Jurnal Flourishing, 6(2), 2026, 449–469
ISSN: 2797-9865 (online)
DOI: 10.17977/10.17977/um070v6i22026p449-469

Loving Yourself to Forgive: The Influence of Self-Compassion on Forgiveness Among College Students

Yoezer Galen Darian Samson, Keshia Irene Muliawan, Nixie Aurelia Liem,
Chen Xi Yang, and Yusak Novanto*
Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Pelita Harapan, Indonesia
*Correspondence author, email: yusak.novanto@uph.edu

Paper received: 24-02-2026; revised: 17-06-2026; accepted: 30-06-2026

Abstract

Self-compassion is regarded as a psychological resource that enables individuals to respond to failure and painful experiences with greater kindness toward themselves, emotional balance, and acceptance. At University X, which upholds Christian values such as love and forgiveness, this study examined the effect of self-compassion on forgiveness among undergraduate students. This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental, correlational design with a cross-sectional approach, involving 202 undergraduate students selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using the Self-Compassion Scale and the Heartland Forgiveness Scale. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, bivariate correlation analysis, and simple linear regression. The results revealed a significant positive relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness (r = .721), with self-compassion accounting for 51.6% of the variance in forgiveness (R^2 = .516). These findings indicate that students with higher levels of self-compassion are more likely to demonstrate greater forgiveness. Therefore, counseling and student development programs that focus on cultivating self-compassion may serve as an effective strategy for enhancing students' capacity for forgiveness.

Keywords: religion; self-compassion; forgiveness; students

Abstrak

Self-compassion dipandang sebagai salah satu sumber daya psikologis yang memungkinkan individu merespons kegagalan dan pengalaman menyakitkan dengan sikap yang lebih penuh kasih, seimbang secara emosional, dan penuh penerimaan. Di Universitas X yang menjunjung tinggi nilai-nilai Kristiani, seperti kasih dan pengampunan, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh *self-compassion* terhadap *forgiveness* pada mahasiswa. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kuantitatif non-eksperimental dengan pendekatan korelasional dan rancangan *cross-sectional* yang melibatkan 202 mahasiswa yang dipilih menggunakan teknik *purposive sampling*. Instrumen yang digunakan adalah Self-Compassion Scale dan Heartland Forgiveness Scale. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, uji korelasi bivariat, dan analisis regresi linear sederhana. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya hubungan positif yang signifikan antara *self-compassion* dan *forgiveness* (r = 0,721), dengan *self-compassion* menjelaskan 51,6% variasi *forgiveness* (R^2 = 0,516). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa dengan tingkat *self-compassion* yang lebih tinggi cenderung memiliki kemampuan memaafkan yang lebih baik. Oleh karena itu, pengembangan program konseling dan pembinaan mahasiswa yang berfokus pada peningkatan *self-compassion* dapat menjadi salah satu strategi untuk mendukung peningkatan *self-compassion*, guna meningkatkan tingkat *forgiveness* pada mahasiswa.

Kata kunci: agama; *self-compassion*; *forgiveness*; mahasiswa

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

1. Introduction

College students are at a critical developmental stage where interpersonal relationships play a central role in their psychological well-being. However, this stage is also marked by a high prevalence of interpersonal conflicts, including friendship disputes, betrayal, silent treatment, group project tensions, and organizational drama. Hou and Li (2021) found that no less than 24.8% of college students experience serious interpersonal distress and the majority tend to manage conflict through competitive or avoidant strategies, which further deteriorate relational quality rather than resolve underlying issues.

University X in Tangerang is a Christian-based university that emphasizes values of love, empathy, and forgiveness in interpersonal relationships. Although students come from diverse religious backgrounds, forgiveness remains a universal value relevant to the entire academic community. In the Christian context, forgiveness is considered as an important moral value that is expected to be reflected in daily interactions. However, in practice, some individuals still experience difficulties in forgiving themselves and others in interpersonal situations.

One of the things that becomes important in such experiences is the process of forgiveness. According to Everett Worthington (2005), forgiveness is a process in which an individual decides to transform negative emotions from unpleasant events into positive emotions. By this definition, forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or condoning wrongdoing. Instead, it involves letting go of the feelings of resentment, anger, or avoidance that might accompany the wrongdoing.

When interpersonal conflicts are left unresolved, they frequently generate lasting emotional wounds such as resentment, prolonged anger, and social withdrawal. In this context, forgiveness both toward others and toward oneself emerges as a crucial psychological process. Nemati et al. (2016) argued that the inappropriate resolution of interpersonal conflicts likely results in interpersonal tensions, while timely and constructive resolution helps conserve interpersonal relationships and enhance psychological well-being. Furthermore, Nasrin et al. (2025) demonstrate that peer conflict was negatively correlated with both emotional well-being ($r = -0.36$) and forgiveness ($r = -0.29$), while forgiveness itself positively predicted emotional well-being ($r = 0.42$), confirming its mediating role between conflict and psychological outcomes.

The consequences of low forgiveness are well-documented. Worthington and Scherer (in Toussaint et al., 2015) noted that unforgiveness characterized by unresolved anger, resentment, and hostility becomes an enduring emotional state that erodes mental health, increases depression and anxiety, and leads to social isolation. Bonete et al. (2025) further confirmed higher depression and anger, and lower self-esteem and hope, compared to those

with higher forgiveness levels. These findings collectively underscore the urgency of understanding what factors facilitate or hinder forgiveness among college students.

