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The Role of Emotional Regulation as a Mediator of Self-Compassion and Stress in Students Completing Final Assignments

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ABSTRACT

Final semester students must complete their education on time with a variety of academic assignments. Apart from that, the personal problems they experience are also increasingly complex, making final-semester students vulnerable to depression. This research aims to determine the relationship between self-compassion and stress mediated by emotional regulation in students who complete their final assignments. The design used in this research was quantitative, with three variables. Data were collected using the Self-Compassion Scale with a Cronbach Alpha reliability of 0.872, the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) with a Cronbach Alpha reliability of 0.790, and the stress subscale of the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-42) with a Cronbach Alpha reliability of 0.951. The subjects of this research were final-year students who were pursuing higher education in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. Data analysis used a mediation analysis model by testing the relationship between stress (dependent variable) and self-compassion (independent variable) and emotional regulation, cognitive reappraisal facets, and expressive suppression facets (mediator variables) using mediation analysis techniques via JASP. The results showed that the cognitive reappraisal facet of emotional regulation mediated the relationship between self-compassion and stress in students. The emotional regulation facet of expressive suppression did not mediate the relationship between self-compassion and stress in students. In addition, there was a direct negative relationship between self-compassion and stress. Students who complete their final assignment must make efforts to increase self-compassion in order to survive stressful situations.

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INTRODUCTION

Stress can be experienced by many populations regardless of age, gender, social status, or level of education (Yikealo et al., 2018). The student phase occurs between the ages of 18 and 27. This stage is quite difficult to pass because of developmental tasks that require several major changes, especially in self-direction and decision-making (Monks et al., 2019). The many changes in roles and status experienced make students vulnerable to mental disorders such as stress, depression, and anxiety (Marthoenis et al., 2018).

Students are given the responsibility to compose a final assignment or thesis as a requirement for graduation, with an average study period of 3.5-4 years. The preparation of a thesis or final assignment usually begins when students take the sixth or seventh semester (Aulia & Panjaitan, 2019). Stress usually arises in students undertaking their final assignments due to internal expectations to fulfill their family's expectations regarding graduation, the desire to graduate as soon as possible to save costs, and the large number of classmates who have completed their final assignments. At a certain point, these difficulties can become increasingly serious problems, causing students who complete their final assignments to lose motivation or even feel that whatever efforts they make next will not be successful (Tarigan et al., 2021).

Stress is an emotional response that arises in stressful situations in life. Individuals who experience stress have symptoms such as difficulty relaxing, easily feeling tense, easily running out of energy, easily angry and easily agitated over small things, easily offended, irritated, and overreacting to a situation, and unable to be patient in facing situations that trigger stress (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1996). Apart from that, stress is also a non-specific response of the body to any demands, so it has different meanings for each person in various conditions (Fink, 2016).

High levels of stress can have a negative impact on students. Previous research shows that students have a higher vulnerability to stress than individuals from other age ranges because they experience difficulties such as academic burdens, roles in the family, and choosing a future career (Borjalilu, 2023). Therefore, students can experience mental health disorders such as easily changing emotions and triggering depression (Glozah & Pevalin, 2014). Student stress levels have a negative correlation with happiness. The higher the stress, the lower the perceived happiness, and conversely, the lower the stress, the higher the happiness (Chavoshi et al., 2019). Students from universities, both state and private universities have relatively the same level of happiness, namely in the low category. Students from both types of tertiary institutions have quite high levels of stress (Dian et al., 2023). Apart from that, students who are taking their final assignments are more susceptible to experiencing stress than students in the first semester or middle semester (Aihie & Ohanaka, 2019).

Students' stress mostly comes from external problems, academic activities, the environment, and relationships with other people, with different portions of

pressure (Musabiq & Karimah, 2018). The factors that influence student stress include the living environment, age, individual gender, and parents' income (Septyari et al., 2022). Apart from that, two things that can be protective factors against student stress are self-compassion and emotional regulation (Wahyuni et al., 2022). Therefore, this research intends to examine two factors that influence stress: self-compassion and emotional regulation.

