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## Self-compassion as protective factor against emotion regulation difficulties, self-criticism and daily hassle among female college students

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### ABSTRACT

Female college students face several daily hassles along with their responsibility as a student especially during learning from home policy. The purpose of this study was to explore the role of self-compassion as a protective factor against emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism among female students with consideration of their daily hassles. The correlative investigation model was employed in this study. The study sample was 870 female university students aged 17 to 24 years old. The correlation analysis indicated that daily hassle was positively correlated with emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. On the hand, emotion regulation difficulties, self-criticism, and daily hassle are negatively correlated with self-compassion. The path analysis indicated that increased daily hassle was directly associated with lower self-compassion, which in turn was associated with higher emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. Self-compassion was found to have a direct link to emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. Cultivation of self-compassion may have benefits for female college students to cope with their daily hassles.



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## Introduction

Covid 19 pandemic has been changing many aspects of human life. It has been more than two years since college student has done their college activities including learning, student organization, thesis supervision, and administration must do through virtual and online modes. College life is challenging for students due to academic and social demands as well as emotional adaptation to success and failure (Bono, Reil, & Hescoc, 2020). Many studies conducted to examine the impact of online learning on college students focused on problems on learning related infrastructure such as curriculum and facilities (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Bao, 2020), students achievement (Chan, Botelho, & Lam, 2021), mental health (Holmes & Reid, 2019; Wiczorek et al., 2021). However, studies on the impact of learning from home policy and how daily hassle puts an extra burden on female students' academic and personal life are limited.

Learning from home is challenging especially for female students. Being at home for female students means extra responsibility and burden on household chores, especially in Indonesian families. Ang et al. (2021) and Cerrato and Cifre (2018) found that men and women have an unequal division in household chores, especially in Asian families. Particularly parents with traditional gender values tend to give their daughters not only a higher burden of household chores but also different responsibilities such as financial responsibility (Loderup et al., 2021). Covarrubias, Valle, Laiduc, and Azmitia (2019) found that first-generation college students including females engage in family roles such as providing emotional support and

advocacy, providing financial support, providing physical support, and sibling caregiving. Female students are juggling their responsibilities as students and daughters.

Dealing with household responsibilities for female students brings higher daily hassles. Daily hassle is seen as a source of stress due to the ability of individuals to cope with everyday require tasks. Stress arises when individuals see the tasks exciding their ability to be completed (Peciuliene, Perminas, Gustainiene, & Valiune, 2015). According to Hochwlder and Saied (2018) intensity of daily hassles experienced by female students ais higher than male students student and have to spend more time on household chores on weekdays and more time on weekends (Cosp & Romn, 2018).

A high burden on household responsibilities has long-term effects due to it can be extremely time-consuming Daily hassle is not only related to everyday hassle but also covert hassles such as thoughts and feelings related to personal issues, social acceptance, and religious or normative beliefs. The severity of those hassles is determined by emotional involvement (Barahmand, Nakhoda, Fahimnia, & Nazari, 2019). According to Antonovsky (1987) there are three types of stress, (1) chronic stressors which are a condition or state/trait of stress which has a permanent and continuous effect on daily life; (2) major life events such as death and sickness; and daily hassles which seem to be minor but potentially irritating and influence everyday life (in Hochwlder & Saied, 2018).

Daily hassle is considered as a stressful life event experience by individuals throughout their life. Daily hassles are relatively minor events but are experienced consistently and continuously which are perceived as more stressful than other types of stress (Flett, Molnar, Nepon, & Hewitt, 2012). The daily hassle was negatively associated with wellness (Tov, 2012) and the correlation between daily hassle and wellbeing was higher among women (Basu, Samanta, Basu, & Bhattacharya, 2018). Some researchers have argued that many stressors come from daily hassles, especially among women (Preston et al., 2018).

The high burden on household responsibilities has long-term effects due to extremely time-consuming and consumed a lot of energy which prevents women and girls to develop their abilities (McGinn, Ruiz Castro, & Lingo, 2015). It can be concluded that the probability of stress caused by daily hassle is higher among female students than their male counterparts (Bedewy & Gabriel, 2015; Caltabiano & Sarafino, 2002; Hochwlder & Saied, 2018; Tajalli & Ganbaripannah, 2010). Many studies reported that female students experienced higher stress related to family and social relationships, as well as daily hassles (Brougham, Zail, Mendoza, & Miller, 2009). Despite the daily hassle of household chores, many female students have a responsibility to support family finance which forces them to work. Being employed also contributes to the correlation between daily hassles and class standing as well as financial stress (Brougham et al., 2009).

