




Structural Model of Marital Conflict Based on Self-Differentiation and Alexithymia with the Mediating Role of Frustration Tolerance in Divorce-Seeking Individuals

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the introduction paragraph beginning with “Marital conflict is one of the most pervasive and complex phenomena...”, the conceptualization of marital conflict is comprehensive, yet the authors do not explicitly operationalize the construct within the context of their measurement tool, which creates a gap between theoretical definition and empirical assessment that should be explicitly bridged.

In the Methods section under “Study Design and Participants,” the sentence “No restrictions were imposed regarding age, gender, or educational level...” contradicts the later stated inclusion criteria (“having at least one child, absence of substance addiction”), and this inconsistency should be resolved for methodological clarity.

In the same section, the reliance on convenience sampling (“a convenience sampling method was employed”) introduces potential sampling bias, yet the manuscript does not sufficiently discuss its implications for external validity, which should be explicitly addressed.

In the description of the Marital Conflict Questionnaire, the authors report high reliability (“Cronbach’s alpha for the total scale was reported as 0.96”), but they do not report reliability indices for the current sample, which is necessary for psychometric transparency.

In the description of the Self-Differentiation Inventory, the reported Cronbach’s alpha values vary considerably across studies (“ranging from 0.53 to 0.72”), yet the authors do not critically evaluate the implications of these relatively low coefficients for measurement reliability.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph discussing self-differentiation (“Self-differentiation refers to an individual’s capacity to maintain emotional autonomy...”), the theoretical grounding in Bowenian family systems theory is appropriate; however, the manuscript lacks a critical discussion of alternative conceptualizations of differentiation or competing models, which limits theoretical depth.

In the alexithymia paragraph (“Another critical construct in understanding marital conflict is alexithymia...”), the authors provide strong literature support, yet the sentence “Individuals with high levels of alexithymia tend to exhibit externally oriented thinking...” would benefit from empirical quantification or meta-analytic evidence to strengthen the claim.

In the paragraph on frustration tolerance (“In addition to self-differentiation and alexithymia...”), the conceptual overlap between frustration tolerance and distress tolerance is not sufficiently disentangled, and the manuscript would benefit from a more precise delineation of these constructs and justification for the chosen terminology.

In the paragraph “The interplay between alexithymia and frustration tolerance is particularly noteworthy...”, the causal language used (e.g., “can lead to maladaptive patterns”) is too strong given the correlational design of the study and should be revised to reflect associative rather than causal inference.

In the final paragraph of the introduction (“Despite the growing body of research...”), the authors correctly identify a research gap; however, the citation of Moayed et al. (2018) appears somewhat outdated relative to the otherwise recent literature, and inclusion of more current studies would enhance the novelty claim.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.