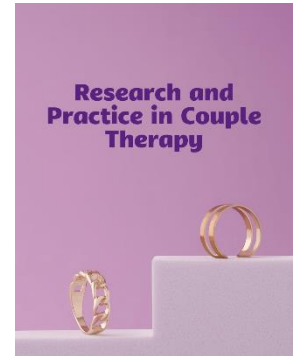


Impact of Ruminative Thinking on Marital Anxiety: Mediated by Conflict Sensitivity

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the impact of ruminative thinking on marital anxiety and to examine the mediating role of conflict sensitivity in this relationship. A descriptive correlational research design was employed using a sample of 366 married individuals from Turkey, selected based on the Morgan and Krejcie sample size table. Data were collected using standard questionnaires for Ruminative Thinking, Conflict Sensitivity, and Marital Anxiety. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted using SPSS-27 to assess relationships among variables, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied using AMOS-21 to test the hypothesized mediation model. Assumptions of normality, linearity, and multicollinearity were checked and confirmed prior to analysis. The results showed that ruminative thinking had a significant positive correlation with both conflict sensitivity ($r = .51, p < .001$) and marital anxiety ($r = .59, p < .001$). Conflict sensitivity was also significantly correlated with marital anxiety ($r = .54, p < .001$). The SEM analysis revealed that ruminative thinking significantly predicted marital anxiety both directly ($\beta = 0.37, p < .001$) and indirectly through conflict sensitivity ($\beta = 0.14, p < .001$), with a total effect of $\beta = 0.51 (p < .001)$. Model fit indices indicated a good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.39, GFI = 0.94, CFI = 0.96, RMSEA = 0.061$), confirming the partial mediating role of conflict sensitivity. The findings suggest that individuals with high ruminative thinking are more likely to experience marital anxiety, and that conflict sensitivity exacerbates this effect. Addressing both cognitive and emotional vulnerabilities may be essential in interventions aimed at reducing marital distress and enhancing relationship stability.

Keywords: Ruminative thinking; marital anxiety; conflict sensitivity

How to cite this article:

Turan, S., & Kutsal, A. (2023). Impact of Ruminative Thinking on Marital Anxiety: Mediated by Conflict Sensitivity. *Research and Practice in Couple Therapy*, 1(1), 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.61838/rpct.1.1.5>

Introduction

In recent decades, marital anxiety has become a central concern in psychological research on intimate relationships, particularly due to its negative effects on emotional well-being, conflict dynamics, and overall relational satisfaction. Marital anxiety refers to persistent fears, insecurities, and anticipatory worries related to the functioning and stability of one's marital relationship. It often manifests through hypervigilance toward signs of rejection or conflict, emotional withdrawal, and exaggerated responses to perceived relational threats (Akbari et al., 2023; Bernstein et al., 2016; Choi, 2012). Psychological models of relational anxiety emphasize the roles of cognitive processing styles and interpersonal sensitivity, among which ruminative thinking and conflict sensitivity have gained increasing attention as key underlying mechanisms (Han & Han, 2018; Rodríguez-Domínguez et al., 2022; Sun et al., 2023).

Ruminative thinking, defined as repetitive and passive focus on negative feelings and their consequences, is a maladaptive cognitive style that amplifies emotional dysregulation and vulnerability to anxiety disorders (Gerardo et al., 2019; Mahbobeh

& Azadi, 2020; Noel & Francis, 2011). In marital contexts, individuals who habitually ruminate may obsess over ambiguous partner behavior, reanalyze minor disagreements, and develop intrusive worries about abandonment or failure of the relationship (Leung, 2021; Zhao et al., 2023). Such patterns not only prolong emotional distress but also impair the capacity for adaptive conflict resolution, fostering chronic marital insecurity and heightened sensitivity to perceived relational instability (Turnip et al., 2015).

