




Modeling Women's Psychological Flourishing Based on Self-Compassion, Emotional Intelligence, Perceived Social Support, and Body Appreciation: The Mediating Role of Psychological Flexibility

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the abstract and Methods section, the manuscript states that psychological flexibility was measured using the Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-II and that “higher adjusted scores indicate greater psychological flexibility.” This needs methodological clarification because the AAQ-II is commonly interpreted as a measure of psychological inflexibility or experiential avoidance unless items are reverse-scored or transformed. The authors should explicitly state the scoring direction, whether reverse scoring was applied, and provide a psychometric justification for treating the AAQ-II as an index of psychological flexibility rather than psychological inflexibility.

In the opening of the Introduction, the heading appears as “WIntroduction,” and the first sentence begins awkwardly: “omen's psychological flourishing has emerged as a central construct...” This is not merely a typographical issue; it affects the professional presentation of the manuscript and suggests insufficient copyediting. Please correct the heading and carefully proofread the full manuscript for formatting artifacts, broken words, and layout-related errors introduced during typesetting.

In the Methods section, the heading “Study design and Participant” should be revised to “Study Design and Participants.” More importantly, the paragraph states that participants were recruited through “social media platforms, women's community

organizations, university mailing lists, and public online forums,” but no recruitment dates, specific platforms, province distribution, response rate, or incentive information is provided. Please add these details, because online convenience sampling can introduce substantial selection bias and should be transparently reported.

In the same Methods paragraph, the manuscript states that “After screening for missing data, response consistency, and multivariate outliers, data from all 620 participants were retained.” This requires much greater detail. Please report the number of initial respondents, the number excluded at each screening stage, criteria used for response inconsistency, thresholds for multivariate outliers, and the amount and treatment of missing data. Retaining all 620 participants after screening is possible, but the procedure must be documented to be credible.

In the participant description, the manuscript reports age, marital status, education, and employment status, but it does not report ethnicity, immigration status, province or region, household income, sexual orientation, disability status, or parental/caregiving status. Given that the study focuses on women in Canada and constructs such as body appreciation, social support, and flourishing may vary across demographic groups, the absence of these variables limits interpretation. Please either report these demographic characteristics or acknowledge their absence as a limitation.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

In the first paragraph of the Introduction, the manuscript states that flourishing is associated with “improved physical health, stronger interpersonal relationships, enhanced occupational performance, greater life satisfaction, and increased resilience.” This statement is conceptually appropriate, but it reads as a broad causal claim without distinguishing correlational from longitudinal or intervention-based evidence. Please revise this paragraph to specify whether these associations are correlational, predictive, or experimentally supported, since the present study itself is cross-sectional and should avoid implying causal inference.

In the second paragraph of the Introduction, the manuscript discusses “gender-specific social expectations, caregiving responsibilities, body image concerns, emotional labor demands, and exposure to societal pressures,” but it does not explain why Canada is a theoretically important context for examining these processes. Since the sample is Canadian, the authors should add contextual information about cultural diversity, immigration background, socioeconomic variation, gender-role expectations, and body-image norms in Canada. Without this contextualization, the article’s framing remains too general and does not justify why this population was selected.

In the Introduction paragraph beginning “Among the personal strengths associated with flourishing,” self-compassion is well defined, but the link between self-compassion and flourishing is discussed primarily in general terms. Please strengthen the theoretical pathway by explaining how the three components of self-compassion—self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness—may specifically support the dimensions of flourishing measured by the Flourishing Scale, such as purpose, competence, positive relationships, and contribution to others.

In the paragraph on emotional intelligence, the manuscript defines emotional intelligence as the capacity to “perceive, understand, regulate, and effectively utilize emotions,” but the selected instrument, the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale, uses four specific dimensions: self-emotion appraisal, others’ emotion appraisal, use of emotion, and regulation of emotion. Please align the conceptual definition with the exact dimensions of the scale and explain whether emotional intelligence was modeled as a single latent construct or whether the four dimensions were used as indicators.

In the paragraph on perceived social support, the manuscript states that social support may influence flourishing “both directly and indirectly through other psychological resources.” However, the proposed model only tests psychological flexibility as the mediator. Please avoid introducing unspecified mediating processes unless they are tested, or alternatively clarify in the hypotheses that psychological flexibility is the specific mediating mechanism evaluated in the present model.

In the paragraph on body appreciation, the manuscript argues that body appreciation is particularly relevant for women because “societal appearance standards often contribute to body dissatisfaction and psychological distress.” This statement is



important, but the manuscript should distinguish body appreciation from the mere absence of body dissatisfaction more rigorously. Please explain why positive embodiment is expected to predict flourishing above and beyond self-compassion, because the two constructs are conceptually related and are highly correlated in the results.

In the final gap paragraph of the Introduction, the manuscript states that “relatively few studies have simultaneously examined these constructs within a comprehensive structural model of women's flourishing.” This gap statement is too general and should be made more precise. Please specify whether the novelty lies in the Canadian adult-women sample, the simultaneous inclusion of four predictors, the use of psychological flexibility as a mediator, or the integration of body appreciation into a flourishing model. The Introduction should also end with explicit hypotheses rather than only a general aim.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.