One factor that may explain individual differences in the capacity to forgive is self-compassion. Self-compassion defined as treating oneself with kindness, recognizing shared humanity, and maintaining mindfulness in the face of personal suffering (Neff, 2003) is theorized to facilitate forgiveness by reducing self-criticism and defensive emotional responses that often obstruct the forgiveness process. One important aspect of self-compassion is common humanity, namely the awareness that difficulties, failure, and suffering are universal parts of human life (Karina, 2020).

Through this awareness, individuals may become more understanding toward both their own mistakes and the mistakes of others, thereby creating psychological space for forgiveness. Individuals with higher self-compassion may be better equipped to acknowledge interpersonal wounds without being overwhelmed, thereby creating psychological space for both forgiving others and forgiving themselves. Yet, empirical evidence examining the relationship between self-compassion and both other-forgiveness and self-forgiveness simultaneously among college students remains limited, warranting further investigation.

Several previous studies have found a positive relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness. Self-compassionate individuals are more likely to develop empathy and reduce resentment, thus improving their ability to forgive (Thompson et al., 2005; Neff & Pommier, 2013). However, research on the relationship between these two variables is still relatively limited in the general population. Research specifically involving college students is still rare. However, the context of Christian college students holds relevance because, in Christian teachings, love and forgiveness are core spiritual values.

Other previous research also supports a positive relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness. Oral and Arslan (2017) examined students' levels of forgiveness based on self-compassion, rumination, and personality. The results showed that self-compassion had a significant positive relationship with forgiveness, while rumination had a negative relationship with forgiveness. This suggests that self-compassionate individuals tend to be better able to accept mistakes, manage negative emotions, and let go of resentment and hatred toward themselves and others.

Additionally, Mróz (2022) examined the relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness in relation to rejection sensitivity. The results showed that self-compassion acts as a protective factor against individuals' tendency to feel rejected easily, ultimately increasing forgiveness. This study confirms that individuals with high levels of self-

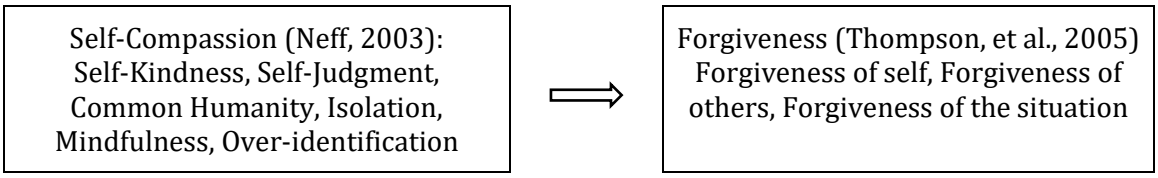
compassion are more emotionally resilient and have a greater capacity for forgiveness in difficult interpersonal situations.

Based on a preliminary study through interviews conducted by researchers with several students at University X, it was found that most of them still have difficulty forgiving when facing conflict. They admitted to understanding the importance of forgiveness in their faith but found it difficult to apply in their daily lives. This suggests that understanding the importance of love and forgiveness according to religious teachings does not always align with an individual's ability to apply these principles in daily life. Therefore, supporting factors such as self-compassion are needed to facilitate this practice. Thus, this study focuses on identifying the effect of self-compassion on forgiveness in students at University X. The results of the study are expected to enrich the theoretical understanding of the effect of self-compassion on forgiveness. In addition, the results of this study can also provide practical implications for students in developing emotional regulation, mental health, and applying the value of forgiveness behavior in everyday life.

The problem formulation in this research is as follows: Is there a significant effect of self-compassion on forgiveness among students at University X? Meanwhile, the objectives of this research are to find out and analyze the effect of self-compassion on forgiveness among students at University X. Theoretically, this study contributes to enriching psychological studies by integrating the concepts of self-compassion and forgiveness in the context of students. This study also helps to clarify how self-compassion not only acts as an internal emotional regulation mechanism but also has the potential to influence interpersonal attitudes, particularly in the process of forgiving oneself and others. Practically, the results of this study can help students at University X better recognize and regulate their personal emotions. This is important for students who are taught to forgive themselves and others. Self-compassion and forgiveness are also highly relevant for students so they can improve their spirituality and service in their daily lives, including in the college environment. Based on this, the research framework and hypotheses are as follows: H_0: There is no significant effect of self-compassion on forgiveness behavior among students at University X, while H1: There is a significant effect of self-compassion on forgiveness behavior among students at University X.

Figure 1

Research Model



2. Method

Participants and Demographics Data

The population studied in this research consisted of students from each study program at University X. The sampling method used was non-probability sampling, with purposive sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was chosen because participants were required to meet the inclusion criteria of being officially registered as students at University X during the data collection period. Demographic data in this study was used to obtain a general overview of the participants' characteristics. The demographic data collected included gender, study program, academic year, and religion. All data collected will be kept confidential and used solely for academic purposes. Furthermore, demographic data will be analyzed using a t-test to determine differences in levels of self-compassion and forgiveness based on the participant characteristics obtained.