Stress induced by daily hassles contributes to negative mental health. Although everyday hassle are relatively minor events such as household chores, sometimes may be perceived as more stressful than a major events (Basu et al., 2018). As a stressor, daily hassles would influence students' everyday life and can adversely impact physiological functioning (Yaribeygi, Panahi, Sahraei, Johnston, & Sahebkar, 2017) and overall health (O'Connor, Thayer, & Vedhara, 2021) as well as individual wellbeing (Bono et al., 2020) and anxiety (Husky, Kovess-Masfety, & Swendsen, 2020) and mental health (Poalses & Bezuidenhout, 2018), quality of life (Ribeiro et al., 2018) and school grades (Telzer & Fuligni, 2009). Bridges-Curry, Glenn, and Felton (2021) found that daily hassle was a significant predictor of anxiety only for female students. Female students reported higher levels of stressor load, anxiety and worry than male counterparts (Anniko, Boersma, & Tillfors, 2019).

The impact of daily hassles contributed to emotion regulation difficulties since their appear to trigger of emotions (Josee, 2017). Emotion regulation is described as the process when students are influenced by emotion in response to personal, interpersonal, and academic demands (Gross, 2015). The idea was expanded by Gratz and Roemer (2004) who considered awareness and acceptance of emotion, the ability to change emotions related to goals, and the ability to control behaviour when the face of negative emotions.

Difficulties in managing emotional experiences have been studied by various researchers. Emotion regulation difficulties are derived from emotion regulation deficit or emotion dysregulation. Gratz and Roemer (2004) concluded that deficiencies of emotion regulation related difficulties in aware and accept emotion, to the lack of the control of emotional experience, expression, monitoring, and evaluation of the emotional experience. emotion regulation difficulties related to several mental health issues (Van Beveren & Braet, 2015). Emotion regulation difficulties related to specific psychological symptom profiles. Adrian et al. (2009) reported that a person who tends to internalize problems has more difficulty aware and understanding their emotion. In addition, emotion regulation difficulties are negatively correlated to self-compassion (Prentice, Rees, & Finlay-Jones, 2021).

Emotion regulation difficulties are one of mental health concerns for female students (Deckert, Schmoeger, Auff, & Willinger, 2020). The female student appeared to have more risk than male students related to emotion regulation and anxiety. As Gao, Ping, and Liu (2020) found that female student anxiety was higher than males in the first and second years and most female students experienced above the normal threshold of anxiety. More importantly, female students in the first-, and second years mode of study was online learning. They never experience face-to-face lectures which influences their attachment to lecturers and peers.

Whelton & Greenberg (2005) suggest that self-criticism is creating an internal stressor in addition to an external source of distress. Self-criticisms heighten stress among female college students in terms of the increase in daily hassles. Female college students who have high daily hassles tend to have high self-criticism and emotion regulation difficulties and mostly have an inadequacy in emotion resilience related to self-criticism (Whelton & Greenberg, 2005). These findings support Gilbert's position suggesting that female student with self-criticism experience higher negative affect which lead to a higher level of stress (Crăciun, 2013). Furthermore, Zuroff, Santor, and Mongrain (2005) argue that people with a high level of self-criticism increase and maintain vulnerability to psychopathology (Crăciun, 2013). As Zuroff et al. (2005) found that self-criticism is correlated to depression during stressful life events among clinical and non-clinical samples. Self-criticism also plays a role as an additional factor in vulnerability to mental health problems (P. Gilbert, 2010).

Self-criticism is the process of negative self-evaluation and self-judgment which is complemented by negative emotions such as hatred, disappointment, and inadequacy (Greenberger, Padesky, & Beck, 2015). Self-criticism is closely related to emotion regulation difficulties. Self-criticism is believed could fostering negative affect which is one of the emotion regulation indicators. Self-criticism is stand as a contradiction to self-compassion as Paul Gilbert (2005) that critical of self may reflect an inability to direct kindness, warmth, and positive regard towards the self or compassion to self. In addition, difficult situations or daily hassles and self-criticism are likely to foster negative emotions (P. Gilbert, 2010).

