

Research Article

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The Relationship between Mattering to Others and Self-Compassion among University Students

Jaber Alhubaidah , Saud Alharbi , Ahmad Al Alwan 

Abstract

Background/purpose. The study examined the relationship between mattering to others and self-compassion among a sample of students of basic education in Kuwait.

Materials/ Methods. For data collection, a Mattering to Others Scale and a Self-Compassion Scale were employed. They were applied to a sample of 1200 male and female students selected using simple random sampling procedures from the population of the study.

Results. The study found that mattering to others was at a moderate level. While self-compassion was high. The study also found that there are no statistically significant differences in mattering to others and self-compassion levels due to gender, while there are significant differences due to academic year in favor of fourth-year students. There was a statistically significant positive correlation between mattering to others and self-compassion. Based on the results, the researcher asserted the need to focus more on mattering to others as an indicator of self-concept and self-esteem among students.

Conclusion. Considering the results of the current study, the researchers recommended to give a mattering to others attention in educational contexts.

1. Introduction

One of the important variables that have been overlooked and rarely studied in the counseling field is mattering to others, which is very crucial in improving self-esteem and self-concept, and that means that it plays a vital role in the academic life of students. This concept is mainly concerned with individual's feelings that they are valued and respected since they can influence other lives. The majority of sociology researchers have examined the role of mattering to others in daily social life, but it has been heavily ignored in counseling (Rayle, 2006).

Despite being a concept rooted in ancient religion such as Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, self-compassion did not attract psychologists and counselors previously and it has become a major focus of these scholars in the last few years as psychological and counseling literature is now increasingly documenting the many benefits of having high levels of self-compassion (Barnard & Curry, 2011).

1.1. Problem of the study

As faculty members, the researchers noticed that students in the universities do not pay much attention to some important psychological variables such as mattering to others and self-compassion. These variables are considered essential among students in higher education institutions; the system of education is more challenging. It can be said that for higher education students, the demand to have self-compassion is higher since they are required to mattering to others. It indicates that for these students, having high self-compassion will lead them to succeed in mattering to others.. Although studies (Gharaibeh, 2021; Abu Msameh, 2020) documented the positive effects of mattering to others and self-compassion on students' academic success, the researchers were not able to cite studies that examined the relationship between mattering to others and self-compassion among Kuwaiti students which motivated them to conduct this study.

Specifically, the main purpose of this study can be stated in the answer to the following questions: (Q1) "What is the level of mattering to others among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait?", (Q2) "What is the level of self-compassion among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait?", (Q3); "Are there statistically significant differences in mattering to others and self-compassion levels due to gender and academic year?, (Q4):" Is there a relationship between mattering to others and self-compassion among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait?".

1.2. Significance of the study

The significance of the study stems from the fact that it sheds light on the relationship between two important variables, which are mattering to others and self-compassion. This will give more information about them to help future researchers benefit from the results of this study to examine this relationship among other study populations. Furthermore, this study provides two important instruments (the Mattering to Others Scale and the Self-Compassion Scale) that can be employed in future research. Finally, it is hoped that the results of this study can help university counselors develop some measures, such as seminars and brochures, that can help students have more information about these two variables.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Mattering to Others

The concept of mattering was introduced over forty years ago by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981), who described it as both a feeling and a need. Additionally, mattering is crucial for personal adjustment and societal functioning, defined as the sense of being significant to others and receiving their attention. They also suggested that individuals can feel they matter when they know others rely on them.

Mattering is viewed as a personal resource, defined by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) as the feeling that others depend upon us, are interested in us, are concerned with our fate, or experience us as an ego-extension. This feeling is believed to stem from four key sources: attention, importance, dependence, and ego-extension. Attention refers to self-awareness, which means that one's actions are recognized and acknowledged by others. Importance is the belief that one's actions hold significance for others. Dependence arises from social connections and obligations, reflecting how much significant others rely on an individual and how their well-being is linked to that person's actions or affection. Ego-extension is the conviction that others have an emotional stake in an individual, believing they would be missed if they were absent, or that their personal achievements or failures would evoke joy or disappointment in others (Taylor, 2001).

Mattering is described as a type of external validation from others, both on a personal level and within a larger societal context. Rosenberg et al. (1999) defined mattering to others as the feeling that one's actions can make a difference and have an impact. Additionally, the concept of mattering to others was initially established as a social psychological construct in 1979 (Rosenberg & McCullough, 1979). Mattering to others is defined as the perception of ourselves as an important part of the world, where we believe that others care about us, seek our advice, and would be upset if we were no longer present. As such, when individuals feel they do not matter to others- that they are acknowledged or relied upon- they have to deal with feelings of irrelevance (Schieman & Taylor, 2001).