Research Design and Procedures

This study employed a non-experimental quantitative cross-sectional design. The study used a bivariate correlation and simple linear regression approach. The aim of the study was to determine and analyze the effect of self-compassion as the independent variable on forgiveness behavior as the dependent variable among students at University X. The research group requested permission from the owners of the measuring instruments. For the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) measurement instrument, the research group requested permission from Kristin D. Neff as the compiler of the original SCS measurement instrument contained in Neff's publication (2003), and from Mr. Dicky Sugianto as the researcher who adapted the Indonesian version (Sugianto et al., 2020). Next, for the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) measurement instrument, the researchers requested permission from Thompson et al., (2005) as the compiler of the original measurement instrument, and from Chandra (2019) as the researcher who adapted the Indonesian version entitled "Heartland Forgiveness Scale" (Translations — HFS, n.d.).

The data collection technique was carried out online through Google Forms, by searching for individuals who met the criteria as active undergraduate students (S1) at University X. The research group distributed questionnaires through social media platforms

and friendship networks. Participation was done voluntarily. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were asked to read and agree to the provided informed consent form by checking the consent box. As a token of appreciation, the research team compensated five selected participants with e-wallet balances. After obtaining the required data, the researchers processed the data using the JASP application, then discussed and summarized the results.

Data Analysis

The data analysis techniques used in this study were descriptive statistical analysis and inferential analysis, including bivariate correlation tests, classical assumption tests, and difference tests. The bivariate correlation test was used to determine the relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness. The difference test was used to examine differences in the levels of the two variables based on demographic characteristics. The data are presented in tables and descriptive analysis results.

Research Instruments

The measurement instrument in this study used the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) designed by Neff (2003). This is an original instrument, developed by Neff to measure the construct of self-compassion. The SCS underwent five stages of testing on various student samples. This measurement instrument consists of 26 statements describing the extent to which individuals demonstrate self-compassion in the face of adversity. In this study, an adapted Indonesian version compiled by Sugianto et al. (2020) was used to facilitate participants' understanding of the statements contained in the questionnaire.

Table 1

Self-Compassion Scale

Dimension	Item Number		Total
	Favorable	Unfavorable	
Self-Kindness	5, 12, 19, 23, 26	-	5
Self-Judgment	-	1, 8, 11, 16, 21	5
Common Humanity	3, 7, 10, 15	-	4
Isolation	-	4, 13, 18, 25	4
Mindfulness	9, 14, 17, 22	-	4
Over-identification	-	2, 6, 20, 24	4
Total	13	13	26

The scale used is a Likert scale with a range of 1 = "Almost Never" to 5 = "Almost Always." Translated into Indonesian, 1 = "Almost Never" to 5 = "Almost Always." Participants will choose the number that best describes the frequency with which they behave according to the statement. The scale contains six dimensions: Self-Kindness, Self-Judgment, Common Humanity, Isolation, Mindfulness, and Over-Identification; negative items (self-judgment,

isolation, over-identification) will be reversed before being added up to produce a total self-compassion score. According to Neff (2003), the SCS shows high internal reliability with a Cronbach's α value of 0.92 for the whole with subscales ≈ 0.75-0.081, as well as good inter-temporal stability with test-retest ≈ 0.93 and its construct validity is supported by the results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis or CFA (six-factor model).

The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) instrument was used in an Indonesian version adapted by Sugianto et al. (2020) and named the *Skala Welas Diri* (SWD). Psychometric tests on a sample of students (N = 329) showed a good fit of the six-factor model (χ^2/df = 1.324; RMSEA = .043; CFI = .935) and good internal reliability for the total score (α = .872; ω = .873) with subscale reliability in the range of .60–.78; thus, the SWD was declared to have adequate construct validity and reliability for the Indonesian student population (Sugianto et al. 2020).

Another measuring tool is the Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) developed by Thompson and Hoffman (2005). This instrument consists of 18 questions divided into three subscales to measure the level of forgiveness behavior in individuals: self-forgiveness, others-forgiveness, and situational forgiveness. Each consists of six items. The scale used is a Likert scale with a range of 1 = "Almost Always False of Me" to 7 = "Almost Always True of Me." The translation of the scale into Indonesian is 1 = "Very unsuitable for me" to 7 = "Very suitable for me." Participants will choose the number that best describes themselves. In this study, an adapted Indonesian version compiled by Chandra (2019) was used to make it easier for participants to understand the statements. (Translations — HFS, n.d.).

Table 2

Heartland Forgiveness Scale

Dimension	*Item Number*		Total
	Favorable	*Unfavorable*	
Forgiveness of Self	1, 3, 5	2, 4, 6	6
Forgiveness of Others	8, 10, 12	7, 9, 11	6
Forgiveness of Situation	14, 16, 18	13, 15, 17	6
Total	9	9	18

Based on the research results of Thompson et al. (2005), the Heartland Forgiveness Scale showed excellent internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.84-0.87 for the total scale, and subscale reliability values ranging from 0.72-0.79. Construct validity tests through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) showed that the three-factor model, self, others, and situation, was in accordance with the proposed theoretical structure. This instrument was tested on more than 1,000 participants from adult and college students in the United States. The Indonesian version of the HFS is an adaptation of the original HFS (Thompson et al., 2005) by Tiffany Chandra (2019). This adapted version

has been used in several studies in Indonesia and reports adequate internal reliability in local samples (e.g., Cronbach's α ≈ .82 in the study by Theodora et al., 2023). Therefore, the Indonesian version of the HFS is considered suitable for measuring forgiveness tendencies (*forgiveness*) in a sample of college students. Based on these results, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale can be concluded as a valid and reliable measuring instrument.