Self-criticism has three components two negative characteristics which are inadequate self and hated self and one positive characteristic self-reassurance. an inadequate self is a sense of personal inadequacy, and a hated self is an individuals' self-critical manifested in thoughts and feelings. Self-reassurance is an ability to support themselves when facing difficulties (P. Gilbert, 2010). The hated self is related to aggressiveness, rejection, and desire to remove the unwanted self. The inadequate self is related to exaggerating inadequacy, self-correction, and comparison to others. Oppositely, self-assurance is the positive side of self-criticism which reflects confidence in self (Wakelin, Perman, & Simonds, 2022). Students with high self-critical demonstrated the inadequacy to be kind and compassionate toward themselves (Paul Gilbert & Procter, 2006).

Gilbert has hypothesized that self-criticism is a predictive factor of psychopathology and reveals helplessness to give psychological calm to the self (Paul Gilbert et al., 2012). The capacity to soothe the self could decrease self-criticism, emotion regulation difficulties and stress as Neff, Kirkpatrick, and Rude (2007) argue that self-compassion served as an adaptive psychological functioning. Self-compassion is argued as a protective factor against several vulnerabilities such as psychosomatic symptoms of distress (Torbet, Proeve, & Roberts, 2019), emotional wellbeing (Bluth & Blanton, 2014), emotional distress (Joeng et al., 2017), depression, anxiety and stress (Özyeşil & Akbağ, 2013). Even though there was no study that reported the mediating role of self-compassion to daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism, it is argued that self-compassion could decrease emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism for female students with the daily hassle.

The concept of self-compassion came from Buddhist philosophy which consists of compassion for self and others along with encouragement to alleviate the distress of others and themselves (Neff et al., 2007). The self-compassion concept was adapted to Western societies and defined as the ability to direct these feelings inwards (Roy, 2010). Self-compassion has three components described in six contradicted components which are self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, which contradicted self-judgment, isolation, and over-identification (Neff & McGehee, 2010). According to Neff (2003) mindful perspective and non-avoidance action toward painful thoughts and feelings are essential to experience self-compassion.

Self-compassion is considered as a predictor or contributor to many positive mental health outcomes such as psychological resilience (Neff & McGehee, 2010), well-being (Neely, Schallert, Mohammed, Roberts, & Chen, 2009), emotional wellbeing (Bluth & Blanton, 2014), emotion regulation (Finlay-Jones, Rees, & Kane,

2015), and self-criticism (Roy, 2010). Self-compassion is negatively correlated to positive mental health and psychopathology, therefore, people who have self-compassion tend to have resiliency against psychopathology which might function as an emotion regulation strategy (Xavier, Pinto-Gouveia, & Cunha, 2016).

The researchers argue that self-compassion is related to affective processes through emotion regulation. Self-compassion could enable emotion regulation skills (Neff, Hsieh, & Dejjattarat, 2005) since it is negatively related to rumination, thought suppression, and avoidance (Neff et al., 2007). Self-compassion enables a student to accept their unpleasant feelings and adequacy as parts of human nature, mindfulness enables them to aware of their emotional experiences and expression (Coaston & Lawrence, 2019).

Self-compassion has been demonstrated to be associated with various emotional functioning (Inwood & Ferrari, 2018). Self-compassion is considered a useful emotional regulation strategy to cope with the daily hassle (Neff & McGehee, 2010). Self-compassion is also a source of resilience for wellbeing during stress and increased resistance to negative influences (Josee, 2017; Neff & McGehee, 2010). Leary, Tate, Adams, Batts Allen, and Hancock (2007) reported that there was a negative relationship between self-compassion and less negative affect as well as emotional reactivity in response to daily hassle. As self-compassion is an adaptive way of relating to the self when facing inadequacies or challenging circumstances by being caring and compassionate towards oneself, it could protect female students to cope with their stress due to daily hassles. Self-compassion is also an adaptive psychological process that can help to regulate negative affect and emotion regulation difficulties (Marshall et al., 2015) and protective factors against mental health difficulties (Barnard & Curry, 2011).

Compassion is considered the 'antidote' to self-criticism by counteracting problems related to stress (Wakelin et al., 2022). Cultivation of self-compassion enables the female student to develop a compassionate mind toward self which counteracts self-critical thought (Paul Gilbert & Procter, 2006). Self-compassion is believed related to psychological health and self-related emotions (Neff et al., 2007). Self-compassion is helpful in processing stress and promotes emotion regulation (Neely et al., 2009). Self-compassion facilitates individuals to feel cared for, connected, and emotionally calm (Paul Gilbert, 2005). Although Josee (2017) found that self-compassion does not appear to function as a resilience resources in the context of daily hassles, it can be argued that inequality of female students' daily hassles and self-help coping strategies are possible resilience resources for female students. However, exploration on female students' daily hassles related to gender inequality and its protective factors to cope with it is still limited. The purpose of the study is to examine self-compassion contribute to emotion regulation to cope with daily hassle among female students.

