



The Effect of Self-Compassion Therapy on Students' Learning Self-Efficacy

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The Effect of Self-Compassion Therapy on Students' Learning Self-Efficacy

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ABSTRACT

Background: Self-efficacy plays a vital role in students' academic success, yet many learners struggle with low confidence when facing academic challenges. One psychological factor believed to influence self-efficacy is self-compassion, which enables students to respond positively to failure and academic pressure. **Objective:** This study aims to examine the effect of self-compassion on self-efficacy among students at Ensino Básico Central Lontale. **Method:** This study employed a quantitative approach with an ex post facto design. The population consisted of 115 students, and a sample of 54 students was selected using a proportional stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using a self-compassion scale and a self-efficacy scale that were tested for validity and reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.758 and 0.623, respectively, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression. **Result:** The results showed that both self-compassion ($M = 42.91$, $SD = 5.67$) and self-efficacy ($M = 55.01$, $SD = 5.15$) fell within the medium category. Further analysis revealed that self-compassion had a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy, accounting for 55.9% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.559$, $p < 0.05$). **Conclusion:** This study confirms that self-compassion is an essential positive predictor of students' learning self-efficacy. These findings enrich evidence in educational psychology and provide practical guidance for school counselors and educators to implement self-compassion-based interventions to foster students' academic confidence. **Originality/Value:** This study offers novel insights by highlighting the role of self-compassion in learning self-efficacy among basic education students in Timor-Leste, an educational context that remains underrepresented in counseling and educational psychology literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, mental health issues have increasingly become a significant concern among adolescents. Health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, but a condition that allows individuals to function optimally in daily life (Larsen, 2022). One psychological issue commonly experienced by adolescents is self-criticism. Self-criticism refers to a pattern of negative self-evaluation in

which individuals direct harsh judgment, dislike, or even hatred toward themselves due to perceived failures or inadequacies (Gilbert et al., 2004). This tendency is closely associated with feelings of insecurity. Adolescents with low self-confidence often experience difficulties in adjustment, such as hesitation in decision-making, reluctance to express opinions, avoidance of social participation, social withdrawal, and persistent self-criticism (McLean, 2019). These characteristics contrast with self-efficacy, which emphasizes individuals' belief in their own capabilities.

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Low self-efficacy among students is commonly reflected in a lack of confidence in personal potential, heightened insecurity, and limited understanding of individual strengths and weaknesses. Such conditions indicate that many students experience insufficient self-efficacy (Van Dinther et al., 2011). According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions required to achieve specific goals. Similarly, Lent et al. (2017) define self-efficacy as a cognitive process involving judgments about one's capability to perform tasks necessary to attain desired outcomes. In contrast, Pajares (2012) emphasizes that self-efficacy reflects individuals' expectations regarding successful performance in particular situations. Thus, self-efficacy can be understood as a belief in one's competence to complete tasks or achieve goals successfully. Bandura (1997) further conceptualizes self-efficacy through three dimensions: level (perceived task difficulty), strength (confidence and persistence), and generality (the extent to which efficacy beliefs transfer across situations).

Bandura (1997) also identifies four primary sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Among these factors, emotional regulation plays a critical role. In this context, self-compassion is considered a crucial emotional factor that may impact self-efficacy. Neff (2003) conceptualizes self-compassion as an adaptive emotional regulation strategy that enables individuals to respond to personal difficulties with kindness rather than self-judgment. By fostering a compassionate attitude toward oneself, individuals can better manage negative emotions and strengthen their sense of competence.

Self-compassion refers to how individuals relate to themselves when experiencing failure, inadequacy, or suffering (Neff, 2003). Kashmari et al. (2013) describe self-compassion as a combination of motivation, affect, cognition, and behavior that reflects self-directed kindness aimed at alleviating suffering. Furthermore, Gilbert (2010) and Gilbert (2020) define self-compassion as an openness to experiencing one's suffering without avoidance, accompanied by a commitment to reducing that suffering through self-care and understanding. Self-compassion thus involves treating oneself with kindness, offering emotional comfort, and acknowledging imperfections as part of the shared human experience.

