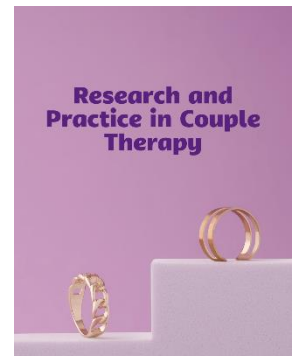


Effect of Psychological Distress on Sexual Satisfaction: Mediated by Communication Avoidance

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the effect of psychological distress on sexual satisfaction in married adults, with communication avoidance explored as a mediating variable. A descriptive correlational research design was employed, and a sample of 330 married individuals from Qatar was selected using Krejcie and Morgan's sample size determination table. Participants completed three standardized instruments: the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10), the Communication Patterns Questionnaire – Short Form (CPQ-SF), and the Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS). Data were analyzed using SPSS-27 for descriptive and correlational statistics, and AMOS-21 was used to test the structural equation model (SEM). Model fit was evaluated using indices such as χ^2/df , CFI, TLI, GFI, AGFI, and RMSEA. Pearson correlation analysis showed that psychological distress was significantly negatively correlated with sexual satisfaction ($r = -.52, p < .001$) and positively correlated with communication avoidance ($r = .47, p < .001$). Communication avoidance also had a significant negative correlation with sexual satisfaction ($r = -.45, p < .001$). SEM results confirmed a good model fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.11$; CFI = .96; RMSEA = .057). Psychological distress had a significant direct effect on sexual satisfaction ($\beta = -0.38, p < .001$) and an indirect effect through communication avoidance ($\beta = -0.15, p < .001$), confirming the partial mediating role of communication avoidance. The findings suggest that psychological distress undermines sexual satisfaction both directly and indirectly by fostering communication avoidance in intimate relationships. Interventions targeting emotional regulation and open communication may help improve sexual and relational outcomes among distressed couples, particularly in culturally conservative contexts.

Keywords: Psychological Distress; Sexual Satisfaction; Communication Avoidance; Marital Relationships

How to cite this article:

Ghasemzadeh, A.R., & Saadat, M. (2023). Effect of Psychological Distress on Sexual Satisfaction: Mediated by Communication Avoidance. *Research and Practice in Couple Therapy*, 1(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.61838/rpct.1.1.6>

Introduction

Sexual satisfaction is a cornerstone of intimate relationships and overall well-being, functioning not merely as a physical experience but as a multidimensional construct that intersects with emotional, psychological, and relational health. In contemporary relationship studies, sexual satisfaction has increasingly been framed as both an outcome and a predictor of marital quality, intimacy, and emotional regulation. However, growing empirical evidence points toward the significant role of psychological distress in undermining this crucial aspect of relational functioning. Psychological distress—characterized by persistent symptoms of anxiety, depression, and emotional dysregulation—has been found to profoundly affect sexual desire, responsiveness, and satisfaction in intimate relationships (Acquati, Hendren, et al., 2022; Almazan, 2019). In particular, when distress is internalized or left unaddressed, it may not only impair individuals' self-perception and emotional resilience but also reduce their capacity for vulnerable communication, thereby mediating sexual disconnection (Hébert et al., 2018; Whitton et al., 2018).

The complex association between psychological distress and sexual functioning is well documented in both clinical and community populations. Individuals experiencing heightened distress often report diminished sexual satisfaction, particularly when distress is chronic and relationally embedded (Acquati, Goltz, et al., 2022; Godbout et al., 2019). The relationship appears to be reciprocal: just as distress can impair intimacy, disrupted sexual functioning may exacerbate emotional distress by threatening one's relational security and self-worth (Dean et al., 2021; Roche et al., 2020). Furthermore, distress related to identity (e.g., minority stress) has been shown to mediate the link between sexual dissatisfaction and broader psychosocial maladjustment (Hoy-Ellis, 2015; Puckett et al., 2015). This bidirectional dynamic emphasizes the importance of identifying mediating variables that can elucidate the pathways through which distress leads to sexual dissatisfaction.

