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## Analysis of the Role of Intimacy-Based Communication Therapy Intervention on Emotional Abuse in Betrayed Women Seeking Relationship Improvement with Their Spouse

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### 1. Round 1

#### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the introduction, the statement "The lack of precise statistics in the country does not imply the absence of this social problem" needs clarification. It would be beneficial to include any available statistics or studies, even if limited, to support this claim and provide a stronger foundation for the argument.

The introduction discusses the emotional trauma caused by infidelity but does not adequately address the cultural context of Qeshm County. Adding context about the region's social and cultural dynamics regarding infidelity would enhance the relevance of the study.

The Emotional Abuse Questionnaire section describes its development and validation extensively, but it is unclear whether the questionnaire was adapted for the cultural context of Qeshm County. Including a discussion on cultural adaptation and pilot testing in the study's specific context is recommended.

In the intervention section, the description of the first session states, "obtaining commitment." It would be beneficial to explain how participant commitment was ensured and whether any measures were taken to monitor continued participation throughout the intervention.

The intervention section describes the use of Gordon's (1999) Intimate Communication Skills Training but does not cite any studies supporting its efficacy. Including references to prior studies that have used this training would enhance the credibility of the intervention approach.

In the discussion, the statement "infidelity is a factor that profoundly emotionally devastates and weakens the victim" is broad. Including citations from existing literature to support this statement would enhance its scientific basis.

The discussion highlights the importance of self-care but does not explain how self-care practices were specifically addressed in the intervention. Providing concrete examples from the intervention would improve clarity.

The limitations section mentions the focus on betrayed women as a limitation, but it does not discuss the potential impact of this limitation on the study's findings. Including a discussion on how this focus might influence the results would be beneficial.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the methods section, the description of the sampling method states, "Participants were randomly assigned to two groups of 15." It would be helpful to specify the randomization technique used (e.g., simple random sampling, stratified random sampling) to ensure reproducibility and transparency.

The inclusion criteria mention "no specific physical or psychological disorders," but there is no information on how these were assessed. Clarifying the screening process and tools used would strengthen the methodological rigor.

The data analysis section mentions the use of ANCOVA but does not provide details on how the assumptions of ANCOVA were tested. Including these details (e.g., homogeneity of variances, normality) would improve the statistical robustness of the analysis.

The findings section presents descriptive statistics, but it is unclear whether any outliers were identified and addressed. Including a brief discussion on data cleaning and outlier management is necessary.

In Table 1, the mean emotional abuse score decreased from 278.77 to 264.46 in the experimental group, but the clinical significance of this reduction is not discussed. Adding an interpretation of the practical significance of the results would provide more context for readers.

In Table 2, the effect size (Eta squared) is reported as 0.60, which is large. However, the power is reported as 0.63, which is relatively low. Discussing why the statistical power is not higher despite a large effect size would be valuable.

The discussion section states, "The therapist taught participants how to express their inner emotions," but there is no mention of any fidelity checks during the intervention. Including information on how the fidelity of the intervention was ensured would strengthen the validity of the results.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.