## Method

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism with self-compassion as a mediator among female college students during the covid 19 pandemic. The method employed in this research was a survey. The survey used the google form to build a set of questionnaires to measure daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism.

The survey was conducted via the internet for 4 months. The participants have recruited from a public university in DKI Jakarta. The invitations to participate in the survey were spread on social media such as Instagram and WhatsApp groups. The participants provided written informed consent and filled out a set of questionnaires.

The participants consist of 870 female students from seven faculties, namely faculty of education (300 students), art and language (143 students), social science (91 students), technics (93 students), sports science (6 students), psychology (20 students), science and mathematics (87 students and economy (130 students). The age of the participants is ranging from 17 to 24. The sociodemographic characteristics of participants are presented in table 1.

The measures used in this study are The Inventory of College Students' Recent Life Experiences (ICSRLE), Difficulties in Emotion Regulation Scale (DERS) and Forms of Self Criticizing and Self Reassuring Scale (FSCRS), and self-compassion scale. The Inventory of College Students' Recent Life Experiences (ICSRLE) was used to collect data on daily hassles. The Inventory of College Students' Recent Life Experiences consists of 18 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale for the frequency of participants' experiences with hassles over the past month with the options: 1 – not at all part of my life, 2 – only slightly part of my life, 3- distinctly part of my life, 4 – very much part of my life. Difficulties in Emotion Regulation



Scale (DERS) is used to measure emotion regulation difficulties. The measure has 36 items in six subscales, which are awareness; clarity; non-acceptance; strategies; impulse; and goals (Gratz & Roemer, 2004). The scale was adapted and validated with the internal consistency coefficient of the total scale was .92 (Arici-Ozcan, Cekici, & Arslan, 2019).

**Table 1.** Sociodemographic Characteristic of The Sample

		Amount	Percentage
<b>Faculty</b>	Education	300	29
	Art and language	143	14
	Social science	91	9
	Technics	93	9
	Sports science	6	1
	Psychology	20	2
	Science and Mathematics	87	8
	Economy	130	12

To measure self-criticism, the study used the FSCRS developed by Paul Gilbert, Clarke, Hempel, Miles, and Irons (2004). The scale has a 22-item measure. The participants fill the form by rating the positive and negative statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 0 = not at all like me to 4 = extremely like me. The scale measures self-reassurance and two types of self-criticism; an inadequate self which is measured on a sense of personal inadequacy and a hated self which reflects self-critical thoughts and feelings. Positive items measure self-reassurance which focuses on the ability to support themselves when things go wrong. The scale had Cronbach's alphas of 0.90 for inadequate self, 0.86 for hated self, and 0.86 for reassured self (Paul Gilbert et al., 2004). Self-compassion was measured by the self-compassion scale (Neff, 2003). The scale represents the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors associated with self-compassion. The scale consists of twenty-six items with equally distributed positive and negative items. The items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale with 1 indicating almost never and 5 indicating almost always.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS 26 software. Based on data assumption analysis, dependent variable's data are not normally distributed, so the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance test was used to see if there were statistically significant differences in daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, self-criticism, and self-compassion according to the faculty background. The faculty were clustered into eight categories (education, art and language, social science, technics, sports science, psychology, science and mathematics, and economy). The Spearman correlation analysis was used to see the relationship between the variables.

## Results and Discussion

The study examined the role of daily hassle on emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism and evaluated the hypothesis that the association between daily hassle and emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism is moderated by self-compassion. Data analysed by SPSS-16 to examine the relationships between daily hassle and emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism and its moderation variable. The descriptive statistic results show that the mean of daily hassle was 105,35, emotion regulation difficulties was 57,60, self-criticism was 49,01 and self-compassion was 82,95 as written in table 2.

