

Assessing the Effectiveness of Single-Session Therapy (SST) on Couples' Mental Health: An Explanatory Mixed-Methods Study




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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Manijeh Daneshpour  Department of Couple and Family therapy, Alliant International University, California, United States of America mdaneshpour@alliant.edu	Reviewer 1: Zahra Yousefi  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. Email: yousefi1393@khuif.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 manuscript states, “According to the World Health Organization, mental health is a state of psychological well-being...” (second paragraph). Expanding on how recent findings (e.g., from Toktas, 2024; Wittenborn, 2024) specifically relate to couples' mental health may enhance the contextual background.

The qualitative methods state that “semi-structured interviews were conducted” (Qualitative Phase). Including a sample interview guide or an appendix with the interview protocol would greatly enhance the transparency and replicability of the study.

The Results section notes, “Given the non-significant results at the .05 level, these assumptions were confirmed.” Please provide the specific test statistics (e.g., test values, degrees of freedom) for the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Levene's tests to allow for a thorough evaluation of the data's adherence to ANCOVA assumptions.

The integration of quantitative and qualitative data is one of the study's strengths. However, the discussion would be enhanced by explicitly outlining how the qualitative themes (e.g., "Improved emotional state, interest in life...") complement the quantitative results. Consider adding a joint display or schematic diagram to visualize the integration.

There is an inconsistency regarding the statistical software: the Methods mention "SPSS22" while the quantitative analysis later references "SPSS version 27." Please confirm and consistently report the version used throughout the manuscript.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the introduction, a variety of therapy models (e.g., Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Schema Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral Couple Therapy) are listed. It would be beneficial to more explicitly compare these models with SST, discussing why SST might offer unique advantages in the context of couples' therapy.

While the quantitative design is clearly described as a quasi-experimental pretest-posttest design with a control group, the manuscript would benefit from a clearer rationale for this choice. Please add a brief discussion on why a quasi-experimental design was particularly appropriate for evaluating SST in this context.

In Table 2, effect sizes are presented with η^2 and Cohen's d values (e.g., " $\eta^2 = .34$ " for psychological well-being). It would be helpful to include a brief explanation or a reference standard (small, medium, large) so that readers can better appreciate the clinical significance of these effects.

When reporting qualitative findings—for example, the quote "When my spouse is at home, I try to be happier..."—consider attributing these quotes by using pseudonyms or participant IDs. This will protect confidentiality while also clarifying how many voices contributed to the theme.

The Discussion asserts that "SST has a significant impact on mental health." Please include a critical appraisal of potential confounding factors (e.g., participant motivation, cultural influences) that might have contributed to this effect and how these were addressed or could be controlled in future research.

When discussing previous work—such as "According to Perkins (2006) in two papers..."—it would strengthen the manuscript to include additional details (sample sizes, effect magnitudes, specific contexts) so readers can better contextualize how the current findings compare with past research.

The manuscript notes that "the study protocol adhered to the principles outlined in the Helsinki Declaration..." Please provide additional details on how participant confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent were practically maintained (e.g., data storage methods, anonymization procedures).

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.