

Structural Modeling of Marital Discord and Negative Interactions on Defense Mechanisms with the Mediating Role of Marital Quality of Life in Patients with Diabetes

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

However, the article later uses self-report instruments to measure these mechanisms. Please clarify the conceptual limitations of measuring unconscious processes with conscious self-report tools.

In paragraphs 6 and 7, the discussion on marital quality of life repeats several concepts already stated in earlier paragraphs (communication patterns, dyadic coping). Consider condensing to eliminate overlap.

The study mentions that “clinical and biological variables were not fully controlled.” For transparency, please specify which variables were considered (e.g., HbA1C levels, diabetes type, comorbidities) and which were omitted.

In the description of the Iranian Couple Interaction Coding System, you list 22 interaction codes but do not specify how many coders were used, whether they were blinded, and how disagreements were resolved. This should be explicitly stated.

In Data Analysis, you mention using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, but the K–S results (statistic and p-value) are not reported. Please include these values to establish distribution assumptions.

Table 1 reports a minimum marital discord score of 41, but according to the Locke–Wallace test scoring interpretation, values under 100 indicate strain. Please clarify if the scale was modified or if this reflects raw rather than standardized scores.

In paragraph 4, phrases like “marital quality... protects individuals” imply causality. Given the cross-sectional design, please revise to reflect correlational—not causal—relationships.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. *Reviewer 2*

Reviewer:

At the end of the Introduction, just before the aim, the gap in literature is implied but not explicitly articulated. Please add one sentence clearly specifying what previous studies did NOT examine that your study addresses.

Given the heterogeneity of diabetic patients, please justify why convenience sampling was considered appropriate and discuss potential biases.

Still in the same paragraph, you state that data were collected “from April to June 2025.” Please clarify whether any seasonal or contextual factors during this period may have influenced participation or stress levels.

In the Measures section, psychometric properties are provided, but cultural adaptation procedures (translation, expert validation, pilot testing) are not discussed. Please specify whether the Iranian versions of the questionnaires were validated for this specific sample.

In Table 3, you provide β coefficients, SE, t, and p-values. Please also include effect sizes (e.g., R^2 increments) to help readers interpret practical significance.

In paragraph discussing Table 2, you state that the model shows “acceptable and desirable fit,” but there is no comparison to threshold values. Please provide conventional cutoffs (e.g., RMSEA < 0.06) to justify this claim.

This is accurate, but later statements overgeneralize to all chronically ill populations. Please add conditional language recognizing this study’s diabetic-specific sample.

In paragraph 3, you attribute reduced quality of life to marital discord but do not discuss potential confounding factors (e.g., illness severity, gender differences). Please incorporate at least one alternative explanation for balance.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.