






The Effect of Emotional Blackmail on the Quality of Marital Relationships: The Mediating Role of Marital Burnout in Women Seeking Divorce

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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Trevor Archer  Professor Department of Psychology University of Gothenburg Sweden trevorcsarcher49@gmail.com	Reviewer 1: Mohsen Kachooei  Assistant Professor of Health Psychology, Department of Psychology, Humanities Faculty, University of Science and Culture, Tehran, Iran. kachooei.m@usc.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Faranak Saboonchi  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Payam Noor University, Tehran, Iran. Email: faranaksaboonchi@pnu.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the sentence “This form of abuse, although often difficult to detect externally...”, consider citing more recent empirical studies on detection mechanisms of emotional abuse in intimate relationships.

The article mentions “fear, guilt, or obligation” as components of emotional blackmail. It would be clearer to define these operationally in this paragraph rather than waiting until the “Measures” section.

The phrase “gendered experiences of emotional abuse” is important; however, the introduction would benefit from integrating intersectional perspectives (e.g., socio-economic status, education) at this stage, not only in the discussion.

In “Study Design and Participants,” the method of purposive sampling is appropriate, but the authors should clarify inclusion and exclusion criteria and whether psychological screening was conducted.

For the Pines’ Marital Burnout Questionnaire, since it was used in Iran, clarification on translation and cultural adaptation of the tool should be provided.

The authors mention that “interventions must be both culturally sensitive and empowering...”. This is essential, but examples of such interventions from empirical studies (e.g., community-based counseling) would enhance this recommendation.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The statement “...where autonomy is suppressed and emotional wellbeing eroded” is theoretically strong, but it would benefit from referencing specific studies on psychological autonomy in abusive marriages.

The paragraph interpreting Table 1 describes mean scores well but lacks interpretive commentary—for example, why “guilt” might have the lowest mean or the implications of low cohesion scores.

The correlation matrix (Table 2) presents strong relationships, but the text does not clearly interpret the strength (e.g., moderate vs. strong) of the correlations. This needs elaboration.

The paragraph summarizing fit indices is excellent but would benefit from brief interpretations of each index (e.g., what does a GFI > 0.90 indicate in practical terms?).

The statement “These findings emphasize the multifaceted effects of emotional abuse...” would be strengthened by discussing potential bidirectional effects, i.e., whether burnout might also increase vulnerability to blackmail.

The authors state that “burnout is a crucial explanatory factor...” but do not discuss other possible mediators (e.g., depression, learned helplessness). A paragraph discussing alternative paths would deepen the analysis.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.