One such potential mediator is **communication avoidance**, a relational dynamic whereby partners refrain from engaging in open, direct, and emotionally vulnerable dialogue—particularly about conflictual or sensitive issues. Communication avoidance has been recognized as a significant relational barrier to intimacy and a predictor of reduced sexual satisfaction in both heterosexual and LGBTQ+ partnerships (Krueger et al., 2020; Masoudi et al., 2022). When individuals experience psychological distress, they may adopt avoidant coping mechanisms that discourage confrontation, thereby reinforcing cycles of silence and disconnection in the relationship (Kaysen et al., 2014; Thorpe et al., 2022). Such patterns are detrimental in sexual relationships, where emotional transparency and responsiveness are foundational to mutual satisfaction. A lack of emotional safety can result in withdrawal, diminished responsiveness, and increased feelings of rejection or neglect during sexual interactions (Murchison et al., 2022; Spidel & Kealy, 2023).

The cognitive-behavioral mechanisms underlying communication avoidance provide further insight into how distress can translate into sexual dissatisfaction. Individuals suffering from anxiety or depressive symptoms often exhibit heightened sensitivity to rejection, fear of conflict, or low self-efficacy in emotional expression—all of which can lead to relational disengagement (Detwiler et al., 2022; Wilson et al., 2022). In couples where one or both partners are unable to express needs, negotiate boundaries, or process emotional vulnerabilities, sexual relationships tend to suffer from misalignment and dissatisfaction. Moreover, the experience of psychological distress may impair not only expressive communication but also the ability to interpret a partner's emotional cues, further exacerbating sexual misattunement (Chen, 2012; Elkington et al., 2010).

The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in the biopsychosocial model of relational functioning, which suggests that psychological, social, and interpersonal processes collectively influence sexual outcomes. Within this framework, psychological distress is positioned as an intrapersonal factor that impacts interpersonal dynamics such as communication, which in turn shapes relational satisfaction, including sexual fulfillment (DeBlaere et al., 2013; Mereish & Poteat, 2015a). Recent research has supported this pathway, indicating that communication quality mediates the link between emotional distress and relational outcomes in diverse cultural and clinical populations (Lafortune et al., 2023; Szymanski & Sung, 2010). However, few studies have explicitly modeled this relationship using structural equation modeling to capture the mediating role of communication avoidance in the pathway from psychological distress to sexual dissatisfaction.

The intersectionality of demographic factors—such as gender, cultural background, and minority identity—also warrants consideration in the exploration of these variables. For instance, Almazan (2019) highlighted that psychological distress levels tend to be higher in sexual minority individuals of color compared to their white counterparts, and that this heightened distress often correlates with reduced relational satisfaction (Almazan, 2019). Likewise, studies on transgender individuals and racial minorities have underscored the need to consider identity-based discrimination and internalized stigma as contributors to both psychological and sexual distress (Chae et al., 2010; Counselman-Carpenter & Redcay, 2023). The compounding impact of cultural or sexual minority stress can amplify communication breakdowns, particularly when open discussions about sexuality are culturally taboo or personally retraumatizing (Mereish et al., 2017; Sluytman et al., 2015).

While much of the existing literature has focused on Western or high-income populations, emerging evidence from African and Middle Eastern contexts suggests that communication avoidance may be more culturally entrenched due to socioreligious norms discouraging open discourse on sexuality (Anyanwu, 2023; Mamaru et al., 2015). In such contexts, psychological distress may have even more pronounced effects on sexual satisfaction due to limited avenues for emotional or therapeutic expression. Masoudi et al. (2022), for example, documented that Iranian parents dealing with sexual behavioral challenges in children experienced high levels of distress and exhibited notable communication avoidance due to cultural shame and stigma (Masoudi et al., 2022). These findings underscore the importance of contextually sensitive investigations into how emotional distress interacts with relational dynamics to shape intimate outcomes.

Furthermore, the developmental trajectory of psychological distress and its relational consequences may differ across lifespan stages. While distress among adolescents and emerging adults has been linked primarily to identity formation and peer rejection, distress in adulthood is more often rooted in chronic stressors such as work-life imbalance, caregiving burdens, or relational instability (Dean et al., 2021; Hayes et al., 2022). As such, marital or long-term partnerships face unique challenges where communication breakdowns are not only symptomatic of distress but also reinforce long-term dissatisfaction in both emotional and sexual domains (Godbout et al., 2019; Roche et al., 2020). The psychological toll of prolonged communication avoidance can thus serve as both a mechanism and a consequence of declining sexual satisfaction.