Self-compassion consists of three core components: self-kindness, which involves being caring and understanding toward oneself rather than self-critical; common humanity, which refers to recognizing that suffering and failure are universal human experiences; and mindfulness, which involves maintaining balanced awareness of thoughts and emotions without exaggeration or suppression (Neff, 2003). These components enable individuals to respond constructively to challenges and setbacks.

Several studies have examined the relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. Manavipour and Saeedian (2016) found a significant positive correlation between self-compassion and self-efficacy among students completing their final academic projects. Similar findings were reported by Allen (2020) and Luo et al. (2019), who identified positive associations between self-compassion and self-efficacy in students. However, contrasting evidence has also emerged. Flentje (2021) reported a negative correlation between self-compassion and self-efficacy among individuals aged 18 and above. In contrast, Kelly et al. (2021) found that the association between these variables was stronger among non-students than among students. These inconsistent findings suggest that the relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy may vary depending on age group and educational context.

Despite growing interest in this topic, existing research presents several limitations. Many studies focus primarily on correlational relationships, employ brief interventions with limited control conditions, or use self-efficacy measures that are not specific to academic contexts. Additionally, mediating and moderating variables such as emotional regulation, rumination, growth mindset, gender, grade level, and family or school support are often overlooked. Furthermore, cultural adaptation and educational contexts, particularly within Indonesian schools, have not been systematically explored.

Given these gaps, further investigation is needed to examine the role of self-compassion in predicting learning self-efficacy among adolescents. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effect of self-compassion on learning self-efficacy among Grade VIII students at Ensino Básico Central Lontale. Specifically, this study seeks to: (a) describe baseline levels of self-compassion and learning self-efficacy; (b) examine the predictive relationship and effect size of self-compassion on learning self-efficacy using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression; (c) determine the proportion of variance in learning self-efficacy explained by self-compassion (R^2); and (d) derive practical implications for school guidance and counseling, particularly in designing self-compassion-based interventions to enhance students' academic confidence.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a non-experimental research design using an ex post facto approach. Ex post facto research is conducted after events or phenomena have occurred and does not involve manipulation of the independent variable or the provision of experimental treatment to participants. This design is suitable for examining the relationships among psychological variables as they naturally occur.

In this study, self-compassion was treated as the independent variable. In contrast, self-efficacy was treated as the dependent variable the research aimed to examine the predictive relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy based on existing conditions among students. Hypothesis testing was conducted through statistical analysis without any form of variable manipulation.

2.2 Research Object

The population of this study consisted of 115 eighth-grade students enrolled at Ensino Básico Central Lontale. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure that students from each class were represented proportionally in the sample. This technique was chosen to reduce sampling bias and increase the representativeness of the sample. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, with a margin of error (e) of 5% and a 95% confidence level. Based on this calculation, a total of 54 students were selected as research participants.

2.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted during the regular school schedule with prior approval from the school authorities. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their participation was voluntary and that their responses would remain confidential. Students completed the questionnaires in a classroom setting under the supervision of the researcher. All participants provided informed consent before participating in the study.

Data were collected using psychological scale instruments, which included a self-efficacy scale and a self-compassion scale. Both instruments were developed using a four-point Likert scale format, with response options ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The scales included both favorable and unfavorable statements to capture respondents' psychological characteristics more accurately.

The self-efficacy scale was developed based on Bandura's (1997) theoretical framework, which includes three dimensions: level, strength, and generality. The initial version of this scale consisted of 26 items. The self-compassion scale was developed based on Neff's (2003) theory, encompassing three core components: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, with an initial total of 28 items.

Instrument validity was assessed through construct validity using expert judgment. After revisions based on expert feedback, the instruments were pilot-tested on 60 students who were not included in the main research sample. Item validity analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26. At a significance level of 5%, the critical r-value was 0.254.

The results indicated that five items from the self-efficacy scale were invalid, resulting in 21 valid items retained for the final instrument. Similarly, 11 items from the self-compassion scale were identified as invalid, leaving 17 valid items for use in data collection.

