

The Effect of Attitudes Toward Spouse Selection and Mate Selection Criteria on Marital Stability Among Married Women Referring to Counseling Centers in Tehran

Marzieh. Balali¹, Mahmoud. Goudarzi^{2*}, Farideh. Dokaneifard³

¹ PhD student in Counseling, Department of Counseling, Sa.C, Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

² Associate Professor, Department of Family Counseling, Sa.C., Islamic Azad University, Sanandaj, Iran

³ Associate Professor, Department of Counseling, RO.C. Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: Mahmoud.Goudarzi@iau.ac.ir

Editor

Şennur Tutarel Kışlak
Department of Psychology/Faculty of Language, History and Geography, University of Ankara, Ankara, Turkey
kislak@ankara.edu.tr

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Zahra Yousefi
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.
Email: yousefi1393@khuisf.ac.ir
Reviewer 2: Mehdi Rostami
Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada.
Email: dr.mrostami@kmanresce.ca

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The statement “marital stability is not solely a post-marital phenomenon but is deeply rooted in pre-marital processes” is theoretically sound but overly broad. The paragraph would be strengthened by specifying which pre-marital processes are most relevant to this study and how they map onto your operational variables.

When discussing attitudes toward spouse selection, the sentence “these attitudes are shaped by a complex interplay of cultural norms, religious values, family expectations, and modern individualistic tendencies” accurately describes the Iranian context, but the manuscript does not elaborate on how these cultural elements may specifically bias mate selection attitudes among women. Consider expanding with concrete examples or mechanisms.

The sentence “this finding aligns with evidence indicating that adaptive decision-making processes...contribute to better marital outcomes” is accurate but repetitive of the introduction. Instead of restating prior literature, provide deeper interpretation of why these attitudes operate as they do in your sample.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The claim that “restrictive or idealized beliefs...can generate unrealistic expectations that undermine marital adjustment” would benefit from more explicit explanation of which dimensions of the questionnaires correspond to “restrictive” or “idealized” beliefs. At present, the link between theoretical constructs and measurement instruments is not sufficiently clear.

The sentence “excessively rigid or idealized criteria may paradoxically increase vulnerability to marital instability” would benefit from specifying whether the criteria being referred to are structural (e.g., socioeconomic attributes) or psychological (e.g., perfectionism). This conceptual ambiguity may hinder readers’ interpretation of your findings.

The gender-specific discussion states that women “often experience pressure to sustain marriages despite dissatisfaction.” While likely valid, this paragraph does not clarify how such pressure interacts with mate selection attitudes or stability mechanisms. Adding a theoretical bridge here would improve coherence.

The manuscript mentions “self-efficacy, self-love, willpower beliefs, and emotional regulation” but does not connect these constructs to any variables actually measured in the study. This creates a conceptual gap. Clarify whether these factors are part of your model or merely background literature.

The table includes a variable labeled “Attitude toward love (total)” with extreme minimum and maximum values (45 to 395), which do not align with typical Likert-scale ranges. This anomaly requires explanation, as it raises concerns about scoring errors or data entry issues.

The demographic breakdown is informative, but the manuscript does not analyze whether age or years married correlate with key variables. Including even a brief exploratory analysis (or noting that no such relationships were found) would strengthen the results section.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.