Finally, the role of protective factors must be acknowledged. Research has consistently shown that relational protective factors—such as social support, self-acceptance, and emotional safety—buffer against the negative effects of psychological distress on intimacy (Mereish & Poteat, 2015b; Whitton et al., 2018). For instance, Wilson et al. (2022) found that individuals in committed partnerships reported significantly lower levels of psychological distress than their unpartnered counterparts, suggesting that relationship quality itself may act as a psychological resource (Wilson et al., 2022). However, when communication avoidance persists, even the most secure partnerships may experience erosion in satisfaction and connectedness, particularly in the sexual domain (Peters, 2023; Spidel & Kealy, 2023).

In summary, there exists a compelling body of literature linking psychological distress to diminished sexual satisfaction, with communication avoidance emerging as a plausible mediating mechanism. Despite the growing scholarly attention to these individual variables, few studies have systematically examined their interrelationship using structural modeling, especially in non-Western contexts such as Qatar. This study addresses this gap by exploring the mediating role of communication avoidance in the association between psychological distress and sexual satisfaction among married adults.

Methods and Materials

Study Design and Participants

This study employed a descriptive correlational design to examine the relationship between psychological distress and sexual satisfaction, with communication avoidance as a potential mediating variable. The population comprised married adults residing in Qatar. Based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size determination table, a sample of 330 participants was deemed sufficient for a population size exceeding 10,000. Participants were selected using a convenience sampling method from counseling centers, health clinics, and community forums, ensuring a balance in terms of gender and age. Inclusion criteria included being legally married, aged 20 to 60 years, and fluent in Arabic or English. All participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and written consent was obtained. Ethical approval was granted by a university-affiliated ethics committee.

Measures

Sexual satisfaction in this study was assessed using the Index of Sexual Satisfaction (ISS) developed by Hudson, Harrison, and Crosscup in 1981. This instrument is widely used to measure dissatisfaction in the sexual relationship between partners. The ISS contains 25 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (rarely or none of the time) to 5 (most or all of the time), with higher scores indicating greater sexual dissatisfaction. To obtain the overall sexual satisfaction score, items are summed and then reversed so that higher scores represent greater satisfaction. The scale includes subscales such as sexual fulfillment and relational conflict during intimacy. The ISS has demonstrated strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values typically exceeding 0.90, and construct validity has been supported through correlations with related constructs in both clinical and non-clinical samples.

Psychological distress was measured using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10) developed by Kessler et al. in 2002. The K10 is a concise 10-item self-report instrument designed to measure non-specific psychological distress in terms of anxiety and depressive symptoms over the past four weeks. Each item is rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (none of the time) to 5 (all of the time), producing a total score between 10 and 50. Higher scores reflect greater psychological distress. The K10 is unidimensional but broadly captures emotional states linked to mental strain. It has been validated across diverse populations and demonstrates excellent psychometric properties, with Cronbach's alpha often above 0.90 and confirmed construct and criterion validity in both epidemiological and clinical studies.

Communication avoidance was assessed using the Communication Patterns Questionnaire – Short Form (CPQ-SF), originally developed by Christensen and Sullaway in 1984 and later adapted into a shorter format. The CPQ-SF includes 15 items that evaluate the extent to which couples avoid direct and open communication during conflict, including behaviors such as withdrawal, demand-withdraw cycles, and reluctance to discuss sensitive topics. Items are rated on a 9-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very unlikely) to 9 (very likely), with higher scores indicating greater communication avoidance. The short form retains core subscales such as mutual avoidance, demand/withdraw, and negative escalation. The CPQ-SF has shown high internal reliability ($\alpha > 0.85$) and validity across marital and clinical samples, making it a suitable instrument for evaluating communication avoidance in the context of intimate relationships.