Reliability testing was performed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient through SPSS version 26. The self-efficacy scale obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.623, which falls within the moderate reliability category. The self-compassion scale demonstrated a reliability coefficient of 0.758, indicating strong reliability. Although the reliability of the self-efficacy scale was moderate, it was considered acceptable for research in educational and psychological contexts.

2.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and simple linear regression analysis. Descriptive analysis was used to determine the levels of self-compassion and self-efficacy among students. Score categorization was conducted by calculating the theoretical score range based on the minimum and maximum possible scores and then dividing the range into three categories: high, moderate, and low.

Simple linear regression analysis was employed to examine the predictive effect of self-compassion on self-efficacy. Prior to conducting the regression analysis, assumptions of normality and linearity were tested to ensure that the data met the requirements for regression analysis. The regression analysis aimed to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between variables, as well as the proportion of variance in self-efficacy explained by self-compassion (R^2).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

The results of this study will provide a description of self-compassion and self-efficacy among eighth-grade students at Ensino Básico Central Lontale. These results were obtained using SPSS Version 26. In accordance with the objectives of the research conducted by the researcher, the results described are: (1) the level of student self-efficacy; (2) the level of student self-compassion; (3) the influence of self-compassion on self-efficacy in students.

3.1.1 Student Self-Efficacy Levels

The researcher conducted a descriptive analysis of student self-efficacy levels based on the results of self-efficacy psychological scale measurements involving a total of 225 student respondents. These measurements were analyzed using SPSS version 26 to obtain accurate Estimates of student self-efficacy levels. The results of the self-efficacy scale measurement are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis of *Self-efficacy* Levels

Variable	N	M	SD	Category
Self-efficacy	225	55.01	5.151	Moderate

The general self-efficacy data obtained were analyzed more specifically to determine the results of students' self-efficacy levels per indicator. The self-efficacy variable has three indicators, namely level, strength, and generality. The three indicators in the self-efficacy variable display mean and Standard Deviation (SD) values that fall within the moderate category. Referring to the explanation above, the researcher attached the results of the descriptive analysis of the three indicators of the self-efficacy variable in the following table:

Table 2. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Self-Efficacy Indicators

Self-Efficacy Indicator	N	M	SD	Category
Generality	225	2.92	0.800	Moderate
Strength	225	2.53	0.747	Moderate
Level	225	2.44	0.710	Moderate

The results of the analysis indicate that the three indicators of self-efficacy level, strength, and generality are in the moderate category. The indicator with the highest score is generality, with a mean of 2.92 and a standard deviation of 0.800. Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest score has a mean of 2.44 and a standard deviation of 0.710. Strength obtained a mean of 2.53 and a standard deviation of 0.747, placing this indicator in the moderate category but not the lowest or highest. Based on these research results, students feel less confident in their abilities when facing task obstacles or problems. Additionally, students often lack persistence and commitment in attempting to complete tasks or problems, and they are less able to respond effectively to situations and past experiences.

3.1.2 Students' Level of Self-Compassion

The results of the descriptive analysis on the level of self-compassion among students were obtained from the measurement of the psychological scale of self-compassion, which included a total of 225 student respondents. The measurement of these results was assisted by SPSS version 26 in data processing to obtain an accurate measurement of the level of self-compassion among students. The results of the self-compassion scale measurement are presented in the following table;

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis of *Self-Compassion* Levels

Variable	N	M	SD	Category
Self-compassion	225	42.91	5.672	Moderate

The results of the self-compassion scale measurement, with a mean of $M = 42.91$ and a standard deviation

of $SD = 5.672$, indicate that students have a moderate level of self-compassion. The general self-compassion level data obtained was analyzed more specifically to determine the results of students' self-compassion levels per indicator. The self-compassion variable comprises three indicators: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. The three indicators in the self-compassion variable display mean and Standard Deviation (SD) values that fall within the moderate category. Based on the above explanation, the researcher attached the results of the descriptive analysis of the three indicators of the self-compassion variable in the following table:

