

The Effectiveness of Systemic-Behavioral Couples Therapy (SBCT) in Enhancing Relationship Outcomes Among Spouses of Individuals with Parkinson's Disease

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning “Effective communication within marital life is closely linked to marital satisfaction”, multiple definitions of marital satisfaction are presented sequentially. The paragraph should synthesize these definitions into a unified operational perspective that directly connects to the study variables rather than listing conceptual viewpoints.

The sentence “Consequently, psychological interventions are essential, addressing not only patients’ needs but also those of their spouses and families” would benefit from stronger empirical justification. The authors should explicitly connect intervention necessity to documented gaps in PD-specific couple therapy literature rather than general psychotherapy evidence.

In the Methods section, the description “purposive sampling and randomly assigned” requires clarification. The authors should explicitly distinguish between sampling strategy (non-probability recruitment) and allocation procedure (random assignment) to avoid methodological ambiguity.

The inclusion criterion “diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease for at least five years” is theoretically meaningful but unexplained. The authors should justify why five years was selected, as disease duration could moderate relational stress and treatment responsiveness.

Within the measurement subsection describing Hudson’s Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire, there is repetition and grammatical inconsistency (“was This questionnaire was designed...”). This section requires linguistic revision and condensation, and psychometric reporting should follow a standardized structure (description, scoring, validity, reliability).

In the Sexual Intimacy Questionnaire description, the use of Persian calendar years (e.g., 1389, 1392) conflicts with international reporting conventions. The authors should convert all dates to Gregorian years to ensure international readability and indexing compliance.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the third introduction paragraph discussing sexual intimacy, the authors appropriately review chronic illness effects; however, the transition from general chronic illness to Parkinson’s disease lacks analytical precision. A clearer justification explaining why PD uniquely influences intimacy (motor symptoms, dopaminergic medication effects, role reversal) would strengthen the argument.

The paragraph defining family emotional climate introduces the construct well, yet measurement alignment is unclear. Because the Hillburn (1964) instrument primarily assesses parent–child interaction, the authors should justify its suitability for evaluating marital-family emotional dynamics in adult couples caring for PD patients.

In the paragraph introducing SBCT, the sentence “SBCT is a hybrid model that integrates Stewart’s behavioral couple therapy with Minuchin’s structural family therapy” is theoretically important but underdeveloped. The authors should elaborate on the mechanisms of change specific to SBCT that differentiate it from CBT, EFT, or Gottman approaches.

The final paragraph of the Introduction appropriately states the research objective; however, the literature gap claim—“existing research... remains limited”—requires more explicit evidence (e.g., number of prior PD couple-therapy studies or systematic review findings). Providing a clearer research gap strengthens justification for the study.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.