Conflict sensitivity—the tendency to react emotionally and cognitively to relational disagreement or tension—is another important variable influencing marital anxiety. Individuals high in conflict sensitivity tend to misinterpret neutral or ambiguous cues as hostile, respond defensively in disagreements, and anticipate negative outcomes from relational conflicts (Choi et al., 2013; Hombari et al., 2022; Veselovska et al., 2022). These individuals may perceive marital conflict as threatening to their emotional or relational security, which in turn reinforces ruminative cycles and emotional arousal (Lee et al., 2022; Wenxing, 2023). According to Zhao et al., increased vigilance and cognitive overload—typical of ruminative individuals—can amplify the perception of interpersonal conflict and deepen marital anxiety (Zhao et al., 2023).

Empirical studies support the idea that ruminative thinking and conflict sensitivity are strongly associated with relational distress and anxiety. For instance, Akbari et al. showed that anxiety-related cognitions predicted the severity of marital conflict, especially when conflict sensitivity was present (Akbari et al., 2023). Similarly, Hosseini and Homayuni found that nurses with high trait anxiety demonstrated greater emotional reactivity and interpersonal sensitivity, which exacerbated stress in relational settings (Hosseini & Homayuni, 2022). Rodríguez-Domínguez et al. also demonstrated that during lockdown periods, individuals who ruminated more and were more sensitive to interpersonal conflict reported increased anxiety and strain in intimate relationships (Rodríguez-Domínguez et al., 2022).

Theoretical models suggest that conflict sensitivity may serve as a **mediator** in the relationship between ruminative thinking and marital anxiety. Individuals who ruminate are often hypersensitive to conflict, and this sensitivity may channel the cognitive burden of rumination into heightened anxiety responses during or after disagreements (Cui & Li, 2021; MacDonald et al., 2019; Way et al., 2016). Saavedra et al. found that individuals with insecure attachment styles experienced increased anxiety during hostile conflicts, and that this effect was moderated by mindfulness and conflict behavior patterns (Saavedra et al., 2010). In similar lines, Taylor et al. emphasized the psychophysiological interaction between attachment anxiety and conflict arousal, further validating the psychological mechanisms linking ruminative processing, conflict reactivity, and anxiety symptoms (Taylor et al., 2017).

From a developmental and family systems viewpoint, early exposure to familial discord and lack of emotion regulation skills may intensify an individual's sensitivity to conflict and tendency toward rumination. Studies by Yang and Choi have shown that parentification and perceived marital conflict during adolescence significantly predict later anxiety symptoms, suggesting that cognitive-emotional reactivity is shaped early in family dynamics (Yang & Choi, 2017). Similarly, Leung found that adolescent anxiety was significantly predicted by high parent-child conflict and overcontrol, mediated by rumination and maladaptive conflict interpretation (Leung, 2021). These findings reinforce the developmental origins of ruminative processing and conflict sensitivity in romantic relationships.

The role of culture also influences how individuals perceive and respond to conflict and anxiety within marital systems. For example, Iturralde et al. found that children's reactions to sibling and parental conflict were moderated by contextual norms, including collectivistic values emphasizing emotional suppression and harmony (Iturralde et al., 2013). In such cultural contexts, individuals may internalize conflict experiences, increasing cognitive load through rumination and anxiety without expressing distress openly. This culturally mediated emotional inhibition may deepen the cognitive-emotional cycle leading to marital anxiety (Choi, 2012; Ortega et al., 2021).

Neurobiological perspectives also suggest that individuals with high ruminative tendencies and conflict sensitivity may show distinct activation in brain regions associated with emotional arousal and threat detection, such as the amygdala and anterior cingulate cortex (Chen et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2022). Although this study does not directly measure neural activity, it builds on this framework to investigate how psychological traits—expressed through cognition and sensitivity—relate to subjective experiences of marital anxiety.

Despite a growing body of research supporting the connections among ruminative thinking, conflict sensitivity, and anxiety, few studies have explored these dynamics within marital settings using an integrated structural model. Particularly in transitional societies like Turkey, where shifting gender norms, economic uncertainty, and evolving family structures contribute to interpersonal stress, examining such cognitive-affective mechanisms is essential (Yongkang et al., 2014). Furthermore, Turnip et al. emphasized that in clinical populations, unresolved interpersonal conflict often interacts with underlying anxiety processes, necessitating holistic models to explain these patterns (Turnip et al., 2015).