3. Results and Discussion

The results of obtaining demographic data from 202 students at University X are presented in Table 3 as follows:

Table 3

Demographic Data of Research Subjects

Demographic Factors	Category	N	% (Percentage)
Gender	Male	66	32.67%
	Female	136	67.33%
Cohort	2022	9	4.46%
	2023	30	14.85%
	2024	90	44.55%
	2025	73	36.14%
Religion	Christian	173	85.64%
	Non-Christian	29	14.36%

Demographic data shows that 32.67% of participants were male and 67.33% were female. Based on class, 4.46% were students from the class of 2022, 14.85% from the class of 2023, 44.55% from the class of 2024, and finally, 36.14% from the class of 2025. Lastly, based on religion, 85.64% of participants are Christians, whereas 14.36% of them are non-Christians.

Validity and Reliability of Measurement Tools

Table 4

Validity and Reliability of Self-Compassion Scale

		Dimension					
	Overall	Self-Kindness	Self-Judgement	Common Humanity	Isolation	Mindfulness	Overidentification
Cronbach's Alpha	0.873	0.768	0.673	0.731	0.703	0.728	0.691
Item-Rest Correlation	0.168 - 0.607	0.469- 0.612	0.399 - 0.459	0.400 - 0.599	0.353 - 0.594	0.408 - 0.604	0.396 - 0.548

Based on Table 4, the Self-Compassion Scale shows a good overall reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.873. The reliability coefficients for each dimension ranged from 0.673 to 0.768, indicating acceptable to good internal consistency across dimensions of Self-Compassion Scale. On the other hand, based on the validity test results using item-rest

correlation, the values ranged from 0.168 to 0.607 overall and 0.353 to 0.612 across dimensions. This shows that most items exceed the acceptable validity threshold of 0.30.

Table 5

Validity and Reliability of Heartland Forgiveness Scale

	Overall	Dimension		
		Forgiveness of Self	Forgiveness of Others	Forgiveness of Situation
Cronbach's Alpha	0.853	0.687	0.591	0.732
Item-Rest Correlation	0.352 - 0.602	0.347 - 0.484	0.054 - 0.525	0.362 - 0.557

Based on Table 5, the Heartland Forgiveness Scale shows good overall reliability with a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.853. The reliability coefficients for each dimension ranged from 0.591 to 0.732, indicating acceptable internal consistency across the dimensions of forgiveness. Although the forgiveness of Others dimension showed a relatively lower reliability coefficient (α = 0.591), the overall reliability of the instrument remained adequate for research purposes.

Furthermore, based on the validity test results using item-test correlation, the values ranged from 0.054 to 0.602. Most items exceeded the acceptable validity threshold of 0.30, indicating that the majority of items were sufficiently correlated with the overall construct being measured.

Descriptive Statistics and Norm Categorization

Table 6

Descriptive Statistic Analysis of Variables and Dimensions

Scale	M (Mean)	SD (Standard Deviation)
Self-Compassion (SCS)	83.624	13.536
Self-Kindness	17.173	3.628
Self-Judgement	14.030	3.747
Common Humanity	14.762	3.172
Isolation	11.644	3.381
Mindfulness	14.460	2.971
Over-Identification	11.554	3.307
Forgiveness (HFS)	82.787	15.104
Forgiveness of Self	27.045	5.941
Forgiveness of Others	28.144	6.227
Forgiveness of Situation	27.599	5.850

Based on the results of the descriptive analysis for both variables, the SCS measuring tool has an average of 83.624 and a standard deviation of 13.536. Among the dimensions of

self-compassion, the self-kindness dimension shows the highest average value (M = 17.173) while the isolation and over-identification dimensions show lower values (M isolation = 11.644, M over-identification = 11.554). Meanwhile, the HFS measuring instrument has an average value of 82.787 and a standard deviation of 15.104. The dimensions in the forgiveness variable show a fairly balanced value where the average value of the forgiveness of self-dimension is 27.045, forgiveness of others is 28.144, and forgiveness of situation is 27.599. The score categorization in this study uses the categorization from Neff (2003) for SCS and Thompson et al. (2005) for HFS. The results of the categorization norms are presented in Table 7 as follows:

Table 7

Categorization Norms

Level	Self-Compassion		Forgiveness	
	N	%	N	%
High	50	24.75%	63	31.18%
Medium	137	67.82%	136	67.33%
Low	15	7.43%	3	1.49%
Total	202 participants	100%	202 participants	100%

Based on Table 7, a picture of the level categorization is obtained for self-compassion and forgiveness in 202 respondents. In the self-compassion variable, the majority of respondents were in the medium category with a total of 137 people (67.82%). In addition, there were 50 people (24.75%) who were in the high category and 15 people (7.43%) who were in the low category. This indicates that most respondents had a medium level of self-compassion. In the forgiveness variable, the majority of respondents were in the medium category with a total of 136 people (67.33%). In addition, there were 63 people (31.18%) who were in the high category and 3 people (1.49%) who were in the low category. This indicates that most respondents had a level of forgiveness in the medium range.

