



THE ROLE OF SELF-COMPASSION ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Student engagement is a crucial factor in academic success, as it reflects students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in the learning process. However, academic demands often lead to stress, anxiety, and burnout, which may reduce students' engagement. One psychological factor that has the potential to enhance student engagement is self-compassion, defined as the ability to treat oneself with kindness, recognize failure as part of the shared human experience, and maintain balanced awareness of personal difficulties. This study aims to systematically review the role of self-compassion in student engagement among university students. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach was employed following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. Data were collected from the Scopus and Taylor & Francis databases using the keywords "self-compassion," "student engagement," and "higher education." Of the 46 articles initially identified, 18 met the inclusion criteria and were included in the analysis. The findings indicate that self-compassion positively contributes to psychological well-being, emotion regulation, resilience, and academic motivation while reducing burnout, anxiety, and fear of failure. Furthermore, self-compassion was found to function as both a mediator and a moderator in the relationship between various psychological factors and student engagement. These findings suggest that self-compassion serves as an important psychological resource that supports students' academic involvement. Therefore, integrating self-compassion development into counseling services, character-building programs, and technology-based interventions may represent an effective strategy for enhancing student engagement in higher education.

Keywords: Higher Education, Self-Compassion, Student Engagement, University Students



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INTRODUCTION

Although a growing body of research links self-compassion to favorable psychological outcomes among students, evidence on how this construct specifically shapes student engagement remains scattered across disconnected studies, with no prior work synthesizing these findings into a coherent account (Liu et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2025). This fragmentation leaves higher education practitioners without a clear, evidence-based picture of whether and how self-compassion can be leveraged to strengthen engagement, which constitutes the central problem this review addresses. University students are individuals in the early adulthood phase of higher education who face complex academic, social, and psychological developmental demands (Liu et al., 2024). At this phase, students are not only required to achieve academic success, but must also adapt to various roles and responsibilities in daily life. These demands encompass coursework, organizational activities, social relationships, and self-development, all of which can affect students' psychological well-being.

In the context of higher education, students' involvement in the learning process commonly referred to as student engagement is an important factor in supporting academic success. Student engagement refers to students' behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement in learning activities (Fredricks, 2011). Students with high levels of student engagement tend to demonstrate active participation in academic activities, possess good learning motivation, and are capable of achieving optimal academic performance. Conversely, students with low engagement levels tend to experience decreased motivation, boredom, and a lack of participation in the learning process (Priyaningtyas & Saniatuzzulfa, 2024).

In practice, however, students often face various problems that can hinder such engagement. Heavy academic workloads, pressure to achieve, and difficulty managing time are common sources of stress for students (Liu, et al., 2024). In addition, students frequently experience negative emotions such as anxiety, stress, and exhaustion due to excessive academic demands (Putri et al., 2025). These conditions can adversely affect the quality of students' engagement in the learning process, making it necessary to identify psychological factors that can help students manage these pressures.

One psychological factor that plays an important role in helping students cope with pressure is self-compassion. Self-compassion is the ability to be kind toward oneself, to understand that failure is part of the human experience, and to maintain a balanced awareness of one's condition without judgment (Neff, 2003). Individuals with high self-compassion tend to be able to accept their shortcomings and failures without becoming trapped in excessive negative emotions, making them more adaptive in facing life's challenges.

In an educational context, self-compassion plays an important role in emotion regulation. Individuals with self-compassion tend to be better able to manage negative emotions and transform them into more positive and adaptive responses (Octasya & Antika, 2023). This suggests that self-compassion can serve as a protective mechanism that helps students deal with academic pressure. With good emotion regulation skills, students can remain focused and engaged in learning activities even when facing various difficulties.

Additionally, self-compassion also plays a role in reducing psychological problems such as academic burnout. Students with high self-compassion tend to be better at managing academic pressure, maintain a more positive mindset, and are less likely to experience emotional exhaustion (Putri et al., 2025). Thus, self-compassion not only contributes to psychological well-being but also has the potential to improve the quality of students' engagement in academic activities.

