




Assessing the Impact of a Strength-Based Parenting Program on Family Cohesion and Marital Conflicts




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E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The paragraph beginning “Marital conflict is not a singular or isolated phenomenon...” synthesizes several findings but would benefit from a clearer explanation of the conceptual framework used in this study to understand marital conflict (e.g., systemic, behavioral, or attachment-based models).

The sentence “Family cohesion... is a protective factor that can buffer the negative effects of marital conflict” is a crucial claim. Please cite empirical studies specifically addressing how cohesion moderates conflict impacts in families, especially in European or Mediterranean populations.

In the “Measures” section, the MCQ is described in detail, but no mention is made of whether it has been previously validated in Italian populations. Please include this information or provide psychometric properties from an Italian sample.

The section on the FACES IV scale explains the subscales well, but the sentence “Higher scores on the Balanced Cohesion subscale indicate healthier levels...” should clarify whether total scores or subscale scores were used in this study and how the composite score was calculated.

The Intervention section is comprehensive; however, the rationale for the specific ordering of sessions (e.g., why conflict resolution appears in Session 8 rather than earlier) could be strengthened with reference to intervention sequencing theory or adult learning models.

In Table 1 and the accompanying paragraph, there is no reporting of effect sizes for group differences at each time point. Including Cohen's *d* for pre-post changes would enrich the interpretation of intervention impact.

The assumption checks (normality, sphericity, etc.) are appropriately addressed, but you mention "Mauchly's test...was non-significant" without discussing what would have been done had it been significant. Consider briefly noting the planned approach for assumption violations (e.g., Greenhouse-Geisser correction).

The paragraph beginning "The strength-based model's success..." uses "may also be attributed to..." and "can reinforce..." multiple times. For scientific clarity, please indicate which of these mechanisms were directly targeted by the intervention versus hypothesized from existing literature.

The section "Suggestions and Limitations" rightly acknowledges limitations, but the claim that the use of self-report measures introduces bias would be strengthened by citing studies that document response distortion in marital conflict research.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph ending with "unique to each setting," consider discussing the specific parenting norms, communication styles, or family dynamics characteristic of Italian culture that may influence intervention outcomes.

The final paragraph of the Introduction outlines the hypothesis well, but the phrase "Parents are frequently tasked with managing multiple roles..." reads more like a general statement. Please tie it more directly to the justification for the strength-based model and explain why it is particularly suited to address these multitasking demands.

In "Study Design and Participants," it is unclear whether couples were treated as dyads or analyzed individually. Please clarify whether statistical analyses accounted for the non-independence of observations within couples (e.g., using dyadic modeling or repeated measures nested within couples).

The description of Session 6: "Participants identified their partner's strengths..." would benefit from detail on how couples were encouraged to avoid idealization or confirmation bias when identifying strengths, which can affect intervention fidelity.

In Session 9, the statement "Each participant created a personalized 'Strength-Based Family Plan'" needs elaboration. Was this plan guided by a template or rubric? Was fidelity to this plan assessed or encouraged during follow-up?

The Findings section reports appropriate demographic data, but the sentence "All participants had at least one child living at home" would be stronger with clarification on the children's age ranges and whether their developmental stages were considered as covariates or moderating variables.

The ANOVA results are clear, but in Table 2, the error term lacks its MSE (mean square error), which is important for transparency in replication. Please include all key ANOVA statistics.

Table 3 presents only the intervention group's post-hoc results. Including control group comparisons or a separate table for them would offer a clearer contrast and help readers understand the full interaction effect.

In the Discussion, the sentence "The sustained improvement...suggests that the skills and strategies...were internalized" is an interpretation. Please consider supporting this claim with participant feedback, qualitative data, or literature on behavioral maintenance in strength-based interventions.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.