

## The Mediating Role of Relational Ethics in the Relationship Between Emotional Maturity and Marital Burnout with Divorce Tendency in Young Couples

Seyed Salar. Atashpour<sup>1</sup>, Nadereh. Saadati<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Master of Family Counseling, Kho.C., Islamic Azad University, Khomeinishahr/Isfahan, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Is.C., Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

\* Corresponding author email address: dr.nsaadati@gmail.com

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Sefa Bulut <sup>id</sup> Associate Profesor, Head of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Department, Ibn Haldun University, Turkey sefa.bulut@ihu.edu.tr	<b>Reviewer 1:</b> Taher Tizdast <sup>id</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran. Email: taher.tizdast@toniau.ac.ir <b>Reviewer 2:</b> Meysam Sadeghi <sup>id</sup> Assistant Professor of Department of Cognitive Psychology, Higher Education Institute of Cognitive Sciences, Tehran, Iran. Email: m.sadeghi@icss.ac.ir

### 1. Round 1

#### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

However, no details are provided regarding cluster formation (e.g., districts, counseling centers, neighborhoods, institutions), number of clusters selected, or selection procedure within clusters. Please provide a transparent description of how clusters were defined and selected to ensure methodological rigor and replicability.

This strong correlation suggests possible conceptual redundancy. Please discuss discriminant validity (e.g., Fornell-Larcker criterion or HTMT ratio). Without this, model interpretation may be compromised.

Given the strong bivariate correlation ( $r = 0.705$ ), the non-significant structural path requires deeper explanation. Consider possible suppression effects or multicollinearity. Please report VIF or tolerance statistics.

In the Ethical Considerations section, you state adherence to the Helsinki Declaration but do not report ethics committee approval number. Please specify the approving institutional review board (IRB) and approval code.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

*1.2. Reviewer 2*

Reviewer:

However, several subscales (e.g., emotional instability, regression, social maladjustment, lack of independence) conceptually reflect maladaptive traits. Typically, higher scores on such subscales indicate lower emotional maturity unless reverse scoring was applied. Please clarify scoring procedures and whether subscales were reverse-coded before computing total scores.

An alpha of .42 is below acceptable psychometric standards. Please justify the continued use of this subscale, report reliability for your current sample, and consider whether removing this subscale improves overall model validity.

While you cite previously reported Cronbach's alpha values, you do not report internal consistency coefficients for this study's sample. For transparency and psychometric integrity, please report Cronbach's alpha (or composite reliability) for each scale and subscale in your sample.

With  $N=298$ , the sample is moderate—not particularly large. Please justify this statement more carefully and consider reporting additional indices such as SRMR or confidence intervals for RMSEA to strengthen model evaluation.

Given the number of constructs and paths,  $df = 22$  appears unusually low. Please clarify whether latent variables were modeled using parcels, total scores, or observed variables. A path diagram with standardized loadings should be included.

In Table 4, indirect effects are reported as significant. However, there is no mention of bootstrapping procedures or bias-corrected confidence intervals. Please specify whether mediation significance was tested using bootstrapping (recommended in SEM) and report 95% confidence intervals.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

**2. Revised**

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.