Self-compassion is explained by Neff (Sugianto et al., 2020) as an understanding and sensitivity to the suffering felt by oneself so that individuals do not judge the inability or failure experienced so that it can be accepted as an experience that helps them become strong. Self-compassion has three aspects. The first is self-kindness, which describes the ability to extend kindness and understand oneself rather than make harsh judgments or criticize oneself. Common humanity is the awareness that all events that occur in human life are part of a larger experience. Meanwhile, mindfulness is consciously accepting all existing thoughts and feelings, even though they are painful.

When you are able to give love to yourself, individuals will tend to be more accepting and believe that all events that occur in life always have positive and negative sides as a reference for action in subsequent events. Previous research shows a negative correlation between self-compassion and depression, anxiety, and stress. Individuals who have low self-compassion experience more severe symptoms of stress, so they are advised to undergo psychological therapy to be free from this situation (de Souza et al., 2020).

Through this presentation, developing self-compassion abilities can help individuals reduce the stress they feel in stressful situations. Individuals who develop this ability tend to be open to new things, so they are able to manage stress more than other people (Na'imah et al., 2023). In addition, self-compassion can also reduce stress in adult individuals in experimental settings (Bluth et al., 2015). Furthermore, the higher the self-compassion a student has, the lower the level of stress due to daily events (Lim & Kartasasmita, 2018). Students who have an open mind, are responsible and principled, and are better able to love and understand themselves also tend to be better able to deal with stress (Bui et al., 2021).

Stress conditions are often associated with a person's emotions. The correlation between stress and emotional regulation is quite a complex relationship resulting from the interaction of biological, psychological, and environmental factors (Flores-Kanter et al., 2021). However, good emotional regulation skills have been proven to lead to emotional improvements and individual well-being during stressful pandemic times (Beltran et al., 2020).

Emotion regulation occurs automatically in emotions by regulating things that happen to individuals, such as thought processes, physiological processes, and the way humans behave. There are two emotional regulation strategies that humans use to overcome a situation, namely the cognitive reappraisal facet and the expressive suppression facet. Cognitive reappraisal reviews an emotional

stimulus to adjust thoughts to future situations (Zaini & Manesh, 2020). At the same time, expressive suppression is a response adjustment in order to prevent negative expressions from appearing. Final semester students who have this ability are better able to face stressful situations when unexpected things happen when working on their final assignment because they can manage their thoughts to stay positive (Suud & Na'imah, 2023).

Feelings of self-compassion can relieve negative emotions by supporting yourself in stressful situations. Individuals with good feelings of self-compassion can face difficult times by balancing their emotions and not criticizing themselves excessively (Wahyuni et al., 2022). Theoretically, self-compassion facilitates individuals in adapting to the emotional regulation process by balancing self-awareness, self-calming, and self-motivation (Berking et al., 2019). Compassionate thoughts towards oneself can help regulate negative emotions and, conversely, can increase positive emotions (Odou & Brinker, 2015). Feeling compassion for oneself is the first step in overcoming negative emotions (Diedrich et al., 2014). Individuals with high self-compassion will form emotional regulation strategies, namely cognitive reappraisal, to reduce negative emotions from problems and pressures in life (Meilasari & Utami, 2022).

Inwood and Ferrari (2018) showed that emotional regulation can facilitate self-compassion and that it has an impact on mental health in various aspects of life. Emotion regulation can significantly be used as a mediator of the relationship between self-compassion and stress in practicing psychologists (Finlay-Jones et al., 2015). Individuals who are more capable of self-compassion have better emotional regulation and can accept negative emotions that arise because of stressful situations. Therefore, individuals experience less difficulty in controlling impulsive behavior in dealing with stressful situations and are better able to adapt to dealing with stress.

