

# Identifying the Psychological and Somatic Dimensions of Neuroticism: A Qualitative Approach

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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

Reviewer:

The introduction states, "Neuroticism is not merely a psychological construct but also manifests in physiological and somatic symptoms, often leading to chronic health concerns and impaired well-being." The phrase "leading to chronic health concerns" is broad; it would be useful to specify particular conditions with supporting citations.

The data analysis section mentions using "open, axial, and selective coding." While this is a standard qualitative approach, it would be beneficial to briefly explain how themes were refined and validated beyond software assistance (e.g., intercoder reliability checks).

In the findings section, the demographic characteristics paragraph mentions "a diverse sample in terms of age, gender, and educational background." However, there is no mention of whether neuroticism scores were assessed before recruitment. Were participants screened for high levels of neuroticism?

The discussion states, "These findings align with existing literature suggesting that neuroticism is not only a psychological construct but also has substantial physiological and behavioral implications." It would be valuable to include a citation supporting this assertion.

In the discussion, the sentence, "Participants frequently reported difficulties in interpersonal relationships, professional settings, and academic environments" would benefit from additional detail—were certain environments more challenging than others? Were social or occupational struggles more prominent?

The conclusion suggests that "interventions promoting mindfulness and cognitive-behavioral strategies can help mitigate the negative impact of neuroticism." However, no specific studies or meta-analyses are cited to support this claim. A reference to existing intervention research is necessary.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the introduction, the sentence, "Studies suggest that neurotic individuals are more likely to experience conditions such as irritable bowel syndrome, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, and cardiovascular dysregulation" (Seiffge-Krenke & Sattel, 2024), requires further clarification on whether these associations are causal or correlational.

The methods section states, "The study aimed to achieve theoretical saturation, ensuring that no new themes emerged beyond the data collected." It would strengthen the methodological rigor to include specific indicators of how saturation was determined, such as the number of interviews after which no new codes emerged.

In the methods section, the sample selection criteria should be elaborated upon. Were there any exclusion criteria for participants? For instance, were individuals with diagnosed psychological disorders excluded?

In Table 1, the subtheme "perfectionistic coping" includes "overcompensating" and "meticulous planning." It is unclear whether this is always maladaptive. Some literature suggests that perfectionism can have adaptive components. A brief discussion on this distinction would be helpful.

In the findings section, a participant is quoted as saying, "I keep replaying past mistakes in my head, as if analyzing them will change something, but it only makes me feel worse." It would enhance scientific rigor to explain how these quotations were selected—did all participants experience this pattern, or was it specific to a subset?

The findings discuss "gastrointestinal complaints" under somatic manifestations, but there is no mention of how frequently these symptoms occurred or their severity. Were participants asked to report frequency or intensity?

The discussion mentions, "Prior studies indicate that neurotic individuals exhibit heightened physiological reactivity to stress, leading to increased activation of the autonomic nervous system and dysregulated inflammatory responses." Given the complexity of this topic, a reference to empirical studies measuring physiological responses would strengthen the argument.

The discussion section states, "Participants frequently reported experiencing chronic muscle tension, cardiovascular sensitivity, and gastrointestinal issues, all of which have been previously associated with neuroticism." A comparison with quantitative studies measuring these symptoms would help contextualize the qualitative findings.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

## 2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.