The relationship between self-compassion and student engagement has also been supported by various studies. Self-compassion can serve as a mediator in the relationship between negative psychological factors, such as fear of failure, and student engagement. Students with high self-compassion are able to manage their fear of failure and thus remain actively engaged in the learning process (Priyaningtyas & Saniatuzzulfa, 2024). This indicates

that self-compassion functions as a mechanism that helps students maintain academic engagement even when facing pressure or failure.

Furthermore, self-compassion is also associated with increased motivation, resilience, and involvement in various academic activities. Students with high self-compassion have a stronger willingness to participate in both academic and non-academic activities and are better able to face challenges adaptively (Liu et al., 2024). This suggests that self-compassion plays a strategic role in enhancing student engagement.

Nevertheless, the study of the role of self-compassion in student engagement still requires more comprehensive examination through a systematic literature review approach. As outlined above, the absence of an integrative synthesis is the key gap motivating this review, existing studies examine isolated psychological correlates of self-compassion without consolidating how these mechanisms collectively operate to shape student engagement. Therefore, this study aims to serve as a systematic literature review related to self-compassion and student engagement, with the goal of providing conceptual understanding, empirical evidence, and policy recommendations.

The research questions (RQ) of this study are as follows: RQ 1: How does self-compassion relate to student engagement among university students according to existing empirical literature? RQ 2: What factors mediate or moderate this relationship, and how do these mechanisms collectively explain the influence of self-compassion on student engagement? RQ 3: What are the implications of these findings for higher education practice?

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) method, which aims to collect, identify, evaluate, and interpret findings from studies relevant to a specific research question, topic, or phenomenon of interest in a systematic and structured manner (Kitchenham, 2004). The SLR approach plays an important role in the development of scientific knowledge, as it is capable of presenting a comprehensive synthesis of scientific evidence. For researchers, this method provides a strong conceptual foundation while identifying research gaps that can serve as a basis for further studies. For practitioners, SLR provides integrated empirical evidence that can support more effective, evidence-based decision-making (Al-Zubidy & Carver, 2019). To ensure the quality and credibility of the review process, this study follows the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines.

Research Target/Subject

Research data were obtained from the Scopus and Taylor & Francis databases. A comprehensive literature search was conducted using: "self-compassion" AND "student engagement" AND "higher education". The search focused on studies published between 2021 and 2026 to capture the latest trends, particularly the dynamics of student well-being in the post-pandemic era and the digital age. To ensure the validity of the conclusions, the quality of the selected articles (n=18) was assessed using the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Critical Appraisal Tools. Each study was evaluated based on methodological rigor, the validity of the psychometric instruments used (such as the Self-Compassion Scale), and the clarity of statistical reporting. Only articles that achieved a high-quality score (above 70%) were included in the final synthesis to prevent weak methodology from confounding the findings (Aromataris et al., 2024).

Research Procedure

The process of identifying and selecting literature followed the PRISMA 2020 standard protocol managed through the Covidence platform. The initial stage began with identifying records through searches in the Scopus (n = 28) and Taylor & Francis (n = 18) databases, yielding a total of 46 potentially relevant articles. At the pre-screening stage, no duplications were identified (n = 0), so all 46 articles proceeded to the title and abstract screening stage.

At the abstract screening stage, 18 articles were excluded because they did not meet criteria for substantial relevance the research focus was outside the educational psychology domain, such as studies on engineering infrastructure, environmental science, and architecture (n = 18). After this process, 28 articles remained eligible for full-text review. The researchers then conducted a thorough eligibility assessment of these 28 articles. In this process, 6 articles were found ineligible: 3 articles did not focus on a student population (but rather on teachers or professional staff), and the other 3 did not address engagement as a research outcome. Through this rigorous screening process, 18 final articles met all inclusion criteria and were used as primary data in this systematic literature review.

