



Self-Compassion in Students' Academic Field: Hero or Zero?

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ABSTRACT

Human life will not be separated from trials and problems, one of which is in the academic field. This academic field is one of the important things for a student because it will support and affect his future. Because of the importance of this academic role, students often feel anxious and worried about everything related to their academic field, which often causes negative behaviour that affects themselves and their environment. Therefore, this study will examine the role of self-compassion in matters relating to the academic field in students. This research was conducted using the *Systematic Literature Review (SLR)* method. The results of this study show that self-compassion has an important role in helping students respond to negative things that happen in their lives, especially those related to the academic field, so that it becomes a saviour so that students do not respond negatively to things that happen to them and can manage their emotions well and channel them into positive actions.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the life of a human being, there is a wheel of life that will continue to rotate the phases of human life. A person will not continue to be in an upper position or a comfortable position throughout his life, but there will be times when he is in a lower position or a falling phase in his life. It is normal for man to encounter various obstacles, problems, failures, and various things that will become trials in his life. These trials will also help humans to improve themselves and become better than before. But in reality, many people are not ready when faced with a down phase in their lives, which causes them to drag on in the problem so that they are down and cannot rise again from that situation.

One of the challenges or problems that we often encounter in everyday life is related to the academic field. Academics is one aspect that is very influential in human life because it supports the future of an individual. Problems in the academic field are also inseparable from one of the important skills in human life, namely the skill to manage emotions. The importance of the role of the academic field often makes individuals become worried and anxious when thinking about things or problems related to academics. The feeling of worry or anxiety felt by individuals when thinking about their academic field can actually be a driver and encouragement to improve their academic results and achievements. However, there are still many individuals who still cannot manage their emotions well.

Emotion management is important in human life, which has become one of the developmental tasks since humans are in adolescence according to Hurlock. If individuals do not know how to manage their emotions and do not channel their emotions properly, it can result in the emergence of various kinds of negative behaviour that can harm themselves and the surrounding environment. In reality, there are still many people who are confused and do not know how to channel their negative emotions when they are facing a difficult situation or problems in their lives, which leads to doing negative things. Therefore, individuals must achieve emotional independence and good emotional control. The existence of skills to control these emotions can help individuals to convey their emotions in an appropriate and good way, and not harm themselves or others, even though they are in difficult times (Wulandari and Rustika, 2016). This can be done by using and improving one of the abilities that exist within us, namely *self-compassion*.

In *self-compassion*, individuals still treat themselves well, understand themselves by not giving negative judgements on their own incompetence, and view negative experiences as common to all people. This allows individuals to care and understand themselves when they are at a difficult time in their lives and provide themselves with warmth and comfort. In a study conducted by Werner, it was found that individuals with high *self-compassion* have a better ability to survive in difficult situations and are protected from anxiety after experiencing stress or receiving stressors (Werner et al., 2012). According to Mustajab, individuals with high *self-compassion* will love themselves even though unpleasant things happen in their lives (Prastya et al., 2020). Seeing the importance of self-compassion, researchers are interested in conducting research that aims to see how the role of self-compassion in students, especially when it comes to the academic field.

2. METHODS

This research will use the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. Systematic Literature Review or literature review is a research method that reviews a particular topic that emphasises a single question that has been identified systematically, assessed, selected and concluded according to predetermined criteria based on evidence from quality research relevant to the research question. According to Creswell, literature review is a written

summary of articles from journals, books, and other documents that describe theories and information both past and present organising the literature into topics and documents needed (Creswell, 2012). This SLR method is a research method used by identifying, analysing, evaluating and interpreting all previous research results obtained by researchers. The results of this previous research were then reviewed by the researcher, by systematically reviewing and identifying the selected research articles.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Finding

The results of the literature review conducted by the researcher, there are 10 research articles with a span of the last 5 years (2019-2024) which are identified as having a correlation with the topic discussed in this study, namely regarding self-compassion and its relationship in the academic field in students.

Table 1. Literature Review

Author, publication year, country	Objective(s)	Methods	Journal	Key Findings
Yudhianto, K. A. (2023) Indonesia.	This study aims to determine the role of self compassion on anxiety in 3rd grade vocational students who are facing the final graduation exam.	Quantitative, using research instruments to study the population then the data is statistically analysed.	Jurnal Ilmu Sosial dan Pendidikan (JISIP)	Based on the research results of the correlation test, a very significant negative relationship between self-compassion and anxiety is obtained, meaning that the higher the individual's self-compassion and the lower the anxiety.
Erwansa, D. and Ridfah, A., (2024) Indonesia.	This study aims to determine the relationship between academic stress and self-compassion in new students at the Faculty of Psychology UNM.	Quantitative correlation with data analysis techniques using Spearman Rank Correlation.	ULILALBAB : Jurnal Ilmiah Multidisiplin	There is a highly significant negative relationship between self-compassion and the level of academic stress in students of the Class of 2020 at Makassar State University, with a value of 0.00 ($p < 0.01$) and a correlation coefficient of -0.484. It was found that the higher the level of self compassion, the lower the stress level of new students.

