

# Comparative Analysis of the Role of Premarital Education and Counseling in Appropriate Mate Selection and Sustainable Marriage from the Perspectives of University Students and Family Counselors

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## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

When stating that ineffective mate selection is “among the strongest predictors of later marital dissatisfaction and divorce,” the authors should clarify whether this relationship is conceptualized as direct, mediated, or moderated, and briefly indicate the implied causal pathway.

The paragraph describing the components of premarital counseling would be strengthened by explicitly mapping these components onto the study’s operational variables (educational program, content, delivery, and counseling), ensuring theoretical–measurement coherence.

The discussion of Iranian sociocultural changes is relevant but remains descriptive. The authors should explain how these contextual factors were considered in sampling, instrument design, or interpretation of results.

The discussion would be clearer if it restated the research question at the beginning, explicitly linking the reported findings back to the study aim.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The aim statement is clear but should indicate whether the comparative analysis is exploratory or hypothesis-driven to enhance methodological transparency.

The use of different sampling strategies for students (multi-stage cluster) and counselors (purposive/snowball) introduces potential sampling bias. The authors should discuss how this affects the comparability of groups and external validity.

Beyond gender distribution, no demographic characteristics (age range, marital status, academic level, counseling experience years) are reported. These should be added to allow meaningful interpretation of group perspectives.

The manuscript concludes that premarital counseling is “most influential,” yet mean differences are small. Effect size measures or confidence intervals should be reported to support this interpretation.

Post-hoc pairwise comparisons are not reported following the significant Friedman test. The absence of post-hoc testing should be justified or corrected.

For the variable “Importance of Premarital Education and Counseling,” the table reports  $p = .030$ , yet the text states that no significant differences exist. This is a critical inconsistency that must be corrected.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.