

# **Do family support and religiosity moderate the interconnections between maladaptive daydreaming and childhood trauma, emotional distress and social problems?**

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## **Abstract**

While daydreaming is considered a well-known normal and common psychological activity, the phenomenon of "Maladaptive Daydreaming-MD" was only conceptualized during first years of the last decade. Online reports by people who identify themselves as spending many hours a day in daydreaming resulting in dysfunction and distress, have increased rapidly in recent years. The aim of the current research study was to deepen the existing knowledge about this phenomenon and to learn about psychosocial variables that can indicate it.

The current study's hypotheses are based on the assumption that people who suffer from different psychosocial difficulties (e.g., childhood trauma, low self-esteem, high level of social anxiety, absence of social relations, high level of loneliness, or a low satisfaction with life) are more likely to activate their rich imagination and turn into maladaptive daydreamers than other people. It was postulated that family support and religiosity can moderate the links between psychosocial difficulties and maladaptive day dreaming.

A hundred and eighty Arab participants recruited from different Arab countries took part in the current study. The participants completed an online research questionnaire. The research group composed of 81 participants, identified as having frequent MD based on the maladaptive daydreaming scale. The rest of participants were the control group.

The results indicated that MDers reported more childhood trauma, social loneliness, high social anxiety compared to the control group. The results showed also that MDers reported less satisfaction with their social relations, low self-esteem and low levels of life satisfaction compared to the control group. In addition, the results showed that family support moderate the connections between loneliness, social anxiety, social relations, self-esteem, life satisfaction and MD. High levels of religiosity moderated the connection between social relations only and MD.

The findings of the current study may have a significant contribution to the scarce scientific literature on the field of MD research in general, and to this field in the Arab world in particular. In addition, the results may promote the recognition about the suffering of many MD contenders

in the world, and particularly in Arab countries. The study findings may be useful in developing future evidence-based treatment methods. Such methods, may focus on identifying the causes of the problems among patients, finding alternative solutions for distress situations that can lead to the development of MD, and find the optimal ways how to strength family support as a way to reconnect to the real life.