

## Examining the Relationship Between Early Maladaptive Schemas and Alexithymia with Emotional Divorce Among Married Female Students

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### Reviewers

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### 1. Round 1

#### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The definition of “emotional divorce” (Jarwan & Al-Farhat, 2020) is conflated with “psychological detachment.” Differentiate these constructs theoretically and operationally.

Arknep’s 10-stage model (Kalanta-Creighton, 2017) is mentioned but not critiqued. Address limitations of this model (e.g., cultural bias) and justify its relevance to the study’s Iranian sample.

The correlation matrix includes a nonsignificant correlation ( $r^* = 0.07$  for Other-Directedness vs. Impaired Autonomy). Discuss why this variable was retained in regression models despite weak associations.

The cumulative  $R^2 = 0.23$  is modest. Acknowledge unaccounted variance (77%) and speculate on omitted variables (e.g., cultural norms, socioeconomic stressors).

The negative  $\beta$  for Impaired Autonomy (-0.218) contradicts schema theory (Young et al., 2003). Reconcile this anomaly—does it reflect suppression effects or measurement error?

The claim that Impaired Limits explains 15% of variance is overstated without comparing effect sizes to prior studies (e.g., “How does this align with Smalpour Babaahmadi et al., 2020?”).

The phrase “prioritizing personal gain over their spouse’s rights” assumes intentionality. Replace with empirically grounded language (e.g., “cognitive biases in decision-making”).

The limitation “cultural factors... were not examined” is critical but underdeveloped. Propose specific cultural variables (e.g., collectivism vs. individualism) for future research.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The statement “EMS remain stable over time” (Young et al., 2003) conflicts with recent evidence of schema malleability (Roediger et al., 2018). Update citations and acknowledge debates.

The convenience sample (N = 240) lacks diversity (e.g., age, socioeconomic status). Justify generalizability to “married female students” given the homogeneous recruitment from a single university.

The Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20) is cited (Bagby et al., 1994), but its validation in Iranian populations is not addressed. Provide Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for the current sample.

The reference to “families of such individuals” (Young et al., 2003) lacks direct linkage to the study’s data. Connect findings to participants’ reported childhood experiences.

The term “pseudo-independence” (Lalzadeh Kandekli et al., 2015) is undefined. Clarify its operationalization and relevance to emotional divorce.

Alexithymia is framed as a “cognitive-emotional phenomenon” but not tied to neurobiological mechanisms (e.g., fMRI evidence; Ihme et al., 2018). Strengthen the theoretical grounding.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.