

# Comparison of the Effectiveness of Acceptance and Commitment–Based Couple Therapy and Cognitive–Behavioral Couple Therapy on Cognitive Distortions, Emotion Regulation, and Emotional Intimacy in Couples Experiencing Marital Disenchantment

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “Interpersonal cognitive distortions can be conceptualized as an information-processing lens...” is theoretically strong; however, it would be helpful to explicitly articulate how this lens operates dyadically, rather than individually, given that the unit of intervention and analysis is the couple.

When discussing emotion regulation strategies, particularly cognitive reappraisal and suppression, the manuscript would benefit from briefly clarifying whether emotion regulation is conceptualized as an individual or dyadic process in this study, as later interpretations imply both.

The reported Cronbach’s alpha of .85 in the present study exceeds original values. Please clarify whether item adaptation, cultural modification, or translation procedures may account for this improvement.

In the paragraph beginning “Acceptance and commitment–based couple therapy was delivered...”, the protocol is described comprehensively. However, the manuscript would benefit from explicitly identifying which ACT core processes were most emphasized (e.g., defusion vs. values) to enhance replicability.

The CBCT protocol description is thorough, but the manuscript does not indicate whether treatment fidelity was assessed (e.g., supervision, checklists). Please clarify how protocol adherence was ensured.

The sentence “Data analysis was conducted using repeated-measures analysis of variance...” is minimal. Please specify assumption testing procedures, handling of missing data, and whether effect sizes were interpreted using established benchmarks.

While age and marriage duration are compared across groups, the manuscript does not report baseline equivalence on primary outcome variables, which is essential given the quasi-experimental nature of the study.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph describing CBCT, the authors cite contemporary developments but do not clearly state which specific CBCT mechanisms (e.g., attribution retraining, behavioral exchange) are hypothesized to influence emotional intimacy, which weakens the rationale for the comparative design.

The contrast between ACT and CBCT is well articulated; however, the sentence “Recent quantitative syntheses suggest that ACT and CBT differ in effect patterns...” would be strengthened by explicitly stating which outcomes are expected to differ most (cognition, emotion, or intimacy) and why.

The aim is clearly stated; however, it would improve methodological precision to specify whether the study is exploratory or hypothesis-testing, and whether differential effectiveness was hypothesized a priori.

The phrase “quasi-experimental design” is used, yet random assignment to groups is reported. Please clarify whether the design is quasi-experimental due to sampling method, lack of blinding, or absence of random population selection, as this affects internal validity claims.

The inclusion criterion “diagnosis of marital disenchantment by the therapist” requires clarification. Please specify diagnostic procedure, inter-rater reliability, or whether a standardized cut-off score alone determined eligibility.

Although reliability indices are reported thoroughly, the manuscript would benefit from briefly stating why this instrument was preferred over alternative measures of marital distress or burnout.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.