Through the explanation above, students who complete their final assignment with good emotional regulation skills can manage the emotions they feel so that they can increase self-compassion and self-acceptance in negative conditions, such as stressful situations that may arise from academic pressure and personal problems in carrying out daily activities (Jing et al., 2022) Other research shows that emotional regulation can be a mediator between self-compassion and mental health, such as depression, in individuals through cognitive reappraisal strategies (Diedrich et al., 2014). Previous research shows that cognitive reappraisal can help individuals deal with emotional situations (Meilasari & Utami, 2022). Individuals with good cognitive reappraisal abilities are associated with fewer symptoms of psychopathology than adults (Rossiter et al., 2017). Somewhat different from the findings already mentioned, emotional regulation, both through cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression strategies, can be a mediator in the relationship between self-compassion and PTSD symptoms (Barlow et al., 2017). Apart from that, emotional regulation strategies, namely

cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression, play an important role in the relationship between self-compassion and social anxiety (Bates et al., 2021).

Self-compassion and emotional regulation have an important role in managing and reducing stress levels. However, previous studies more often link emotional regulation as a mediator of other psychological aspects in students. This research can produce new findings regarding emotional regulation as a mediator between self-compassion and student stress in completing final assignments, both through cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression strategies. Therefore, the hypothesis in this research is a relationship between self-compassion and stress through emotional regulation mediators, both cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression strategies, in students who complete their final assignments.

METHODS

Research Design

This research used a quantitative approach with a correlational research design. This design was intended to see the relationship between self-compassion (independent variable) and stress (dependent variable) mediated by emotional regulation (mediator variable) in students in completing their final assignments. Emotion regulation is divided into two facets: cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression.

Research Subject

Subjects in this study were selected using cluster random sampling techniques to ensure that everyone in the selected population group (universities) had the same opportunity to take part in the research. The participating subjects were students from universities in Yogyakarta. Students from randomly selected universities could become research subjects. The student is male or female and is an active student who is completing his final assignment based on the category of students who completed their final assignment, according to Aulia and Panjaitan (2019). Those who fulfilled the above requirements and were willing to become research samples by agreeing to the statement of willingness became subjects of this research. A total of 307 students, with details of 69 PTN students and 238 PTS students, were selected as respondents for this research.

Data Collection Method

Quantitative data collection in this research used a Likert scale, which is a scale to measure the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of individuals or groups of people regarding an event (Sugiyono, 2017). Data was collected using a Google Form, which contains three scales: the stress subscale from DASS42, The Self-Compassion Scale, and the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire, which has been adapted into Indonesian, as follows.

Student stress was measured using the stress subscale of the DASS-42 measuring instrument, which refers to the theory of Lovibond and Lovibond (1995). Based

on this scale, the items used to view stress symptoms in individuals total 14 statements. Examples of items from the DASS-42 are (1) Getting angry over trivial things, (2) Tending to overreact to situations, and (3) having difficulty relaxing or relaxing. There are four answer choices with a score range of 0-3, namely Never (scored 0), Sometimes (scored 1), Often (scored 2), and Almost Always (scored 3). This scale was adapted to Indonesia by Marsidi (2021), who carried out a validity test using Pearson Product Moment, resulting in the validity of all DASS items obtaining a value of > 0.532. Meanwhile, the Cronbach Alpha reliability test showed that the reliability of the stress item was 0.951.

Next, self-compassion was measured using The Self-Compassion Scale developed by Neff (2003) and adapted into Indonesian by Sugianto et al. (2020). The 26-item statement includes 13 favorable items and 13 unfavorable items, with a score range on the scale of 1 (Almost Never) to 5 (Almost Always). Some items from this scale include (1) I do not accept and judge my weaknesses and shortcomings, (2) When I am down, I tend to obsess and continue to focus on everything wrong, (3) When bad things happen to me, I see life's difficulties as a part that everyone has to go through. The validity of the scale was considered quite good, with an RMSEA value = 0.043; GFI = 0.910; CFI = 0.935; TFI = 0.923; NFI = 0.848; IFI = 0.936. Furthermore, the Cronbach Alpha reliability of the Indonesian version of The Self-Compassion was 0.872, meaning that the scale was reliable enough to be used.

