

The Effectiveness of Religious Forgiveness Therapy on Reducing Marital Conflicts and Extramarital Behaviors in Married Women Seeking Divorce

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The article states, "Forgiveness therapy has emerged as an effective approach for resolving issues related to marital adjustment and relationship quality." While this is a strong claim, the article does not clearly highlight the existing research gap. Consider adding a section that explicitly states why previous forgiveness therapy studies were insufficient or lacked religious elements, thus justifying the need for this study.

The article outlines a 10-session religious forgiveness therapy program, but some sessions are not sufficiently detailed. For instance, "Session 6: Religious Values in Family Interactions and Parenting" discusses the importance of religious upbringing, but it lacks information on how this was taught (e.g., through role-playing, scripture reading, or discussion).

The article states that "hypotheses were tested using analysis of covariance (ANCOVA)." However, ANCOVA assumes that the groups have equal variances and normal distributions. Were assumptions such as Levene's Test or the Shapiro-Wilk test met? If so, report them explicitly.

The study reports that forgiveness therapy had a significant effect, but Cohen's d or partial eta squared (η^2) is missing. Given that significance does not imply practical importance, effect sizes should be reported alongside p-values.

The MANOVA table lacks specific comparisons between pretest and posttest scores for both groups. Consider providing mean difference confidence intervals (95% CI) to reinforce statistical conclusions.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The study discusses the significance of forgiveness therapy but does not clearly integrate it with an established psychological framework (e.g., Enright's Process Model of Forgiveness or Worthington's REACH Model). Incorporating such a theoretical background would strengthen the study's foundation.

The sampling method is described as convenience sampling, yet random assignment was also used ("Participants were selected through convenience sampling and were randomly assigned into two groups."). This seems contradictory. Clarify whether the entire process was convenience sampling or if random assignment was conducted after a voluntary sample was obtained.

The study claims the control group received no intervention. However, it is essential to discuss whether this group was given a placebo intervention (e.g., generic counseling) to control for the placebo effect.

The study cites the Marital Conflict Questionnaire (Sanaei et al., 2008), but the reported reliability is Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.53$, which is below the acceptable threshold for psychometric instruments. Explain how this affects the study's validity or justify its continued use.

The study does not control for religiosity levels among participants. Since the intervention is based on religious teachings, it is crucial to indicate whether all participants had a similar religious background to ensure the effects are due to therapy rather than personal belief systems.

The follow-up data show that the intervention effects remained stable over two months, yet the discussion does not speculate on whether the effects might fade over longer periods. Consider discussing how the intervention's long-term effectiveness could be studied.

The discussion states, "These results align with the findings of Nowin et al. (2016), Gharamaleki et al. (2023), Farahbakhsh et al. (2013), and Abbasi (2011)." However, there is no explanation of how these studies are similar or different. A deeper comparison would strengthen the argument.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.