

Academic Motivation as an Outcome of Self Compassion among Youth: A Case of Undergraduate Students of University of Gujrat

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Abstract

This paper aimed to investigate the relationship between self-compassion and academic motivation among undergraduate students of University of Gujrat (UOG). Through multi stage random sampling method 192 students of faculty of social sciences were selected. Data was collected through structured questionnaire. For the analysis of the data Pearson's correlation matrix and simple linear regression were used. The result of the study showed that self-compassion had positive and significant relationship with academic motivation. It was concluded that self-compassion enhances the academic motivation among students. The study suggested educational institutions must focus to enhance academic motivation through self-compassion by specifically concentrating to develop the environment of class as more conducive for learning. Awareness campaigns and seminars can also be used to increase level of self-compassion and level of academic motivation. Additionally, it was also recommended that these variables must also be investigated among students of schools and colleges.

Key words: Self-compassion, Academic motivation, Undergraduate, Students, Social sciences

Introduction

Self-compassion denotes the feelings of compassion and worry for one's own self, individual self-compassion does not mean to be selfish or self-seeking, and it does not mean that individual give importance to personal needs over those of others. Neff (2005) described that high level of self-compassion has greater effect in terms of control on the self-doubt and academic anxiety, that may lead to better academic performance. Self-compassion means to accept that pain, failure, and shortage are part of the human situation, and that all people including your own self are worth of compassion. The term self-compassion is a different one from self-pity (Goldstein & Kornfield, 1987).

Self-compassion has three components which include: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Studies have shown that people who have high self-compassion are less prone to self-criticism, anxiety, and depression. Self-kindness is the capacity to shift our actions and inner discussion to a softer, kinder tone, similar to how you might speak to a dear friend. Common humanity is a sense of interconnectedness and belief that your feelings and experiences are part of being human. Mindfulness helps us become more aware of how we treat ourselves and build our capacity to observe our experiences and reactions in a non-judgmental and balanced way. We do not want to ignore our feelings, but we want to avoid them as well (Neff, 2003).

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Motivation has different factors in educational perspective that are connected with the process of learning and as well as with academic motivation. Motivation has been divided into two major categories termed as internal motivation and external motivation. With an independent aim in the minds of people they handle a particular activity which is the influence of external motivation; however, the internal motivation offers the sufficient support in order to conduct a task (Mohamadi, 2006). There is another group of academic motivation which is amotivation: the absence of aim or force to follow an action due to failure of oneself to establish the possibility between their behavior and the activity (Vallerand, 1992).

Literature Review

Williams Stark & Foster (2008) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between self-compassion, motivation and procrastination. They investigated the relationship between motivations anxieties, achievement goals and procrastination trend, a sequence of correlation analyses were conducted, with the alpha level set at .05 for all tests. Undergraduate of college completed four online surveys. The research has shown that individuals with high self-compassion reported radically less motivation, anxiety and procrastination tendency than those with low or modest self-compassion. This study is an attempt to contribute to this growing area of research on self-compassionate attitudes and their influences on academic motivation and performance.

Neff and Vonk (2009) discussed the literature regarding self-compassion vs. global self-esteem. Their study focused on the psychological process because this process is related to two different ways that are thinking and feeling about self-esteem and self-compassion of oneself. It was found in the study that self-compassion was not much dependent on specific outcomes rather it was the feeling of self-worth and self-esteem.

The aim of conducting the study was to investigate whether self-compassion was a unique interpreter of ego-focused reactivity in comparison to global self-esteem. Participants were randomly assigned to the study and sample was 165 undergraduate students. The researcher revealed that self-compassion was a stronger negative predictor of social comparison, public self-consciousness, and self-rumination than was global self-esteem.

Hajiaziz and Ho (2017) conducted a study to examine the direct and indirect effects of self-compassion on procrastination among University students in Thailand. The study discovered that the participant's level of self-compassion was negatively linked with their level of academic procrastination. The participants were engaged via convenience sampling. The sample consisted of 200 respondents. It was also exposed that the students' level of self-compassion had a direct control on their reported level of academic procrastination. The findings from the present study suggest that self-compassion has a positive influence on procrastination by lowering the participants' tendency to procrastinate in their academic tasks. The researcher clearly show that self-compassion is a significant positive psychological attribute, feelings of kindness and equanimity, high levels of optimism, motivation, and positive affect in countering life's adversities.