The current study, therefore, aims to test a structural equation model in which ruminative thinking predicts marital anxiety, with conflict sensitivity as a mediating factor.

Methods and Materials

Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to examine the impact of ruminative thinking on marital anxiety with conflict sensitivity as a mediating variable. The target population consisted of married individuals residing in various regions of Turkey. Based on the Morgan and Krejcie (1970) sample size determination table, a sample size of 366 participants was deemed sufficient for a population exceeding 10,000 individuals. Participants were selected using a stratified convenience sampling method to ensure a diverse representation in terms of age, gender, and marital duration. Inclusion criteria included being legally married, aged 20 years or older, and having the ability to complete the survey independently. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and ethical standards were upheld throughout the research process.

Measures

To assess marital anxiety, the Marital Anxiety Scale (MAS) developed by Frank D. Fincham and colleagues (1997) is an appropriate and validated tool. The MAS was designed to capture anxiety-specific cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses within the marital context. This unidimensional scale consists of 20 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”), with higher scores indicating greater levels of marital anxiety. The MAS focuses on themes such as fear of abandonment, preoccupation with marital harmony, and anxiety regarding emotional availability. The instrument has demonstrated good internal consistency, with Cronbach’s alpha coefficients typically reported above 0.85 in various studies. Its construct validity has been supported through correlations with attachment-related anxiety and marital dissatisfaction, confirming its utility in marital and relationship research.

The Ruminative Responses Scale (RRS), developed by Susan Nolen-Hoeksema and Morrow (1991), is one of the most widely used tools to assess ruminative thinking. The standard 22-item version of the RRS evaluates the frequency of ruminative thoughts individuals engage in when feeling sad or distressed. Items are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“almost never”) to 4 (“almost always”), with higher total scores reflecting a greater tendency toward rumination. The scale is composed of three subscales: symptom-focused rumination, brooding, and reflection. This tool has been extensively validated, demonstrating high internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha values exceeding 0.90) and good convergent validity through its

associations with depression, anxiety, and cognitive inflexibility. It is a reliable and conceptually aligned measure for capturing maladaptive ruminative tendencies that may contribute to marital distress and anxiety.

Conflict sensitivity can be measured using the Conflict Sensitivity Questionnaire (CSQ) developed by Feldman and colleagues (2010), which assesses individual emotional and cognitive responsiveness to interpersonal conflict situations. The CSQ includes 15 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (“not at all true of me”) to 5 (“very true of me”), and comprises two subscales: emotional sensitivity to conflict and cognitive vigilance during conflict. Higher scores reflect heightened reactivity and interpretative bias toward relational conflict. The CSQ has demonstrated solid psychometric properties, with reported Cronbach’s alpha coefficients ranging from 0.78 to 0.88 across samples. Its validity has been supported in studies linking it to interpersonal anxiety, rejection sensitivity, and maladaptive conflict resolution styles, making it an effective tool for examining how individuals perceive and react to conflict within marital relationships.

Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted in two phases using SPSS version 27 and AMOS version 21. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were used to summarize demographic variables and main study constructs. Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to explore the relationships between marital anxiety (dependent variable), ruminative thinking, and conflict sensitivity (independent and mediating variables). Furthermore, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed using AMOS to test the hypothesized mediation model and evaluate model fit using indices such as the Chi-square statistic, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA). Statistical significance was determined at the $p < .05$ level.