Data analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 27 and AMOS version 21. First, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage) were calculated for demographic variables. Pearson correlation analysis was employed to assess the bivariate relationships between the independent variables (psychological distress and communication avoidance) and the dependent variable (sexual satisfaction). In the next phase, a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach was used to test the hypothesized mediation model. SEM allows for the simultaneous examination of direct and indirect effects and is well-suited for testing complex relational models. Model fit was evaluated using standard indices such as Chi-square (χ^2), RMSEA, CFI, and TLI, with acceptable thresholds defined as RMSEA < 0.08 , CFI and TLI > 0.90 .

Findings and Results

Among the 330 participants, 176 individuals (53.33%) identified as female and 154 individuals (46.67%) as male. In terms of age, 78 participants (23.64%) were between 20 and 30 years, 121 participants (36.67%) were between 31 and 40 years, and 131 participants (39.70%) were aged between 41 and 60. Regarding educational attainment, 98 participants (29.70%) held a high school diploma or less, 157 (47.58%) had a bachelor's degree, and 75 (22.73%) possessed a postgraduate degree. Most

participants (219 individuals; 66.36%) reported being married for more than 5 years, while 111 (33.64%) had been married for less than 5 years.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for the Main Variables (N = 330)

Variable	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)
Psychological Distress	28.34	6.91
Communication Avoidance	92.58	15.26
Sexual Satisfaction	71.42	13.77

Participants reported a moderate level of psychological distress ($M = 28.34$, $SD = 6.91$), a relatively high level of communication avoidance ($M = 92.58$, $SD = 15.26$), and moderate sexual satisfaction ($M = 71.42$, $SD = 13.77$). These descriptive findings suggest considerable variability in all three key constructs, justifying further investigation through correlational and structural modeling approaches.

Prior to conducting the main analyses, all statistical assumptions for parametric tests and SEM were evaluated. Tests for normality using skewness and kurtosis showed values within acceptable ranges (skewness between -0.92 and 0.81 ; kurtosis between -0.77 and 1.04), indicating approximate normal distribution of the data. The assumption of linearity was confirmed through scatterplots, which revealed linear relationships among the variables. Multicollinearity was assessed using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), with all VIF values ranging from 1.14 to 1.76 , well below the cutoff value of 5 . Homogeneity of variance was verified using Levene's test, which was not significant ($p > 0.05$) across demographic groups. Additionally, Mahalanobis distance was used to detect multivariate outliers, and no cases exceeded the critical chi-square value at $p < 0.001$ for the given degrees of freedom. These findings confirm that the assumptions for both Pearson correlation and SEM were satisfactorily met.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Coefficients Among Variables

Variables	1	2	3
1. Psychological Distress	—		
2. Communication Avoidance	.47** ($p < .001$)	—	
3. Sexual Satisfaction	-.52** ($p < .001$)	-.45** ($p < .001$)	—

Correlation analysis indicated that psychological distress was positively correlated with communication avoidance ($r = .47$, $p < .001$) and negatively correlated with sexual satisfaction ($r = -.52$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, communication avoidance was also significantly and negatively associated with sexual satisfaction ($r = -.45$, $p < .001$). These findings support the hypothesized direct and indirect relationships among variables.

Table 3. Fit Indices for the Structural Equation Model

Fit Index	Value	Acceptable Threshold
χ^2 (Chi-Square)	94.87	—
df	45	—
χ^2/df	2.11	< 3.00
GFI	0.95	> 0.90
AGFI	0.91	> 0.90
CFI	0.96	> 0.90
RMSEA	0.057	< 0.08
TLI	0.94	> 0.90

The structural model demonstrated excellent fit to the data, as indicated by the Chi-square ($\chi^2 = 94.87$, $df = 45$), a χ^2/df ratio of 2.11 , and high values for GFI (0.95), AGFI (0.91), CFI (0.96), and TLI (0.94). The RMSEA value of 0.057 further confirms that the model's approximation of the data is within acceptable limits.