There is a lot of criticism in place for self-esteem programs in learning institutions as a basic source of encouraging a positive sense of self-improvement, motivation and positive attitude among students. However, researches also reinforce the notion by arguing that self-compassion highly offers different psychological and health benefits to self-esteem with limited drawbacks (Neff,

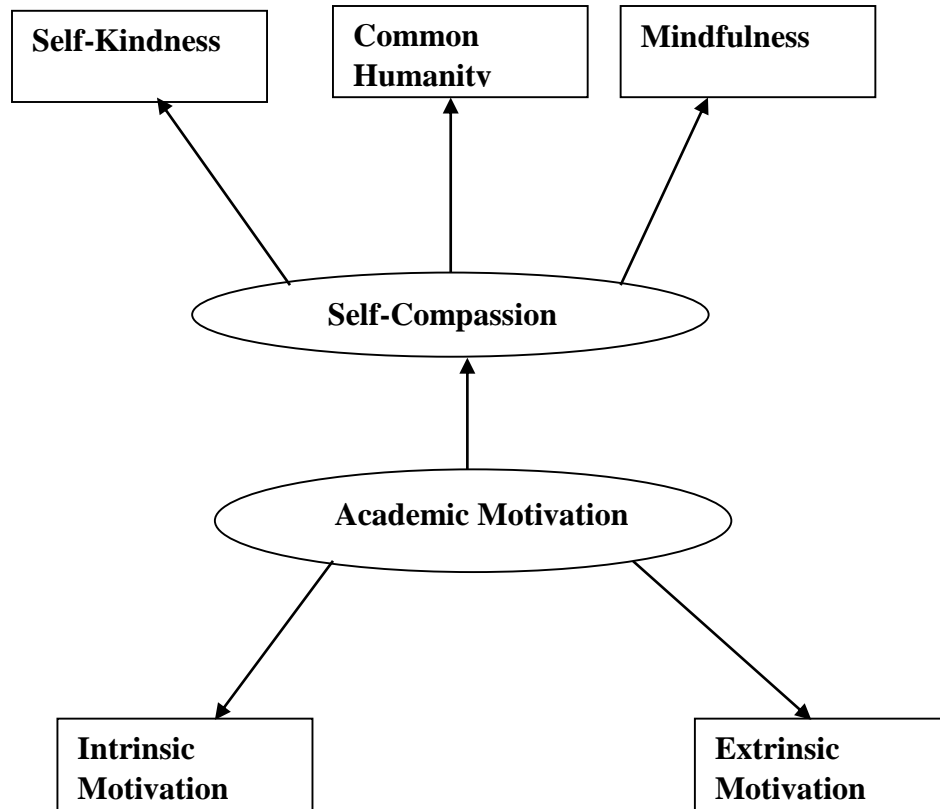
Kirkpatrick, & Rude, 2007). Such findings, although, are promising and researches related to self-compassion is at birth stages and there is a need of further scientific investigation about the relationship of self-compassion and associated psychological processes (Raes, 2009). There are several theoretical beliefs of compassion towards (or against) self that may have enough potentials to affect process of human learning and socialization (Rothblum, Solomon, & Murakami, 1986). The original contribution of the self-compassion is focusing the emotional attitude of individuals in the conditions of failure and success. It gets the students back from going in any serious psychological disaster.

Motivation has very essential impact and brings good change to the student's academic career. It can bring one in the position to argue and emphasized self-determination that is found in the conceptualization of self-esteem. Moreover, self-compassion is unique in its specific attention to emotions and its accurate regulations as one of its core segment because it largely entails mindfulness rather than over-identifications or any correlated negative sentiments. Therefore, it can be easily linked with students' work method and their psychological intelligence (Tangney, Dearing, Wagner & Gramzow, 2000). Thus, the concept of increasing self-compassion in embedded into its very definition, with equipped pathways existing in well-established interventions.

