



Trait Emotional Stability as a Protective Factor against Psychosomatic Symptom Amplification: A Multilevel Mediation Analysis


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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph beginning “Psychosomatic symptom amplification is increasingly understood as a perceptual–cognitive process...”, the authors describe amplification mechanisms well, but do not clearly distinguish somatosensory amplification from related constructs such as somatization or health anxiety. A brief conceptual differentiation would improve theoretical precision.

The statement “Psychosomatic distress may also emerge from conflict-related behavioral patterns and stress-laden interpersonal environments” introduces important contextual variables; however, the paragraph reads as somewhat descriptive. Please clarify how these findings directly inform the current model specification.

The exclusion criterion “individuals with a self-reported diagnosis of severe psychiatric disorders” raises concerns about diagnostic validity. Please clarify how self-report diagnoses were verified or justify this limitation more explicitly.

Although the BFI is well-established, the manuscript does not report Cronbach’s alpha values for the present sample. These should be explicitly stated for all instruments.

In the description of the Somatosensory Amplification Scale, consider citing cutoff interpretations or normative ranges to contextualize the observed mean score.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

When stating “A major theoretical candidate for explaining protective variability in psychosomatic processes is trait emotional stability”, the authors should explicitly justify why emotional stability was prioritized over closely related traits (e.g., conscientiousness, optimism, resilience).

The paragraph beginning “The protective logic of emotional stability becomes especially important...” would benefit from a brief mechanistic schematic explanation linking emotional stability → attentional processes → amplification → symptom severity.

In the sentence “Mechanistically, emotional stability is likely to exert its effects through emotion regulation and distress tolerance processes”, the authors imply mediation but do not yet justify why perceived stress was selected as the sole mediator rather than emotion regulation indices.

The paragraph discussing interoception (“At the level of body-focused mechanisms...”) is theoretically rich; however, it would strengthen coherence if the authors explicitly tied interoceptive processes back to measurement choices (SSAS and PHQ-15).

The final sentence clearly states the study aim. Nevertheless, consider adding a brief hypothesis formulation (e.g., H1–H3) to improve structural clarity and align with empirical conventions.

The sentence “Participants were recruited using a stratified online sampling strategy” lacks detail. Please specify stratification variables, recruitment platforms, and response rates to enhance reproducibility.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.