

The Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Couples Therapy on Marital Commitment, Love Schemas, and Emotional Schemas in Couples with Extramarital Affairs

Saeed. Isari¹, Masoud. Shahbazi^{2*}, Maryam. Gholamzadeh Jofreh³

¹ PhD Student, Department of Counseling, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

² Department of Counseling, Masjed Soleiman, Branch, Islamic Azad University, Masjed Soleiman, Iran

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Counseling, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: masoudshahbazi66@yahoo.com

Editor

José Aparecido Da Silva^{id}
Full Professor, Department of
Psychology, University of Sao
Paulo, Ribeirao Preto, Sao Paulo,
Brazil
jadsilva@ffclrp.usp.br

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Fahime Bahonar^{id}
Department of counseling, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran.
Email: Fahime.bahonar@edu.ui.ac.ir
Reviewer 2: Mahdi Khanjani^{id}
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Allameh Tabataba'i University,
Tehran, Iran.
Email: khanjani_m@atu.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

"Marriage is considered the foundation of family formation. It provides an appropriate context for obtaining emotional support, cooperation, a specific sexual partner, and economic security."

Clarify the sources of the statistics and claims mentioned here, such as the importance of marriage and its benefits. Adding citations to relevant studies will strengthen the introductory claims.

"Participants responded to the Marital Commitment Questionnaire by Adams and Jones (1997), the Love Schema Questionnaire by Yarahmadi-Vaseli et al. (2020), and the Leahy Emotional Schema Scale (LES) (2002)."

Include reliability and validity statistics for these tools within the context of this study. Mention if these tools were adapted for the cultural context of the participants.

"No specific studies were found regarding the effectiveness of EFCT on marital commitment in couples with extramarital relationships."

A more thorough literature review might reveal related studies or at least theoretical frameworks that could support the findings. Expand the discussion by integrating these sources.

"The average age of the sample was 33 years, with the age range of the sample being between 27 and 39 years."

Provide a more detailed demographic breakdown (e.g., gender, socioeconomic status) and discuss how these factors might influence the results.

"The EFCT process was conducted in three baseline stages across 8 sessions of 90 minutes each with a two-month follow-up."

Clarify the content and objectives of each session. A detailed session outline would help replicate the study and understand the therapeutic process.

"The decrease in the Unserious Love Schema in the second couple in the Emotion-Focused Couples Therapy group was significant and statistically confirmed."

Discuss potential reasons why EFCT was not effective for all couples. Including qualitative data or case studies could provide insights into individual differences.

"EFCT can be utilized as a sustainable intervention to enhance marital commitment, love schemas, and emotional schemas in healthcare and therapeutic centers for couples with extramarital affairs."

Expand on how EFCT can be integrated into existing therapeutic practices and any necessary training for therapists. Discuss any potential limitations or challenges in implementation.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

"One of the primary reasons for the breakdown of marriage is marital infidelity which manifests as extramarital affairs."

Provide more recent data or references to support this claim. It's essential to ensure that the references are up-to-date and relevant to modern societal trends.

"A total of 4 couples (8 individuals) were selected through purposeful sampling."

Justify the sample size and explain why purposeful sampling was chosen over other sampling methods. This will help readers understand the rationale behind the study design.

"The increase in the Secure Love Schema in all four couples in the Emotion-Focused Couples Therapy group was significant and statistically confirmed."

Include specific p-values and effect sizes to provide a clearer understanding of the statistical significance and practical importance of the findings.

"Tables 1-8 present the results of various schemas and their improvements."

Ensure all tables are clearly labeled and described in the text. Each table should have a descriptive title, and all abbreviations or statistical terms should be clearly explained in footnotes.

"EFCT led to an increase in marital commitment in couples with extramarital affairs ($P < 0.05$) and the effects persisted until the follow-up stage."

Strengthen the conclusion by summarizing key findings and their implications for practice and future research. Discuss any limitations that were not previously mentioned.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.