




The Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Therapy on Improving Marital Intimacy and Marital Adjustment

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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:

In the first paragraph, the statement “Marital relationships are among the most intimate and emotionally significant human bonds...” could be strengthened by adding a brief conceptual model illustrating how intimacy influences adjustment and vice versa, to anchor the reader.

In the paragraph starting “The cross-cultural relevance of intimacy and adjustment further supports the need for EFT-based interventions...” the authors should acknowledge cultural differences in emotional expression that might affect EFT outcomes, not only similarities.

The Intervention section lists session contents well, but it would be stronger if the authors explicitly mapped sessions to the three stages of EFT (de-escalation, restructuring, consolidation), to show fidelity to the original model.

The Measures section cites older psychometrics (e.g., 2001, 1976) and Iranian validation from 2009. It would strengthen the paper to cite any more recent local validation studies if available.

The statement “The mean age reported for the sample...” should include exact n per group and SD values in parentheses directly after each mean to align with APA reporting style.

In the paragraph about Box's M and Mauchly's test, the authors should report exact p-values (e.g., $p = .012$) rather than only "< .01" to increase transparency.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The introduction cites many studies (e.g., Brigoli & Sandoval, 2023; Gurung et al., 2023), but the paragraph "Researchers have consistently underscored that marital intimacy is not merely physical or sexual..." would benefit from a critical synthesis (e.g., convergences and contradictions among studies) rather than listing citations.

The sentence "Interventions aimed at strengthening marital intimacy and adjustment have thus become a focal point..." states a rationale but does not explicitly articulate the research gap (e.g., scarcity of EFT research in Iranian couples). This needs to be stated clearly to justify the study.

Table 1 is titled "Statistical Characteristics of Variables" but actually presents descriptive means and SDs across timepoints. Consider renaming to "Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables by Group and Time".

The paragraph "Table 2 shows that there was a significant difference..." notes $\text{partial } \eta^2 = .481$ as "statistically considerable," but should interpret the effect size magnitude using benchmarks (Cohen's criteria) for reader clarity.

In the first discussion paragraph, the authors state "These improvements were maintained at the three-month follow-up..." but do not compare the size of posttest vs follow-up effects. Adding this would clarify the durability of EFT effects.

The Suggestions and Limitations paragraph lists key issues but should also mention lack of therapist fidelity checks (e.g., no supervision or adherence rating), which can critically influence EFT outcomes.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.