**Table 2.** The Mean and Standard Deviation

	Mean	SD
<b>Daily hassle</b>	105,35	25,219
<b>Emotion Regulation Difficulties</b>	57,60	14,143
<b>Self-Criticism</b>	49,01	10,665
<b>Self-compassion</b>	82,95	14,887

Table 3 presents the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of the variance test, which reveals that only the self-compassion variable has a significant result in the comparison to the faculty. The Faculty of Sports Science has the highest mean self-compassion score, while the Faculty of Social Science has the lowest mean self-

compassion score. The mean score of all the faculty ranges from 100,92 to 109,34 for the daily hassle variable; from 52,17 to 59,10 for emotional regulation difficulties; and from 47,20 to 51,40 for self-criticism.

**Table 3.** Kruskal–Wallis One-way Analysis of Variance

Category	Daily Hassle Mean (SD)	<i>H</i> ( <i>p</i> )	Emotion Regulation Difficulties Mean (SD)	<i>H</i> ( <i>p</i> )	Self-Criticism Mean (SD)	<i>H</i> ( <i>p</i> )	Self-Compassion Mean (SD)	<i>H</i> ( <i>p</i> )
Education	104,70 (25,17)	10,22 (0,176)	57,57 (14,04)	5,48 (0,601)	48,70 (9,91)	12,26 (0,092)	83,58 (15,616)	18,36 (0,010)
Art and language	109,04 (26,43)		58,84 (14,77)		49,94 (11,51)		80,17 (14,437)	
Social science	109,34 (23,90)		59,10 (14,29)		51,40 (10,66)		80,07 (16,42)	
Technics	106,48 (25,40)		56,68 (14,92)		49,75 (11,259)		82,19 (13,65)	
Sports science	105,33 (29,88)		52,17 (16,18)		50,83 (10,50)		87,33 (20,57)	
Psychology	101,80 (22,05)		57,50 (10,90)		49,15 (10,02)		85,10 (12,34)	
Science and Mathematics	103,61 (24,64)		58,11 (14,07)		47,84 (11,33)		84,22 (13,30)	
Economy	100,92 (25,03)		55,85 (13,46)		47,20 (10,38)		85,73 (13,94)	

**Table 4.** Correlation Between Variables

	1	2	3	4
1. Daily hassle	-	0.643 (0.000)	0.576 (0.000)	-0.559 (0.000)
2. Emotion Regulation Difficulties		-	0.635 (0.000)	-0.609 (0.000)
3. Self-Criticism			-	-0.477 (0.000)
4. Self-compassion				-

Then, all study variables were intercorrelated to examine whether the correlation would be obtained in the expected direction. As expected, a positive correlation was found between the daily hassle and emotion regulation difficulties, daily hassle and self-criticism as well as emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. In addition, a negative correlation was found between self-compassion and daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism. Based on the correlation analysis result, there is a significant positive relationship between daily hassle and emotion regulation difficulties ( $r=0.643$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), as well as self-criticism ( $r=0.576$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). While significant negative association appear between self-compassion and daily hassle ( $r=-0.559$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), emotion regulation difficulties ( $r=-0.609$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), as well as self-criticism ( $r=-0.477$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). A significant association was observed between daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism, confirming our expectation that individuals with greater daily hassles would experience higher emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism.

On the other hand, the negative relationship between self-compassion and daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, as well as self-criticism, reflected the higher self-compassion, lower daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism. Daily hassle significantly correlated with emotion regulation difficulties. Daily hassle as daily stress gives extra pressure on female students which heightens their emotion regulation difficulties. Daily problems in relationships, disappointment toward others, and time constraints in dealing with household chores, university assignments, and social demands interfere with their ability to regulate their emotion. Those pressures might bring disappointment, rejection, and confusion that lead to impulsive responses, self-judgment, and poor emotion regulation strategies.

Part of the result is consistent with other previous studies conducted by Paul Gilbert and Procter (2006) that compassionate people tend to have less self-critical. Many studies found that self-compassion is positively associated with psychological health by promoting adaptive emotion regulation in times of stress as well as increasing emotion regulation by promoting non-judgmental awareness (Neff et al., 2005). Therefore, self-compassion could help the female student to be less critical toward self and better emotion regulation in response to everyday stressors.

The correlation analysis shows that daily hassle negatively correlated to self-compassion which means that the higher the daily hassle, the lower self-compassion. In addition, self-compassion negatively correlated with emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. The higher self-compassion, the less emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism. All the correlations between the variables were found to be statistically significant. As hypothesized daily hassles increase emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. However, being high in self-compassion moderates the effect of daily hassles on emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. While being low on self-compassion is a risk factor for increased emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. A high level of self-compassion is highly protective, mitigating the self-criticism and emotion regulation difficulties. This result shows that self-compassion could play a role as a protective factor against emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism in relation to daily hassle.