Elliot et al. (2004) described mattering to others as "the perception that, to some extent and in various ways, we are a significant part of the world around us. They defined mattering through three key aspects: awareness (meaning that others pay attention to us), importance (referring to the investment others make in us), and reliance (indicating that others depend on us to meet their needs). When individuals feel that they do not matter to others, it can lead to feelings of unimportance and disconnection in an unsympathetic world, which may result in maladaptive behaviors as they seek to gain a sense of importance and significance. Davis et al. (2019) mentioned that mattering to others is positively correlated with self-esteem, psychological well-being, and a sense of meaning in life, while being inversely related to depression and distress.

Mattering to others develops by the fact that individuals make various comparisons with others as to how they are important to them. In other words, one field that he matters as he contrasts his perceptions about the attention he receives from others with those that others receive from these same individuals. Gharaibeh (2021) assumes that individuals compare the attention they receive from one of their friends with that other people receive from the same friend, which gives a clear perception of their status in the friend's life.

2.2. Self-Compassion

Compassion is often defined as the kind, empathetic feelings that arise when we wish to alleviate the suffering of others, characterized by openness, understanding, and a deep sense of connection to their pain. Self-compassion is a similar process, but directed inward, focusing on one's own suffering in moments of personal failure or perceived inadequacy. According to Neff (2003), self-compassion involves showing oneself the same kindness, understanding, and support one might extend to others, creating a nurturing response to personal struggles instead of self-criticism or judgment.

Self-compassion involves being aware and accepting of one's own suffering rather than avoiding or distancing oneself from it. This awareness fosters a desire to alleviate that suffering and to heal oneself with kindness (Aranda et al., 2021). In the same vein, self-compassion entails being receptive to personal failures and hardships, recognizing them as part of the "shared human fallibility" (Kotera & Gordon, 2021).

Additionally, Yang et al. (2019) mentioned that self-compassion means treating oneself with kindness instead of harsh criticism, recognizing imperfections as a natural aspect of the shared human experience rather than viewing them as isolating, and being aware of painful emotions without overly identifying with them. One key aspect of self-compassion is the ability to feel connected to the broader human experience of suffering without isolating or distancing oneself.

As highlighted by Neff (2003), self-compassion involves a deep awareness of one's own suffering and that of others, consisting of three main components: (i) self-kindness, which means being kind and understanding towards oneself; (ii) common humanity, recognizing that suffering is a shared aspect of human existence; and (iii) mindfulness, which entails being fully present in the moment. While self-compassion is related to compassion, which focuses on being sensitive to the suffering of others and the desire to alleviate it, self-compassion emphasizes one's own experiences of suffering (Shonin et al., 2017).

Furthermore, self-compassion entails acknowledging that imperfections, mistakes, and challenges are integral to the human experience. It requires a balanced response to negative experiences, ensuring that painful feelings are neither repressed nor blown out of proportion. When someone is consumed by negative emotions, they lose all perspective. Conversely, self-compassion encourages a healthy distance from one's emotions, allowing them to be experienced fully with mindful objectivity (Weliangan et al., 2024).

Individuals who practice self-compassion are driven to learn and grow for intrinsic motivations rather than seeking social approval (Neff, 2016). Similarly, students with high levels of self-compassion cultivate an internal desire to persevere and tackle the challenges and demands of the learning process. Consequently, it is anticipated that high self-compassion will positively influence students' academic performance. Moningka (2017) mentioned various factors influencing self-compassion, including personality, gender, parental roles, and culture.

Moreover, Aydoğdu and Dirik (2022) confirmed that individuals with a high degree of self-compassion tend to have greater self-esteem. Self-compassion can serve as a protective factor against negative psychological distress resulting from stressful life events. In the field of psychology, self-compassion is viewed both as a personality trait and as a skill that can be developed. Self-compassion is closely linked to the motivational patterns that drive achievement and performance, showing a positive correlation with mastery goals. It stands out as one of the most significant predictors of an individual's intrinsic motivation in both academic and workplace settings, influencing their sense of responsibility for success and failure, as well as their capacity to view mistakes as essential and unavoidable parts of the learning process (Awamleh, 2019).

In addition, Berking and Whitley (2014) stated that self-compassion is an effective strategy for emotional regulation, as it helps transform negative emotions into positive ones by distancing oneself from suffering. It has a significant role in dealing with doubts and failures, especially among youth who are more prone to self-critical thinking. Additionally, individuals with a high level of hope tend to achieve their goals even during setbacks, viewing mistakes as learning opportunities, which enhances their self-esteem. In contrast, those with low hope perceive failures negatively, which adversely affects their self-esteem. Therefore, hope is a process through which mental health can be enhanced (Harshitha & Sasi).