Taghipour, Gilaninia, Jalali, Azizpour, Razaghi & Mousavian (2012) conducted a study to investigate the standardizing academic motivation scale. The present research used a sample consists of 708 high school students in all educational levels. Exploratory method is used in this study and follows the conventional method for standardizing tools and research. The data collection tool for this study is tests of academic motivation (Vallerand, 1992). The discussed scale in Iranian society is enough valid and reliable and practical to use.

Methodology

The objective of present study was to find out the relationship between Self-compassion and Academic motivation among undergraduate students of University of Gujrat. It analyzed the level of self-compassion and academic motivation among undergraduate students. Questionnaire was used to collect the data. The main scales of the study were self-compassion and academic motivation. These scales were developed by Neff (2003) and Robert (1992-1993) and have open access to use for research purpose. Data was collected from a sample of 192 undergraduate students of faculty of social sciences of University of Gujrat. Multistage sampling technique was used to select sample from target of population of study. The current study used a structured questionnaire as a tool of data collection whereas technique of data was survey method. After collecting data through questionnaire from 192 respondents, its consistency was checked by editing data. Researchers used software (SPSS version 21) to check the reliability of the data. Kolmogorov Smirnov Test was applied to test the normality of data. Descriptive analyses of the study showed frequency distribution of responses of sample. Pearson's correlation was calculated between the main variables of the study that were self-compassion and academic motivation among undergraduate students. Simple linear regression was also used to test the association between these variables.



Hypothesis

H₁: There is a correlation between various dimensions of self-compassion and academic motivation among undergraduate students

H₂: The self-compassion is positively associated with academic motivation among undergraduate student

Inferential Analyses

Following hypothesis were tested by using the correlation:

H₀: There is no statistically significant relationship between Self-Compassion and Academic Motivation among undergraduate students

H₁: There exists a statistically significant relationship between Self-Compassion and Academic Motivation among undergraduate students

Descriptive Results**Table 1.1 Demographic variables (n=192)**

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	37	19.3
Female	155	80.7
Age of Respondents (in years)		
18-20	62	32.3
21-24	121	63.0
25-28	9	4.7
Department		
Sociology	33	17.2
Psychology	64	33.3
Economics	51	26.6
Education	44	22.9
Program		
BS	147	76.6
M.A	45	23.4
Semester		
Sixth	81	42.2
Eight	66	34.4
Fourth	21	11
Second	24	12.5
Area of Residence		
Rural	90	46.9
Urban	102	53.1
Family System		
Nuclear	121	63.0
Joint	71	37.0
Father's Education		
No education	12	6.3
Matriculation	42	21.9
Intermediate	35	18.2
Bachelors	87	45.3
M.Phil.	16	8.3
Father's Occupation		
Businessman	46	24.0
Accountant	30	15.6
Government employee	45	23.4
Farmer	24	12.5

Went abroad	25	13.0
Professor	15	7.8
Jobless	7	3.6
Mother's Education		
No education	29	15.1
Matriculation	30	15.6
Intermediate	39	20.3
Bachelor	60	31.3
M.Phil.	34	17.7
Monthly Household Income		
50,000- 83,000	71	37.0
83,001- 116001	101	52.6
116,002- 149,002	15	7.8
149,003 and above	05	2.6

Table 1.2 Correlation between various dimensions of self-compassion and academic motivation

		Self-kindness	Common humanity	Mindfulness	Intrinsic motivation	Extrinsic motivation
Self-kindness	Pearson	1	.123	.198**	.042	.091
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.090	.006	.563	.210
Common humanity	Pearson	.123	1	.311**	.317**	.297**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.090		.000	.000	.000
Mindfulness	Pearson	.198**	.311**	1	.299**	.156*
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.000		.000	.031
Intrinsic motivation	Pearson	.042	.317**	.299**	1	.524**
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.563	.000	.000		.000
Extrinsic motivation	Pearson	.091	.297**	.156*	.524**	1
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.210	.000	.031	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 1.3 Overall correlation between Self –Compassion and Academic Motivation

		Self -Compassion	Academic Motivation
Self-Compassion	Pearson correlation	1	.414**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Academic motivation	Pearson correlation	.414**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Model fitness**Table 1.4 Coefficient results when Self-compassion is independent and Academic motivation is dependent.**

Independent Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	59.616	5.449		10.941	.000
Self-compassion	.805	.129	.414	6.262	.000

($p < 0.05$, $F = 39.215$ (0.000), Adjusted $R^2 = .167$)

Discussion

The demographic profile for sample of present study depicted (Table 1.1) that most of the respondents were females (80.7%) and majority of the respondents were in age group 21-24 years (63.0%) whereas, 32.3% of the respondents belong to age group 18-20 respectively.

