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Development of a Causal Model of Marital Distress Tolerance Based on Cognitive Flexibility and Family-of-Origin Health with the Mediating Role of Problem-Solving Skills

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The sentence “Empirical evidence suggests that distress tolerance plays a pivotal role…” summarizes the literature but does not sufficiently clarify the specific gap the present study aims to fill. The reviewer recommends explicitly stating how previous models have failed to integrate cognitive flexibility, family-of-origin health, and problem-solving within a single SEM framework.

The authors state: “Participants were selected using an accessible convenience sampling method…”. Because convenience sampling carries bias implications, the reviewer recommends clarifying whether counselors referred participants, or if participants self-selected, and how this may affect external validity.

Although strong psychometric properties are mentioned, the reviewer notes that no confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results are included for the current dataset. Since SEM requires measurement validation, the authors should report model fit indices for each latent construct.

The manuscript states: “Data analysis was conducted using both descriptive and inferential statistical procedures…”. It does not specify whether missing data existed, and if so, whether listwise deletion, mean imputation, or PLS handling was applied.

The paragraph states: “the descriptive statistics indicated moderate to relatively high levels of distress tolerance…”. Reviewer recommends providing benchmarks or cutoff scores to justify “moderate” vs. “high” classifications.

The Avoidant Style variable reports SD = 12.67, which is extremely large relative to its mean (10.08). This suggests a scoring, coding, or entry error. Authors should verify raw data or explain the unusually high variance.

Several structural paths show coefficients near 1.0, such as Distress Tolerance → Absorption (0.936–0.957). Such extremely high values may imply item redundancy or multicollinearity. Reviewer recommends reporting VIF values and explaining potential construct overlap.

The sentence “Such dynamics may simultaneously promote engagement with problems while limiting flexibility…” is speculative and requires empirical grounding. The reviewer suggests adding at least one empirical reference to prevent overgeneralization.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning with “Moreover, cultural context plays an important role…”, the manuscript emphasizes collectivistic cultural factors but does not situate these findings within the broader cross-cultural research landscape. Suggest adding at least one comparative reference showing how these constructs behave in non-collectivist contexts.

The final sentence reads: “The aim of this study is to develop and evaluate a causal model…”. Although clear, it does not specify the expected directionality or hypothesized mediation paths. Reviewers often expect a concise restatement of hypotheses.

The model reports Family Health → Ineffective Problem Solving = 0.607, which contradicts theoretical expectations. The manuscript mentions possible cultural complexity, but this explanation should be expanded with evidence or reinterpretation, as this is a critical and unexpected finding.

The statement “This pattern underscores the behavioral mechanisms…” is conceptually accurate but missing elaboration on why both adaptive and maladaptive problem-solving pathways were modeled simultaneously. Authors should justify this choice statistically and theoretically.

The discussion repeatedly references similar cognitive flexibility studies (e.g., Giovannini, Jalili, Zanganeh Parsa) without synthesizing results across studies. Reviewer recommends merging citations and providing a cohesive narrative rather than repeating similar conclusions.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.

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