Thus, trait self-compassion is characterized as an implicit (unconscious and automatic) system for regulating emotions. This involves an individual's acceptance and non-judgmental perspective towards both internal and external stressors (Svendsen et al., 2016). Neff et al. (2021) has recently defined state self-compassion and found that it can also be described through the six components of self-compassion. The key distinction between trait and state self-compassion lies in the fluctuating

nature of an individual's state based on the situation. Particularly in challenging circumstances, the level of state self-compassion can be considered essential (Thøgersen-Ntoumani et al., 2017).

Kristin Neff's three-dimensional model (2003) defines self-compassion as comprising self-kindness (treating oneself with warmth and understanding rather than harsh criticism), common humanity (recognizing that suffering and failure are part of the shared human experience), and mindfulness (maintaining balanced awareness of one's thoughts and feelings without exaggeration or denial). Attachment theory provides another perspective, suggesting that self-compassion is influenced by early attachment patterns; individuals with secure attachment are more likely to adopt a compassionate self-view, while those with insecure attachment may be more self-critical (Kelly et al., 2012; Raes, 2011). Emotional regulation theory also highlights self-compassion as a crucial strategy for managing negative emotions constructively, as studies show that self-compassion supports individuals in facing personal challenges in a supportive way, reducing stress and fostering a positive self-view (Leary et al., 2007; Ingledew, 2008).

2.3. The Relationship between Mattering to Others and Self-Compassion

Studies have documented the relationships between mattering to others and self-compassion. For example, in one of the few studies in Arab countries, Abu Msameh (2020) reported a statistically significant positive correlation between mattering to others and self-compassion. This researcher explained the correlation by indicating that individuals having a high level of self-compassion is more able to put themselves in others' state of mind, capable of understanding their positive and negative emotions, and this puts them in a better place to give help others, and this has a positive impact on mattering to others concept. As mattering to others is mainly concerned with how others perceive the individual as important to them, being self-compassionate mirrors the ability to understand what others are feeling and act upon the negative or positive emotions others are experiencing.

2.4. Previous Studies

The researcher reviewed a few prior studies pertaining to the study variables in this section. For example, A study by Van and Vohs (2023) investigated the concept of mattering to others among university students and its effects on their mental health and academic performance. The study sample consisted of 280 university students. The results showed a moderate level of mattering to others among university students. The findings also indicated that students who reported a higher sense of mattering to others experienced lower levels of anxiety and depression. Furthermore, a significant positive correlation was found between mattering to others and academic engagement, suggesting that students who feel valued by their peers and faculty are more likely to be engaged and satisfied with their academic experience.

In the United States, Smith and Jones (2021) explored the concept of self-compassion among university students, focusing on its relationship with mental health outcomes and academic performance. The study sample consisted of 300 university students. The results indicated that higher levels of self-compassion were significantly associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression. Specifically, students who reported higher self-compassion tended to have better emotional well-being and were more resilient in facing academic challenges. Furthermore, self-compassion was found to correlate positively with academic performance.

Furthermore, a study by Gharaibeh (2021) examined the predictability of mindfulness, self-compassion, and importance to others regarding emotional labor among mental health professionals. A predictive design was employed by using the Mindfulness Scale, the Self-compassion Scale, the Importance to Others Mattering Index, and the Emotional Labor Scale. The study sample consisted of 319 mental health professionals. The study found that professionals had a moderate level of mindfulness, while self-compassion and the importance of others were high. Deep acting and

acts of realism were rated high, but surface acting was low. There were no significant differences in mindfulness, self-compassion, or importance to others based on gender, education, experience, or marital status. However, a significant difference in deep acting was found in favor of those with over 10 years of experience. A negative correlation was observed between mindfulness and surface acting, while positive correlations existed between mindfulness and deep acting and acts of realism. Self-compassion accounted for 19.2% of the variance in surface acting, and mindfulness accounted for 2%. For deep acting, self-compassion explained 18.4%, mindfulness explained 5.8%, and the importance of others contributed 5.9%. Lastly, the importance of others explained 11.2% of the variance in acts of realism.

A study by Abu Msameh (2020) examined the predictive ability of fear of compassion, self-compassion, and the importance of others regarding smiling depression among individuals with senior job titles. The sample of the study consisted of 156 individuals, including 104 males and 52 females, all of whom had moderate or higher levels of depression as measured by the Beck Depression Inventory. The results revealed that the levels of both compassion and self-compassion related to smiling depression among individuals with senior job titles were moderate, while the level of the importance of others was high. The findings showed no statistically significant differences in the overall level of fear of compassion attributed to gender, years of experience, residence, monthly income, and educational level. Additionally, the results revealed no statistically significant differences in the levels of the importance of others, fear of compassion, self-compassion, or smiling depression among senior job title holders attributed to gender, years of experience, residence, monthly income, and educational level. The study's findings also indicated a difference in the predictive ability of fear of compassion on smiling depression among senior job title holders attributed to gender, favoring females. However, there were no statistically significant differences in the predictive ability of self-compassion or the importance of others on smiling depression among senior job title holders attributed to gender.