Table 4. Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects Between Variables in the SEM Model

Path	b	S.E.	β	p
Psychological Distress → Communication Avoidance	0.62	0.07	0.47	< .001
Communication Avoidance → Sexual Satisfaction	-0.39	0.06	-0.33	< .001
Psychological Distress → Sexual Satisfaction (Direct)	-0.41	0.08	-0.38	< .001
Psychological Distress → Sexual Satisfaction (Indirect via Comm. Avoidance)	-0.24	0.05	-0.15	< .001
Psychological Distress → Sexual Satisfaction (Total)	-0.65	0.07	-0.53	< .001

As shown in the model, psychological distress significantly predicted communication avoidance ($b = 0.62$, $\beta = 0.47$, $p < .001$), which in turn negatively predicted sexual satisfaction ($b = -0.39$, $\beta = -0.33$, $p < .001$). Additionally, the direct effect of psychological distress on sexual satisfaction remained significant ($b = -0.41$, $\beta = -0.38$, $p < .001$), and the indirect effect via communication avoidance was also significant ($b = -0.24$, $\beta = -0.15$, $p < .001$). The total effect of psychological distress on sexual satisfaction ($b = -0.65$, $\beta = -0.53$) underscores the strength of the relationship.

Structural Model of Psychological Distress, Communication Avoidance, and Sexual Satisfaction