Finally, the level of emotional regulation was measured using the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ). This scale was prepared based on emotion regulation strategies according to Gross and John (2003), which were adapted by Radde et al. (2021). Facets of emotion regulation include cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression. This scale consists of 10 favorable items, with six scale items measuring the cognitive reappraisal strategy and four items measuring the expressive suppression strategy. Each emotion regulation strategy was measured separately. There are seven answer choices on the ERQ scale, namely Strongly Agree, Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neutral, Somewhat Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The value of each item moves from a score of 1-7. In this research, it was proven that the validity of the cognitive reappraisal aspect was CFI=1.00; GFI=1.00; RMSE=0.036, factor loading ($p<0.05$), and Cronbach Alpha reliability of 0.951. Meanwhile, in the expressive suppression aspect, there is a validity of CFI=1.00, GFI=0.99, RMSE=0.064, factor loading ($p<0.05$), and Cronbach Alpha reliability of 0.790.

Data Analysis Method

Data analysis in this research was carried out with JASP application version 0.16.4 using the mediation analysis method to test the direct or indirect influence between the dependent variable and the independent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Most respondents from this study were female (68.4%) and male (31.6%). The following table contains demographic details of respondents in this study, including demographic aspects such as regional origin, respondent's age, semester currently being taken, and other activities that are being actively carried out apart from studying.

Table 1. Respondent Demographic Data

Characteristics	N	%
Age		
20 years old	16	5.2
21 years old	110	35.8
22 years old	87	28.3
23 years old	50	16.3
24 years old	15	4.9
25 years old	20	6.5
26-27 years old	9	2.9
Current Semester		
Semester 7 (class of 2019)	173	56.4
Semester 9 (class of 2018)	84	27.4
Semester 11 (class of 2017)	18	5.9
Semester 13 (class of 2016)	15	4.9
Semester 15 (class of 2015)	17	5.5
Activities other than college		
Work	93	30.3
Internship	42	13.7
Organization/Community	95	30.9
Other activities	16	5.2
Not mentioned	60	19.5

Based on Table 1, students who completed their final assignments and participated in this research had an age range of between 20 and 27 years with the university entry class from 2015 to 2019, according to previously established research criteria. Apart from that, 56.4% of respondents were currently taking semester seven or were students from the class of 2019. Furthermore, students from the class of 2018 were 27.4%, and students from the class of 2015-2018 were 16.3%. Other activities of students while studying include 30.3% of students doing work such as freelance, tutoring, or running their own business. Meanwhile, 13.7% are currently interning or looking for an internship in accordance with university regulations. Quite a lot of respondents also focused on organizations or communities, either internal campus organizations or volunteering in various community activities. Other students work at home either as housewives or to help their parents.

Table 2 shows the categorization of self-compassion and emotional regulation scores felt by each respondent. The data that was analyzed found that 33.9% of

respondents had self-compassion in the high category and 47.2% in the medium category. Furthermore, 99% of respondents had very high cognitive reappraisal facets of emotional regulation. Meanwhile, emotional regulation in the expressive suppression facet is in the moderate category at 46.9%, 32.2% in the high category, and 14.3% in the very high category. The stress level of the majority of research respondents was in the very low category, namely 50.8%; in other words, most respondents had normal stress levels.

Table 2. Categorization of Each Variable

Categorization	*Self-Compassion*		Emotion Regulation				Stress	
			Cognitive reappraisal		*Expressive Suppression*			
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Very high	29	9.4	304	99	44	14.3	1	0.3
High	104	33.9	2	0.7	99	32.2	15	4.9
Average	145	47.2	1	0.3	144	46.9	64	20.8
Low	28	9.1	0	0	20	6.5	71	23.1
Very low	1	0.3	0	0	0	0	156	50.8

Researchers then tested the normality assumption to determine the distribution of research data. Based on the results of this analysis, the data shows that only the self-compassion variable is normally distributed with a significance score of 0.125. Meanwhile, the stress and regulation variables for the cognitive reappraisal facet and the expressive suppression facet each have the same significance score, namely 0.000, meaning the data is not normally distributed. Normality test results can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Normality Assumption Test

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Stress	.109	307	.000	.953	307	.000
expressive_suppression	.134	307	.000	.943	307	.000
cognitive_reappraisal	.149	307	.000	.947	307	.000
self_compassion	.056	307	.023	.992	307	.125
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Based on the normality assumption test analysis, the results showed variables that were not normal, so the next step was for researchers to use the mediation analysis method through the JASP application. This analysis aimed to see whether or not there was a relationship between stress and self-compassion through the mediation of emotional regulation from the cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression facets. This analysis tested the direct and indirect effects of this research model.

