

Explaining the Factors Related to the Enrichment of Marriage in the Marriage Contract Stage: A Grounded Theory Study

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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 introduction, the paragraph starting with "One of the critical stages of marriage is the Marriage Contract Stage" provides an overview but lacks a clear link to previous research specifically focused on this stage in Iranian culture. Including more region-specific literature will strengthen the contextual foundation of the study.

The "Measures" section mentions the Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire by Dennis and Vanderwal (2010), but the rationale for its inclusion in a grounded theory study focused on marital enrichment is unclear. Justifying why this measure was relevant to the research question is necessary.

In the data analysis section, the sentence "Sampling continued until theoretical saturation was reached" is repeated from the methods section. Consolidating this information in one place can enhance clarity and avoid redundancy.

The "Findings" section lists the average age of participants as 28.22 years. Clarifying the standard deviation or age range will provide a better understanding of participant diversity.

In the intervening categories section, the phrase "speaking harshly" is cited as a barrier to enrichment, but there is no mention of specific communication theories (e.g., Gottman's Four Horsemen). Integrating such frameworks can provide a stronger theoretical base.

The consequences section mentions "self-management," but the article does not discuss how this construct overlaps or differs from psychological flexibility, despite using the Psychological Flexibility Questionnaire. Clarifying this relationship will improve conceptual coherence.

The discussion section states, "Self-esteem acts as a buffer against life's challenges," but the cited literature (Shakri, 2022) focuses on postpartum self-esteem. Citing research specifically on self-esteem in marital contexts will strengthen the argument.

In the discussion, the sentence, "Adaptation is particularly critical during the early years of marriage," references Bowlby (1988) but would benefit from also citing contemporary attachment research for updated perspectives.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The introduction mentions, "Research indicates that over 90% of men and women worldwide marry at some point in their lives (Payne, 2019)," but this statistic is outdated for a 2025 publication. Updating this figure with more recent global or regional statistics will enhance the accuracy and relevance of the study.

In the methods section, the sentence "Participant selection continued until theoretical saturation was reached" needs to describe how theoretical saturation was determined, such as specific coding criteria or examples, to provide methodological rigor.

The inclusion criteria listed under "Study Design and Participant" should specify how the absence of chronic physical or mental illness was verified, such as through self-report, medical records, or screening tools, to strengthen methodological transparency.

Table 1 presents 105 primary codes but does not indicate how many participants contributed to each code. Including frequency counts or percentages for each code can enhance the credibility of the qualitative findings.

In the presentation of background categories, the quote from Participant 5, "Because we respect each other's freedoms in our lives and accept ourselves," would benefit from a brief interpretation linking it to relevant psychological theories of self-esteem and autonomy.

The causal categories section includes the quote, "When we loved each other and did not hesitate to express our love," but does not connect this to attachment theory or existing literature on the importance of verbal affirmations in relationships. Adding this connection will enhance theoretical integration.

The strategies section mentions, "The more patient we were, the better and richer our relationship became," but lacks discussion on how patience is operationalized or measured in this context. Including a definition or explanation will provide clarity.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.