Table 4. Results of Descriptive Analysis of Self-Compassion Indicators

Self-Compassion Indicator	N	M	SD	Category
Common Humanity	225	2.60	0.892	Moderate
Mindfulness	225	2.55	0.831	Moderate
Self-Kindness	225	2.43	0.900	Moderate

Based on the analysis results, the three indicators in the self-compassion variable namely, self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness are in the moderate category. The indicator with the highest score is common humanity, with a value of $M = 2.60$; $SD = 0.892$. Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest score is self-kindness, with a value of $M = 2.43$ and $SD = 0.892$. Mindfulness obtained a result of $M = 2.55$; $SD = 0.831$, which is not too far from the value of shared humanity and still places this indicator in the moderate category. Based on these research results, it can be concluded that students are less able to understand and accept their strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, students are less aware that every human being has weaknesses and has experienced failure. Furthermore, students can overcome excessive emotions within themselves, but sometimes their emotions remain unstable.

3.1.1 Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results

In simple linear regression analysis, classical assumption tests must be carried out to meet the requirements before performing simple linear regression tests. The steps required to meet the classical assumption test in a simple linear regression model include normality tests, linearity tests, and heteroscedasticity tests, which can be performed using SPSS version 26.

The normality test was performed using the one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which yielded a p-value of 0.200, indicating that the residual values can be considered normally distributed. The linearity test was performed using the test of linearity method, and the result was a significance value of 0.051 for the deviation from linearity, meaning that the dependent and independent variables have a linear relationship. Meanwhile, the heterosce-

dasticity test, using the Glejser test method, yielded a significance value of 0.205, indicating that there was no heteroscedasticity.

Hypothesis testing in this study employed simple linear regression analysis, utilizing SPSS Version 26. The simple regression test results table shows the value of the influence of self-compassion as an independent variable (X) on self-efficacy as a dependent variable (Y). The results of the simple linear regression test can be seen in the following table;

Table 5. Results of Simple Linear Regression Analysis

Variable	R	R ²	Beta	t	p-value
Self-compassion	0.784	0.559	0.748	16.817	0.000

The results of the simple linear regression test, as shown in Table 4.8, indicate that the values obtained are $R = 0.784$, $R^2 = 0.559$, $B = 0.748$, $t = 16.817$, and $P\text{-Value} = 0.000$. The results of the analysis can be explained in more detail, starting with the R value, which indicates the magnitude of the correlation or relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy, at 0.784. This result indicates a relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. R^2 or R-squared explains the magnitude of the influence of the self-compassion variable on self-efficacy, which is 55.9%. The B or regression coefficient in this study shows a value of 0.748, which is positive. This suggests that the influence of self-compassion on self-efficacy is also positive, as increasing self-compassion value leads to an increase in students' self-efficacy. Finally, looking at the significance value of the self-compassion variable, which shows a value of 0.000, it means that self-compassion influences self-efficacy, because the significance of $0.000 < \text{probability of } 0.05$. Based on the description of the results of the simple linear regression test above, it can be concluded that the research hypothesis proposed in this study is accepted. The accepted hypothesis states that "there is a positive and significant influence of self-compassion on self-efficacy in students."

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1 Student Self-Efficacy Levels

Self-efficacy is a crucial psychological construct that students must possess to engage in learning activities successfully. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability to organize and execute the actions required to accomplish specific tasks. Similarly, Panadero et al. (2017) define self-efficacy as a person's self-evaluation of their ability to perform actions correctly or incorrectly in accordance with predetermined standards.

Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to approach challenges with enthusiasm and persistence, are motivated

to take action, and are better able to regulate anxiety and stress (Lu et al., 2018). Conversely, individuals with low self-efficacy often experience difficulties in achieving goals, as they tend to doubt their abilities and avoid challenging tasks (Hirsch et al., 2018).

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis, students' self-efficacy in this study falls within the moderate category. This finding suggests that students have not yet fully developed a strong sense of confidence in their ability to complete academic tasks successfully. A more detailed examination of each self-efficacy indicator also shows that the dimensions of level, strength, and generality are all categorized as moderate. This suggests that students have not yet optimally developed the confidence required to handle tasks of varying difficulty, persist consistently in the face of challenges, and generalize past successes to new situations.