3. Methodology

This section provides a detailed description of the study's methodology, population, sample, sampling technique, research tools, procedures for verifying validity and reliability, study variables, and the statistical methods employed to analyze the results.

3.1. Study design

A descriptive-analytical approach was adopted to achieve the study's objectives and answer its questions. Data was collected through electronically distributed questionnaires, which were then statistically analyzed using appropriate methods.

3.2. Population and Sample

The study population included all students enrolled in the bachelor program of the basic education specialization in the first semester of the academic year 2024/2025. The total number of these students was 20,073 students. A simple random sampling method was employed to represent 5 % of the study population. This resulted in a sample of 1200 male and female students from the four academic years in their study, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The distribution of the study sample according to independent variables.

Variable	Level /category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	578	48.2
	Female	622	51.8
	Total	1200	100.0
Academic Year	First	427	35.6
	Second	450	37.5
	Third	304	25.3
	Fourth	19	1.6
	Total	1200	100.0

3.3. Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study:

Mattering to Others Scale: The questionnaire used is Elliot, 2004 mattering to others Scale, which consists of 24 statements to measure the level of the main mattering to others in terms of awareness, importance and reliance. The questionnaire was applied to a survey sample of (30) students from the study community, and they were excluded from the study sample. Correlation coefficients were calculated between the score of each item and the total score for the field to which the item belongs. Correlation coefficients were also calculated between the score of each field of the questionnaire and the total score of the questionnaire. It is important to highlight that all correlation coefficients were found to be acceptable and statistically significant. As a result, none of the items were removed. Additionally, the correlation coefficient for each domain with the overall score, as well as the correlation coefficients between the different domains, were calculated. This indicates that the correlation coefficient values for the study tool domains with the overall tool exceeded (0.20), and the inter-correlation values between the domains were also above (0.20), which is suitable for achieving the objectives of the study.

Two methods were employed to verify the reliability of the study tool to achieve scale reliability. The first method involved test-retest reliability, while the second utilized Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the test-retest method, the questionnaire was administered twice to a pilot sample of 30 respondents with a two-week interval, and the Pearson correlation coefficient (reliability coefficient) was calculated between both applications. In the second method, internal consistency was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Table (2) presents the results.

Table 2. Test-retest reliability coefficient and Cronbach's Alpha for the study tool and its domains.

Scale and its domains	Internal consistency Stability	Re-test
Awareness	0.89	0.86
Importance	0.90	0.85
Reliance	0.88	0.86
Mattering	0.93	0.94

The results in Table 2 indicated that the Pearson correlation coefficient between the participants' scores during both administrations of the tool resulted in an overall reliability coefficient of 0.93.

Additionally, the internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) for the entire tool was 0.92, indicating a high level of reliability. These values were deemed appropriate for fulfilling the objectives of the study and ensuring the credibility of its results.

Self-Compassion Scale: The questionnaire used is Neff's Self-Compassion Scale (short form), which consists of 12 statements to measure the level of the main components of self-compassion in terms of self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. The questionnaire was applied to a survey sample of 30 students from the study community, and they were excluded from the study sample. Correlation coefficients were calculated between the score of each item and the total score for the field to which the item belongs. Correlation coefficients were also calculated between the score of each field of the questionnaire and the total score of the questionnaire the results showed that the correlation coefficient values for the study tool domains with the overall tool exceeded (0.20), and the inter-correlation values between the domains were also above (0.20), which is suitable for achieving the study's objectives.

To achieve scale reliability, two methods were employed to verify the reliability of the study tool. The first method involved test-retest reliability, while the second utilized Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For the test-retest method, the questionnaire was administered twice to a pilot sample of 30 respondents with a two-week interval, and the Pearson correlation coefficient (reliability coefficient) was calculated between both applications. In the second method, internal consistency was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Table 3 presents the results.

Table 3. Test-retest reliability coefficient and Cronbach's Alpha for the study tool and its domains

Scale and its domains	Internal consistency Stability	Re-test
Self-Kindness Subscale	0.89	0.86
Self-Judgment Subscale	0.90	0.85
Common Humanity Subscale	0.88	0.86
Isolation Subscale	0.88	0.85
Mindfulness Subscale	0.87	0.87
Over-Identification Subscale	0.87	0.91
Self-Compassion	0.94	0.93

The results in Table 3 indicated that the Pearson correlation coefficient between the participants' scores during both administrations of the tool resulted in an overall reliability coefficient of 0.93. Additionally, the internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) for the entire tool was 0.94, indicating a high level of reliability. These values were deemed appropriate for fulfilling the objectives of the study and ensuring the credibility of its results.