The methodological quality of the 18 included articles was appraised using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (MMAT), selected for its suitability in evaluating the quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods designs present across the review. Two reviewers independently rated each study against the relevant MMAT criteria, including clarity of the research question, appropriatenes of the measurement instruments, and adequacy of the reported results, and resolved discrepancies through discussion until consensus was reached. Studies that met the minimum quality threshold were retained for synthesis, none of the 18 included articles were excluded on quality grounds, although several cross-sectional designs were noted to carry an elevated risk of bias related to causal inference, a limitation addressed further in the Discussion section.

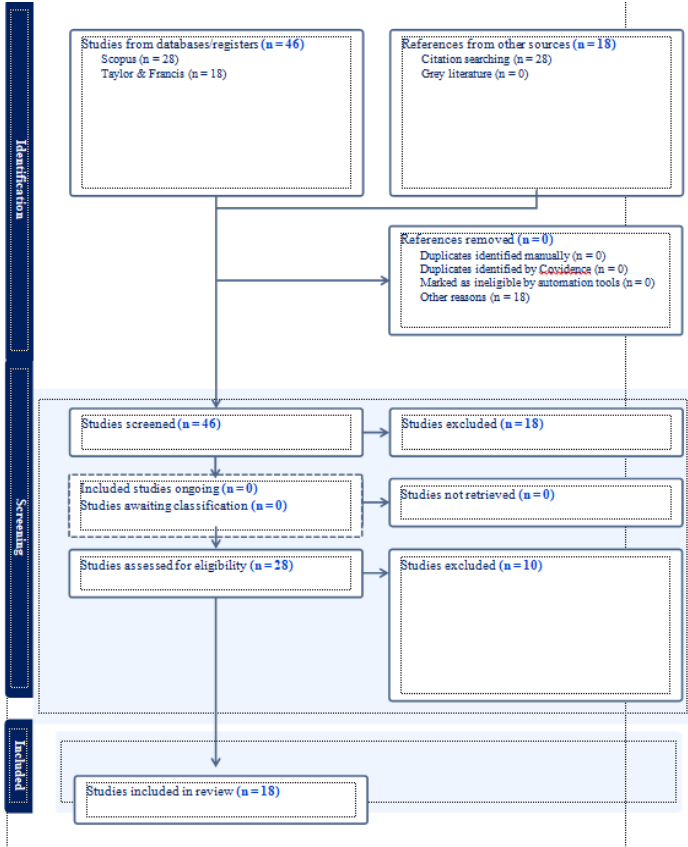


Figure 1. Screening Result

Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques

As illustrated in Picture 1, the screening process narrowed an initial pool of 46 records identified from Scopus and Taylor & Francis to 18 articles meeting all inclusion criteria, a yield of approximately 39%. This relatively high attrition reflects the conceptual specificity of the review, which deliberately excluded studies situated outside the educational psychology domain or that did not measure engagement as an outcome. The resulting corpus, while modest in size, is therefore tightly aligned with the review’s focal constructs and provides a defensible basis for the synthesis presented in the following sections.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The bibliometric analysis of the 18 articles meeting the selection criteria reveals a highly progressive publication dynamic, with a surge in study frequency between 2024 and 2026, accounting for more than half of the total reviewed literature. This temporal distribution indicates that discourse on self-compassion has transformed from a clinical psychology concept into a strategic pillar in post-pandemic global higher education policy (Lippman et al., 2021). In terms of institutional origin and research location, significant geographic diversification is evident; while studies from Western regions still make major contributions, there is an emerging body of literature from Asian contexts such as Malaysia (Teo et al., 2023), Vietnam (Thang & Trang, 2024), and Africa through a study in Ethiopia (Olana et al., 2024).

In terms of methodology, the reviewed research demonstrates a diversity of designs reflecting the complexity of the variables studied. The majority of literature still relies on quantitative approaches using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test mediation pathways between psychological variables; however, there is a growing trend toward longitudinal and diary study designs (Majerová & Sokolová, 2025). Additionally, emerging innovative qualitative methods such as positive autoethnography (Grobbelaar & Reid Boyd, 2026), duoethnography (Beresford-Dey et al., 2024), and reflective journals (Bham, 2025) provide new dimensions for understanding student identity formation in depth.

