



The Relationship Between Anxiety and Self-Efficacy Mediated by Cognitive Flexibility in Female University Students

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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

Date: 10 March 2025

Reviewer:

In the Introduction, the sentence “Cognitive inflexibility, in turn, may contribute to maladaptive patterns of thinking such as rumination and experiential avoidance...” would benefit from a citation that directly connects cognitive inflexibility to these outcomes in university student populations to substantiate the claim.

The paragraph in the Introduction beginning with “The concept of self-efficacy, introduced by Bandura...” should include a clearer transition to its relevance in female student populations, as the next paragraph abruptly introduces gender without theoretical framing.

In the Self-Efficacy subsection, the sentence “The original version included 36 items, but based on factor analysis...” would benefit from clarification on whether the reduced 23-item version was used in this study and how the decision aligns with prior Iranian validation studies.

In the Data Analysis section, the sentence “The assumption of multicollinearity was tested using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values...” would be strengthened by reporting the actual VIF range, rather than simply stating they were below the threshold.

In Table 2, while the correlation matrix is helpful, confidence intervals for Pearson coefficients would improve interpretive accuracy and allow assessment of the precision of these estimates.

In Table 3, the sentence “The model fit indices... indicate an acceptable to excellent model fit” should be expanded with a rationale for each threshold (e.g., why RMSEA < 0.06 is considered excellent) and a citation for the standard being used.

In the Discussion, the sentence “The current study supports this perspective...” would benefit from explicitly linking the results to neurocognitive mechanisms (e.g., prefrontal regulatory networks) with appropriate citations to support the neuroscientific claim.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

1.2 Reviewer 2

Date: 13 March 2025

Reviewer:

In the final paragraph of the Introduction, the sentence “This study is theoretically grounded in the cognitive-behavioral framework...” would be strengthened by specifying which aspects of the cognitive-behavioral model are being operationalized and how they inform the mediation model.

In the Study Design and Participants section, the justification for the sample size based on “Tabachnick and Fidell (2007)” is vague. Include the exact formula or guidance used to derive the number 290 from 58 items for transparency.

In the Cognitive Flexibility subsection, the authors mention, “although the component scores were not separately reported in the present study.” This omission limits interpretability. Consider reporting subscale data or justifying why only total scores were analyzed.

In the Anxiety subsection, the phrase “specific scoring guidelines and interpretations were provided in a PDF format in the original study” is vague and unacademic. Instead, summarize the scoring cutoffs used in the present study based on standard thresholds.

In the Findings and Results section, the sentence “The distributions of the variables... are normal” is a strong claim. Consider adding exact skewness and kurtosis values with thresholds for comparison to reinforce the conclusion.

Table 1's description says, “suggesting no significant deviation from normality,” but this is an interpretation. It would be more precise to state that values are within the accepted range for normality testing (e.g., ± 1 for skewness and kurtosis).

In Table 4, the sentence “The total effect of anxiety on self-efficacy... was substantial and significant...” would benefit from including effect size interpretation (e.g., small, medium, or large effect based on Cohen's guidelines).

The Discussion section refers to “Bandura's social cognitive theory...” without formally introducing the theory earlier. Consider providing a concise summary of the theory's mechanisms in the Introduction for logical consistency.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the updated document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.