Normality Test

Tabel 8

Normality Test

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk	P-Value Shapiro Wilk
Self-Compassion	0.992	0.986
Forgiveness	0.592	0.112

The results of the normality test using Shapiro-Wilk showed that the SCS measuring instrument had a Shapiro-Wilk value of 0.992 and a p value greater than 0.05 (p = 0.987). This indicates that self-compassion data is normally distributed. In addition, the HFS measuring instrument showed a Shapiro-Wilk value of 0.592 with a p value also greater

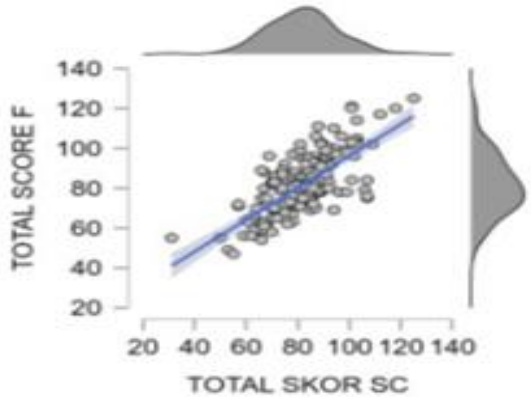
than 0.05 (p = 0.112). Although the Shapiro-Wilk statistical value is relatively low, the p-value is still above 0.05, so the forgiveness data can still be understood as normally distributed (Goss-Sampson, 2020).

Linearity Test

The results of the linearity test based on the scatterplot on the overall data are presented in Figure 2 as follows:

Figure 2

Linearity Test



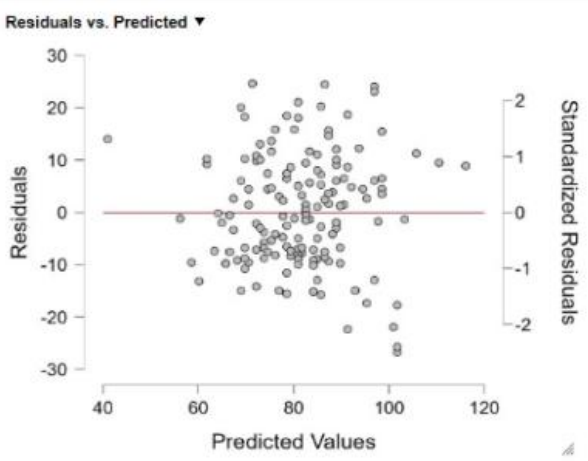
Based on the results of the linearity test, the data distribution for both variables falls along the distribution line, resulting in a linear pattern. Therefore, the linearity assumption is met (Goss-Sampson, 2020).

Homoscedasticity Test

The result of the homoscedasticity test was assessed through inspection of the scatterplot of standardized residuals presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Homoscedasticity Test



Based on the result of the homoscedasticity test, the scatterplot indicates that the residuals were randomly scattered, without creating a clear pattern in the plot, therefore indicating that the assumption of homoscedasticity is met.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 9

Correlation Test Between Dimensions of Research Variables

Variable		Self Kindness	Self Judgement	Common Humanity	Isolation	Mindfulness	Over Identification	Forgiveness of Self	Forgiveness of Others	Forgiveness of Situation
Self Kindness	Pearson's r	-								
	p-value	-								
Self Judgement	Pearson's r	0.364***	-							
	p-value	< .001	-							
Common Humanity	Pearson's r	0.568***	0.025	-						
	p-value	< .001	0,522222222	-						
Isolation	Pearson's r	0.315***	0.555***	0.126	-					
	p-value	< .001	< .001	0.115	-					
Mindfulness	Pearson's r	0.621***	0,097916667	0.639***	0.190***	-				
	p-value	< .001	0.078	< .001	0.017	-				
Over Identification	Pearson's r	0.260***	0.572***	0.093	0.656***	0.247***	-			
	p-value	< .001	< .001	0.246	< .001	0.002	-			
Forgiveness of Self	Pearson's r	0.503***	0.567***	0.270***	0.403***	0.372***	0.370***	-		
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	-		
Forgiveness of Others	Pearson's r	0.378***	0.262***	0.345***	0.293***	0.384***	0.413***	0.462***	-	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	-	
Forgiveness of Situation	Pearson's r	0.502***	0.468***	0.398***	0.511***	0.450***	0.509***	0.658***	0.533***	-
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	-

Based on Table 9 above, it was found that each dimension of the Self-Compassion Scale had a positive and significant correlation with each dimension of the Heartland

Forgiveness Scale (p < .001) (Goss-Sampson, 2020). With the assumptions of normality and linearity met in the overall student data, the Pearson correlation test was used to analyze the relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness across participants. The results of the correlation test for the two variables are presented in Table 10 as follows:

Table 10

Correlation Test of All Subjects

Korelasi	Pearson's r	p
TOTAL SCORE SCS - TOTAL SCORE HFS	0.721	<.001

Based on a correlation test using Pearson's r conducted on the student data sample, it was found that the total score of Self-Compassion Scale had a strong positive correlation with the total score of Heartland Forgiveness Scale (r = 0.721, p < .001) (Goss-Sampson, 2020).

Table 11

T Test

Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized	t	p
M0	(Intercept)	81.608	1.228		66.469	< .001
M1	(Intercept)	16.212	5.110		3.173	0.002
	TOTAL SCORE SC	0.799	0.062	0.721	12.980	< .001

Table 12

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Square	df	Mean Square	F	p
M0	Regression	19414.918	1	19414.918	168.480	< .001
	Residual	17976.752	156	115.236		
	Total	37391.671	157			

Table 13

Simple Linear Regression Test

Model	R^2	Adjusted R^2	df1	df2	p
M0	0	0	0	157	
M1	0.519	0.516	1	156	< .001

Based on a linear regression analysis conducted on the entire student data sample, it was shown that self-compassion significantly predicts forgiveness, F(1,156) = 168.480, p < 0.001. The results also indicate that self-compassion explained 51.6% of the variance in forgiveness score (Adjusted R^2 = 0.516), indicating that higher levels of self-compassion are associated with higher levels of forgiveness (Goss-Sampson, 2020).

