

A new method for assessing families

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In the current issue of *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* a new formulation of a psychological questionnaire for assessing families is presented. The Family Assessment Device (FAD) is a widely used 60-item self-report questionnaire measuring the ability of the family to work together to satisfy the basic needs of its members, according to the McMaster Model of Family Functioning.

It has 6 subscales and a General Functioning scale, which assesses the overall health/pathology of the family.

The Italian version of the FAD was administered to a sample of 456 parents with Italian as their [mother tongue](#) (222 males, 234 females; mean age: 41.72 ± 5.67 years; 93% married; 98.4% employed) contacted via five primary schools placed in three towns in Tuscany (Italy). The results of this exploratory factor analysis are consistent with the literature since no research found a good fit between the McMaster Model and the data collected in cross-cultural studies.

Results on the clinimetric version of the FAD are also consistent with those proposed for the clinimetric version of the neuroticism subscale of the Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness Personality Inventory (NEO-PI). The FAD subscales of well-being and of ill-being of family functioning recall the strategic interference of the agreeableness factor of the 5-factor model of personality, as measured by the NEO-PI. Thus, the FAD items of well-being might be interpreted as family functioning characterized by high agreeableness; likewise, the FAD items of ill-being might correspond to family functioning characterized by low

agreeableness.

Finally, the present results suggest a relationship between the [family functioning](#) and the antagonism factor of the alternative model for personality disorders proposed by the DSM-5, which is a measure of personality trait corresponding to the maladaptive, extreme versions of the agreeableness factor of the 5-factor model. However, the possible relationship between the clinimetric version of the FAD, the 5-factor model of personality, and the DSM-5 dimensional model for [personality disorders](#) still needs to be investigated.

More information: Fiammetta Cosci et al. The Family Assessment Device: A Clinimetric Analysis, *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics* (2016). [DOI: 10.1159/000445438](https://doi.org/10.1159/000445438)

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