

# The Effectiveness of Gottman's Systemic Cognitive Couple Therapy on Marital Conflicts, Communication Patterns, and Alexithymia in Couples with Marital Conflict

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

"The effectiveness of Gottman's Systemic Cognitive Couple Therapy on marital conflicts, communication patterns, and alexithymia in couples with marital conflict was examined." - Consider providing specific statistics or results in the abstract to give readers a clear overview of the study's findings.

"Alexithymia refers to difficulty identifying feelings, limited ability to distinguish emotions from bodily sensations, difficulty describing emotions to others, and an externally oriented thinking style (Renzi et al. 2020)." - Consider adding a brief explanation of how alexithymia is measured and its prevalence in the general population for better context.

"In the Persian version, the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the overall alexithymia scale and the subscales Difficulty Identifying Feelings, Difficulty Describing Feelings, and Externally Oriented Thinking were 0.85, 0.82, and 0.15, respectively, indicating good internal consistency." - The Cronbach's alpha of 0.15 for Externally Oriented Thinking is quite low. Address how this might impact the study results and consider discussing potential reasons for this low reliability.

"In the first session, the therapist introduces the framework and goals of Gottman's Systemic Cognitive Couple Therapy to the couples." - Provide more details about the assessment tools used in this session and how the initial assessments were conducted.

"The therapist introduces strategies for softened start-ups, effective repair attempts, and physiological self-soothing." - Describe these strategies in more detail and explain their theoretical basis and expected impact on the couples.

"The majority of respondents were aged between 40 and 50 years, while the least number of respondents were aged between 30 and 35 years." - Provide the actual numbers or percentages to support these statements for clarity.

Ensure that the table includes clear headings and footnotes to explain any abbreviations or specific terms used. This will help in better understanding and interpreting the data.

"Before conducting the repeated measures ANOVA, several assumptions were checked and confirmed to ensure the validity of the analysis." - Include a brief discussion of the consequences if any of these assumptions were violated, and how this would affect the results.

"Gottman's systemic theory, with its broad and very effective application, is a very suitable method that helps individuals better understand themselves and others without using complex terminology (Garanzini et al. 2017)." - Discuss potential limitations of Gottman's systemic theory and how they might be addressed in future research.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

"Previous research has shown that many factors can contribute to these problems (Lee 2023)." - It would be beneficial to elaborate on the specific factors mentioned in previous research to provide a clearer context for the study.

"Communication problems are among the most common issues that couples, especially married women, report." - Clarify the basis for this statement, perhaps by citing specific studies or statistical data that highlight this gender difference.

"The inclusion criteria were complete willingness to participate in the study, at least a middle school education, absence of chronic illness or physical and mental disabilities, and an age range of 30 to 50 years." - Explain the rationale behind these inclusion criteria and how they might affect the generalizability of the study.

"Ethical considerations included voluntary participation, informing participants about the study's details and regulations before starting, respecting participants' attitudes and beliefs, allowing participants to withdraw at any stage, and offering the control group the same intervention as the experimental group after the study if desired." - Mention if ethical approval was obtained from a relevant committee and provide the approval number.

"The reliability coefficients for the Mutual Constructive Communication, Demand/Withdraw, and Mutual Avoidance patterns were 0.78, 0.71, and 0.72, respectively, using Cronbach's alpha." - Discuss the implications of these reliability coefficients for the validity of the study's findings.

"This finding is consistent with the prior results (Ajeli Lahiji & Besharat 2017; Brand 2012; Garanzini et al. 2017; Gottman 2018; Gottman & Notarius 2002; Rajaei et al. 2019)." - Critically evaluate how the findings compare with these prior studies, highlighting any similarities or differences.

"Changing cognitions through their impact on attitudes about the marital bond and improving the quality of marital relationships can strengthen commitment, which can guarantee marital relationships." - Provide more empirical evidence or theoretical backing to support this statement.

Authors revised and uploaded the document.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.