

Effectiveness of Bowen Intergenerational Family Therapy on Marital Conflicts and Interpersonal Forgiveness


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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

"The family is considered the most fundamental institution and structure throughout human history and civilization and is deemed the most important pillar of society."

This statement is quite broad and could be more precise. Consider providing specific references or studies that emphasize the family as a fundamental institution, to establish a stronger empirical foundation. For example, you could cite anthropological or sociological studies that explore the evolutionary or societal role of the family.

"From our religious and cultural perspective, the family holds special importance, having formed in response to the innate needs of humans."

While this provides an interesting perspective, it may be beneficial to clarify which religious and cultural frameworks you're referring to, as these can vary widely. Additionally, a more scientific exploration of "innate needs" (e.g., through attachment theory or evolutionary psychology) could make this statement more academically rigorous.

"Therefore, the foundation of the family is formed based on the marital bond between husband and wife, aiming to experience a peaceful and prosperous life together."

This assertion requires further clarification. You may want to incorporate a more nuanced discussion of how marital bonds contribute to family structure, referencing sociological or psychological models of family dynamics.

"Evidence suggests that marital conflict leads to the emergence of negative emotions and responses. Psychologically, many individuals experience conflict in marital relationships as highly stressful."

You could strengthen this argument by citing specific studies or meta-analyses on the psychological impacts of marital conflict, such as research on stress, coping mechanisms, or affective responses in relationships.

"Forgiveness, according to Meiren (1990), is a means by which we can save ourselves without compromising our feelings."

This definition of forgiveness seems somewhat vague. It would be helpful to elaborate on what "saving ourselves" means in this context. Consider rephrasing this concept to be more specific or to reference psychological models of forgiveness (e.g., Enright's model of forgiveness) for clarity.

"Marital conflict is a contributing factor to various psychiatric disorders, including depression (Wang et al., 2019), anxiety disorders (Dos, 2020), internalizing disorders (Brooks & Lawrence, 2019), and psychoses (Bain, 2017)."

This is an important point, but the relationship between marital conflict and these disorders needs to be discussed more deeply. Specifically, consider discussing the mechanisms through which marital conflict contributes to psychological distress (e.g., through attachment, communication patterns, or stress response systems).

"Forgiveness is one coping method for perceived wrongs, enabling individuals to change their negative responses and exhibit a positive response toward forgiving the wrongdoing (Yar Mohammadi, 2021)."

This sentence could be made clearer by explaining how forgiveness specifically functions as a coping mechanism. For instance, do individuals engage in cognitive reframing, emotional regulation, or perspective-taking as part of the forgiveness process?

"Individuals with higher levels of forgiveness also display more positive behaviors in their relationships."

It would be helpful to clarify what "positive behaviors" refer to in this context (e.g., increased communication, less hostility). Additionally, it would strengthen this claim to reference studies that operationalize "positive behaviors" in marital relationships.

"Therefore, the main goal of Bowen's therapy is to reduce chronic anxiety by increasing awareness of the family emotional system, enhancing the level of differentiation, and focusing on self-change rather than trying to change others (Gharabaghi, 2015)."

This is a key point, but it would be helpful to briefly explain how Bowen's differentiation process functions in practice. For instance, what are some practical strategies or techniques used to enhance differentiation within the context of marital therapy?

"The exclusion criteria were: 1- having psychological disorders based on clinical interviews and scores on the revised Symptom Checklist..."

You could elaborate on why excluding individuals with psychological disorders was important for the study's objectives. Would individuals with psychological disorders still benefit from Bowenian therapy, or would their participation introduce confounding variables?

"The research findings showed that Bowen intergenerational therapy impacts marital conflicts and interpersonal forgiveness."

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

"Despite the growing attention to marital conflicts and interpersonal forgiveness among couples, there is still a significant gap in information about interventions that can influence these components and their processes and outcomes (Hinman, 2020)."

This is a crucial point; however, it would be helpful to specify the exact gap you're referring to. Is the gap in terms of theoretical understanding, practical interventions, or empirical evidence? Providing further context here would help define the problem more clearly.

"Bowen's intergenerational approach...scientifically organizing human emotional functioning (Corey, 2017)."

This statement could benefit from more detail about Bowen's theory and its empirical foundations. You could provide a clearer explanation of Bowen's key concepts and how they apply to marital therapy, offering a brief overview for readers unfamiliar with Bowenian theory.

"Bowen's therapy, based on Bowen's systemic theory, emphasizes the role of differentiation and chronic anxiety in the formation of chronic physical illnesses."

While this is an interesting point, the connection between chronic anxiety, physical illness, and marital conflict needs further exploration. Consider integrating studies or theories that discuss how anxiety regulation within family systems can influence both psychological and physical health outcomes.

This is an important finding. However, a more detailed explanation of the specific outcomes related to marital conflict and forgiveness would add depth to this claim. For example, how did the therapy specifically influence conflict resolution strategies or forgiveness in the participants?

"The present study's results align with previous research indicating that marital conflict is a significant factor in various psychological disorders, including depression (Wang et al., 2019) and anxiety disorders (Dos, 2020)."

While the reference to prior studies is valuable, it would strengthen the discussion to include a more detailed analysis of how marital conflict specifically contributes to these psychological disorders. Consider exploring any theoretical models or mechanisms through which conflict leads to these outcomes.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.