In terms of study participants, research is not limited to undergraduate students in general, but also extends to populations under extreme academic pressure, such as medical students (Buck et al. (2021) and nursing students (Ramos-Vidal & Ruíz, 2024). The literature distribution also notes the increasingly dominant role of digital technology, marked by studies on AI competence and app-based mental health interventions (Rahimi et al., 2024; Rodriguez et al., 2025). Overall, the formal characteristics of the selected literature reflect an increasingly interdisciplinary research ecosystem connecting psychology, pedagogy, and health technology.

Table 1 below presents the findings from the 18 selected articles, covering authors, article titles, research methods, and key findings.

Table 1. Findings from 18 Articles

Author	Title	Method	Findings
Krejcová et al.	Work-related Well-being in Early Career: A Role of Self-Compassion	Quantitative, cross-sectional (n=244), SEM analysis.	Negative self-compassion (self-judgment, isolation, over-identification) linked to workaholism and work boredom. Self-compassion interventions may reduce workaholism's negative impact.
Turakka et al.	Perfectionism and Athletes' Mental Health: The Mediating Role of	Quantitative survey (n=693 athletes), SEM	Self-compassion mediated the relationship between perfectionistic strivings and

	Self-Compassion	analysis.	adaptive psychological states. Fear of self-compassion mediated between perfectionism and poor mental health.
Nguyen et al.	The Relationship Between Emotion Regulation and Mental Health in Adolescents: Self-Compassion as a Moderator	Quantitative, clustered RCT data (n=752 adolescents).	Compassionate self-responding reduced depression and anxiety. Self-compassion moderated the relationship between emotion regulation and adolescent mental health.
Kishimoto et al.	Single Online Self-Compassion Writing Intervention Reduces Anxiety: With the Feedback of ChatGPT	Mixed-factorial experiment, pre-post test (n=98).	Self-compassion writing + ChatGPT feedback significantly reduced anxiety and increased self-compassion more than control groups.
Buehler et al.	Combining Social Media Literacy with Self-Compassion: Testing the SoSelf mHealth Training	Feasibility study using EMA, 30 days (n=26 females aged 15-21).	SoSelf program increased self-compassion and body appreciation; reduced social appearance anxiety. Positive effects persisted one month post-intervention.
Li, Chen & Sun	Social Networking Site Body Talk and College Students' Physical Activity: The Role of Self-Compassion	Quantitative survey (n=1,189 Chinese college students).	Self-compassion moderated the mediation effect of upward appearance comparison on body talk and physical activity, strengthening the effect for high self-compassion individuals.
Jang	A Longitudinal Study of the Mediating Role of Self-Compassion in Moral Injury and Moral Disengagement	Two-wave longitudinal study (n=790 Korean adults).	Self-compassion (especially self-judgment) mediated the influence of moral injury on moral disengagement both cross-sectionally and longitudinally.
Muris et al.	Relations Between Self-Compassion Components and Narcissism	Quantitative survey (n=120 non-clinical participants).	Self-criticism and self-deprecation positively related to both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, especially vulnerable narcissism.
Skinner & Kuijer	The Role of Self-Compassion in Protecting Psychological Wellbeing in Endometriosis	Two-wave prospective study, 6 months (n=264).	High self-compassion associated with reduced depression, anxiety, stress, and improved quality of life. Pain catastrophizing was the primary mediator.
Frazier et al.	Compassion-Based Social, Emotional, and Ethical Learning in Urban	Mixed-methods, large-scale	Program improved perspective-taking, empathic concern, self-compassion, academic goal