In terms of the level indicator, students demonstrate a moderate ability to judge the difficulty of tasks they can perform. According to Bandura (1997), this dimension reflects an individual's capacity to set challenging goals and believe they can complete tasks even when they are perceived as difficult. Pajares and Schunk (2005) further explain that students with high self-efficacy view complex tasks as challenges rather than threats, enabling them to apply effective learning strategies, seek assistance when necessary, and persist despite failure. The moderate level found in this study suggests that while some students feel capable of completing complex tasks, others still struggle, particularly when tasks require independent problem-solving without assistance.

The strength indicator, which reflects the consistency of confidence and perseverance in the face of difficulties, also falls into the moderate category. This dimension can be observed through students' efforts after failure, their resilience when encountering obstacles, and their commitment to completing assigned tasks (Bandura, 1997). In line with Chen (2015), self-efficacy influences how individuals respond to success and failure. The findings indicate that although some students demonstrate persistence and responsibility in completing tasks, others tend to underestimate their abilities and procrastinate when confronted with academic demands.

The generality indicator, which refers to the extent to which individuals can apply past experiences to new and varied situations, likewise shows moderate results. According to Bandura (1997), individuals with high generality can draw lessons from previous experiences to cope effectively with current challenges. This is consistent with Uzuntiryaki (2008), who emphasizes that self-efficacy develops through mastery experiences. In this study, some students can view past failures as learning opportunities and sources of motivation. However, others perceive failure as a sign of futility, which limits their ability to apply previous experiences constructively.

3.2.2 Students' Level of Self-Compassion

Self-compassion is a critical personal resource that supports students' emotional well-being and learning processes. Neff (2003) defines self-compassion as treating oneself with kindness and understanding in moments of failure or difficulty, rather than engaging in harsh self-judgment. Neff (2011) further emphasizes that self-compassion is an essential attitude for students to develop within the school context.

Self-compassion enables individuals to acknowledge and accept their imperfections as part of the shared human experience (Germer & Neff, 2013). Compassionate individuals can recognize suffering, tolerate emotional discomfort, and respond with care and warmth toward themselves and others (Strauss et al., 2016). Research by Yarnell and Neff (2013) shows that individuals with high self-compassion tend to approach problems in a balanced manner, considering both personal needs and situational demands.

The descriptive analysis results indicate that students' self-compassion is also categorized as moderate. According to Lathren et al. (2019), adolescents with moderate self-compassion generally demonstrate an adequate ability to accept their strengths and weaknesses, regulate negative emotions, and avoid extreme reactions to problems. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that students have not yet fully developed the capacity to treat themselves kindly when facing failure or adversity. This is further supported by the indicator analysis, which shows that self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness all remain at a moderate level.

Regarding the self-kindness indicator, students show a moderate tendency to accept themselves without excessive self-criticism. Neff (2003b) explains that self-kindness involves being understanding and supportive toward oneself rather than judgmental. Germer and Neff (2013) note that individuals with low self-kindness often respond to failure by blaming and criticizing themselves. The findings suggest that while some students can acknowledge their limitations and respond with self-acceptance, others still struggle to extend kindness toward themselves during difficult situations.

Similarly, the standard humanity indicator is categorized as moderate. Common humanity refers to the recognition that failure, suffering, and imperfection are universal aspects of human life (Neff, 2003b). Students with low common humanity often feel isolated and believe that they are alone in their suffering, which can lead to withdrawal from social environments (Seekis et al., 2022). The results indicate that some students have not yet fully internalized the idea that academic setbacks are a regular part of learning, causing them to feel unsupported or disconnected when they experience failure.

The mindfulness indicator also shows moderate results. Mindfulness refers to the ability to observe one's ex-

periences in a balanced and non-exaggerated manner (Neff, 2003). According to Chiovato et al. (2022), students with high mindfulness are more adept at assessing problems realistically and identifying appropriate solutions. In contrast, students with low mindfulness tend to ruminate excessively on their mistakes, which hinders problem-solving (Bluth & Eisenlohr-Moul, 2017). The findings indicate that although students generally understand the problems they face, they often remain overly focused on the emotional distress associated with failure rather than actively seeking solutions.