Figure 1 shows the mediation analysis of two emotional regulation strategies on

the relationship between stress and self-compassion in final-semester students.

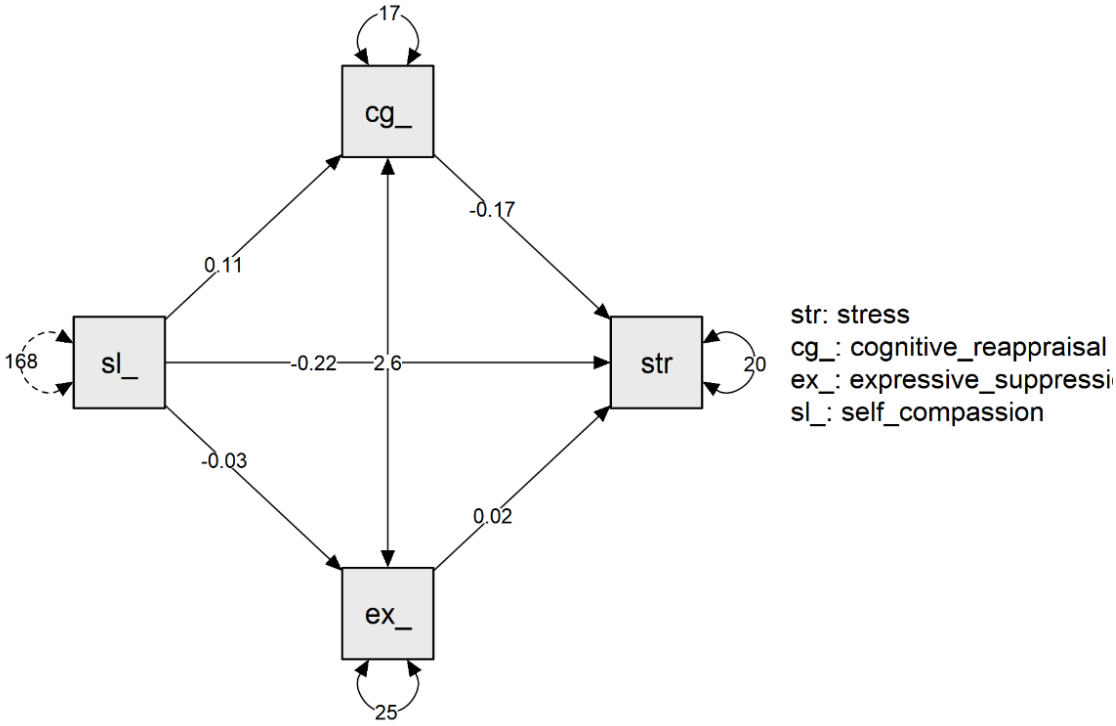

Figure 1. Path Plots of Emotion Regulation Strategy Mediators

Based on the analysis in Table 4, self-compassion has a direct effect on stress, with a direct effect score of 0.217 and a significance value of <0.001 (p<0.05). The cognitive reappraisal facet of emotional regulation is a mediator for the relationship between self-compassion and stress, with a significance score of 0.016 (p<0.05) and an indirect effect of -0.018. However, the expressive suppression facet of emotional regulation cannot be a mediator in the relationship between self-compassion and stress, with a significance of 0.737 (p>0.05) and an indirect effect of -4.597.

Table 4. Results of Mediator Analysis of Emotion Regulation Strategies

					Estimate	*P*
Immediate Effect	Self-Compassion	→		Stress	-0.217	<0.001
Indirect Effects	Self-Compassion	→	Cognitive Reappraisal	→ Stress	-0.018	0.016
Indirect Effects	Self-Compassion	→	Expressive Suppression	→ Stress	-4.597	0.737
Total Effect	Self-Compassion	→		Stress	-0.236	<0.001

*p value <0,05

This research also carried out further analysis using the cognitive reappraisal facet as a mediator between self-compassion and stress in students completing their final assignment, as shown in Figure 2.