Differential Research between Christian and Non-Christian Groups with Research Variables

Before the difference test using an independent sample t-test. After the data were analyzed, classical assumption tests, including normality and homogeneity of variance, were performed. These tests ensured that the data met the required assumptions before conducting a mean comparison test. The results of the normality test for demographic data for Christian and non-Christian students, when associated with SCS and HFS scores, are presented in Table 12 below:

Table 14

Normality Test

Residuals	Group	W	p
TOTAL SCORE SCS	Christian	0.991	0.396
	Non-Christian	0.979	0.825
TOTAL SCORE HFS	Christian	0.987	0.111
	Non-Christian	0.981	0.860

Based on the results of the normality test in Table 12, the data distribution for this group shows a p-value > 0.05, thus concluding that the data are normally distributed (Goss-Sampson, 2020). The results of the homogeneity of variance test for the demographic data for the Christian and non-Christian categories are presented in Table 13 as follows:

Table 15

Homogeneity of Variance Test

F	p
1.286	0.258
0.071	0.790

Based on the results of the homogeneity of variance test using the Levene test, the p-value obtained was greater than 0.05, indicating that the variance between Christians and non-Christians was homogeneous (Goss-Sampson, 2020). Furthermore, the descriptive statistics of demographic data for age categories in relation to SCS and HFS scores are presented in Table 16 as follows:

Table 16

Descriptive Statistics Test

	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of Variation
TOTAL SCORE SCS	Christian	173	83994	12818	1051	0.165
	Non-Christian	29	81414	11682	2169	0.143
TOTAL SCORE HFS	Christian	173	83000	15154	1152	0.183
	Non-Christian	29	81517	14999	2785	0.184

Based on the results of descriptive statistics by looking at the mean, Christian students at University X have a slightly higher mean SCS score and HFS score than non-Christian students at University X. Then, the results of the difference test using the independent sample t-test on Christian and non-Christian students when associated with the SCS score and HFS score are presented in Table 17 as follows:

Table 17

Result of the Comparison Between Christian and Non-Christian Students on the Study Variables

	Test	Statistic	df	p
TOTAL SCORE SCS	Student	0.950	200	0.343
TOTAL SCORE HFS	Student	0.499	200	0.626

Based on the results of the independent sample t-test between Christian and non-Christian student groups, self-compassion scores and forgiveness scores did not show significant differences ($p > 0.05$) (Goss-Sampson, 2020).

Discussion

Prior to conducting the regression analysis, the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were met. The results of the regression analysis demonstrate that self-compassion significantly predicts forgiveness among students at University X ($F(1,156) = 168.480$, $p < 0.001$). Self-compassion accounted for 51.6% of the variance in forgiveness, therefore suggesting that self-compassion is a considerable predictor of forgiveness. In addition, the positive regression coefficient further demonstrates that higher levels of self-compassion are associated with higher levels of forgiveness, creating a parallel or aligned trend.

This finding is consistent with previous studies that have also reported positive relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness across various populations, Among university students and adults, Topçu and Erus (2023) found that self-compassion significantly predicted forgiveness, with self-compassion and interpersonal mindfulness together accounting for 39% of the overall variance in adult forgiveness. They further noted that "self-compassion is believed to be a variable that might affect to what extent an individual might forgive" (p. 264), and that self-compassion serves as "a strategy an individual uses while forgiving oneself for others by showing mercy and compassion to himself without ignoring his own grief" (Topçu & Erus, 2023, p. 262). Similarly, Neff and Pommier (2013) found that self-compassion was significantly associated with forgiveness across college undergraduates, community adults, and practicing meditators, suggesting that the relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness is consistent across different life stages and population (Sarı & Conoley, 2019; Breen et al., 2010; Sakız, & Sarıçam, 2015; Zhang & Chen, 2016).

The positive relationship between self-compassion and forgiveness can be understood through the three core components of self-compassion proposed by Neff (2003), namely self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. As Neff and Germer (2017) argued, "forgiving others required understanding the vast web of causes and conditions that lead people to act as they do. The ability to forgive and accept one's flawed humanity, therefore, appears to also apply others" (p. 19). This process id further supported by the role of mindfulness in emotion regulation, since forgiveness fundamentally requires "the replacement of negative emotions (e.g., resentment, bitterness, anger, hatred, or hostility) toward a transgressor with positive emotions (i.e., empathy, sympathy, compassion, or love)" (Ho et al., 2020, p. 1) a transformation that individuals high in self-compassion are better equipped to undergo.

Another understanding for the consistency of this study with studies before is that individuals with high self-compassion tend to have more empathy and less resentment, therefore are more likely to forgive (Thompson et al., 2005; Neff & Pommier, 2013). This is also consistent with the definition of forgiveness that involves the process of letting go of the feelings of resentment (Worthington, 2005).

