

Exploring the Psychological and Relational Factors Shaping Marital Commitment in Long-Term Relationships

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Monika Szczygieł  Department of Psychology, Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland monika.szczygieł@uj.edu.pl	Reviewer 1: Masoud Asadi  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Counseling, Arak University, Arak, Iran. Email: m-asadi@araku.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Stephen C. L. Lau  Professor (Assistant) at Washington University in St. Louis, United States. Email: lauc@wustl.edu

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The eligibility criterion requiring participants to have been “continuously married to their current spouse for at least seven years” is central to the operational definition of a long-term relationship, yet the manuscript does not sufficiently justify why seven years was selected. The authors should provide a theoretical or empirical rationale for this threshold and distinguish marital duration from total relationship duration. Since participants had been in relationships for an average of 3.74 years before marriage, some individuals had substantially longer relationship histories than their recorded marital duration suggests. Sensitivity analyses based on total relationship duration or alternative marital-duration thresholds would strengthen the manuscript.

Table 1 should be revised because the correlation matrix is structurally inconsistent. The table lists ten variables, including “10. Quality of alternatives,” but the correlation columns are labeled only “1” through “9.” Consequently, the matrix is incomplete in its displayed structure, and correlations involving Variable 10 are presented in a way that may confuse readers. The authors should provide a complete 10 × 10 lower- or upper-triangular correlation matrix, clearly align each correlation with the corresponding variable, and define the scaling of all variables so that means and standard deviations can be interpreted.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The Methods section states that “a purposive sampling strategy supplemented by convenience and snowball recruitment was used,” but the implications of this hybrid nonprobability sampling strategy are not adequately addressed. The authors should explain how each recruitment method was implemented, whether recruitment quotas were used, how snowball referrals were controlled to avoid clustering within social networks, and whether participants recruited through different channels differed systematically. At minimum, recruitment source should be reported and, if available, examined as a potential covariate or source of sampling heterogeneity.

The Data Collection Tools section identifies the “commitment component of the Investment Model Scale” as the principal outcome, but insufficient psychometric information is provided about the exact version administered. The authors should report the number of commitment items, response anchors, scoring range, whether any items were reverse-coded, and whether a validated Slovenian version existed. The same level of specification should be provided for satisfaction, quality of alternatives, and investment components. Readers should not have to infer which version of the Investment Model Scale was used from the general theoretical description.

The measurement of emotional intimacy is insufficiently specified. The manuscript states that “emotional intimacy was assessed with items examining perceived emotional closeness, openness, understanding, affection, and the perceived ability to disclose important personal thoughts and feelings,” but no instrument name, number of items, original source, response scale, or validation evidence is given. This constitutes a major reproducibility problem because emotional intimacy is one of the principal predictors in both regression and SEM. The authors should identify the exact validated instrument or, if a researcher-constructed scale was used, provide the item-development procedure, content-validity process, dimensionality assessment, scoring procedure, and full psychometric results.

A similar problem concerns the Communication Patterns Questionnaire. The manuscript reports that it assessed “mutual constructive communication, demand-withdraw patterns, mutual avoidance, and other conflict-related behaviors,” yet the Findings focus specifically on constructive communication and demand-withdraw communication. The authors should specify which CPQ version was administered, how the two scores used in the analyses were calculated, whether husband-demand/wife-withdraw and wife-demand/husband-withdraw patterns were combined, and whether gender-specific forms were retained. This is especially important because collapsing directional demand-withdraw patterns may obscure theoretically meaningful gender or partner-role differences.

The manuscript states that “where an established Slovenian version of an instrument was available, that version was used” and otherwise a translation–back-translation procedure was applied. This wording is too vague for an international empirical article. The authors should identify, measure by measure, which instruments had pre-existing validated Slovenian translations and which required translation in the present study. For newly translated scales, the qualifications of translators, reconciliation procedure, pilot sample size, cognitive testing procedure, and any modifications following pilot testing should be described. Measurement validity across languages is particularly consequential in SEM because linguistic non-equivalence can distort latent-variable relations.

The Methods section states that “confirmatory factor analysis” was conducted and that “the factorial validity of the measurement model was examined,” but the Findings do not present the measurement model in sufficient detail before the structural model is tested. The authors should report CFA fit indices separately, standardized factor loadings, the range of residual variances, any correlated errors introduced, and whether any items were removed. If items were deleted or residual covariances were added based on modification indices, these decisions should be theoretically justified rather than data-driven. The current presentation moves directly from reliability and AVE statistics in Table 1 to the structural model without demonstrating adequately that the latent measurement structure was acceptable.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.