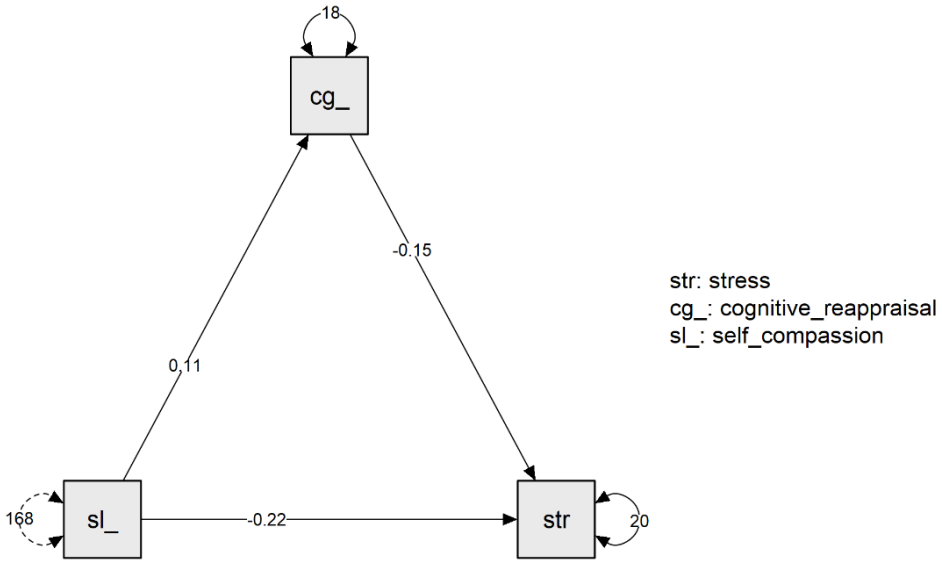

Figure 2. Path Plots of Stress, Self-Compassion, and Cognitive Reappraisal

Next, a mediator analysis was carried out using the cognitive reappraisal facet, with detailed results in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of Cognitive Reappraisal Facet Mediator Analysis

				Estimate	*P*
Immediate Effect	Self-Compassion	→	Stress	-0.219	<0.001
Indirect Effects	Self-Compassion	→ Cognitive Reappraisal →	Stress	-0.017	0.022
Total Effect	Self-Compassion	→	Stress	-0.236	<0.001

**p value <0,05*

Based on the analysis as listed in Table 5, self-compassion had a direct effect on stress with a direct effect score of 0.219 and a significance value of <0.001 (p<0.05). The cognitive reappraisal facet of emotional regulation is a mediator for the relationship between self-compassion and stress, with a significance score of 0.017 (p<0.05) and an indirect effect of -0.022. Next, data analysis related to demographics was added. In analyzing self-compassion, two facets of emotion regulation, stress, were associated with age, gender, and semester level.

Table 6. Correlation Analysis of Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Self-Compassion		Emotion Regulation				Stress	
			Cognitive Reappraisal		Expressive Suppression			
	R	*p*	r	*P*	R	*P*	*r*	*p*
Age	-0.014	0.812	-0.095	0.098	-0.021	0.713	0.197	0.001
Gender	0.078	0.173	-0.036	0.528	-0.126	0.028	-0.069	0.227
Semester Level	-0.151	0.008	-0.105	0.065	-0.007	0.906	0.252	0.000

**p value<0.05*

Table 6 reveals a correlation between age and stress. Furthermore, there was no relationship between gender and stress, self-compassion, or emotional regulation in the cognitive reappraisal facet or expressive suppression facet. Finally, there is a relationship between semester level and self-compassion, with a significance score of 0.008 ($p<0.05$) and a correlation coefficient of -0.151. There is a relationship between semester level and stress with a significance score of 0.000 ($p<0.05$) and a correlation coefficient of 0.252. Likewise, the semester level with self-compassion had a significance score of 0.008 ($p<0.05$) and a correlation coefficient of -0.151. Meanwhile, the semester level is not related to the cognitive reappraisal facet of emotional regulation, with a significance score of 0.065 ($p<0.05$) and a correlation coefficient of -0.105 and the expressive suppression facet, with a significance score of 0.906 ($p<0.05$) and a correlation coefficient of -0.007.