While self-compassion accounted for 51.6% of the variance in forgiveness, the remaining variance suggests that other psychological factors also contribute to forgiveness behavior. One such factor is emotion regulation. Ho et al. (2020) found that both self-regulatory strength and emotion regulation were significant predictors of forgiveness among university students, with cognitive reappraisal mediating the relationship between self-regulatory fatigue and forgiveness, suggesting that the ability to reframe negative experience cognitively plays in important role in enabling individuals to let go of resentment. Empathy has also been consistently identified as self-compassionate individuals are more likely to develop empathy and reduce resentment, thus improving their ability to forgive (Thompson et al., 2005; Neff & Pommier, 2013). Additionally, Oral and Arslan (2017) found that among university students, rumination negatively predicted forgiveness of others, while agreeableness and extraversion predicted it positively, indicating that both cognitive tendencies and dispositional personality traits independently shape one's capacity to forgive.

Through the research results, there are theoretical and practical implications. As a theoretical implication, the result of this study indicates that self-compassion is positively associated with forgiveness behavior among students at University X, suggesting that students with higher levels of self-compassion tend to demonstrate higher levels of forgiveness. This finding provides empirical support for previous theories and research that

also demonstrate a positive correlation between self-compassion and forgiveness (Neff & Pommier, 2013; Thompson et al., 2005; Worthington, 2005). Meanwhile, as a practical implication, this finding suggests that self-compassion may serve as a relevant psychological factor in supporting students' capacity to forgive. Therefore, counseling services and student development programs at University X may consider incorporating self-compassion-based approaches, such as the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) program (Neff & Germer, 2013), as part of efforts to support students' interpersonal well-being.

This study has several limitations that should be considered. First, the study used a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to examine changes in self-compassion and forgiveness over time. Second, the findings in this study cannot be generalized to all university students because the sample was only drawn from one university, namely University X, which may differ from other universities in terms of culture, religious background, and environmental context. In addition, the data collected were self-report measures, which may be influenced by social desirability bias. Furthermore, this study also only examined self-compassion as a predictor of forgiveness and did not include other variables that may also contribute to forgiveness, for example, emotional regulation, empathy, or personality factors. Finally, the study did not use interviews or observations as additional methods of primary data collection and only conducted a short interview during the beginning of the study, while interviews and observations could have provided a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences, emotions, and perspectives related to self-compassion and forgiveness.

Furthermore, this study also makes a novel contribution to the field of research. As an additional finding based on demographic comparison, the correlation between self-compassion and forgiveness was found to be slightly stronger in the non-Christian group compared to the Christian group. This may be understood through the model proposed by Mróz et al. (2024), who found that religiosity does not directly promote forgiveness but instead works through self-compassion, specifically its components of self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. When religious teachings are internalized through the lens of self-compassion, they may strengthen forgiveness. However, when religiosity is experienced as moral obligation or self-judgment, it may weaken this relationship. Research on religiosity in Indonesia (Herdiansyah et al., 2024) similarly shows that the psychological impact of religiosity varies depending on how individuals experience and internalize religious teachings. However, this finding should be interpreted with considerable caution, as the non-Christian sample was considerably smaller than the Christian sample, which may have influenced the observed difference in correlation strength.

4. Conclusion

Based on the research results, a significant effect of self-compassion on forgiveness behavior was found among students at University X. This finding shows that H_1 is accepted and H_0 is rejected. This means that higher levels of self-compassion significantly predict higher levels of forgiveness behavior among students at University X. These findings reinforce theoretical understanding that self-compassion plays a crucial role in the forgiveness process. Individuals who can treat themselves with kindness, recognize human limitations, and respond to negative experiences with mindfulness are more likely to be able to let go of negative emotions toward themselves and others. Thus, self-compassion serves as a protective factor that helps students manage painful experiences, reduces the tendency to blame themselves, and increases their ability to view situations more objectively.

The findings of this study also indicate that self-compassion contributes to forgiveness behavior among students at University X. This suggests that self-compassion may be an important psychological factor in fostering forgiveness among college students across various backgrounds and individual characteristics. College students with higher self-compassion may be more capable of responding to their own interpersonal conflicts and personal failures in a healthier and more constructive manner.

Practically, the results of this study emphasize the importance of developing self-compassion in college students as part of emotional regulation and mental health. Interventions such as mindfulness training, self-compassion training, and counseling services can help students increase empathy for themselves and others, thereby strengthening their ability to forgive in various interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts.

Overall, this study shows that self-compassion has an important role in supporting forgiveness behavior in students at University X. The significant influence found in this study indicates that self-compassion is an important psychological aspect that deserves attention in efforts to improve students' mental well-being and the quality of their social relationships, especially in the college environment.

Based on the findings of this study, several theoretical and practical suggestions can be considered for further research. Theoretically, researchers can examine other independent variables that may influence forgiveness. Furthermore, researchers can test other dependent variables that may also be correlated with self-compassion. Furthermore, researchers can examine populations with different characteristics, such as age, faculty, or cultural background, to broaden the theory's generalizability. Practically, suggestions can be provided for students to further enhance their self-compassion. Universities can support this by providing programs such as seminars, workshops, or care groups that encourage the

development of self-compassion and forgiveness. Furthermore, consistent social support from lecturers, the community, and family is also important to strengthen the development of these aspects in students.

