



Peer Review Report Form

Manuscript Title:	Psychological Predictors of Academic Performance in Research Writing among Undergraduate Students: Evidence from a Philippine Local College
Type of Article:	Original Article

FIRST ROUND

Editor

General Comments and Recommendations

The reviewers acknowledge the significance of your manuscript and recommend several revisions to further improve its clarity, coherence, organization, and overall scholarly quality. In addition, you are advised to thoroughly review and validate all references included in the manuscript. Please ensure that all cited sources are accurate, accessible, and retrievable through Google Scholar to uphold the credibility and reliability of the study. Additionally, make sure to include the DOI or website link for every reference whenever available to facilitate verification and accessibility of sources. Furthermore, only sources that are cited within the manuscript should appear in the References section, and all entries listed in the References section must also be cited in the text. For example, if 20 unique sources are cited in the manuscript, then only those 20 sources should be included in the References section. Please also note that repeated citations of the same source within the text are counted as a single reference entry; therefore, the total number of references may be lower than the total number of in-text citations.

Reviewer 1

General Comments and Recommendations

The paper is timely and useful because it tries to explain academic performance in research writing using psychological variables, which is relevant in undergraduate research education. The topic has value, and the manuscript is generally organized.

Specific Comments and Recommendations

My main suggestion is for the authors to be more careful in interpreting the regression findings. Although the model is statistically significant, the explanatory power is very low, meaning the three psychological predictors explain only about 1.4% of academic performance. Because of this, the paper should not strongly claim that research beliefs reflect a “resource-allocation dilemma” or that valuing research may reduce academic performance unless there is stronger evidence to support this explanation. The negative relationship of research beliefs with



academic performance is interesting, but it may also be due to measurement issue, grading differences, omitted variables, or the way academic performance was measured only through research grades. I suggest that the authors revise the discussion and conclusion to make the interpretation more modest. They may say that research beliefs showed a small negative association, but this should be treated as tentative and requiring further study.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accept the manuscript for publication.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The authors are commended for tackling the psychological aspects of undergraduate research writing. This is a very relevant topic, especially as higher education institutions continue to push for tighter quality assurance and outcomes-based education in their curricula. The attempt to link internal psychological factors to objective academic grades is an interesting approach to understanding student success.
<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
The regression model reports an R^2 of 0.014. This means that the combined variables of research self-efficacy, scientific identity, and research beliefs explain only 1.4% of the variance in students' academic performance. While it is true that Research Beliefs yielded a significant p-value of 0.013, it is important to remember that with a large sample size of 666 students, even negligible and trivial effects will appear statistically significant. Basing broad practical recommendations such as altering institutional workload policies or restructuring research advising on a 1.4% effect is quite a stretch. The authors need to explicitly discuss the minimal effect size and practically acknowledge that 98.6% of a student's grade is determined by other factors not included in this study.
The methodology notes that the target population was 1,432 students, but only 666 were included in the final sample. The authors explicitly state that students with "Pass" or missing grades were excluded from the analysis because they lacked numerical grades. Excluding more than half of your target population introduces a massive non-response or selection bias. Practically speaking, students with missing or incomplete grades are often the ones struggling the most with research tasks. By dropping them, the study likely skewed the data toward higher-performing students, which is reflected in the high mean academic grade of 88.95. This limitation must be heavily justified and prominently discussed, as it threatens the external validity of the findings.
The study uses "numerical grades" in thesis writing as the sole measure of academic performance. In the local Philippine college setting, thesis grading is notoriously subjective. Grades depend heavily on the specific rubrics of different degree programs, the leniency or



strictness of individual research advisers, and the subjective evaluations of defense panelists. Unless there was a strictly standardized, institutional-wide grading system applied equally to all 666 students across different departments, this dependent variable is highly noisy. This inherent subjectivity might actually be the main reason why your R² is so low. This needs to be addressed in the limitations section.

The study anchors itself on three massive frameworks: Social Cognitive Theory, the Theory of Planned Behavior, and Expectancy-Value Theory. Using all three makes the theoretical foundation a bit cluttered and disjointed. When mapping variables to theories, precision is key. For instance, within Social Cognitive Theory, one must be very careful not to mix up internal cognitive constructs (like self-efficacy) with environmental or systemic variables. It might serve the paper better to streamline the framework and focus on the single most relevant theory that explains the resource-allocation dynamic discussed in your conclusion, rather than forcing all three theories into one model.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

SECOND ROUND

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Editor</u>	<u>Reviewer 1</u>	<u>Reviewer 2</u>
Accept the manuscript for publication.	/	/	/
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Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.			