Widyastuti. (2020) Indonesia.	This study examines the effect of self-compassion on academic stress and self-adjustment in new students of the Faculty of Psychology, Makassar State University class of 2015.	Quantitative with data analysis techniques using regression analysis.	Jurnal Psikologi Talenta	Self-compassion has an influence on academic stress and self-adjustment in new students. Individuals with high self-compassion will avoid frustration and stress when facing pressure. High self-compassion also allows a person to be more self-accepting and supports a person to behave adaptively.
Rifa'i, H. R., and Syahrina, I. A. (2019). Indonesia	This study aims to determine the relationship between self-regulated learning and self-compassion with academic procrastination in class XI students at MAN 2 Solok.	Quantitative Correlation.	Jurnal PSYCHE 165 Fakultas Psikologi	There is a significant relationship between Self Compassion and Academic Procrastination in Class XI Man 2 Solok Students in the negative direction, meaning that if Self Compassion is low, then Academic Procrastination in Class XI Man 2 Solok Students will be high, otherwise if Self Compassion is high, then Academic Procrastination in Class XI Man 2 Solok Students will be low. Self-compassion variables contributed 27% to academic procrastination, and Self regulated Learning and Self Compassion variables simultaneously to Academic Procrastination by 23%.

Amanda, G. A. S., Asrori, M., and Yuline (2023) Indonesia.	This study aims to find the effect of self-compassion training to eliminate academic procrastination in class XI students of SMA Negeri 10 Pontianak.	Quantitative with a form of pre-experimental design, and using a pre-test post-test one group design.	Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Khatullistiw a	Self-compassion training is effective in reducing the level of academic procrastination of students in class XI SMA Negeri 10 Pontianak. Students who succeeded in reducing their academic procrastination level were students who played an active role during the training.
Felicia, Tiatri, S., Fransisca, I. R. D. (2023) Indonesia.	This study aims to determine the role of self-compassion and contingent self-esteem on appearance perceptions of academic performance in junior high school (SMP) and senior high school (SMA) students at X school in North Jakarta.	Quantitative using questionnaires.	Jurnal PSYCHE 165 Fakultas Psikologi	Self-compassion affects academic performance negatively and significantly. This means that the higher the self-compassion, the higher the academic performance. In addition, self-compassion has a negative influence with fear of failure and is positively associated with academic competence so that it can improve academic competence.
Yıldırım, F. B., and Demir, A. (2020). Indonesia	This study aims to examine the role of procrastination, test anxiety, self-esteem and self-compassion on self-handicapping in university students.	Quantitative	Psychological Reports	All predictor variables, namely procrastination, exam anxiety, self-esteem and self-compassion contribute significantly in explaining self-handicapping that occurs in university students, and procrastination is the strongest predictor in this study. The results showed that Self Compassion contributed 2% to self-handicapping, and high self-compassion

				will reduce self-handicapping.
Suryani, and Oktavia, N. A. (2021). Indonesia	This study aims to examine the Self-compassion programme, namely Pro-Session in increasing the academic resilience of Muslim students.	Quantitative with experimental research strategy Named 'Quasi-experimental'	Jurnal Konseling Religi	The results of this study indicate that there is a significant effect of the Pro-Session programme in increasing the resilience of Muslim students, so it can be concluded that self-compassion is effective for increasing individual resilience.
Inaya, A. A., Bakar, R. M., Hamid, H., (2024). Indonesia	This study aims to determine the effectiveness of self-compassion writing on improving emotional regulation in new students.	Experimental using between subjects design, and randomised block design.	INNOVATIVE: Journal Of Social Science Research	There is a difference in the level of emotional regulation in the group given self-compassion writing with the group that is not given self-compassion writing in new students. There is an increase in emotional regulation in students who are given self-compassion training, so it can be concluded that self-compassion is effective for improving emotional regulation in individuals.
Setiani, I. B., and Titi, D. (2023). Indonesia	This study aims to determine the effect of gender on students' self-compassion level and to determine the effect of students' self-compassion	Quantitative, with ex-post facto research type and ordinal regression analysis.	Jurnal Kajian Bimbingan dan Konseling	There is no significant influence between students' gender on their level of self-compassion and academic achievement.

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3.2. Discussion

Self-compassion is an individual's ability to provide kindness and care for oneself when experiencing challenges, problems and difficulties in life and understanding that all challenges, problems and difficulties in life are part of the human experience (Neff, 2011). Self-compassion is a process of uncritical understanding of one's own suffering, failures or inadequacies by understanding that they are part of the human experience in general (Neff, 2003). The function of self-compassion is as an adaptive strategy to manage emotions by reducing negative emotions and increasing positive emotions in the form of kindness and relationships (Hidayati, 2015).

In a study conducted by Gill, it was also found that self-compassion can be a protective factor against various experiences, developments, and symptoms of anxiety that arise. Increasing self-compassion will help individuals to evaluate other people's views or opinions in a balanced and wise manner so as to reduce worries and fears that may arise. Self-compassion also helps individuals to understand and accept that problems and trials in life are common to every human being, and makes individuals able to fight excessive self-criticism (Gill et al., 2018). In several other studies, it was also found that individuals who have high self-compassion also have higher psychological well-being than others (Pebriani and Kusuma W, 2021).