Daftar Rujukan

Bonete, S., Molinero, C., Sendra, S., & González De Abreu, A. M. (2025). A path to better mental health among emerging adults: Forgiveness as a solution to interpersonal conflicts. *Frontiers in Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1477283

Breen, W. E., Kashdan, T. B., Lenser, M. L., & Fincham, F. D. (2010). Gratitude and forgiveness: Convergence and divergence on self-report and informant ratings. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *49*(8), 932–937. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2010.07.033

Chandra, T. (2019). *Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) – Indonesian translation*. Heartland Forgiveness Scale. https://heartlandforgiveness.com/translations/

Goss-Sampson, A. M. (2020). *Statistical Analysis in JASP: A Guide for Students*. Author. Retrieved from: http://jaspstats.org/jasp-materials/.

Herdiansyah, D., Farghobi, I. Y., Azmi, S. M., Khoiriyah, H. S., & Apriliani, D. (2024). Exploring the Relationship between Religiosity and Mental Health: Towards Psychological Well-Being-A Literature Review. *BICC Proceedings*, *2*, 60-71.

Ho, M. Y., Van Tongeren, D. R., & You, J. (2020). The role of self-regulation in forgiveness: A regulatory model of forgiveness. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1084. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01084

Hou, Y., & Li, Y. (2021). Relationship between interpersonal distress and interpersonal conflict management modes among college students. *Advances in Social Sciences Research Journal, 8*(11), 473–480. https://doi.org/10.14738/assrj.811.11301

Mróz, J. (2022). Forgiveness and flourishing: The mediating and moderating role of self-compassion. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, *20*(1), 666.

Mróz, J., Toussaint, L., & Kaleta, K. (2024). Association between religiosity and forgiveness: Testing a moderated mediation model of self-compassion and adverse childhood experiences. *Religions*, *15*(9), 1137. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15091137

Nasrin et al. (2025). Forgiveness as a mediator between peer conflict and emotional wellbeing. *Journal of Adolescent and Youth Psychological Studies, 6*(8), 1–10. http://dx.doi.org/10.61838/kman.jayps.4423

Neff, K. D., & Germer, C. (2013). A pilot study and randomized controlled trial of the Mindful Self-Compassion program. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 69*(1), 28–44.

https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.21923

Neff, K. D., & Germer, C. (2017). Self-compassion and psychological wellbeing. In E. M. Seppälä, E. Simon-Thomas, S. L. Brown, M. C. Worline, C. D. Cameron, & J. R. Doty (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science* (pp. 371–385). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190464684.013.27

Neff, K. D., & Pommier, E. (2013). The relationship between self-compassion and other-focused concern among college undergraduates, community adults, and practicing meditators. *Self and Identity, 12*(2), 160–176. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2011.649546

Neff, K. D. (2003). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity, 2*(2), 85–101. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1080/15298860309032

Neff, K. D. (2011). Self-Compassion, Self-Esteem, and Well-Being. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *5*(1), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1751-9004.2010.00330.x

Neff, K. D. (2003). The development and validation of a scale to measure Self-Compassion. *Self and Identity*, *2*(3), 223–250. https://doi.org/10.1080/15298860309027

Nemati, S., Mirnasab, M. M., & Bonab, B. G. (2016). The Relationship between Dimensions of Forgiveness with Mental Health in Mothers of Children with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. *Journal of Education and Learning*, *5*(4), 15-20.

Oral, T., & Arslan, C. (2017). The investigation of university students' forgiveness levels in terms of self-compassion, rumination, and personality traits. *Universal Journal of Educational Research, 5*(8), 1335–1342. https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1151858.pdf

Sakız, H., & Sarıçam, H. (2015). Self-compassion and forgiveness: The protective approach against rejection sensitivity. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice, 15*(6), 1671–1681.https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281408998_Self-compassion_and_forgiveness_The_protective_approach_against_rejection_sensitivity_Oz-duyarlilik_ve_affedicilik_Reddedilme_duyarliligina_karsi_koruyucu_bir_yaklasim

Sarı, T., & Conoley, C. (2019). The relationship between self-compassion and well-being: A comparison on Turkish and US university students. *International Journal of Research Studies in Psychology*, *8*(2), 51-66.

Sugianto, D., Suwartono, C., & Sutanto, S. H. (2020). Reliabilitas dan validitas Self Compassion Scale versi bahasa Indonesia. *Jurnal Psikologi Ulayat*. Advance online

publication. https://doi:10.24854/jpu02020-337.

Theodora, M., Sahrani, R., & Roswiyani, R. (2023). The mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between gratitude and well-being among emerging adults in Indonesia. *Jurnal Psikologi* Ulayat. https://lintar.untar.ac.id/repository/penelitian/buktipenelitian_10706003_3A090124090454.pdf?utm_source

Thompson, L. Y., Snyder, C. R., Hoffman, L., Michael, S. T., Rasmussen, H. N., Billings, L. S., ... & Roberts, D. E. (2005). Dispositional forgiveness of self, others, and situations. *Journal of personality*, *73*(2), 313-360. https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-6494.2005.00311.x

Topçu, P., & Erus, S. M. (2023). Self-compassion and interpersonal mindfulness as predictors of forgiveness in adulthood. *International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies, 10*(1), 261–273. https://dx.doi.org/10.52380/ijpes.2023.10.1.1014

Worthington, E. L., Jr. (Ed.). (2005). *Handbook of forgiveness*. Routledge.

Zhang, J. W., & Chen, S. (2016). Self-compassion promotes personal improvement from regret experiences via accepting and learning from regrets. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, *42(*2), 244–258. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167215623271