

## Development of a Neuropsychological Questionnaire for Marital Conflicts and Examination of Its Psychometric Properties in Iran



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### 1. Round 1

#### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction, paragraph 3, the sentence “Disruptions or inefficiencies in these systems can lead to maladaptive interpersonal behaviors” would benefit from a clearer causal or correlational framing; currently, it implies causality without empirical evidence from your study, so it should be rephrased to reflect association unless longitudinal or experimental evidence is provided.

In the Introduction, paragraph 5, the discussion of neural synchronization (“couples with higher marital satisfaction exhibit greater neural synchrony”) is theoretically relevant but insufficiently integrated into the study rationale; you should explicitly explain how this construct informed item generation or factor structure, otherwise it appears as an isolated theoretical insertion.

In the final paragraph of the Introduction, the sentence “within an ایرانی cultural context” contains a language inconsistency and should be fully translated into English; beyond that, the cultural specificity claim requires elaboration—what aspects of Iranian marital dynamics necessitate a distinct neuropsychological instrument?

In the Methods (Study Design and Participants), first paragraph, the phrase “81 married individuals experiencing severe marital conflict” contradicts earlier references to “couples”; you must clarify whether the unit of analysis is individuals or dyads, as this has major implications for statistical independence and validity of analyses.

In the network analysis paragraph, the report of “183 nonzero edges out of 351 possible connections” is informative, but the methodology for constructing the network (e.g., correlation threshold, regularization method) is not described; without this, the interpretability and reproducibility of the network analysis are limited.

In Table 3 (EFA results), the use of principal components analysis (PCA) rather than common factor analysis is not justified; given that the goal is latent construct identification, you should justify PCA or consider reanalyzing using principal axis factoring or maximum likelihood extraction.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the Methods (Study Design and Participants), second paragraph, the sampling strategy is described as both “purposive and convenience sampling,” which is methodologically ambiguous; you should clearly distinguish the criteria-based purposive component from the accessibility-based convenience component and justify their combined use.

In the Measures section, the description of the researcher-developed questionnaire lacks sufficient detail on item generation procedures; although thematic analysis is mentioned later, you should explicitly report the number of initial items, expert panel composition, and content validity indices (e.g., CVR, CVI) in this section for methodological transparency.

In the Data Analysis section, the statement “Data analysis was conducted in a systematic and multi-stage manner” is too generic for a scientific manuscript; replace this with a more precise procedural description (e.g., sequence of EFA → CFA → reliability → validity testing) to improve methodological clarity.

In the Findings (qualitative development paragraph), the claim “systematic and evidence-based process grounded in thematic network analysis” is not accompanied by methodological specifics (e.g., coding procedure, inter-rater reliability, number of coders); this omission weakens the credibility of the qualitative phase and should be addressed.

In Table 1 and its accompanying paragraph, the transition from 100 initial items to 91 retained items is reported, but the criteria for item reduction are not quantified (e.g., thresholds for CVR or factor loadings); providing explicit decision rules would strengthen methodological rigor.

In the Findings (descriptive results paragraph), the statement “women constituted about four-fifths of the participants” highlights a substantial gender imbalance; however, no discussion is provided regarding its potential biasing effect on factor structure or generalizability, which should be explicitly addressed.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.