	Indian Classrooms	evaluation of setting, and reduced emotional SEE Learning reactivity. (9 schools).
Vieira et al.	The Neuropsychophysiological Correlates of Compassion: A tDCS Study	Randomized double-blind RCT (N=81) using tDCS, HRV, HD-DOT. tDCS did not significantly change self-reported compassion, but changes in physiological and neural activity related to compassion processing were found.
Sotardi & Thompson	Perfectionism Profiles, Self-Compassion, and Wellbeing Among Undergraduates in New Zealand	Quantitative (n=327), person-centered analysis, SEM. Evaluative Concerns Perfectionism strongly negatively related to self-compassion. Self-compassion mediated the effect of perfectionism on life satisfaction and well-being.
Rigaud et al.	Navigating Academic Setbacks with Intention and Self-Efficacy for Self-Compassion	Four international studies (N=1,846), instrument validation. Intention and self-efficacy for self-compassion after academic failure related to well-being and mental health but not directly to academic achievement.
Yudiani et al.	Lecturers' Psychological Well-Being: Impact of Leadership on Self-Compassion and Gratitude	Survey (n=645 Indonesian lecturers), SEM analysis. Self-compassion positively contributed to psychological well-being. Transformational leadership strengthened the influence of self-compassion on lecturer well-being.
Williamson et al.	Perceived Benefits of Cultivating Self-Compassion Among Women with Gestational Diabetes	Mixed methods, online survey (n=44 women with GDM). Majority found self-compassion helpful for emotion regulation, coping, and well-being. A small proportion reported difficulties applying self-compassion.
Hailikari et al.	Self-Criticism, Burnout, and Self-Compassion in Higher Education Students' Study Achievement	Quantitative survey (n=782 higher education students), latent profile analysis. Students with high self-criticism had higher burnout risk and lower academic achievement. Self-compassion served as a protective factor against burnout.
Negri-Schwartz & Hasson-Ohayon	Moderating Role of Self-Compassion in Intolerance of Uncertainty and Parental Decision-Making	Survey (n=219 parents), moderated moderation analysis. Self-compassion strengthened family functioning in reducing the negative impact of intolerance of uncertainty on parental clinical decision-making.
Aljaberi et	Burnout Among Algerian	Cross-sectional Self-judgment and over-

al.	Public Workers: Protective Roles of Self-Compassion	Healthcare survey (n=387 healthcare workers), regression analysis.	identification increased burnout, while empathy and communication skills were protective. Self-compassion was important in burnout prevention.
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It should be noted that Table 1 includes several studies conducted with non university student samples, such as athletes, healthcare workers, and adolescents. These studies were retained because they examine the same core self-compassion mechanisms, emotion regulation, burnout, and resilience. That underlie student engagement, and because the literature directly addressing university students alone remains too limited to support a standalone synthesis. They are treated as comparative, mechanism level evidence rather than direct evidence of student engagement, and their findings are interpreted accordingly throughout the Discussion below.

The findings of this systematic literature review demonstrate that self-compassion constitutes a significant psychological factor in enhancing the quality of student engagement in the learning process. Across all studies analyzed, self-compassion consistently contributed to improvements in psychological well-being, emotion regulation capacity, resilience, and the reduction of various psychological risk factors that may impede student engagement. These findings reinforce the conceptualization proposed by Neff (2003), which posits that self-compassion encompasses self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Components that enable individuals to respond to adversity in a more adaptive manner compared to self-judgmental patterns that tend to be psychologically destructive.

Beyond restating these individual findings, the cross-study pattern observed here points to a more specific argument: self-compassion does not influence engagement through a single uniform pathway, but through at least three distinguishable routes, a direct resources pathway (sustaining vigor and motivation under pressure), a protective pathways (buffering burnout and fear of failure), and an indirect pathway in which self-compassion mediates the effect of other risk factors, such as perfectionism and moral injury, on engagement related outcomes. Disaggregating the literature in this way, rather than treating self-compassion as a single undifferentiated predictor, is the principal interpretive contribution of this review and is used to organize the synthesis presented in the remainder of this section.

