

Predicting Marital Burnout from Emotional Intimacy and Perceived Partner Responsiveness: The Mediating Role of Dyadic Coping

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Methods section, the sentence “A total of 384 participants were recruited from several Canadian provinces” requires substantially greater methodological transparency. The manuscript should specify how the target sample size of 384 was determined before recruitment. A formal a priori power analysis or SEM sample-size justification should be reported, including assumed effect size, alpha level, desired statistical power, number of latent/observed parameters, and software or analytical approach used. Simply stating that the sample was “considered adequate” is insufficient for a mediation model estimated through structural equation modeling.

In the Study Design and Participants paragraph, the manuscript reports that participants were recruited “using a combination of convenience and online purposive sampling through community organizations, family and relationship support networks, social media advertisements, and online research recruitment platforms.” This description is too broad for reproducibility. The authors should identify the recruitment period, specific types of recruitment platforms used, whether paid advertisements were employed, how eligibility was verified, how duplicate responses were detected, how many individuals initially accessed the

survey, how many were excluded, and the final completion rate. A participant-flow description would materially strengthen the reporting quality.

In Table 1, the manuscript reports both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, with values ranging from .91 to .95. Composite reliability should not be reported without specifying the measurement model and formula used to compute it. The authors should explain whether CR was calculated from standardized CFA loadings and error variances. They should also consider reporting McDonald's omega, particularly because alpha assumes essentially tau-equivalent items and may not be the most informative reliability estimator for multidimensional or congeneric measures.

The paragraph following Table 1 interprets the means as indicating "moderate to relatively high levels" of emotional intimacy and "comparatively high" perceived partner responsiveness. These qualitative interpretations require either validated cutoffs, normative data, or an explicit mathematical basis. Because no clinical or normative thresholds are provided, the authors should avoid labeling scores as low, moderate, or high and instead report them descriptively relative to the possible score ranges. Otherwise, the interpretation may imply normative conclusions unsupported by the instruments.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The eligibility criterion stating that participants had to be "legally married at the time of participation" should be justified, particularly in the Canadian context where common-law partnerships are prevalent and may function similarly to marriage in terms of intimacy, responsiveness, and dyadic coping. The authors should clarify whether common-law couples were deliberately excluded and provide a conceptual reason for restricting the population to legally married individuals. This decision also limits the generalizability of the findings and should be acknowledged explicitly.

The Methods paragraph states, "The study was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical principles for research involving human participants," but no institutional research ethics board information is provided. For a publishable human-participant study, the manuscript should report the name of the approving institutional ethics committee or research ethics board, approval/reference number, date of approval where required, and confirmation that electronic informed consent was obtained before participation. The current generic statement is inadequate for standard journal ethics reporting.

In the Data Collection Tools section, the Couple Burnout Measure is described as containing 21 items and three dimensions, yet the manuscript does not provide sufficient psychometric justification for its use in this Canadian sample. The authors should report the exact scoring method, identify which items are reverse-scored, clarify whether the total or mean score was analyzed, and provide evidence supporting the assumed factor structure. If the study used the global score as a latent or observed outcome, the authors should explain why aggregation across the three burnout dimensions was psychometrically appropriate.

The paragraph describing the Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale states that "The 18-item romantic-partner version was used," but the response anchors are described only as ranging "from low endorsement of the statement to high endorsement." This is not sufficiently precise. The manuscript should report the exact number of response categories and verbatim scale anchors, the possible total or mean score range, treatment of any reverse-scored items, and the exact scoring procedure. Instrument descriptions must be detailed enough to permit replication.

The Dyadic Coping Inventory paragraph states that "Items measuring negative dyadic coping were reverse scored when calculating the global dyadic coping score." The authors should verify this scoring procedure against the official scoring protocol and explicitly identify which items contributed to the total score. More importantly, because dyadic coping is multidimensional, the decision to use only a global score as the mediator should be theoretically defended. It is possible that supportive, common, delegated, and negative dyadic coping have differential associations with burnout; collapsing them into a single total score may obscure meaningful pathways.

The Data Analysis paragraph states that "measurement quality was further evaluated through confirmatory factor analysis," yet the Findings report only model-level fit statistics. The manuscript should provide the actual CFA results for the

measurement model, including standardized factor loadings, standard errors or significance levels, construct reliabilities, AVE values, and correlations among latent constructs. Given that four theoretically related relational variables are modeled, evidence for convergent and discriminant validity is essential before interpreting structural paths.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.