3.2.3 The Effect of Self-Compassion on Self-Efficacy in Students

The results of the inferential analysis indicate that self-compassion has a positive and significant effect on students' self-efficacy. This finding supports the proposed hypothesis that higher levels of self-compassion are associated with higher levels of self-efficacy among students. The analysis shows that self-compassion accounts for 55.9% of the variance in students' self-efficacy, suggesting a substantial influence.

Bandura (1997) explains that physiological and emotional states, such as fatigue, stress, anxiety, and mood, play an important role in shaping self-efficacy beliefs. Adverse emotional conditions can weaken individuals' confidence in their abilities, whereas positive emotional states can enhance self-efficacy. In this context, self-compassion serves as an adaptive emotional regulation strategy, enabling individuals to manage negative emotions effectively (Neff, 2003). By reducing self-criticism and emotional distress, self-compassion creates a psychological environment that supports stronger self-efficacy beliefs.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research, which demonstrates a positive relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. Iskender (2009) found that self-compassion is positively associated with optimism, happiness, personal initiative, and confidence. Choi et al. (2014) reported that individuals with high self-compassion are better able to overcome feelings of inferiority and self-doubt, which in turn strengthens their belief in their ability to handle challenges. This suggests that self-compassion facilitates the development of self-efficacy by fostering emotional resilience and self-acceptance.

Furthermore, Manavipour & Saeedian (2016) emphasize that self-compassion and self-efficacy are interrelated constructs that jointly enhance individuals' persistence in achieving goals. Similarly, Souza & Hutz (2016) found that self-compassion has a significant and positive effect on self-efficacy. Research by Kelly et al. (2019) also supports the existence of a positive relationship between these two variables in students. These findings highlight the importance of self-compassion as a psychological resource that enables students to maintain confidence and motivation, particularly when facing academic challenges.

Long and Neff (2018) explain that students with low self-compassion tend to avoid challenges and withdraw from difficult situations. In contrast, those with high self-compassion are more willing to confront obstacles without excessive self-blame. In a similar vein, Demirören et al. (2016) state that students with high self-efficacy can recognize and utilize their potential effectively while taking responsibility for their learning outcomes. Taken together, these findings underscore the importance of fostering both self-compassion and self-efficacy to support students' academic and personal development.

Based on the significance of these variables, targeted interventions are needed to enhance students' self-compassion and self-efficacy. Counselors and Therapist play a crucial role in providing structured support within the school setting. Carvalho et al. (2023) suggest that group counseling strategies, including group discussions, role-playing, homework assignments, mind mapping, and social drama, can effectively promote self-compassion among students.

In addition, Saphira and Mongrain (2010) propose self-compassion interventions that involve writing compassionate letters to oneself about difficult experiences. Their findings demonstrate a reduction in depressive symptoms and an increase in happiness over time. Germer and Neff (2019) also developed the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) program. This eight-week intervention has been shown to significantly increase self-compassion, attention, and life satisfaction, while reducing depression, anxiety, stress, and emotional avoidance.

Overall, the findings of this study align with existing literature demonstrating a positive and significant effect of self-compassion on students' self-efficacy. Therefore, the research hypothesis is accepted. Implementing counseling services and intervention programs that focus on enhancing self-compassion is expected to contribute positively to the development of students' self-efficacy, thereby supporting their academic performance and psychological well-being.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implications

The implications of this study suggest that self-compassion therapy can play a crucial role in improving students' learning self-efficacy. By enhancing students' ability to accept themselves, especially when facing failure and academic challenges, this research provides evidence that developing self-compassion can help students become more confident in their academic abilities. Therefore, implementing this therapy in educational settings could be an effective strategy to boost students' motivation and academic performance, particularly for those who struggle with academic pressure. It also offers insights for educators and

policymakers to consider integrating this psychological approach into curricula or educational programs to support students' mental well-being and academic development.