3.4. Scoring the study instruments

To calculate the total score for both scales, five alternatives were developed, and respondents selected one that best reflected their opinion. The alternatives were scored as follows: (5) for "very high," (4) for "high," (3) for "moderate," (2) for "low," and (1) for "very low." To interpret the means for the items, domains, and overall tool, a statistical standard was established using the following formula:

Category range = (highest value - lowest value) ÷ number of options.

Category range = 5 - 1 = 4 ÷ 5 = 0.8, leading to the judgment criterion shown in Table (4).

Table 4. Statistical standard for determining the range of arithmetic averages

Arithmetic average	Degree
Out of 1.00, less than 1.80	Very low
Out of 1.80, less than 2.60	Low
Out of 2.60, less than 3.40	Medium
Out of 3.40, less than 4.20	High
Out of 4.20, less than 5.00	Very high

3.5. Statistical analysis

To address the first question and 2nd question of the study, mean scores and standard deviations were calculated. For the third question, both mean scores and standard deviations were used.

4. Results

This study aimed to assess the relationship between self-compassion and mattering among students of basic education faculty in Kuwait. The questions were addressed in order, and the following presents the findings:

4.1. Results of the First Question:

What is the level of mattering to others among students of the faculty of basic education in Kuwait? To answer this question, mean scores and standard deviations were computed for the study sample members' evaluations of the level of psychological hardness among students of the faculty of basic education in Kuwait. Table (5) displays these results.

Table 5. Means and standard deviations of the study sample members' evaluations of the level of mattering among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait, organized in descending order based on the arithmetic mean

Domain Number	Domain	Mean	SD	Rank	Degree
3	Reliance	3.43	.91	1	High
1	Awareness	3.42	.73	2	High
2	Importance	3.22	.58	3	Moderate
	Mattering to others	3.36	.55		Moderate

Table 5 shows that all domains achieved high levels, indicating that participants have elevated scores across these areas. The Reliance domain ranks first with a mean of 3.43 and a standard deviation of 0.91, reflecting a high level of trust or dependency among participants. Following this, the Awareness domain has a mean of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 0.73, indicating a high awareness level. Importance ranks third with a mean of 3.22 and a lower standard deviation of 0.58, suggesting less variation among participants regarding its importance. The Mattering domain, with a mean of 3.36, also reflects a consensus on its significance, even though it was ranked moderate.

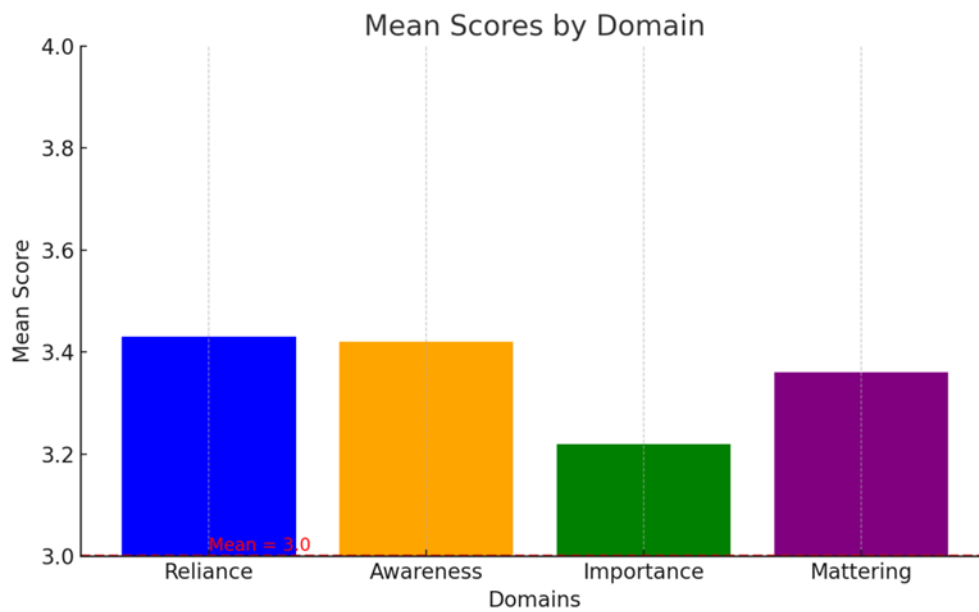


Figure 1. The mean scores by domain of mattering to others scales

4.2. Results of the 2nd question:

What is the level of self-compassion among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait?. To answer this question, mean scores and standard deviations were computed for the study sample members' evaluations of the self-compassion among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait as well as for each of its domains. Table 6 displays these results.