The previous research found that self-compassion is positively related to psychological functioning (Neff et al., 2007), and negatively correlated to anxiety and depression (Özyeşil & Akbağ, 2013), stress and daily hassle (Josee, 2017), emotion regulation (Finlay-Jones et al., 2015) and self-criticism (Paul Gilbert & Procter, 2006). Those studies showed that *self-compassion* plays a key role to enhance positive psychological attributes and protecting against negative psychological variables. It could be concluded that self-compassion can help individuals to cope with negative life events (Leary et al., 2007) and enable female students to face their stress, emotional pain, and self-criticism with kindness, warmth and compassion (Neff et al., 2007).

The result is in line with a previous study that found students who possess self-compassion reported fewer self-critical thoughts in the face of difficult daily events (Leary et al., 2007). When facing daily difficulties and experiences students with high self-compassion were more likely to demonstrate a tendency to have a wider perspective of stressful events. They do not harshly judge and overly criticize toward themselves when face difficulties or failure in their developmental challenges, academic tasks, as well as romantic, friendship, and social problems. They are also likely to express aspects of common humanity that other people also encounter those experiences (Leary et al., 2007). In addition, female students who have high self-compassion would have emotionally positive self-attitude which enables them to engage with activities and deal with daily stress (Neff et al., 2005).

Self-compassion enables female students to have better strategies to deal with emotional encounters with acceptance and awareness of emotion as well as demonstrate non-impulsive responses. They tend to demonstrate self-assurance rather than feeling inadequate. They easily forgive themselves and have high levels of tolerance toward disappointments and frustration (Paul Gilbert & Procter, 2006). Self-compassion enables female students to maintain a balanced perspective in the face of difficulties, failure, and changes negative emotions of self-criticism into more productive emotions.

The significant association between daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, self-criticism, and self-compassion among female students explained that gender inequality represented in daily hassle contributes to mental health status. It was agreed that in Asian families, females are responsible to do household chores. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the burden is heavier due to social restrictions and financial difficulties. As older family members, female college students are given an extra burden to take responsibility as adult family members in household chores, helping parents to earn additional financial support, and even sometimes become the breadwinner in the family. However, those problems are considered normal (Basu et al., 2018). This collective normality This condition contributed to female students' mental health status.

Many studies found that females are more vulnerable to stress, anxiety, and depression (Gao et al., 2020), and the daily hassle during the COVID-19 pandemic increase vulnerability of female student to a mental health issue. Additionally, the lack of awareness of the community on mental health contributes to undermining female mental health. United Nation (2020) reported that mental health issues among women are greater than among men in several Asian countries such as in Cambodia, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Thailand. Therefore, promoting female students' mental health is an essential strategy to acknowledge their unspoken struggles.

Several studies experimented with self-compassion-based programs and treatments to deal with emotion, stress, and self-criticism such as compassionate mind training (Paul Gilbert & Procter, 2006), compassion-based socio-emotional programs (Berger, Brenick, & Tarrasch, 2018) and compassion-based group interventions (Palmeira, Cunha, & Pinto-Gouveia, 2019). The meta-analysis conducted by Wakelin et al. (2022) found that self-compassion-based intervention contributes to a medium reduction of self-criticism. Those studies proved that self-compassion enables individuals to deal with emotion-related problems. Enhancing self-compassion among female students to deal with their daily s might enable them to regulate their emotions better and be more accepting and non-critical toward themselves.

## Conclusion

The study shows that there was a positive relationship between daily hassles and emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism. On the contrary, a negative relationship was found between self-compassion and daily hassle, emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism. The higher the self-compassion, the lower emotion regulation difficulties, and self-criticism among female students with the daily hassle. It could be concluded that self-compassion could play as protective factor against emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism among female students with the daily hassle. Limitations of this study area the study relied on correlation analysis which cannot determine the directionality of the effects between variables. In addition, the study relied entirely on self-report measure. Findings of this study suggest that self-compassion enable female students to lessen emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism by acceptance, kindness, and common humanity. It was recommended that self-compassion would be more appreciated as a variable to help female students to cope with emotion regulation difficulties and self-criticism in relation to daily hassles.

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