in social situations, and in this regard, its deficiency and disorder leads to severe social dysfunction.

Some research has shown that the direct experience of childhood violence plays a key role in the development of intimate partner violence rather than witnessing it; frequent or occasional rejection, destruction, deprivation of basic physical or emotional needs, and exploitation are also considered to be the most common cases of childhood maltreatment. Also, the quality of marital relationship has been considered by many researchers and includes various dimensions of marital relationships such as compatibility, satisfaction, happiness, cohesion, and commitment. The interpersonal concept of marital quality includes emotional cognition, communication patterns, and violence as interpersonal processes of marital relationship quality. The negative consequences of violence among victims may persist even after the violence; Therefore, the aim of this study was to develop and test a model of domestic violence based on mind reading through the eyes and childhood psychological maltreatment mediated by the quality of marital relationship in traumatized women.

**Method:** The statistical population of the study consisted of all married women traumatized by intimate partner violence living in Ardabil in 2021. In the present study, due to the lack of full access to the traumatized married individuals in Ardabil, 330 subjects were selected via convenient sampling method, after reviewing the collected questionnaires, 30 questionnaires were discarded due to incompleteness, and finally, the data of 300 questionnaires were analyzed. To collect data, Haj-Yahia Domestic Violence Against Women Questionnaire (2002), "Reading the Mind in the Eyes" Test of Baron and Cohen (2005), Childhood Psychological Abuse Scale of Coates and Messman-Moore (AMI-24) (2014), and the Marital Quality Scale of Basbi et al. (RDAS) (1995) were used. Data in the descriptive section were performed using SPSS-25 software. In the inferential statistics section, structural equation analysis was performed using Lisrel-23 software.

**Results:** According to the research findings, the direct effect of mind reading variable on domestic violence was negative and significant, and was positive and significant on the quality of marital relationship; Childhood psychological maltreatment also had a direct positive and significant effect on domestic violence and a direct negative and significant effect on the quality of marital relationship. The direct effect of the marital relationship quality variable on domestic violence was negative and significant. According to amount of indirect t-statistics (T-sobel), mind-reading variables through the eyes and childhood psychological maltreatment, in addition to the direct effect, indirectly and through the quality of the marital relationship also affected domestic violence. According to the obtained rate for VAF statistics, it could be seen that 48% of the effect of mind reading through the eyes on domestic violence and 30% of the effect of childhood psychological



maltreatment on domestic violence can be explained through the quality of marital relationship.

**Conclusions:** The present study was performed to investigate the causal model of domestic violence based on mind reading through the eyes and childhood psychological maltreatment mediated by the quality of marital relationship in traumatized women. The results showed that the indirect effect of mind reading through the eyes on domestic violence was significant through the quality of marital relationship. Individuals with mental retardation experience a variety of factors, including low cognitive development, low visualize and extracorporeal ability, and low language ability, which would increase the risk of domestic violence by affecting the quality of the marital relationship and reducing it. The results also showed that the indirect effect of childhood psychological maltreatment on domestic violence was significant through the quality of the marital relationship. In order to explain these results, it could be said that in some people, due to the experience of childhood trauma, incompatibility schemas were created that affected the way they thought, behaved and felt about their marital relationships, and since these schemas shape human beliefs about human nature and how they communicate, they would be the core of personality problems and failure in marital relationships; which would lead to more violence at the time of disputes and conflicts in the relationship due to underlying cognitive problems.

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