Table 6. Means and standard deviations of the study sample members' evaluations of the self-compassion among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait, organized in descending order based on the arithmetic mean

Domain Number	Domain	Mean	SD	Rank	Degree
1	Self-Kindness Subscale	3.84	.77	1	High
2	Self-Judgment Subscale	3.74	.82	2	High
3	Common Humanity Subscale	3.72	.71	3	High
4	Isolation Subscale	3.50	.91	4	High
6	Over-Identification Subscale	3.36	1.14	5	Moderate
5	Mindfulness Subscale	3.32	1.08	6	Moderate
	Self-Compassion	3.58	.53		High

The Table presents the results of an analysis related to self-compassion, showing the means and standard deviations for each subscale. The "Self-Kindness Subscale" ranks first with a mean of 3.84, indicating a high level of kindness toward oneself. This is followed by the "Self-Judgment Subscale," with a mean of 3.74, also reflecting a high degree of positive self-awareness. However, there is variation in the results across the domains, as the "Mindfulness Subscale" ranks sixth with a mean of 3.32, suggesting a moderate level of self-awareness. This discrepancy may indicate an imbalance in how individuals practice self-compassion, with a higher emphasis on kindness and self-judgment compared to mindfulness. Overall, all domains are classified as "High."

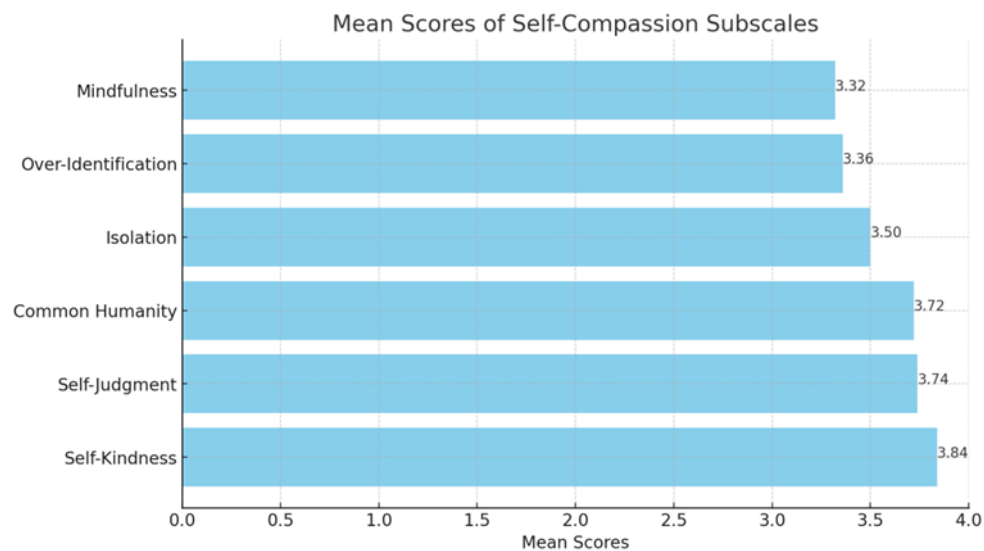


Figure 2. Mean scores of self-compassion subscales

4.3. Answering the 3rd question:

Are there statistically significant differences in mattering to others and self-compassion levels due to gender and academic year? To answer this question, Means and standard deviations were calculated for the study sample members' estimates of the degree of self-compassion and Mattering levels due to gender and academic year, according to the variables of gender and academic year. Table (7) shows this.

Table 7. Means and standard deviations according to study variables

Variables	Statistics	Mattering	Self-Compassion
Gender			
	Mean	3.3431	3.5792
Male	N	578	578
	Std. Deviation	.53680	.52506
	Mean	3.3718	3.5815
Female	N	622	622
	Std. Deviation	.55554	.53904
	Mean	3.3580	3.5804
Total	N	1200	1200
	Std. Deviation	.54656	.53213
Academic Year			
First	Mean	3.2396	3.5336
	N	427	427
	Std. Deviation	.47569	.49147
Second	Mean	3.4193	3.4844
	N	450	450
	Std. Deviation	.52707	.57746
Third	Mean	3.4410	3.7867
	N	304	304
	Std. Deviation	.64435	.46407
Fourth	Mean	3.2393	3.6048
	N	19	19
	Std. Deviation	.25846	.44794
Total	Mean	3.3580	3.5804
	N	1200	1200
	Std. Deviation	.54656	.53213

It is noted from Table 7 that there are apparent differences between the mean scores of the study sample members' estimates of the degree of self-compassion and Mattering levels due to gender and academic year. To determine the statistical significance of these apparent differences, a two-way analysis of variance was applied without interaction.

