

Alexithymia, Trait Avoidance, and Somatic Distress: A Transdiagnostic Model of Emotion–Body Disconnection

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R e v i e w e r s

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the opening paragraph beginning with “Across contemporary psychosomatic and clinical science...”, the term “somatic distress” is used broadly. Consider adding a brief operational clarification distinguishing somatic distress from related constructs such as somatization, medically unexplained symptoms, or bodily distress disorder to reduce conceptual ambiguity early in the manuscript.

The paragraph starting “A central process repeatedly implicated in somatic symptom persistence...” effectively references emotion construction and interoception. However, the theoretical link between emotion construction models and alexithymia could be made more explicit. Please consider adding one or two sentences clarifying how alexithymia disrupts predictive emotion construction processes.

In “Participants consisted of adults residing in Sweden...”, more detail is needed regarding sample size justification. Please report how the sample size relates to SEM requirements (e.g., power analysis, cases-to-parameters ratio).

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the sentence “Recent longitudinal research has further complicated the trait-versus-state debate...”, the implications for your cross-sectional design are not fully addressed. Please explicitly state how potential state-like fluctuations in alexithymia may affect interpretation of your structural paths.

The paragraph beginning “Nevertheless, alexithymia alone rarely explains...” would benefit from clearer differentiation between experiential avoidance and behavioral avoidance. Please clarify whether your model is intended to capture avoidance primarily at the experiential (internal) level or as a broader regulatory style.

In the paragraph starting “Interoception—broadly, the perception and interpretation of internal bodily signals...”, interoception is discussed extensively but not included in the empirical model. Please explicitly justify why interoception is treated as a conceptual scaffold rather than a measured variable, and acknowledge this as a model boundary.

The paragraph beginning “Importantly, somatization and bodily distress are culturally embedded phenomena...” is theoretically rich. However, given that the sample is Swedish, please clarify how cultural variability is expected to influence—or not influence—the proposed pathways in the present study.

The final sentence of the introduction (“Therefore, the aim of this study was...”) would be strengthened by explicitly stating directional hypotheses (e.g., H1, H2, H3) rather than a general aim, particularly given the use of structural equation modeling.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.