

Prediction of Generalized Anxiety Disorder Based on Self-Handicapping with the Mediating Role of Worry




Seyed Aliasghar. SeyedEbrahimi^{1*}, Seyed Alireza. SeyedEbrahimi², Manijeh. Firouzi³

¹ PhD Student in Clinical Psychology, Aras International Campus, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

² PhD student in Health Psychology, Caspian International Campus, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

³ Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

* Corresponding author email address: merajeentezar@gmail.com

E d i t o r	R e v i e w e r s
Trevor Archer  Professor Department of Psychology University of Gothenburg, Sweden trevorcsarcher49@gmail.com	Reviewer 1: Mahdi Khanjani  Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran. Email: khanjani_m@atu.ac.ir Reviewer 2: Zahra Yousefi  Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Khorasgan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran. Email: yousefi1393@khuisf.ac.ir

1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The phrase “persistent, and often debilitating mental health condition characterized by excessive and uncontrollable worry...” is strong but could benefit from including the DSM-5 criteria to anchor the clinical definition of GAD.

In the sentence “These considerations are particularly salient for understanding...,” more explicit references to Iranian sociocultural dynamics and how they affect self-handicapping would strengthen contextualization.

The sentence starting “Moreover, findings by Jia et al. (2021)...” is overly long and complex. Consider breaking it into two sentences for clarity and easier comprehension.

The concluding sentence “The current study aims to address these gaps...” should more clearly articulate the novelty of the study (e.g., “no studies in Iran have empirically tested this mediation model”).

The sentence “Given that worry mediates the influence of various distal risk factors...” partially repeats ideas from the previous paragraph. Consider condensing or reframing to avoid redundancy.

The paragraph discussing Iranian collectivist values could include citations from local or regional sources to strengthen cultural grounding (e.g., studies on academic stress in Iranian students).

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The sentence “Although initially conceptualized within educational settings...” should briefly elaborate on how self-handicapping behavior extends beyond academic domains into clinical psychology for better transition.

The claim that “worry is maintained by individuals as a strategy to reduce emotional contrast...” needs to include clearer citations or definitions for contrast avoidance theory and its empirical foundations.

The statement “Structural and functional abnormalities in prefrontal and limbic regions...” is informative but too broad. It would benefit from citing specific studies on GAD neuroimaging in young adults or using more cautious language.

Although significant correlations are reported, the effect sizes should be interpreted. For example, $r = .61$ is considered a strong correlation; such interpretation should be stated in the text to guide readers.

The phrase “Self-Handicapping → GAD (Indirect)” would be clearer if you specify the mediation path as “Self-Handicapping → Worry → GAD Symptoms” for transparency and consistency with figure 1.

The sentence “This pattern has been previously identified...” could be improved by specifying which theoretical model (e.g., cognitive vulnerability models, attribution theory) best explains the observed patterns.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.