Discussion

The hypothesis in this research is a relationship between self-compassion and stress through emotional regulation mediators, both cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression strategies, in students completing their final assignments. Based on the results, the cognitive reappraisal facet of emotional regulation mediates the relationship between self-compassion and stress in students who completed their final assignments. Therefore, the hypothesis in this study was accepted. Furthermore, the emotional regulation facet of expressive suppression did not mediate the relationship between self-compassion and stress in students who completed their final assignments. Therefore, the hypothesis in this study was rejected. Additional analysis was also carried out to see the direct correlation between the self-compassion variables and stress, as well as the relationship between the variables and the subject's demographic aspects, such as age, gender, and semester level of the students.

The first result of this research, cognitive reappraisal facet emotional regulation, mediated the relationship between self-compassion and stress in students completing their final assignments, which is in line with the results of previous research. The results of this study support research showing that cognitive reappraisal as a consistent emotional regulation strategy can reduce negative emotions (Picó-Pérez et al., 2017). When negative emotions decrease, students who are completing their final assignments and who have self-compassion are better able to develop awareness, understanding, and care for themselves in difficult situations (Neff, 2003). Cognitive reappraisal as a strategy for emotional regulation can mediate between self-compassion and an individual's negative emotions and reduce excessive emotional responses to stressful events (Shapero et al., 2019). In addition, students who have a high sense of self-compassion are proven to have more effective cognitive reappraisal abilities so that they can reduce feelings of depression more significantly (Diedrich et al., 2014)

Other psychologists provide explanations about the role of cognitive reappraisal in emotional situations. A theory of emotion suggests that cognitive reappraisal

or cognitive appraisal applies the meaning of experience or the way an event is assessed not from the event itself but rather from how the individual provides a subsequent emotional response to that event (Neff, 2003). In line with this, experts say that cognitive reappraisal can help individuals deal with emotional situations (Meilasari & Utami, 2022). Students who adopt cognitive reappraisal strategies show healthy adaptation in overcoming negative situations, thereby increasing positive experiences and thus having good mental health (Vally & Ahmed, 2020). Apart from that, cognitive reappraisal strategies for students who are active in physical activity can help students manage stress (Perchtold-Stefan et al., 2020).

The results also support several previous research results regarding the mediating role of emotion regulation in the relationship between self-compassion and stress. In the findings of previous research, there was no distinction between the cognitive reappraisal facet and the expressive suppression facet, namely that emotional regulation succeeded in providing a complete mediating role in the relationship between self-compassion and stress in practicing psychologists (Finlay-Jones et al., 2015). In line with this research, emotional regulation can most likely be used as a mediator for self-compassion with mental health, one of which is stress (Inwood & Ferrari, 2018).

The stress condition of the respondents in this study was seen through the size of the symptoms that appeared on the individual's physical appearance when they were in a stressful situation (Nurbayani et al., 2020). The more symptoms that appear, the more it shows the severity of the level of stress experienced by the individual. Students often experience stress due to academic loads, institutional demands, and several other external factors, such as decision-making in interpersonal relationships (Musabiq & Karimah, 2018). Apart from that, for students who complete their final assignments, the stress they feel can generally be caused from within themselves or from outside. Internal hopes to fulfill family expectations regarding graduation, the desire to graduate as soon as possible to save costs, and the large number of classmates who have completed their final assignments can trigger stress in students who complete their final assignments (Edjah et al., 2020).

The second result in this study found that the expressive suppression facet of emotional regulation did not mediate the relationship between self-compassion and stress in students who completed their final assignments. Expressive suppression inhibits the expression of emotions so that individuals become positive. Theoretically, this strategy is rarely used by individuals during the transition from adolescence to adulthood (Vally & Ahmed, 2020). This finding supports other results, showing that students of transitional age do not use expressive suppression strategies to deal with stressful situations. Students tend to change negative thoughts to more positive ones (cognitive reappraisal) rather than showing emotional expressions (expressive suppression) in carrying out

daily activities.

