

Modeling the Relationship Between Controlling Behavior and Differentiation With Spousal Violence Through the Mediation of Spiritual Well-being in Couples

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The opening statement "The family is the first institution..." is too generalized. Consider grounding the statement in a theoretical framework (e.g., Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory) or empirical source to strengthen the scientific rationale.

There is a logical inconsistency: the occupational data sum to over 100% (48.34% + 49.58% + 15.42% + 35%). Please review these numbers for overlap or error.

The interpretation "the highest mean was for economic control (M = 12.61)" is correct, but the practical implications of this distribution are not discussed. What does this dominance suggest about the contextual nature of control in your population?

The claim "Although no prior studies were found..." could benefit from a more nuanced phrase such as "To the best of our knowledge..." to reflect the limits of literature coverage and avoid absolutism.

You reference Bowen's theory but do not cite his original work (e.g., Bowen, 1978) or a seminal source. Including a foundational citation would strengthen the theoretical integration.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the sentence "Controlling behavior refers to an excessive tendency to dominate others....," it would be beneficial to further delineate how this operational definition differs from coercive control or narcissistic traits, as these constructs are often conflated.

The study by Gou et al. (2019) is cited, but the phrase "controlling behavior by men predicted marital dissatisfaction in women" should be statistically clarified (e.g., β values, p-values) for better comprehension of the cited result.

The link between spirituality and family values is discussed, yet the theoretical mechanisms (e.g., social capital theory, attachment theory) through which spirituality influences relationship quality are not explored. Please expand this section.

You state, "no study has yet investigated the simultaneous relationships among all components in the form of a causal model." This claim needs to be strengthened with a clearer literature gap analysis or systematic review justification.

You mention that participants were selected via "simple random and purposive sampling," which is contradictory. Please clarify whether the sampling strategy was probabilistic, non-probabilistic, or mixed, and justify it.

While reliability coefficients are provided, the paragraph lacks information on construct validity (e.g., CFA results). Please include whether the factor structure was replicated in your sample.

You confirm multivariate normality using skewness/kurtosis within -2 to $+2$. However, for SEM, multivariate normality requires more rigorous checks (e.g., Mardia's coefficient). Please clarify or adjust the justification.

The reported CI values (Upper CI = 0.129, Lower CI = 0.103) appear inconsistent for an indirect effect (-0.508). Please recheck the bootstrap CIs and confirm that they are not inverted or misreported.

The six "loving habits" (listening, supporting, etc.) are introduced without a citation. These seem to originate from choice theory or reality therapy—please attribute the source appropriately.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.