




Self-Reflection as a Mediator Between Solitude and Identity Development




Nur Aisyah. Binti Zulkifli¹, Syarifah. Maisarah^{2*}, Nayelli. Muñoz³

¹ Department of Health Psychology, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia

² Faculty of Social Sciences & Liberal Arts, Department of Psychology, UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

³ Faculty of Health Sciences, Private University of the North, Lima, Peru

* Corresponding author email address: symaisarah@ucsiuniversity.edu.my

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Muhammad Rizwan  Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Haripur University, Islamabad, Pakistan muhammad.rizwan@uoh.edu.pk	Reviewer 1: Kamdin Parsakia  Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: kamdinarsakia@kmanresce.ca Reviewer 2: Seyed Ali Darbani  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology and Counseling, South Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. Email: Ali.darbani@iau.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the introduction, the claim “Solitude, when experienced constructively, allows adolescents to pause this social feedback loop and turn inward for meaning-making...” is compelling but would benefit from empirical support or a citation to reinforce this psychological mechanism.

In the final paragraph of the introduction, the statement “...this study hypothesizes that self-reflection will mediate the positive association...” would be strengthened by explicitly stating this as a numbered or bullet-pointed hypothesis for clarity.

In the methods section under “Study Design and Participants,” the use of the Morgan and Krejcie table is appropriate, but the justification for choosing this method could be expanded. Why was this method deemed more appropriate than power analysis for SEM?

In the paragraph reporting SEM assumptions, the sentence “...data showed no significant outliers, as assessed by Mahalanobis distance...” lacks specification of how many cases exceeded the threshold or whether any were removed.

In Table 3, “Threshold” values are presented for fit indices, but no reference is provided for these thresholds. Cite relevant SEM literature (e.g., Hu & Bentler, 1999) to justify the cut-offs used.

In the Findings section discussing Table 4, the authors state “suggesting a partial mediation.” This claim should be statistically confirmed by reporting a Sobel test or bootstrapped indirect effect confidence intervals.

In the Discussion, the sentence “...solitude emerged in this study as a fertile ground for introspective activity...” is metaphorical. Consider rephrasing in scientific terms, e.g., “solitude was significantly associated with increased self-reflection and identity clarity.”

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In paragraph three of the introduction, the authors state, “Self-reflection is not a passive cognitive habit but a skill that can be cultivated.” This statement is strong but could be supported by evidence from educational psychology literature that frames self-reflection as a metacognitive competency.

In the introduction, the reference to “pseudo-solitude” in “...leading to a form of ‘pseudo-solitude’ that lacks the quietude necessary...” should be explained more clearly for readers unfamiliar with the term. Consider defining it or providing a brief example.

In the same paragraph, the sentence “voluntary solitude—deliberately sought and valued—may be more likely to foster...” needs further clarification on how voluntary solitude was operationalized in the study. Was this aspect measured by a specific subscale?

In the “Measures” subsection for Identity Development, while psychometric properties are presented, the cultural adaptation or validation of the EIPQ for the Malaysian context is not addressed. Please clarify if any adaptation or re-validation was performed.

In the “Solitude” subsection, the sentence “...discomfort in social settings” should be linked more clearly to the conceptual model. Was this subscale used analytically, or was only the total score considered?

In the Data Analysis subsection, the authors state, “The significance of mediation effects was tested through bootstrapping procedures...” but do not specify the number of bootstrap samples or confidence intervals. Please add this technical detail for reproducibility.

In the Results section, Table 2 shows a correlation of .41 between solitude and self-reflection. The moderate size of this relationship should be interpreted in more detail in the discussion—how practically significant is this correlation?

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.