




Prediction of Covert Relational Aggression Based on Early Maladaptive Schemas and Fear of Intimacy in Married Women

Khadijeh. Peyvasteh Hajimahalleh¹, Mansooreh. Fazilati^{1*}



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

* Corresponding author email address: Mansooreh_fazilati@yahoo.com

Editor

Mohsen Joshanloo
Associate Professor, Department of
Psychology, Keimyung University,
1095 Dalgubeol Boulevard, Dalseo-
Gu, Daegu 42601, South Korea
mohsen.joshanloo@unimelb.edu.au

Reviewers

Reviewer 1: Hajar Torkan
Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan
(Khorasgan) Branch, Isfahan, Iran. h.torkan@khuisf.ac.ir
Reviewer 2: Nadereh Saadati
Department of Couple and Family therapy, Alliant International University,
California, United States of America. mdaneshpour@alliant.edu

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

This statement would benefit from a more explicit definition of “marital stability” (e.g., divorce risk, satisfaction, long-term cohesion) to improve conceptual clarity.

The manuscript mixes Iranian and Western findings but does not analyze cultural differences. Please add a sentence critically contrasting why covert aggression may manifest differently across these cultural settings.

The research gap is not clearly articulated. Please specify how your study uniquely extends previous work—e.g., testing the relative weight of schemas vs. intimacy fears, or focusing on Tehran women.

The description “applied research” is vague. Please clarify whether this classification refers to its practical application in clinical settings or its contribution to intervention development.

The analysis section implies use of nonparametric methods due to normality rejection, yet regression (a parametric test) was used. Please justify this decision or explain whether robustness checks were applied.

The cultural discussion is rather brief. Please elaborate on how Iranian gender norms (e.g., indirect expression of anger) may uniquely predispose women to covert aggression.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

Consider integrating more empirical data or prevalence statistics on covert relational aggression in marital contexts to demonstrate the scope of the problem.

The link between schema domains and covert aggression is asserted, but no direct evidence is cited for emotional withdrawal specifically. Please support this with a reference or qualify it as theoretical.

The text suggests fear of intimacy leads to covert aggression, but does not discuss possible bidirectionality (i.e., whether covert aggression may also increase fear of intimacy). This could be acknowledged for balance.

The text states “nonparametric methods such as Spearman’s test were deemed more appropriate” but subsequent analyses rely on multiple regression. This inconsistency must be clarified.

While well-argued, this paragraph would be stronger with more quantitative comparisons (e.g., beta coefficients from related studies) to contextualize the strength of your own findings.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.