The third result of this research shows that the complete mediation of self-compassion and stress through emotional regulation in the cognitive reappraisal facet still needs to be fulfilled. In fact, there is a significant direct relationship between self-compassion and stress. According to Baron and Kenny (Bullock & Green, 2021), complete mediation is obtained if a direct relationship is not fulfilled, so the results do not meet these requirements.

The direct relationship between self-compassion and stress is in line with several previous studies. One of them is research from Huriyah et al. (2022) showing a negative correlation between self-compassion and stress in students who are carrying out PKPP (Psychological Professional Work Practices). The higher the feeling of self-compassion, the lower the level of stress one has. Apart from that, the level of stress experienced is also different between students due to differences in workload and environment faced during the implementation of PKPP. This research is supported by other research, which shows that high stress can be associated with low levels of self-compassion. It is also related to high levels of negative effects that students have so that their coping strategies become more maladaptive (Zhang et al., 2016).

The respondents in this study were in the youngest age range of 20, and the oldest respondent was 27, so most respondents were in the early adulthood phase. Aulia and Panjaitan (2019) revealed that individuals in the early adulthood phase enter a regulatory period where most feel burdened by responsibility for their careers and futures. One way to do this is by completing lectures. Researchers then tested the relationship between age range and the three variables, and the results of the analysis showed that age had a significant relationship with stress but not with emotional regulation and self-compassion. Early adult individuals have high levels of stress compared to older individuals and have a lot of life experience (Stefaniak et al., 2022). Stress in the early adulthood phase occurs due to negative events that occur daily, such as financial problems, partners, and work. Apart from that, a student's maturity is a significant determinant of their ability to deal with stress. This ability will increase as the ability to adapt and manage emotions also improves (Monteiro et al., 2014).

This research found that gender has no relationship with student stress. Anbumalar et al. (2017) actually show that women experience more academic stress than men because women feel more anxious and afraid, cry about assignments, and blame themselves when assignments are not optimal. In the future, it is necessary to review the differences in student stress between men and women.

Researchers also tested the relationship between respondents' semester level and the three existing variables. The results showed a positive correlation between semester level and stress level, which shows that the higher the semester a student is currently undergoing, the higher the stress they feel. In this study, the majority of students who participated were in the 7th semester, so students had

just started their final assignments, so the stress they felt tended to be normal. Stress for students completing their final assignments also increases as academic demands increase with each passing semester. The higher the semester level, the higher the stress felt by students (Ganesan et al., 2018).

In addition, a student's semester level is negatively correlated with self-compassion, so the higher the semester, the lower the possibility of self-compassion. Self-compassion is needed to help students develop resilience skills, overcome stressful situations, and reduce criticism and negative thoughts towards themselves so that life becomes meaningful (Chan et al., 2022). Students who complete their final assignments experience various problems that give rise to negative thoughts containing hatred towards themselves so that they feel that they have no value (Flett et al., 2021).

CONCLUSIONS

Finally, this research concludes that the cognitive reappraisal facet of emotional regulation acted as a mediator of the relationship between self-compassion and student stress. Meanwhile, the expressive suppression facet of emotional regulation did not act as a mediator in the relationship between self-compassion and stress in students completing their final assignments. Furthermore, self-compassion had a direct influence on the stress of students completing their final assignments. Students who completed their final assignments more often used cognitive strategies to change their thoughts to be more positive and to accept themselves in stressful situations. In conclusion, an urgent matter that needs to be paid attention to by students, especially those who are working on their final assignments, is learning to love themselves to increase their resilience in stressful situations. Researchers suggest programs that can increase self-compassion for students completing their final assignments, practicing mindfulness, or attending training and seminars to increase self-awareness.

This research has limitations and limited research subjects because data collection was only carried out with the special population of the Special Region of Yogyakarta. So that further research can be carried out on a wider scope at several institutions in different cities. Apart from that, further research can also focus on emotion-based therapy or mindfulness therapy to increase self-compassion in stressful situations for final-year students who are carrying out their final assignments.

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