



## Examining the Causal Relationship Model of Neuroticism with Emotional Divorce Based on the Mediation of Emotional Regulation in Women's Cultural Background

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### Abstract

The aim of the present study was to examine the causal relationship model between neuroticism and emotional divorce with the mediation of emotional regulation (reappraisal and emotional suppression) in women's cultural background. The statistical population of the research included all the women who referred to counseling and psychology centers in Amol city in the academic year 1402-1401, of which 308 subjects were selected by convenient sampling method. The research method was correlational. To collect data, the Emotional Divorce Questionnaire of Mohammadi and colleagues (2014); The Big Five Personality Factors of Costa and McCarey (1992) and Emotional Regulation Questionnaire of Gross and John (2003) were implemented. Pearson's correlation coefficient and path analysis by AMOS-24 and SPSS-26 software were used to analyze the data. The results showed that neuroticism had a negative direct effect on reappraisal and a positive direct effect on emotional suppression and emotional divorce ( $P < 0.05$ ). Also, reappraisal had negative effect on emotional divorce and emotional suppression and a positive effect on emotional divorce. The results of path analysis indicated that neuroticism had mediating effect on women's emotional divorce through the mediator variable of reappraisal and emotional suppression. Therefore, neuroticism and emotional regulation were effective on emotional divorce in women.



## Extended abstract

**Introduction:** Family breakdown is an important social and cultural issue, and emotional divorce is the determining factor in this phenomenon. It could lead to boredom, cooling of relationships, feelings of sadness, despair, and separation of couples from each other. Also, its negative effects on the cultural and economic system are undeniable. Research showed that cultural differences between the couples affect marital conflict and have lower marital stability. Specifically, some research revealed that neuroticism reduces marital stability and predicts emotional divorce. In addition, researchers found that emotion regulation plays an important role in interpersonal outcomes, such as couple relationship quality and conflict management. In this regard, neuroticism is a trait that is strongly associated with lower levels of marital relationship quality. Findings indicated that neuroticism reduces marital stability and predicts emotional divorce. In addition, high premarital neuroticism has been shown to strongly predict marital dissatisfaction and divorce over a 45-year period. Emotional divorce usually occurs when a husband and wife withhold their feelings from their spouse because they may not be able to express their feelings satisfactorily, or because they may not be able to understand and manage the intensity or contradiction of their feelings. In addition, researchers found that emotion regulation plays an important role in interpersonal outcomes, such as couple relationship quality and conflict management. Regulation of emotions in each of the couples helps to reduce the arousal of their own and their spouse's individual emotions and to reach a mutual adjustment. Examining the mediator role of emotional regulation according to the personality characteristics of women, including neuroticism, which is an inherent issue, can solve the current problem considering the importance of the family's role in the health of the individual and society as well as in general, the aim of the present study was to examine the causal relationship model between neuroticism and emotional divorce with the mediation of emotional regulation (reappraisal and emotional suppression) in women's cultural background.

**Method:** The statistical population of the research included all the women who referred to counseling and psychology centers in Amol city in the academic year 1402-1401, of which 308 subjects were selected by convenient sampling method. The research method was correlational. To collect data, the Emotional Divorce Questionnaire of Mohammadi and colleagues (2014); The Big Five Personality Factors of Costa and McCarey (1992) and Emotional Regulation Questionnaire of Gross and John (2003) were implemented. Pearson's correlation coefficient and path analysis by AMOS-24 and SPSS-26 software were used to analyze the data.

**Results:** The results showed that neuroticism had a negative direct effect on reappraisal and a positive direct effect on emotional suppression and emotional divorce ( $P < 0.05$ ). Also, reappraisal had negative effect on emotional divorce and emotional suppression and a positive effect on emotional divorce. The results of path analysis indicated that neuroticism had mediating effect on women's emotional divorce through the mediator variable of reappraisal and emotional suppression. Therefore, neuroticism and emotional regulation were effective on emotional divorce in women.

**Conclusions:** The results showed that neuroticism had an inverse relationship with the



use of cognitive and positive reappraisal strategies with emotional suppression, a kind of emotion regulation. In explaining the results, it could be mentioned that individuals with lower levels of neuroticism were more effective in regulating negative emotions due to their tendency to use cognitive reappraisal strategies. As a result, they experienced less negative emotion. Conversely, individuals with high levels of neuroticism showed poor emotional regulation and unfavorable emotional states. Neuroticism encompasses a wide range of negative emotions including fear, sadness, excitement, anger, guilt, and boredom. In general, neuroticism involves more factors than susceptibility to psychological distress, as it could affect a person's adjustment to personal and environmental conditions. In addition, to explain this result, it could be said that individuals who show negative cognitive strategies such as self-blame, rumination, catastrophizing, emotional suppression, and blaming others, are more prone to emotional problems compared to others, and their marital life is more affected. Considering the role of neuroticism and emotional regulation in emotional divorce, addressing these factors in counseling and training women will be effective.

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