Based on the literature review that has been conducted by researchers, it is found that Self-Compassion has an effect on reducing as well as overcoming anxiety and stress experienced by individuals, especially in academic anxiety (Erwansa and Ridfah, 2024; Yudhianto, 2023; Widyastuti, 2020). This is in line with the results of research conducted by Werner, which states that individuals with high self-compassion have a better ability to survive in difficult situations and are protected from anxiety after experiencing stress or receiving stressors (Werner et al., 2012). In addition, self-compassion can also reduce adolescent anxiety in situations related to self-esteem (Neff et al., 2007).

In addition, based on a literature review that has been conducted on an article written by Widyastuti, it was found that high self-compassion helps a person in adjusting to a new environment, especially an educational environment because self-compassion makes a person more accepting of themselves and supports a person to behave adaptively. (Widyastuti, 2020). This is supported by previous research conducted by Breines and Chen in 2012, which states that Self-compassion helps adolescents as individuals to be able to survive, understand, and realise the meaning of a problem as a positive thing (Breines and Chen, 2012). According to Neff, individuals who have high self-compassion will be more able to feel comfortable in their lives, accept themselves as they are, and can trigger the emergence of

better emotion coping skills such as being more self-aware and able to improve negative emotional states (Neff, 2012). Meanwhile, adolescents who have low self-compassion will experience stress and even depression because they are unable to accept their condition and blame themselves (Bergen-Cico and Cheon, 2014).

Self-compassion also affects academic procrastination, which can be seen through research conducted by Rifa'i and Syahrina (2019), where the higher the self-compassion, the lower the academic procrastination, and vice versa. A training programme using self-compassion conducted by (Amanda et al., 2023) also proved effective in reducing and overcoming academic procrastination experienced by research subjects. In addition, another training programme conducted by (Suryani and Oktavia, 2021) using self-compassion has also been proven to increase students' academic resilience, and can also improve emotion regulation (Inaya et al., 2024). This is explained in research conducted by Podsakogg, that self-compassion is strongly related to a happier, optimistic mindset, and is able to facilitate an individual's ability to grow, explore and wisely understand oneself and others (Dewi et al., 2021).

Self compassion is one of the topics that can explain how individuals are able to survive, understand and realise the meaning of a difficulty as a positive thing (Hidayati, 2015). Individuals who have self-compassion in themselves bring many positive influences in life, including high levels of life satisfaction, good emotional intelligence, wisdom, happiness, optimism, personal initiative, low levels of depression, anxiety and fear of failure. However, it is important to note that self-compassion is not given to oneself because one is superior, or vice versa. Rather, it is given because the individual realises their interconnectedness and equality with others.

It is also important to recognise that having self-compassion is not the same as self-pity. In fact, self-compassion is the antidote to self-pity. Research shows that people with self-compassion are more likely to engage in perspective-taking, rather than focusing on their own distress. They are also less likely to dwell on how bad things are, which is one of the reasons self-compassionate people have better mental health. When we are self-compassionate, we remember that everyone suffers from time to time (shared humanity), and we do not exaggerate the magnitude of our struggles (mindfulness) (Neff and Germer, 2018).

Having self-compassion also does not make one weak towards oneself. Instead, self-compassion is a reliable source of inner strength that will give us courage and increase our resilience when we face difficulties. Research shows that self-compassionate people are better able to cope with difficult situations such as divorce, trauma, or chronic pain (Neff and Germer, 2018). Self-compassion will also not make us selfish, because by giving love to ourselves it will make it more possible for us to give more love to others. Research shows that people who have self-compassion will be more caring and supportive to others. The existence of self-compassion in a person will also not make him spoiled, on the contrary, this self-compassion will lead us to long-term health and well-being. In a study conducted by Neff, it was found that people who have self-compassion perform healthier and more productive behaviours. This result is also shown by research conducted by Setiani and Titi, (2023) and Felicia et al. (2023) in the literature review, which shows that individuals who have high self-compassion will increase their academic performance and productivity.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Self-compassion is one of the human abilities to be kind to oneself when faced with a problem. Self-compassion has a great influence on various things related to academics. High self-compassion can reduce the level of academic stress and anxiety, help individuals to adjust in a new educational environment, reduce the level of academic procrastination, increase academic resilience and emotional regulation in students. In addition, self-compassion can also improve academic performance and productivity. So, it can be concluded that the presence of self-compassion is very helpful and helps individuals and to respond positively to everything, especially those related to the academic field. Self-compassion makes individuals more caring and kind to themselves and others when facing all conditions. But keep in mind that self-compassion will not make someone weak, spoiled, selfish, or lazy, but the existence of self-compassion makes individuals stronger, because self-compassion becomes an inner strength that encourages oneself not to be weak or self-pitying, to be more productive and more caring for others.

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