






The Effectiveness of Emotion-Focused Therapy on Relational Ethics and Behavioral Emotion Regulation in Women with Marital Conflicts

Sara. Rezaei¹, Laleh. Kohansal^{2*}, Mahsa. Bahri³, Mounes. Mansouri¹, Maryam. Yousofi⁴




¹ Master's Student, General Psychology, Ayandegan Institute of Higher Education, Mazandaran, Iran

² Instructor, Department of Psychology, Sarouyeh Institute of Higher Education, Sari, Iran

³ Bachelor in Psychology, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tonekabon, Iran

⁴ Master's Student in Clinical Psychology, Bushehr Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bushehr, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: Daryaedanesh@yahoo.com

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Donatella Di Corrado  Associate Professor, Department of psychology, Kore University of Enna, Enna, Italy donatella.dicorrado@unikore.it	Reviewer 1: Ali Khodaei  Department of Psychology, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, Payam Noor University, Tehran, Iran. Email: alikhodaei@pnu.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Mohsen Kachooei  Assistant Professor of Health Psychology, Department of Psychology, Humanities Faculty, University of Science and Culture, Tehran, Iran. kachooei.m@usc.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction reviews the literature on EFT but does not discuss previous research on EFT specifically in relation to behavioral emotion regulation. Adding citations that directly link EFT to behavioral emotion regulation would provide better contextual support.

The description of the Relational Ethics Scale (RES) and Behavioral Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (BERQ) is thorough, but it would be beneficial to report their Cronbach's alpha values in this study rather than citing external sources. This would confirm the reliability of these measures in the current sample.

The study reports normality and homogeneity tests, but it would be beneficial to also report Mauchly's test results for sphericity more explicitly in the text rather than just in the tables.

The study states, "Bonferroni post-hoc analysis revealed significant differences between pre-test and post-test ($p = 0.001$) and pre-test and follow-up ($p = 0.003$), while post-test to follow-up differences were not statistically significant." What implications does this have for the sustainability of EFT's effects? A brief interpretation would be helpful.

The discussion effectively compares the results with prior studies, but the theoretical implications of improved relational ethics due to EFT are not fully explored. How do these findings contribute to existing psychological theories on marital conflict resolution?

Could factors other than EFT explain the observed improvements? For instance, social desirability bias or the placebo effect in the experimental group could play a role. Addressing these possibilities would strengthen the study's conclusions.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the introduction, the study justifies the use of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) but does not fully address why EFT may be more effective than alternative therapies. A comparison with other common interventions such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) would strengthen the argument.

The definition of relational ethics on page 2 appears somewhat broad: "Relational ethics refer to the principles of fairness, trust, and responsibility that guide interpersonal relationships." Providing a citation for this definition or breaking down its components with real-life examples would improve clarity.

How was adherence to the EFT protocol ensured? Was there therapist supervision, session recordings, or fidelity checks? Including this information would strengthen the study's reliability.

The study provides means and standard deviations in Table 1, but were there any baseline differences between the experimental and control groups? Conducting and reporting independent t-tests for baseline comparisons would be useful.

The study reports ANOVA results with η^2 values, but Cohen's d effect sizes are only reported in the Bonferroni post-hoc tests. Providing Cohen's d for the ANOVA results would allow better comparability with prior studies.

Since the study was conducted in Tehran, cultural factors might have influenced relational ethics and emotion regulation. Including a section discussing how cultural norms may shape the results would enhance the study's generalizability.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.