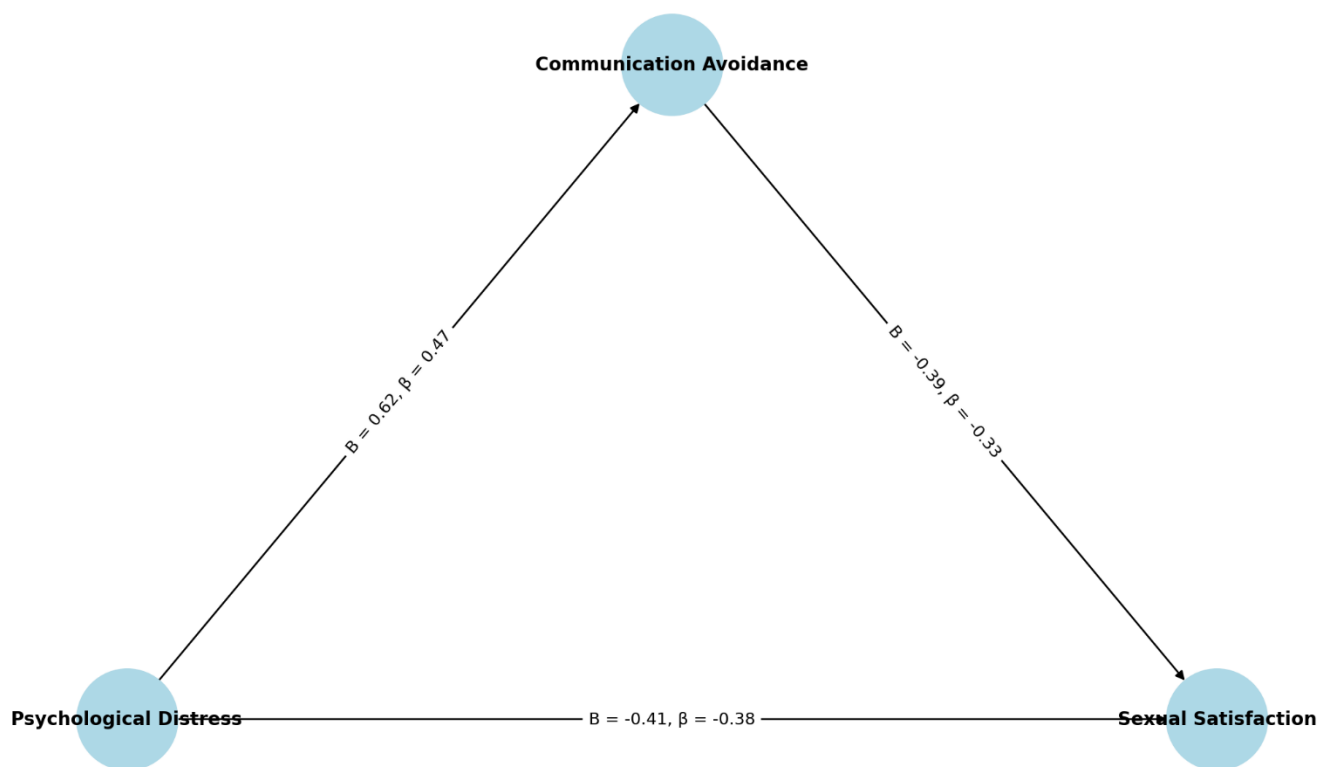


Figure 1. Model with Path Coefficients

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study investigated the effect of psychological distress on sexual satisfaction in married individuals in Qatar, with communication avoidance tested as a mediating variable. The results revealed a significant negative relationship between psychological distress and sexual satisfaction, indicating that higher levels of psychological distress correspond with lower levels of sexual fulfillment. Moreover, communication avoidance was found to partially mediate this relationship, suggesting that individuals experiencing psychological distress tend to withdraw or avoid open dialogue, which in turn exacerbates sexual dissatisfaction. These findings support the study's hypothesized model and contribute to the growing literature on the intrapersonal and interpersonal mechanisms that shape sexual well-being.

The direct negative effect of psychological distress on sexual satisfaction is consistent with previous empirical studies highlighting the detrimental impact of emotional disturbances on intimate relational functioning. Prior research has demonstrated that psychological distress—encompassing symptoms of anxiety, depression, and emotional dysregulation—can interfere with sexual desire, arousal, and relational responsiveness (Acquati, Hendren, et al., 2022; Godbout et al., 2019). In particular, distress disrupts emotional regulation and impairs one's capacity for intimacy, thereby reducing the mutual emotional engagement that underpins satisfying sexual experiences (Hayes et al., 2022; Whitton et al., 2018). The current study reinforces these conclusions within a Middle Eastern context and affirms that the psychological burden carried into the relational space undermines sexual connection, irrespective of cultural backdrop.

The partial mediation observed through communication avoidance offers further insight into the relational processes that amplify the negative impact of distress. Individuals burdened by psychological distress often struggle to communicate openly with their partners, particularly regarding emotionally charged or vulnerable topics such as sexual needs, dissatisfaction, or emotional disconnection (Masoudi et al., 2022; Murchison et al., 2022). This avoidant pattern results in relational ambiguity and silence, which in turn weakens emotional and physical intimacy. The findings align with previous studies suggesting that communication avoidance serves not only as a symptom of distress but also as a reinforcing mechanism that perpetuates dissatisfaction and alienation within intimate relationships (Dean et al., 2021; Kaysen et al., 2014).

Supporting this, Detwiler et al. (2022) emphasized how psychological distress in sexual minority older adults fosters avoidance and withdrawal, leading to diminished well-being and relational breakdowns (Detwiler et al., 2022). Similarly, Chae et al. (2010) found that minority stress and emotional suppression were closely tied to increased psychological distress and sexual dysfunction (Chae et al., 2010). The current study extends these insights by showing that even among heterosexual married adults in a conservative cultural context, the mechanism of emotional withdrawal remains central in the distress-sexual satisfaction linkage. These parallels suggest that communication avoidance, as a behavioral coping strategy, transcends demographic boundaries and serves as a universal mediator in the distress–intimacy pathway.

Theoretical frameworks on relationship functioning further support the observed relationships. According to relational-cultural theory, emotional isolation and the inability to engage in growth-fostering dialogue contribute to psychological pain and relational fragmentation (Mereish & Poteat, 2015a, 2015b). In this light, communication avoidance operates as both a protective and destructive force—allowing individuals to shield themselves from perceived emotional threats, but simultaneously creating barriers to relational healing and connection. The current study's findings affirm this model by demonstrating that psychological distress drives relational withdrawal, which then deteriorates sexual satisfaction.

Culturally, this research contributes to an underrepresented body of literature examining intimate processes in Arab societies, where discussions around sex, emotional vulnerability, and psychological distress are often taboo or stigmatized (Anyanwu, 2023; Masoudi et al., 2022). In these contexts, communication avoidance may not only reflect individual coping styles but also culturally reinforced norms that discourage open expression of dissatisfaction or emotional pain. The compounded effect of cultural conservatism and individual distress may create a cycle of silence that is particularly damaging to sexual satisfaction. This echoes the findings of Mamaru et al. (2015), who found that psychological distress linked to sexual harassment among Ethiopian university women was rarely disclosed or processed, leading to pervasive emotional suppression (Mamaru et al., 2015).

