

Self-compassion and Achievement Goals: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach

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Abstract

Problem Statement: Because research on self-compassion is novel, to examine the relationships between this construct and several psychological and educational variables is a necessity. One of these educational variables is achievement goals.

Purpose of Study: The purpose of this study is to examine the relationships between self-compassion and achievement goal orientations.

Methods: The sample of study consists of 646 university students who were enrolled in different programs at Sakarya University, in Turkey. Of the 646 participants, 319 were female and 327 were male; the mean age was 19.7. The Turkish version of the Self-compassion Scale and the 2X2 Achievement Goal Orientations Scale were used to assess self-compassion and achievement goals. The relationships between dimensions of self-compassion and achievement goals were examined using correlation analysis and the hypothesis model was tested through structural equation modeling. Data were analyzed by LISREL 8.54 and SPSS 11.5.

Findings and Results: In correlation analysis, self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness factors of self-compassion were positively related to learning-approach/avoidance goals and were negatively related to performance-approach/avoidance goals. On the other hand, self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification factors of self-compassion were associated positively with learning-avoidance, performance-approach/avoidance goals and were associated negatively with learning-approach goals. According to path analysis results, learning-approach/avoidance goals were predicted positively and performance-approach/avoidance goals were predicted negatively by self-kindness, common humanity, and mindful-

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ness. Further self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification predicted learning-approach goals in a negative way and learning-avoidance, performance/performance-avoidance goals in a positive way. Six factors of self-compassion predicted 72% of learning-approach, 39% of learning-avoidance, 98% of performance-approach, and 97% of performance-avoidance goals.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Participants were limited to Sakarya University students and a replication of this study for targeting other student populations should be made in order to generate a more solid relationship among constructs examined in this study. Also, educational settings should help to foster the self-compassion level of students.

Keywords: Self-compassion, achievement goals, structural equation modeling, path analysis