The present review further reveals that self-compassion is not solely associated with mental health outcomes, but also contributes to an individual's involvement in activities that demand commitment and psychological endurance. Krejčová et al. found that negative dimensions of self-compassion, namely self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification. That were linked to workaholism and diminished occupational well-being. Parallel findings were observed among higher education students, where self-criticism was associated with a greater risk of burnout and lower academic achievement. Conversely, individuals exhibiting high levels of self-compassion demonstrated lower burnout rates and healthier psychological functioning. This pattern of findings suggests that self-compassion operates as a psychological resource that enables individuals to sustain energy, motivation, and engagement when confronted with academic and professional pressures.

In the context of higher education, student engagement is significantly shaped by students' capacity to manage academic demands. According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory, individual engagement emerges when personal and environmental resources are sufficient to offset the demands encountered (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Self-compassion may thus be conceptualized as a personal resource that enables students to address academic demands more effectively. Students who are capable of accepting mistakes as an inherent part of the learning process are less likely to become trapped in prolonged negative emotional states, thereby maintaining their focus on academic activities. In this regard, self-compassion

contributes to the enhancement of vigor, dedication, and absorption the core components of student engagement as outlined by Schaufeli et al. (2002).

A further consistent finding across the literature concerns the role of self-compassion in emotion regulation. Nguyen et al. demonstrated that self-compassion moderates the relationship between emotion regulation strategies and adolescent mental health. Individuals who respond to themselves with compassion exhibit significantly lower levels of anxiety and depression compared to those who tend toward self-criticism. These results are consistent with the findings of Inwood and Ferrari (2018), who reported a strong negative association between self-compassion and stress, anxiety, and depression. Such emotion regulation capacity is of particular importance in the context of student engagement, as students who are able to manage negative emotions tend to be more focused, participatory, and persistent in their learning activities, even when confronted with substantial academic challenges.

This review also identifies self-compassion as functioning both as a mediator and as a moderator across a range of psychological relationships. Several studies demonstrate that self-compassion mediates the relationship between perfectionism and psychological well-being, between moral injury and moral disengagement, and between fear of failure and student engagement. These findings indicate that self-compassion does not operate solely through direct pathways; rather, it constitutes a psychological mechanism that explains how various risk factors influence individual engagement and well-being. Students with high self-compassion tend to interpret failure in a more constructive manner, preventing fear of failure from developing into a barrier to academic participation.

The protective role of self-compassion is further evidenced by its relationship with burnout, which represents one of the most frequently cited factors associated with low student engagement. The findings of this review consistently show a negative correlation between self-compassion and burnout across diverse populations, including university students, healthcare professionals, academic staff, and young workers. This is corroborated by the meta-analysis conducted by Marsh et al. (2018), which found that self-compassion is positively associated with psychological well-being and negatively associated with psychopathology. Individuals with high levels of self-compassion tend to maintain emotional equilibrium when facing pressure, thereby reducing the risk of emotional exhaustion. In the higher education context, this capacity enables students to sustain their academic engagement even under conditions of high academic demand.

Beyond its protective function, self-compassion is also associated with the enhancement of positive indicators that support student engagement. The Compassion-Based Social, Emotional, and Ethical (SEE) Learning program evaluated by Frazier et al. demonstrated significant improvements in participants' perspective-taking, empathic concern, academic goal setting, and self-compassion. These findings indicate that self-compassion does not merely serve to reduce negative outcomes, but also strengthens the psychological capacities that underpin active involvement in learning. Such results align with the findings of Zessin et al. (2015), who reported a positive correlation between self-compassion and indicators of happiness, optimism, and life satisfaction.

Notably, several studies in this review suggest that self-compassion can be cultivated through relatively accessible interventions. Kishimoto et al. found that a self-compassion writing exercise combined with ChatGPT feedback significantly increased self-compassion and reduced participant anxiety compared to control conditions. These findings extend prior evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) program in enhancing psychological well-being and reducing distress (Neff & Germer, 2013). This finding should, however, be interpreted with caution: it derives from a single pre-post experiment with a modest sample ($n = 98$) that has not yet been replicated, and the AI-feedback condition was not tested against other low-cost alternatives such as peer-supported writing. Pending replication in higher education samples specifically, these results are best read as a preliminary

proof of concept rather than a basis for broad institutional recommendations; large-scale, controlled trials are needed before technology-assisted self-compassion training can be confidently advised for university settings.

