

The Effectiveness of Systemic Couple Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Couple Therapy on Sexual Intimacy and Sexual Function in Distressed Couples

Nazanin. Haghighat Bayan¹, Maryam. Ghorbani Gherkhloo², Elahe. Sadeghi³, Mehdi. Soltani^{4*}, Reza. Reyhani⁵,
Kamran. Pourmohammad Ghouchani⁶, Roksana. Nakhaei Moghadam⁷

¹ Department of Clinical Psychology, Ro.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

² Department of Clinical Psychology, SR.C., Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Ayandegan Institute of Higher Education, Tonekabon, Iran




⁴ M.A. in Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Science, University of Tehran, Iran

⁵ PhD, Counseling Department, Shahid Chamran University, Ahvaz, Iran

⁶ PhD, Department of Psychology, Kish International Branch, Islamic Azad University, Kish Island, Iran

⁷ Department of Clinical Psychology, Zah.C., Islamic Azad University, Zahedan, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: soltani646464@gmail.com

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Mohsen Golparvar ¹  Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran mgolparvar@khuif.ac.ir	Reviewer 1: Hajar Torkan ¹  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch (Khorasgan), Isfahan, Iran. h.torkan@khuif.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Farhad Namjoo ²  Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: farhadnamjoo@kmanresce.ca

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The manuscript mentions “Cinek, 2025” to assert the link between marital satisfaction and sexual function. This reference should be expanded upon to clarify the mechanisms or pathways by which this relationship manifests.

The inclusion criterion "Not taking psychiatric medications affecting sexual performance..." is appropriate, but it is unclear how this was verified. Was it based on self-report, medical records, or physician confirmation?

The psychometric properties of the Botlani et al. (2010) scale are briefly described. Consider specifying its construct validity or the factor structure to better justify its use.

The examples of distorted beliefs in CBCT (e.g., “I shouldn’t enjoy this”) are useful but would benefit from a citation linking these examples to empirical studies or validated belief inventories.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The definition of sexual intimacy is presented with multiple dimensions. Consider condensing this explanation for clarity, or citing more recent integrative frameworks that operationalize these dimensions concisely.

The transition from general marital issues to systemic-behavioral and cognitive-behavioral therapies lacks cohesion. Consider adding a bridging sentence to guide the reader logically toward the therapeutic approaches studied.

Gender distribution is unbalanced (e.g., 93.3% male in control group). This skew should be acknowledged as a limitation, especially considering the use of FSFI, which assesses female sexual function.

The paper notes that systemic therapy helps partners "establish appropriate relational boundaries." While theoretically sound, empirical support from this study for this process is not presented. Consider qualifying this with "based on the intervention design" unless observational data supports it.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.