Furthermore, this study's findings underscore the intersectional dynamics of psychological distress. Consistent with the work of Almazan (2019) and Sluytman et al. (2015), individuals who experience systemic stress or marginalization—whether based on gender, race, or sexual identity—often carry elevated psychological distress, which in turn affects their relational and sexual outcomes (Almazan, 2019; Sluytman et al., 2015). Although the current sample did not target minority groups

specifically, the pathways observed here mirror those documented in marginalized populations, suggesting a broader universality of the psychological mechanisms involved.

Additionally, the importance of relational support as a buffer against distress-induced avoidance emerges as a critical takeaway. Studies have shown that emotional safety and secure attachment within romantic relationships can mitigate the adverse effects of psychological distress (Whitton et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2022). However, in the absence of such emotional safety—as may occur when one or both partners engage in communication avoidance—the buffering effect is lost. This is reflected in the work of Counselman-Carpenter and Redcay (2023), who emphasize the need for relational depth and openness in promoting posttraumatic growth and emotional repair (Counselman-Carpenter & Redcay, 2023). The current study reinforces this perspective by identifying communication avoidance as a pivotal barrier to relational repair.

While some studies have highlighted the role of emotion-focused coping in mitigating distress and improving intimacy, this study emphasizes the dangers of avoidant coping strategies. As shown in research by Kaysen et al. (2014), internalized shame and poor coping mechanisms mediate the relationship between distress and poor sexual functioning (Kaysen et al., 2014). Our findings suggest that addressing communication patterns—particularly avoidance—could be a promising intervention target to enhance sexual satisfaction in distressed couples. Emotionally focused therapeutic interventions that emphasize vulnerability, expression, and repair may be especially beneficial in such contexts.

The model tested in this study also opens new avenues for clinical application. Given that communication avoidance partially mediated the relationship rather than fully explaining it, there remains a significant direct pathway from psychological distress to sexual dissatisfaction. This highlights the importance of addressing distress not only at the relational level but also as an individual psychological condition. Interventions such as mindfulness-based therapy, stress reduction programs, and individual psychotherapy targeting anxiety or depression may have downstream effects on sexual and relational well-being, particularly when paired with couple-based interventions.

This study, while offering valuable insights, is not without limitations. First, the cross-sectional design limits causal interpretation. Although the proposed model was theoretically grounded and statistically supported, longitudinal or experimental designs would be necessary to establish temporal precedence and directionality of effects. Second, the use of self-report questionnaires may be subject to social desirability bias, especially given the cultural sensitivity of discussing psychological and sexual matters in Qatar. Participants may have underreported distress or dissatisfaction due to stigma or embarrassment. Third, although the sample was diverse in terms of age and education, it did not account for potentially important moderating variables such as religiosity, gender roles, or attachment style, all of which may influence the dynamics between distress, communication, and sexual outcomes.

Future studies should adopt longitudinal or mixed-methods designs to better understand how psychological distress and communication avoidance evolve over time and in response to relational stressors. Incorporating dyadic data from both partners could also provide a more comprehensive understanding of how distress and communication interact within the relational system. Moreover, exploring cultural moderators such as collectivism, sexual norms, and family expectations could offer deeper insights into how these dynamics manifest differently across societies. Finally, future research could explore how interventions aimed at improving communication—such as emotionally focused therapy or behavioral couple therapy—might mediate or moderate the distress–sexual satisfaction link in different populations.

In practical terms, mental health professionals working with distressed couples should be trained to identify and address communication avoidance as a relational barrier to intimacy. Integrating communication skills training with emotional regulation strategies may be particularly effective in improving sexual satisfaction in couples where psychological distress is present. Psychoeducation around the interplay of mental health and sexual functioning could reduce stigma and encourage

help-seeking, especially in culturally conservative contexts. Finally, policymakers and clinical educators should work to normalize discussions of sexual health and emotional well-being in marital counseling and public health messaging to foster healthier relationships and stronger emotional bonds.

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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