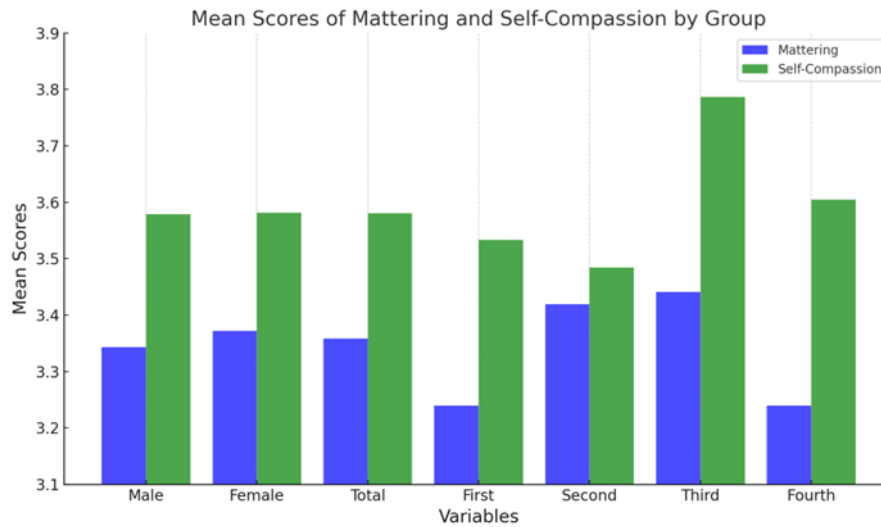


Figure 3. Mean scores of mattering to others and self-compassion by group

Table 8. Analysis of variance for the Mattering and self compassion levels due to gender and academic year

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Gender	Mattering	.019	1	.019	.064	.801
	Self-Compassion	.305	1	.305	1.133	.287
Hotelling's Trace=0.001 Sig. 0.5029						
Academic year	Mattering	9.807	3	3.269	11.221	.000
	Self-Compassion	18.332	3	6.111	22.736	.000
Wilks' Lambda value=.922 Sig.= .000						
Error	Mattering	348.116	1195	.291		
	Self-Compassion	321.181	1195	.269		
Total	Mattering	13889.642	1200			
	Self-Compassion	15722.537	1200			
Corrected Total	Mattering	358.170	1199			
	Self-Compassion	339.515	1199			

It is noted from Table 8 that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) self-compassion and Mattering levels due to gender, also the results indicate that there are sig. differences due to academic year. Scheffe analysis was computed as shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Scheffe analysis according to academic year

Dependent Variable	(I) Academic Year	(J) Academic Year	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Mattering	First	Second	-.1797(*)	.000
		Third	-.2014(*)	.000
	Second	First	.1797(*)	.000
		Third	.2014(*)	.000
Self-Compassion	First	Second	.0492	.578
		Third	-.2531(*)	.000
	Second	First	-.0492	.578
		Third	-.3023(*)	.000
	Third	First	.2531(*)	.000
		Second	.3023(*)	.000

As Table 9 indicates, there are significant differences between the fourth year and the first year, in favor of the fourth year; and the third year and the first year, in favor of the third year; between the first year and the second year, in favor of the second year.

4.4. Answering the 4th question:

Is there a relationship between mattering to others and self-compassion among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait? To answer this question, Pearson correlations were computed between mattering to others and self-compassion among students of the faculty of basic education in Kuwait, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Pearson corr. between psychological hardness and Mattering among students of faculty of basic education in Kuwait Correlations

		Self-Compassion
Awareness	Pearson Correlation	.217(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	1200
Importance	Pearson Correlation	.073(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.012
	N	1200
Reliance	Pearson Correlation	.137(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	1200
Mattering	Pearson Correlation	.199(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	1200

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

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

Table 10 presents Pearson correlation coefficients between self-compassion and its associated variables- awareness, importance, reliance, and mattering- based on a sample size of 1,200 respondents. The correlation between self-compassion and awareness is .217(**), indicating a significant positive relationship ($p < .001$), suggesting that higher awareness is associated with greater self-compassion. The correlation with importance is weaker at .073(*), which is statistically significant ($p = .012$), indicating a small but notable relationship. Reliance shows a moderate positive correlation of .137(**), also statistically significant ($p < .001$), reflecting a meaningful connection with self-compassion. Finally, the correlation with mattering is .199 (**), significant at $p < .001$, indicating that greater feelings of mattering are linked to higher levels of self-compassion. Overall, self-compassion demonstrates significant positive correlations with awareness, reliance, and mattering, though the relationship with importance is comparatively weaker.