4.1 Research Contributions

This study contributes theoretically and empirically to the field of educational psychology by providing evidence that self-compassion is a significant predictor of students' self-efficacy. The findings reinforce Bandura's social cognitive theory by emphasizing the role of emotional regulation in shaping self-efficacy beliefs, while also extending Neff's framework by demonstrating that self-compassion functions not only as an emotional coping mechanism but also as a psychological resource that strengthens academic confidence. Empirically, this study enriches the literature by highlighting the relevance of self-compassion and self-efficacy among students in the educational context and by demonstrating that these constructs are modifiable through targeted interventions.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

5.1 Research Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting the findings. First, the cross-sectional design used in this research limits the ability to draw causal conclusions about the relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias or inaccurate self-assessment by the students. The sample size of 54 students, although adequate, may not be representative of the entire student population, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the study focused on a single educational institution, which may limit the applicability of the results to other contexts or cultural settings. Future research with larger, more diverse samples and longitudinal designs could provide a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of self-compassion on self-efficacy in different educational environments.

5.1 Recommendation for Future Research

Future research should explore the long-term effects of self-compassion on self-efficacy across different academic levels and diverse student populations to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how self-compassion develops over time and its sustained impact on students' academic performance and mental health. Additionally, future studies could investigate the effectiveness of specific self-compassion interventions, such as mindfulness training or self-compassion workshops, in enhancing self-efficacy across various learning environments. It would also be valuable to investigate the role of other psychological factors,

such as emotional regulation and resilience, in mediating the relationship between self-compassion and self-efficacy. Ultimately, examining cultural differences in how self-compassion affects self-efficacy may contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of its role in diverse educational contexts.

6. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion of this study, students' level of self-compassion is categorized as moderate. This finding suggests that students have not yet consistently developed the ability to treat themselves with kindness when facing difficulties or failure. Although students are generally able to show self-kindness in certain situations, they still tend to engage in self-criticism and self-blame at times. Furthermore, all components of self-compassion, namely self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, are also classified as moderate, suggesting that self-compassion has not yet been fully internalized as a stable personal resource among students.

The results also show that students' self-efficacy is at a moderate level. This indicates that students do not yet fully believe in their ability to complete academic tasks successfully. Each dimension of self-efficacy, including level, strength, and generality, falls within the moderate category. These findings suggest that students often lack persistence and consistency when facing challenging tasks and struggle to apply past experiences as meaningful lessons to improve their future performance.

Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that self-compassion has a positive and significant effect on students' self-efficacy. The analysis reveals that self-compassion accounts for 55.9% of the improvement in self-efficacy, which falls within the moderate category of influence. Based on these results, the research hypothesis is accepted, confirming that higher levels of self-compassion are associated with higher levels of self-efficacy. This highlights the importance of fostering self-compassion in students as a means of strengthening their confidence, persistence, and ability to cope with academic challenges.

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CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

All authors discussed the results, contributed to the final manuscript, and approved the final version for publication. Gabriel Manek: Conceptualization; Formulation of research objectives and design; Instrument development; Data collection; Formal analysis; Visualization; Writing of the original draft. Nuno da Conceição Dos Santos: Methodology; Instrument validation; Data curation; Analysis and interpretation of results; Writing review & editing (writing – review & editing).

Declaration of GenAI Usage in Scientific Writing

The authors declare that generative AI and language-assistance tools ([Quillbot](#), [Grammarly](#)) were used solely for grammar checking, language refinement, and proofreading of the draft manuscript. The scientific arguments, methodology, and conclusions were developed entirely by the authors. All use of generative AI in this article was carried out by the authors in compliance with the [IJCP GenAI Tool Usage Policy](#), with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest to declare. All co-authors have seen and agree with the contents of the manuscript and there is no financial interest to report.

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The authors declare that this study was conducted in accordance with research ethics, including obtaining approval from the relevant institution. This process respects the autonomy of participants, ensures the confidentiality of their data, and prioritizes their safety and well-being, in compliance with applicable research ethics guidelines. Written and verbal informed consent, or assent for minors, was obtained from all participants involved in the study.

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