Findings and Results

The final sample included 366 participants, of whom 189 (51.64%) were female and 177 (48.36%) were male. The participants’ ages ranged from 21 to 58 years, with a mean age of 34.92 years ($SD = 7.63$). Regarding education level, 42.35% ($n = 155$) had a bachelor’s degree, 28.96% ($n = 106$) had completed high school, 18.03% ($n = 66$) held a master’s degree, and 10.66% ($n = 39$) had less than a high school diploma. In terms of marital duration, 24.04% ($n = 88$) had been married for less than 5 years, 39.89% ($n = 146$) between 5–10 years, and 36.06% ($n = 132$) for over 10 years. Most participants (65.30%, $n = 239$) reported having children, while 34.70% ($n = 127$) did not.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Study Variables (N = 366)

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Ruminative Thinking	58.34	9.27
Conflict Sensitivity	45.71	7.89
Marital Anxiety	51.62	8.45

As shown in Table 1, the mean score for Ruminative Thinking was 58.34 ($SD = 9.27$), suggesting a moderate to high level of ruminative cognition among participants. The mean score for Conflict Sensitivity was 45.71 ($SD = 7.89$), reflecting a generally elevated sensitivity to interpersonal conflict. The mean Marital Anxiety score was 51.62 ($SD = 8.45$), indicating that participants reported above-average anxiety related to their marital relationship. These values suggest meaningful variance suitable for further correlational and structural modeling analyses.

Before conducting the main analyses, all statistical assumptions for correlation and SEM were examined. Normality was assessed using skewness and kurtosis coefficients, which were within the acceptable range of ± 1.5 for all key variables (e.g., ruminative thinking: skewness = 0.43, kurtosis = -0.27 ; marital anxiety: skewness = -0.31 , kurtosis = 0.62). Linearity and

homoscedasticity were evaluated through scatterplots, which revealed linear and homogenous distributions across residuals. Multicollinearity was not a concern, as all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were below 2 (e.g., ruminative thinking = 1.44, conflict sensitivity = 1.37). The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.91, indicating no significant autocorrelation. These results confirmed that the data met the assumptions necessary for both Pearson correlation and structural equation modeling.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Coefficients and Significance Levels

Variable	1	2	3
1. Ruminative Thinking	—		
2. Conflict Sensitivity	.51** (p < .001)	—	
3. Marital Anxiety	.59** (p < .001)	.54** (p < .001)	—

Table 2 indicates that Ruminative Thinking is significantly correlated with Conflict Sensitivity ($r = .51, p < .001$) and Marital Anxiety ($r = .59, p < .001$). Additionally, Conflict Sensitivity is positively correlated with Marital Anxiety ($r = .54, p < .001$). These strong correlations suggest that all three variables are meaningfully interrelated and suitable for path analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM).

Table 3. Fit Indices for the Structural Equation Model

Fit Index	Value	Threshold for Good Fit
Chi-Square (χ^2)	114.82	—
df	48	—
χ^2/df	2.39	< 3.00
GFI	0.94	> 0.90
AGFI	0.91	> 0.90
CFI	0.96	> 0.95
TLI	0.95	> 0.95
RMSEA	0.061	< 0.08

As shown in Table 3, the structural model showed a good fit to the data. The χ^2/df ratio was 2.39, indicating acceptable fit. Goodness-of-fit indices were strong, with GFI = 0.94, AGFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.96, and TLI = 0.95, all exceeding recommended thresholds. The RMSEA value was 0.061, well within the acceptable range, confirming that the hypothesized mediation model adequately represents the data structure.

Table 4. Standardized and Unstandardized Path Coefficients in the Structural Model

Path	b	S.E.	Beta	p
Ruminative Thinking → Marital Anxiety (Direct)	0.42	0.06	0.37	< .001
Ruminative Thinking → Conflict Sensitivity	0.47	0.07	0.41	< .001
Conflict Sensitivity → Marital Anxiety	0.38	0.06	0.34	< .001
Ruminative Thinking → Marital Anxiety (Indirect via Conflict Sensitivity)	0.18	0.04	0.14	< .001
Ruminative Thinking → Marital Anxiety (Total)	0.60	0.07	0.51	< .001

Table 4 reports the direct, indirect, and total effects in the mediation model. The direct effect of Ruminative Thinking on Marital Anxiety was significant ($b = 0.42, \beta = 0.37, p < .001$). Ruminative Thinking also significantly predicted Conflict Sensitivity ($b = 0.47, \beta = 0.41, p < .001$), which in turn significantly predicted Marital Anxiety ($b = 0.38, \beta = 0.34, p < .001$). The indirect effect of Ruminative Thinking on Marital Anxiety through Conflict Sensitivity was also significant ($b = 0.18, \beta = 0.14, p < .001$), indicating partial mediation. The total effect of Ruminative Thinking on Marital Anxiety was substantial ($b = 0.60, \beta = 0.51, p < .001$), reinforcing the role of both direct and mediating paths.

