Post-Traumatic Growth and Couple Resilience: Exploring the Mediating Role of Relational Meaning Making

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the first paragraph of the Introduction ("Experiencing profound loss or trauma often destabilizes individuals and couples…"), clarify how post-traumatic growth (PTG) differs from resilience. Readers might confuse these constructs; a succinct contrast with citations would strengthen conceptual clarity.

In "Study Design and Participants," you mention "stratified convenience sampling." Elaborate on stratification criteria (e.g., region, socioeconomic status) to help readers evaluate representativeness.

In the "Measures" section on the Dyadic Meaning-Making Scale (DMMS), clarify how the Brazilian cultural adaptation was conducted (translation process, pilot testing, confirmatory factor analysis) since cultural adaptation impacts validity.

The "Ethical Considerations" section cites Helsinki Declaration compliance but omits details about IRB or ethics committee approval reference number; adding it would improve transparency.

The "Preliminary analyses indicated that the assumptions for Pearson correlation and SEM were met." Provide brief descriptive results for linearity and homoscedasticity (e.g., visual inspection outcomes, residual plots) for reproducibility.

In Table 3 and its description ("Fit indices were within accepted thresholds…"), briefly justify the chosen cutoff values (e.g., why RMSEA < .05 and CFI > .95 were considered excellent fit).

In "Clinical and Theoretical Implications," the suggestion to use "digital memory-sharing platforms" should include brief evidence or a citation (if available) supporting their efficacy.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The paragraph starting "Cultural frameworks strongly shape how couples process trauma and construct meaning…" discusses Brazil broadly but should integrate more recent Brazilian PTG or resilience research to demonstrate contextual relevance.

The last paragraph before "Methods and Materials" states, "empirical studies that integrate these constructs within a single model remain scarce." Provide specific evidence (number or examples of previous integrated models) to strengthen the novelty claim.

In Table 4 discussion, you report β = .66 total effect but do not interpret its practical significance; add language about strength of association (e.g., "large effect size according to Cohen's conventions").

In the Discussion paragraph "The Brazilian context may further explain the strong PTG–resilience connection," elaborate on how specific Brazilian rituals or spiritual practices map onto the measured constructs.

The Discussion states "PTG alone does not automatically translate into relational strength." Consider mentioning possible moderating variables (e.g., relationship satisfaction baseline, gender role expectations) to deepen interpretation.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.
Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.