




Explaining the Causal Relationship Between Existential Anxiety and Post-Traumatic Growth in Women and Men Affected by Infidelity: Assessing the Mediating Role of Resilience

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The paragraph stating “In many societies undergoing rapid social and cultural change, including Iran...” broadly references cultural shifts but does not present empirical data or citations about rising rates of infidelity in Iran. Inclusion of national epidemiological evidence, if available, would improve the cultural justification.

The paragraph referencing Kline (1998) claims “if 20 participants were considered for each component...”, but SEM sample adequacy is determined by number of parameters, not “components.” This should be corrected because it may mislead readers about sample size justification.

The sentence “The researcher explained the correct method of responding...” lacks detail on whether researchers minimized common-method bias, especially social desirability, which is highly relevant in culturally sensitive topics like infidelity.

The existential anxiety scale shows low internal consistencies for subscales ($\alpha = .41-.51$). The manuscript states these values but does not discuss implications for construct reliability. A justification for using a scale with such low reliability should be added.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sentence “Longitudinal and cross-sectional studies in a variety of trauma-exposed samples...” applies findings from unrelated trauma types (natural disasters, chronic illness) to marital infidelity. That generalization should be justified or limited to avoid overextension of the PTG framework.

In the opening paragraph, “marital infidelity... can lead to extensive psychological consequences”, the authors do not define what constitutes “infidelity” in this study (emotional, sexual, online, etc.). Given the literature’s heterogeneity, an operational definition is required for conceptual clarity.

In “These individuals were required to have reported experiencing infidelity...”, the manuscript does not explain how infidelity was verified (self-report only? clinical documentation?). Please clarify the screening method to improve methodological transparency.

Although the Existential Anxiety Questionnaire was “translated into Persian by Etemad et al. (2016)”, the manuscript does not report whether the Persian version used here was validated in populations similar to infidelity-affected adults. Please clarify or justify this.

The paragraph stating “reliability assessed via Cronbach’s alpha ranged from .76 to .79” only reports overall PTG reliability. Subscale reliability values should also be reported because the structural model treats subscales as indicators.

The manuscript states “200 individuals were selected as the sample”, but the results section begins with “215 participants affected by infidelity...”. This discrepancy requires correction because it raises concerns about inclusion/exclusion criteria and attrition.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.