

Developing a Mindfulness Model With the Mediating Role of Self-Compassion in the Marital Adjustment of Women and Men in Tehran

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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 sample-size justification in the paragraph beginning “Because structural equation modeling methodology is substantially similar to multivariate regression” is insufficiently specified. The authors cite Tabachnick and Fidell but do not present the actual formula, number of predictors, anticipated effect size, statistical power, significance level, or allowance for incomplete questionnaires. The statement that “the recommended minimum sample size for structural equation modeling is generally no fewer than 200 participants” is overly general and does not independently justify the sample. The authors should provide an a priori power analysis or a transparent sample-size calculation based on model complexity, free parameters, expected effect size, and desired power, and should distinguish between the number recruited, the number responding, and the final analytical sample.

The Self-Compassion Scale paragraph should explain precisely how the six subscales were scored. The negative dimensions—Self-Judgment, Isolation, and Overidentification—must be reverse-scored when calculating an overall self-compassion score, but the correlation table reports positive associations between Self-Judgment and marital adjustment and between Overidentification and marital adjustment. The discussion acknowledges that these findings are theoretically

unexpected, but this issue should be resolved rather than merely noted. The authors should verify the coding syntax, distinguish raw negative-subscale scores from reverse-coded scores, relabel variables if necessary, and reproduce all analyses after checking for scoring errors.

The Dyadic Adjustment Scale paragraph includes the sentence “The scale uses three different response formats,” but the scoring procedure is not adequately described. The manuscript should report the possible total-score range, the direction of scoring, any established cutoff score used to distinguish distressed from nondistressed relationships, and reliability coefficients obtained in the current sample. In addition, the cited Iranian standardization study should be presented with sufficient bibliographic information in the reference list. Given that the instrument was developed decades ago, the authors should also justify its applicability to contemporary married adults in Tehran and provide evidence of construct validity in the current sample.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The multistage sampling procedure described in the Methods paragraph is internally unclear. The text states that Tehran was divided into four geographical areas, two municipal districts were selected from each area, four districts were subsequently selected from the resulting eight, and “ultimately Districts 1 and 4 were included.” It is not evident how four selected districts were reduced to two, whether Districts 1 and 4 represent municipal districts or neighborhood centers, or how participants were randomly sampled within each center. The authors should provide a stepwise sampling flow, including the sampling frame at each stage, the names or codes of selected districts, the number of centers per district, the number approached at each site, and the method used to randomly select individuals.

The eligibility criteria are absent from the Methods section. The phrase “married individuals who attended neighborhood community centers” does not clarify minimum age, duration of marriage, cohabitation status, literacy level, current separation, remarriage, psychiatric treatment, substance-use problems, or concurrent participation of both spouses. These characteristics can materially affect marital adjustment and questionnaire validity. The authors should state explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria and clarify whether both members of a couple could participate. If spouses from the same couple were included, the statistical independence assumption may have been violated and should be addressed analytically.

The participant characteristics are not reported. The manuscript should include a demographic table presenting at minimum age, gender, duration of marriage, number of children, educational level, employment status, socioeconomic status, and previous marital history. Because the study repeatedly refers to “women and men,” the number and percentage of participants by gender must be reported, together with an assessment of whether the model differed across gender groups. Without this information, the representativeness of the sample and the generalizability of the findings cannot be evaluated.

In the procedure paragraph, the sentence “The ethical principles of the study were presented at the beginning of the questionnaire” is not an adequate ethical report. The manuscript should specify the approving institutional review board or ethics committee, the approval code, the approval date, the consent procedure, confidentiality protections, data-storage arrangements, and participants’ right to withdraw without penalty. Verbal consent may be acceptable in certain contexts, but the rationale for using verbal rather than written consent should be explained. The authors should also state whether participants received compensation and whether referral procedures were available for participants who experienced distress while answering questions about their marital relationship.

The counterbalancing procedure described in the sentence “approximately half of the participants first completed the mindfulness, marital adjustment, and self-compassion measures in that order, whereas the other half completed them in the reverse order” requires clarification. The authors should indicate whether participants were randomly allocated to questionnaire-order conditions and whether order effects were statistically tested. Moreover, the manuscript states that the researcher ensured that “no items were left unanswered,” which may imply that participants were pressured to respond. The

authors should explain how missing responses were handled ethically and statistically and should avoid language suggesting that participants were not permitted to omit sensitive items.

The description of the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire contains psychometric concerns that should be addressed before the structural findings are accepted. The reported Cronbach's alpha of .55 for Nonreactivity in the Iranian version is below commonly accepted thresholds for research use, yet the manuscript does not report reliability coefficients for the current sample. Because the path model treats each mindfulness facet as an observed predictor, measurement unreliability could substantially attenuate or distort the path coefficients. The authors should report Cronbach's alpha and preferably McDonald's omega for every subscale in the present sample, examine item-total correlations, and discuss whether the weaker subscale reliability affects the validity of the conclusions.

Response: Revised and uploaded the manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.