


The Effect of Perfectionism and Test Anxiety on Academic Burnout in High School Students


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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the Introduction, paragraph 2, the phrase “Perfectionism, while traditionally associated with high personal standards and conscientiousness...” requires clarification on the distinction between adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism earlier in the paragraph to avoid conceptual ambiguity.

In the third paragraph of the Introduction, you mention “Biggs et al. found that perfectionism was a significant predictor...” but fail to explain whether this applied to specific subscales of burnout or perfectionism. Clarifying this would enhance conceptual precision.

The Methods section, first paragraph, lacks detail regarding how informed consent was obtained from minors. Please clarify the ethical procedure for securing guardian/parental consent in accordance with institutional or national ethical guidelines.

In the “Perfectionism” subsection under Measures, the sentence “Participants respond using a 5-point Likert scale...” should indicate whether all six FMPS subscales were analyzed or if some were excluded. This affects construct validity.

In the paragraph introducing Table 3, you note that “The overall regression model demonstrated a strong fit...”—this should be supported with a standardized residuals plot or Durbin-Watson statistic to demonstrate no autocorrelation and good model fit.

In Table 4 and the following paragraph, the regression coefficients are significant, but no confidence intervals are reported for the B values. Including these would enhance the statistical rigor.

In the Discussion section, first paragraph, the statement “These findings are supported by the work of Biggs et al.” would benefit from a more nuanced comparison of the demographic or cultural differences between that sample and the Malaysian high school population.

The Limitations section identifies several valid points but omits any mention of common method variance due to using only self-report questionnaires. This potential bias should be acknowledged.

In the final paragraph of the Limitations section, the recommendation “Cultivating a learning environment that values effort over outcomes...” would be more impactful if linked to empirical evidence or best-practice interventions from school psychology.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In paragraph 4, the sentence “A particularly insidious outcome of perfectionism is its role in cultivating a heightened sensitivity...” is a strong evaluative claim. It would benefit from referencing a model or framework (e.g., cognitive-behavioral model of anxiety) to anchor the interpretation.

In the Introduction’s final paragraph, the authors state “Given the collectivistic cultural values and societal emphasis on academic excellence...”—this sociocultural framing would be strengthened by citing cross-cultural comparative studies that support this claim.

In the “Test Anxiety” subsection, the statement “Each item is rated on a 4-point Likert scale...” could be expanded to note whether cultural or linguistic adaptation of the TAI was conducted for the Malaysian student population.

In the “Academic Burnout” subsection, the sentence “The MBI-SS has demonstrated robust psychometric properties...” should be followed by a brief report of Cronbach’s alpha values obtained in your own sample to confirm internal consistency.

In the Data Analysis paragraph, while assumptions are mentioned, there is no indication of how outliers were handled. Please specify whether any outliers were identified or excluded and the criteria used.

In the Results section, paragraph 1, you mention a balanced distribution across demographic variables. It would be helpful to statistically confirm this assertion (e.g., chi-square test for gender proportions or grade-level differences).

The Pearson correlation results in Table 2 are clearly presented, but the accompanying paragraph lacks effect size interpretation. Adding Cohen’s guidelines (e.g., small, medium, large effect) would contextualize the strength of these relationships.

The statement in the Discussion “The present study supports the vulnerability-stress model...” should be further developed by briefly articulating the mechanisms proposed by this model (e.g., perfectionism as a diathesis interacting with academic stress).

In the penultimate paragraph of the Discussion, you note “The current findings indicate that the high school students in this sample were more likely exhibiting maladaptive perfectionism...”—this is speculative unless specific FMPS subscale data are provided.

Authors uploaded the revised manuscript.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision after revisions: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.

