





# The Mediating Role of Psychological Capital in the Relationship Between Academic Self-Efficacy, Academic Engagement, and Academic Meaningfulness with Academic Achievement Among Students in Wasit, Iraq

Rim. Abdoulmatlab Jasem<sup>1</sup>  Hajar. Torkan<sup>2\*</sup>  Adnan. Mared Jabr<sup>3</sup> , Ali. Mahdad<sup>4</sup> 




<sup>1</sup> PhD Student in educational Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

<sup>3</sup> Professor, Department of Educational and Psychological Sciences, University of Wasit, Iraq

<sup>4</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran

\* Corresponding author email address: h.torkan@khuif.ac.ir

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
John S. Carlson  Distinguished Professor of the Department of Educational Psychology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, United carlsoj@msu.edu	<b>Reviewer 1:</b> Sara Nejatifar  Department of Psychology and Education of People with Special Needs, Faculty of Educational Sciences and Psychology, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran. Email: s.nejatifar@edu.ui.ac.ir <b>Reviewer 2:</b> Kamdin. Parsakia  Department of Psychology and Counseling, KMAN Research Institute, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada. Email: kamdinarsakia@kmanresce.ca

## 1. Round 1

### 1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The study proposes that psychological capital mediates the relationship between academic self-efficacy, engagement, and meaningfulness with academic achievement. However, the theoretical foundation for this mediation is not well-articulated. Consider adding more justification by referencing relevant psychological capital theories.

Throughout the manuscript, the terms "psychological capital," "academic self-efficacy," and "academic engagement" are sometimes used interchangeably with "psychosocial resources" or "academic motivation." Ensure that each term is consistently used with precise definitions.

In the measures section, the psychological capital questionnaire includes reverse-scored items (items 13, 20, and 23), but no explanation is provided on how these items were handled in analysis. Clarify whether they were transformed before computing the total score.

Given that students were self-reporting their psychological capital and engagement, how was social desirability bias mitigated? Was a control variable included in the model, or was this limitation acknowledged?

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The methods section states that SEM was used but does not report key model fit indices (e.g., RMSEA, CFI, TLI). Please provide these indices to demonstrate the adequacy of the proposed model.

In the findings, the study reports that "the direct effect of academic engagement on academic achievement was not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ).". This contradicts some literature. Please discuss possible explanations for this finding, including potential cultural, contextual, or measurement differences.

The study relies entirely on self-report measures for all variables. Please acknowledge this limitation in the discussion section and suggest how future research could use objective academic achievement data (e.g., GPA records) to strengthen validity.

The findings state that "psychological capital serves as a full mediator in the relationship between academic engagement and academic meaningfulness with academic achievement, whereas it acts as a partial mediator in the relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic achievement." However, the table suggests indirect paths are significant for all three predictors. Please clarify the distinction between full and partial mediation in the context of your model.

The conclusion suggests that "school administrators and policymakers in Iraq should take these findings into account." However, the study does not provide direct evidence for policy-level interventions. Consider narrowing recommendations to educational strategies or student-level interventions.

The study is conducted in Wasit, Iraq, but does not discuss how cultural or educational norms in Iraq might influence academic self-efficacy or engagement. Adding this discussion would enhance the study's contextual relevance.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.