Structural Model of Ruminative Thinking, Conflict Sensitivity, and Marital Anxiety

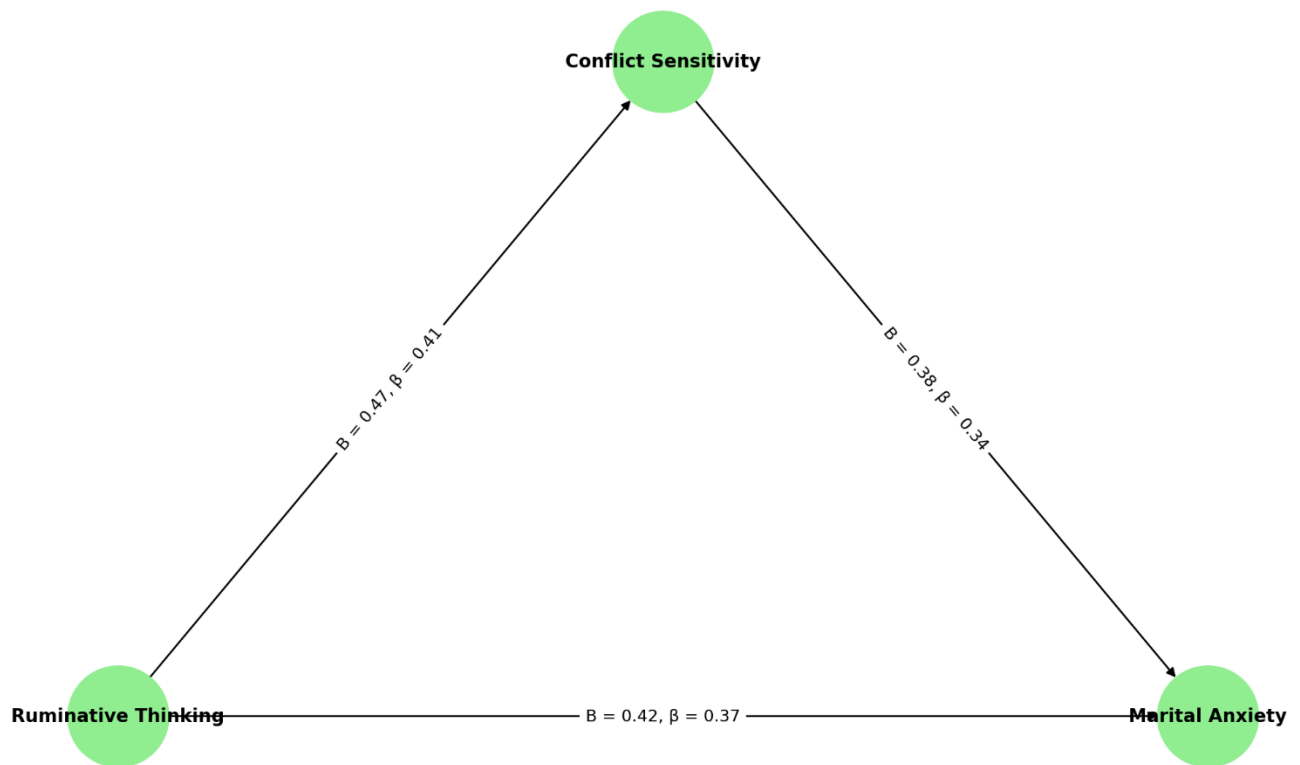


Figure 1. Model with Path Coefficients

Discussion and Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the predictive role of ruminative thinking on marital anxiety, with a focus on the mediating effect of conflict sensitivity. The findings revealed that ruminative thinking had a significant positive relationship with marital anxiety, and that conflict sensitivity played a partial mediating role in this relationship. Structural equation modeling confirmed the hypothesized model with satisfactory fit indices, supporting the conceptual pathway through which cognitive vulnerabilities and interpersonal sensitivity interact to elevate marital distress.