This review further indicates that research on self-compassion has increasingly adopted a more interdisciplinary orientation in recent years. Self-compassion is no longer examined exclusively within clinical psychology; it is now investigated in relation to educational technology, artificial intelligence, digital health, educational leadership, and well-being education. This broadening of context reflects a growing recognition of self-compassion as a key twenty-first-century competency supporting individuals' capacity to adapt to the rapid pace of social, academic, and technological change.

Notwithstanding these contributions, the present review also identifies several limitations in the existing literature. The majority of studies employ cross-sectional designs, which preclude definitive causal inferences regarding the relationship between self-compassion and student engagement. Moreover, most studies focus on psychological well-being as the primary outcome, while research that directly measures student engagement remains comparatively limited. These gaps underscore the need for longitudinal and experimental research that specifically examines the effects of self-compassion on distinct dimensions of student engagement, including behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement.

Overall, the findings of this systematic literature review confirm that self-compassion is a psychological factor with a significant contribution to student engagement. Self-compassion assists students in managing negative emotions, reducing burnout, enhancing resilience, strengthening academic motivation, and sustaining engagement in the learning process when facing various pressures. Accordingly, the cultivation of self-compassion represents a promising strategy for improving the quality of students' learning experiences and fostering a higher education environment that is healthier, more adaptive, and more sustainable. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the position of self-compassion as a primary psychological resource bridging mental well-being and academic engagement. Practically, this review provides an empirical foundation for higher education institutions to integrate self-compassion development into counseling services, character-building programs, and student mental health policies, thereby cultivating a generation of learners who are not only academically accomplished but also psychologically resilient.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the systematic literature review of 18 articles meeting the inclusion criteria, it can be concluded that self-compassion plays a significant role in supporting student engagement as well as various aspects of psychological well-being related to academic success. The literature consistently shows that individuals with high levels of self-compassion tend to be better able to manage academic pressure, reduce the impact of negative emotions, and maintain motivation and engagement in the learning process. Conversely, negative aspects of self-compassion such as self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification have been shown to be associated with increased risk of burnout, anxiety, maladaptive perfectionism, and various psychological barriers that can diminish the quality of academic engagement.

The review also indicates that self-compassion functions as a protective factor that helps individuals face various academic and non-academic challenges more adaptively. The ability to treat oneself with acceptance when experiencing failure enables students to develop better emotion regulation, increase resilience, and maintain focus on academic goals. In this context, self-compassion not only contributes to mental health, but also serves as a psychological

resource supporting the emergence of vigor, dedication, and absorption as the main components of student engagement.

Beyond its direct role, self-compassion was also found to function as a mediator and moderator in various psychological relationships. Several studies showed that self-compassion mediated the relationship between perfectionism, fear of failure, and moral injury with various indicators of individual well-being and engagement, demonstrating that self-compassion is a psychological mechanism that helps individuals maintain their adaptive functioning even in stressful situations.

From a practical perspective, higher education institutions need to pay attention to students' internal psychological factors, particularly the development of self-compassion. Self-compassion-based interventions whether through training, self-reflection, or technology-based approaches are capable of improving psychological well-being and reducing various psychological risks that can hinder student engagement. Therefore, integrating self-compassion development programs into counseling services, character-building programs, and student mental health policies can be an effective strategy for supporting academic success and the overall well-being of students.

Overall, this literature review reinforces self-compassion's position as one of the key psychological resources bridging mental well-being and student engagement. Future research is recommended to use longitudinal and experimental designs to obtain a deeper understanding of the causal relationship between self-compassion and student engagement across various higher education contexts.

DECLARATION OF AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

During the preparation of this work the author(s) used Claude (Anthropic) in order to paraphrase and refine certain sentences for clarity and academic tone. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; Investigation.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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