Department to which majority of respondents were studying was psychology (33.3%) and most of the respondent's program of study was BS (76.6%). Majority of the respondents (42.2%) were from semesters sixth and eight (34.4%). The above table also depicts that many of the students' current place residence was in urban areas (53.1%) while, more than half (63.0%) of the respondents living in nuclear family system as compared to joint family system (37.0%). Educational background of majority of respondents' fathers was bachelors (45.3%) and majority of the fathers of respondents were engaged in their own business activity (24.0). Education level attained by most of respondents' mothers was bachelor (31.3%) and monthly household income of majority of respondents was between 83,001- 116001 (52.6) in Pakistani rupees.

The standardized Cronbach's alpha reliability value .828 was calculated for the scales of self-compassion and academic motivation among the students. Table 1.2 illustrates correlation analyses between dimensions of self-compassion (self-kindness, common humanity and mindfulness) and

academic motivation (intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation). It demonstrates that self-kindness is positively and significantly correlated with characteristic of mindfulness. The p-value (.006) proves the relationship between level of self-kindness and mindfulness among the undergraduate students. It also shows that common humanity and mindfulness are positively and significantly correlated with dimensions of academic motivation that are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation with p-value less than alpha value (0.05). Above results in Table 1.3 show the overall correlation among two variables that were self-compassion and academic motivation. The significance level (p-value) was .000 which was less than alpha (0.05) depicted that significant correlation exists between self-compassion and academic motivation. The Pearson's correlation value (.414) showed a positive correlation between study variables even at significance level of $p < 0.001$.

The table 1.4 shows the regression analyses. It depicts that the relationship between self-compassion and academic motivation is significant ($F = 39.215, p < 0.05$). The association between the variables was accounted for 16.7 % (adjusted $R^2 = .167$). Value of p (0.000) suggested that overall model was fit. The model above represents that a greater level of self-compassion among students (standardized beta = .414, $p < 0.05$) lead to higher level of academic motivation.

Regression results represent that exposure to self-compassion that includes self-kindness, common humanity and mindfulness had a significant influence on academic motivation which contains the variables, intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. This relationship had also significant effect because p-value is less than 0.05. Neff, Hsieh & Dejittreat (2005) concluded in their study that self-compassion had a positive relationship with intrinsic motivation and a negative relationship with anxiety.

Overall the inferential analysis has shown significant relationship between the self-compassion and academic motivation among undergraduate students. This depicts that students who had high Self-compassion were more likely to have high level of Academic Motivation. As Williams, Stark and Foster (2008) demonstrated in their study that higher level of self-compassion were linked to lower levels of academic worry. This study contributes to the growing area of research on self-compassionate attitudes and their influences on academic motivation and performance.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The main objective of the study was to examine the relationship between the self-compassion and academic motivation among undergraduate students of UOG. Pearson's correlation matrix and regression analysis was used to analyze the relationship between level of self-compassion and level of academic motivation among students. The results of the study had shown a positive and significant of relation between the level of self-compassion and level of academic motivation among undergraduate students of university of Gujrat. Keeping in view the findings of the study, following suggestions/recommendations were made for the academic purpose and practical work:

- The relationship between self-efficacy and academic motivation must also be investigated.
- Self-compassion is needed to be enhanced young generation.
- This research should also be applied to the schools and colleges to analyse the academic motivation among students.
- Designing/ improvement of the productive environment of the class rooms with objective to increase motivation among students.

- The sample should be increased to get the real picture of dependent and independent variables.
- Involve both genders equally in research for better results.

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