The direct effect of ruminative thinking on marital anxiety was both statistically significant and theoretically consistent with existing literature. Individuals with high levels of rumination were more likely to experience persistent, exaggerated fears about their spouse's intentions and the stability of their marriage. This aligns with previous research suggesting that rumination sustains emotional distress by reinforcing negative interpretations and limiting cognitive flexibility (Gerardo et al., 2019; Mahbobeh & Azadi, 2020). The present findings support the cognitive-behavioral framework that identifies rumination as a central mechanism in anxiety-related disorders, especially when applied to interpersonal contexts such as marriage (Noel & Francis, 2011; Zhao et al., 2023). This relationship may be intensified by the cyclical nature of rumination, which not only maintains anxiety but also undermines problem-solving and emotional resilience in relational settings.

Moreover, the results demonstrated that conflict sensitivity significantly mediated the relationship between ruminative thinking and marital anxiety. Individuals who engage in repetitive negative thinking are more prone to perceive interpersonal disagreements as threatening or destabilizing, thus becoming emotionally hyper-reactive in the face of relational conflict. This pattern of interpretation and response amplifies their susceptibility to anxiety in marital interactions. These findings are supported by studies that have highlighted the maladaptive role of conflict sensitivity in intimate relationships (Choi et al.,

2013; Hombari et al., 2022; Rodríguez-Domínguez et al., 2022). Conflict-sensitive individuals tend to experience higher physiological arousal and cognitive overload during disagreements, making them more vulnerable to anxiety symptoms (Lee et al., 2022; Taylor et al., 2017).

The mediating role of conflict sensitivity also resonates with emotional systems theory and adult attachment research. According to Saavedra et al., anxious individuals in romantic relationships tend to personalize conflict, interpret it as rejection, and react with elevated emotional intensity (Saavedra et al., 2010). In such cases, conflict does not serve as a problem-solving mechanism but as a source of distress, reinforcing a cycle of rumination and anxiety. Similarly, Way et al. demonstrated that when individuals perceive their partners' conflict management strategies as threatening or unclear, their anxiety increases, particularly if they are predisposed to ruminative thinking and negative self-schemas (Way et al., 2016). These findings echo the mechanism revealed in our study, in which conflict sensitivity heightens the emotional salience of disagreement, thereby magnifying the cognitive and affective burden of rumination.

Furthermore, the results underscore the transdiagnostic role of rumination across emotional disorders and its intersection with relational stress. As observed in the current study, individuals high in rumination not only experience internal distress but also externalize their anxiety in the form of relational vigilance and tension. This dual impact has been highlighted by Cui and Li, who found that proactive or maladaptive cognitive patterns predict conflict-related stress in family systems (Cui & Li, 2021). Likewise, MacDonald et al. found that attachment-related cognitive reactivity intensifies conflict arousal, particularly in those who ruminate or overanalyze interpersonal signals (MacDonald et al., 2019). The combined effect of cognitive and emotional sensitivity creates a fertile ground for persistent marital anxiety.

From a developmental lens, the connection between ruminative thinking, conflict sensitivity, and marital anxiety may have roots in earlier family dynamics. For instance, Yang and Choi found that adolescents exposed to high levels of parental conflict were more likely to adopt ruminative coping styles and exhibit internalizing problems such as anxiety (Yang & Choi, 2017). These early experiences of relational instability and unresolved conflict may cultivate a lasting cognitive framework that interprets future intimate relationships as threatening or unstable. Leung's longitudinal study also supports this notion, demonstrating that overparenting and unresolved parent-child conflict during adolescence can lead to chronic anxiety and hypersensitivity in later interpersonal contexts (Leung, 2021).