5. Discussion

The results showed that the level of mattering to others was moderate. It was found that the Reliance domain ranks first with a mean of 3.43 and a standard deviation of 0.91, reflecting a high level of trust or dependency among participants. Following this, the Awareness domain has a mean of 3.42 and a standard deviation of 0.73, indicating a high awareness level. Importance ranks third with a mean of 3.22 and a lower standard deviation of 0.58, suggesting less variation among participants regarding its importance. The Mattering domain, with a mean of 3.36, also reflects a consensus on its significance, even though it was ranked moderate. mattering to others is not fully examined and understood by participants who were students of the faculty of basic education in Kuwait. This resulted in different responses among them despite the fact that the researcher made sure to explain this concept to them. Furthermore, mattering to others is a self-concept that is based on perceptions that the individual is respected and valued by others, which makes it difficult to measure. The researcher also assumed that students may have an inclination to keep those items that may reflect having a moderate level of mattering to others to make impressions about themselves. This result is consistent with the result reported by Van and Vohs (2023), indicating a moderate level among university students.

Also, the results showed that self-compassion was high. It was found that the "Self-Kindness Subscale" ranks first with a mean of 3.84, indicating a high level of kindness toward oneself. This is followed by the "Self-Judgment Subscale," with a mean of 3.74, also reflecting a high degree of positive self-awareness. The researchers attributed this result to the nature of Kuwaiti society, which is conservative in its religion, customs, and traditions, which is considered part of its cultural and social fabric that supports sympathy, kindness, and compassion. This result may be attributed to the type of socialization in Kuwait, which supports harmonious family functioning. Also, it may be attributed to the secure attachment that is common in Kuwait. However, there is variation in the results across the domains, as the "Mindfulness Subscale" ranks sixth with a mean of 3.32, suggesting a moderate level of self-awareness. This discrepancy may indicate an imbalance in how individuals practice self-compassion, with a higher emphasis on kindness and self-judgment compared to mindfulness. Overall, all domains are classified as "High. This result is consistent with the results reported by Gharaibeh (2021), indicating that the relationship between mattering to others and self-compassion was high.

The study also found that there are no statistically significant differences in mattering to others and self-compassion levels due to gender. This result may be attributed to the fact that both male and female students may share relatively similar parenting styles and social and academic life in their university study. This has contributed significantly to their behavioral and psychological development, which is manifested by mindfulness and psychological hardiness levels, as shown in this study. Also, this result may be attributed to the fact that self-compassion is considered an important aspect of maturity; this means that university students become wiser and more emotionally intelligent. There

are significant differences due to the academic year in favor of third-year students. This result is logical since students in this year have been exposed to several academic, personal, and social experiences that positively affected their psychological growth. They are more able to handle the problems they face in their university life compared to students in the first and second years. This may count for the differences in self-compassion and mattering to others, which are indicators of personal and developmental maturity. This result is consistent with the results reported by Gharaibeh (2021), indicating that mindfulness and psychological hardiness differ based on gender.

There was a statistically significant positive correlation between mattering to others and self-compassion. The findings also found that the correlation between self-compassion and awareness is .217(**), indicating a significant positive relationship ($p < .001$), suggesting that higher awareness is associated with greater self-compassion. The correlation with importance is weaker at .073(*), which is statistically significant ($p = .012$), indicating a small but notable relationship. Reliance shows a moderate positive correlation of .137(**), also statistically significant ($p < .001$), reflecting a meaningful connection with self-compassion. Finally, the correlation with mattering is .199 (**), significant at $p < .001$, indicating that greater feelings of mattering are linked to higher levels of self-compassion. Overall, self-compassion demonstrates significant positive correlations with awareness, reliance, and mattering, though the relationship with importance is comparatively weaker. The researchers explain this positive correlation by the fact that having high levels of compassion, as it was found in this study, contributes highly to demonstrating positive behaviors, which will, in turn, positively affect the nature of the relationship between the individuals and others. Being highly self-compassionate means helping others, comforting them, and caring about them, and this implies that other individuals will appreciate the contributions of people willing to engage in their lives and try to improve them. This result is consistent with the results reported by Gharaibeh (2021) and Abu Msameh (2020), indicating that mattering to others is positively correlated with self-compassion.

6. Limitations and Recommendations

The study was limited to a sample of undergraduate students at the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait, who were enrolled during the first semester of the academic year 2024/2025. Also, the possibility of generalizing the study results is determined in light of the validity and reliability of the measures used in the current study and the extent of the credibility of the study sample in answering the study tools.

Based on the study's results, the researchers recommend educators in universities should work on designing learning materials and activities, improving mattering to others among students by making them more engaged in classes and that their contributions are highly valued. Furthermore, students should be more informed and educated about the importance of self-compassion and its effects on their academic life. Thus, universities are called to develop seminars and platforms that enable students to openly discuss their concerns and anxieties. University counselors should be active participants in these activities and counsel students to work on their strengths, such as self-compassion, emphasizing at the same time that improving these strengths helps them decrease concerns and anxieties. Also, the researchers recommend utilizing the high level of self-compassion among university students to guide and direct them in investing their energy across various fields, positively impacting their goal achievement.

Declarations

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