

Comparison of the Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Therapy and the Existential–Spiritual Reconstruction Protocol in Enhancing Quality of Life Among Women Attending Healthcare Centers in Bushehr City

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the second paragraph of the Introduction, the statement “Miscarriage is not only a biological event but also a deeply emotional and psychological experience...” would benefit from more recent or meta-analytic references to strengthen the evidential basis and demonstrate engagement with the latest literature.

In the Measures section, while the SF-36 is described adequately, the authors do not report reliability coefficients (e.g., Cronbach’s alpha) for the current sample, which is a critical omission for psychometric validation.

In the Interventions section, the description “Sessions included guided reflection, narrative reconstruction...” for the ESR-A protocol is informative but insufficiently standardized; a session-by-session structure or manualization details should be provided to ensure replicability.

Similarly, in the EFT intervention description, the sentence “Techniques such as experiential exercises, emotion coaching...” lacks procedural clarity; specifying the sequence and therapeutic framework would enhance methodological transparency.

In the Data Analysis section, the sentence “one-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed...” is appropriate; however, the rationale for choosing ANCOVA over repeated-measures ANOVA is not explained, which weakens the analytical justification.

In the Findings section, Table 1 shows large mean differences (e.g., “14.20 to 41.20” in physical functioning), but no discussion is provided regarding potential ceiling effects or scale transformation issues, which may threaten interpretability.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph starting “In recent years, emotion-focused therapy (EFT) has gained prominence...”, the authors cite multiple studies but do not critically evaluate inconsistencies or limitations in prior findings; incorporating a brief critical synthesis would significantly strengthen the theoretical grounding.

In the paragraph discussing spirituality, the sentence “Spirituality provides individuals with a framework for meaning-making...” is conceptually strong but overly general; it would benefit from specifying mechanisms (e.g., cognitive reappraisal, existential coherence) supported by empirical evidence.

The final paragraph of the Introduction, ending with “The aim of the present study is to compare...”, is appropriate; however, the research gap is not explicitly formulated as a testable hypothesis, which limits the theoretical precision of the study design.

In the Methods section under “Study design and Participant,” the sentence “45 individuals were selected using purposive sampling...” raises concerns about selection bias; the authors should justify this sampling method and discuss how it may affect internal validity.

In the same paragraph, the statement “participants were then randomly assigned to three groups...” lacks detail regarding the randomization procedure (e.g., simple randomization, block randomization), which is essential for assessing methodological rigor.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.