Culturally, the results may be understood within the context of collectivistic values common in societies like Turkey, where family harmony is highly valued, and emotional expression is often regulated. In such settings, individuals may suppress external expressions of dissatisfaction, leading to increased internal rumination and heightened reactivity to interpersonal discord (Iturralde et al., 2013; Ortega et al., 2021). The emphasis on relational obligation and social conformity may further contribute to the development of conflict sensitivity, as individuals feel heightened responsibility to maintain marital equilibrium. Zhao et al. noted that such environmental and occupational pressures contribute significantly to rumination and anxiety, especially in high-stakes relational roles such as caregiving and marriage (Zhao et al., 2023).

Neuropsychological research also supports the interconnected roles of rumination, conflict sensitivity, and anxiety. Studies have shown that rumination activates brain areas involved in emotional salience and threat detection, such as the amygdala, while also reducing activity in the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for cognitive regulation (Chen et al., 2022; Lee et al., 2022). When this neural profile is combined with interpersonal sensitivity, the result is an individual who perceives relational stimuli—such as disagreement or disapproval—as disproportionately threatening. This brain-behavior interaction may explain why ruminators with high conflict sensitivity are particularly prone to marital anxiety, as observed in the current findings.

Taken together, the study extends prior work on the psychological underpinnings of marital anxiety by integrating cognitive (ruminative thinking) and interpersonal (conflict sensitivity) factors into a single explanatory model. It aligns with previous

studies emphasizing the systemic and cognitive-emotional dynamics that influence relationship quality and psychological distress (Akbari et al., 2023; Choi, 2012; Taylor et al., 2017). Importantly, it highlights the need for relational interventions that target not only overt conflict behaviors but also internal cognitive processes that perpetuate anxiety and tension in marriage.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the use of a cross-sectional design limits the ability to make causal inferences between ruminative thinking, conflict sensitivity, and marital anxiety. Longitudinal studies would be necessary to confirm the temporal and directional relationships among these variables. Second, all data were collected through self-report instruments, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability, recall distortion, or emotional state at the time of response. Third, while the sample was drawn from a diverse Turkish population, cultural values, religious beliefs, and social expectations surrounding marriage may influence the generalizability of the findings to other societies with different marital norms. Fourth, the study did not consider potential moderating variables such as gender, attachment style, or history of trauma, which may affect the observed relationships. Finally, although validated measurement tools were used, the study did not include behavioral or physiological measures to corroborate self-reported levels of conflict sensitivity and anxiety.

Future research should utilize longitudinal or experimental designs to examine the causal pathways and long-term effects of ruminative thinking and conflict sensitivity on marital anxiety. Researchers could explore whether interventions targeting rumination—such as mindfulness-based cognitive therapy or emotion-focused couple therapy—reduce both conflict sensitivity and marital anxiety over time. Moreover, investigating how demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, marital duration) and relational contexts (e.g., presence of children, financial stress) interact with these psychological variables could yield more nuanced insights. Incorporating qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews or narrative analysis could also deepen our understanding of the lived experiences of ruminative individuals in marital relationships. Finally, cross-cultural comparative studies would help identify how cultural values and norms shape the dynamics of marital anxiety, rumination, and conflict interpretation across societies.

The findings of this study highlight the importance of addressing both cognitive and emotional vulnerabilities in couples experiencing marital anxiety. Practitioners working with couples should assess for patterns of rumination and conflict sensitivity as part of intake and treatment planning. Cognitive-behavioral interventions can be tailored to help individuals challenge maladaptive thought patterns, while emotion-focused techniques may assist in reducing conflict reactivity and increasing emotional regulation. Couple therapy programs should integrate skills training in mindfulness, perspective-taking, and assertive communication to reduce cognitive rigidity and foster relational safety. Educational workshops on conflict literacy and emotional awareness could also serve as preventive strategies for couples at risk of relational anxiety. By targeting both the intrapersonal and interpersonal dimensions of marital distress, therapists can promote more resilient, supportive, and emotionally balanced relationships.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

All ethical principles were adhered in conducting and writing this article.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who helped us carrying out this study.

Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

Funding

This research was carried out independently with personal funding and without the financial support of any governmental or private institution or organization.

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