

Designing a proposed educational program based on (Gilbert-Neff) theory to decrease self-abasement for Mosul university students

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Abstract: The goal of the current study is to develop a program that reduces self-abasement in accordance with Gilbert-Neff theory. To this end, the researchers created twenty lessons that address self-compassion, including mental alertness versus excessive autism, common humanity versus isolation, and self-kindness versus self-judgment. The program was submitted to a committee of 22 specialists in order to gauge its authenticity. For the academic year 2023–2024, the researchers ran a pilot study with thirty male and female students at Mosul University. This experiment aimed to determine the degree of instructional clarity, the amount of time needed for each lecture, and the main difficulties the researchers encountered when delivering the program. Twenty-four colleges at Mosul University make up the population of the study. The College of Basic Education (also known as the Department of Kindergarten) was chosen as the study's sample because its students displayed the highest level of self-abasement among the colleges at Mosul University. The outcome of the research was the creation of the program's final form, and the researchers' suggestions included the following: In order to help the students develop self-compassion, the researchers created a program. The program is used as part of the guiding efforts by the unit of educational guidance and psychological direction. The researchers recommend conducting a study to adapt the program to additional stages.

Keywords: *Designing a proposed, (Gilbert-neff), Self-abasement.*

1. Introduction

As university professors at Mosul University, the researchers observed certain student behaviors that are symbolic of self-deprecation, such as striking the hand, tweezing the hair, or applying pressure to a particular area of the body with the nails. Other abstract behaviors that are symbolic of psychological self-abasement are the students' negative self-deprecating remarks and cruel treatment of themselves. Therefore, determining the impact of an educational program based on Gilbert-Neff theory in reducing the self-abasement of Mosul University students becomes the research's main challenge. Self-compassion is one of the positive personality traits that contributes to the psychological well-being of both individuals and society. It helps people develop self-respect and accept who they are without conditions, which will increase their openness to new experiences, raise their level of mental alertness, and reduce their negative feelings and thoughts. This is how the research problem is formulated. As a result, the term "self-compassion" has become essential in today's world since it describes how a person feels good about both themselves and other people, as well as how they perform better on tasks and deal with everyday issues [1]. The following query can be used to sum up the research problem: What impact will Gilbert-Neff's suggested educational program have on Mosul University students' development of self-compassion?

It is beneficial for a person to experience regret or to criticize himself before others do, as constructive criticism helps one understand one's own shortcomings and improves oneself. Self-

abasement is a damaging level that makes one feel like a failure and locks them in a psychological conflict region that is difficult to escape. While regret keeps us from repeating an action, excessive expression of this emotion leads to self-deprecation.

As it spreads the virus of (inability to innovate), (inability to confront the crises), (exacerbation of relationships, communication), and (loss of hope for the future) in addition to insomnia, lack of concentration, nightmares, and depression, self-abasement has major psychological repercussions for both the individual and society. In most cases, it has chronic consequences in several areas of life.

Admitting one's need or expressing one's incapacity is not a problem; rather, the issue arises when someone pretends to feel otherwise. One of the many pillars that support a person's personality is the emotional component, which represents the overwhelming emotions that shape a person's conduct and serve as a gauge for the psychological well-being of the personality. A person can release pent-up tensions and feel less pressured when they give themselves permission to vent these emotions.

Depending on the action or sentiment that occurred previously, a person typically feels the need to examine himself and hold himself accountable for his behaviors, feelings, and beliefs. This process is often accompanied by pain, suffering, or pleasure and relief. Despite having a healthy emotional equilibrium, people make errors, feel guilty about them, and condemn themselves. One of the strongest psychological situations that a person may face is self-judgment, which people suffer when their moral principles conflict with the norms of society.

In contrast to students with low levels of self-compassion, those with high levels of self-compassion are better able to deal with undesirable thoughts and emotions, which will replace negative feelings and transform them into realistic aspects related to psychological welfare, life satisfaction, wisdom, and social positivity. This helps to attenuate negative feelings because self-compassionate students do not suppress negative feelings. Neff contends that human beings experience suffering throughout their lives, and that if a person only recognizes this suffering, it will equate to death, perfection, or seclusion. As a result, a person requires specific ideas that allow him to accept this suffering and attempt to adjust to it, such as self-compassion [2].

Given that self-compassion is one of the positive concepts and a strong indicator of psychological health that helps the individual deal with himself gently by using tender, sentimental and supportive language for himself, as opposed to self-judgment, which indicates the tendency of an individual to be cruel to himself when he passes through a failure experience or hard times, and that he can deal with the negative way of life that he creates in a sane way, it was necessary to start an educational program on self-compassion for those who suffer from self-abasement.

The goal of the current study is to embed self-compassion among Mosul University students by creating an educational program based on Gilbert-Neff theory.

A collection of lessons, videos, examples and specific activities were created by the researchers in an attempt to accomplish the objectives of the particular lessons and ultimately reach the program's overall purpose.

2. Gilbert – Neff theory (Gilbert – Neff, 2003)

The self-compassion theory has roots that go back approximately 2500 years, and it pivots on the individual's focus on himself, his or her issues, and his or her attempts to overcome them by practicing kindness, compassion, and psychological care. It also emphasizes the importance of not underestimating oneself and the recognition that one's experiences are a part of the human experience [3] acknowledging that everyone makes mistakes and may feel inadequate and inept, and viewing them as a component of the shared personal experience, being transparent, and addressing one another's issues [4].

In addition to a long list of negative beliefs, the person's self-talk and justification of his or her mistakes and problems in life—that he or she is to blame, a loser, incapable of doing anything right, and unlucky—may cause criticism of one's own behavior to become persistent and exaggerated, which may

lead to a vicious cycle of negative emotions, frustrations, and obstacles that stops one from moving forward in life.

Regarded as a relatively new idea in psychology, self-compassion is defined as a constructive way for a person to focus on, care for, and handle their self when they are going through a difficult situation. The American psychologist Kristin Neff developed the idea of self-compassion at the start of the twenty-first century as a concept of positive psychology and mental health. According to Neff, it is a crucial component of the individual psychological construction, a significant characteristic of the positive personality, and a psychological barrier against the detrimental effects of life's stresses and suspicious fluctuations [5].

It's been observed that self-compassion entails treating yourself with the same consideration and caring that you give to your close friends or family when you face difficult obstacles in life, personal failures, or defeats, rather than passing harsh judgment [6].

3. Dimension of Self-Compassion

3.1. Self-Kindness Versus Self-Judgment

Self-compassion: It is a state in which an individual understands himself in situations of personal incompetency or suffering instead of judging himself cruelly and this dimension also involves the understanding and sentimental warmth towards the self when an individual encounters a certain suffering or failure when he is trying to accomplish something instead of criticizing himself. For instance, individuals who enjoy self-compassion admit that they are not perfect and they might fail in accomplishing their objectives in life and so they tend to be gentle to themselves when they face painful experiences instead of self-blaming or self-abasement [5].

Self-judgment: It indicates a persons' propensity to harshly condemn themselves as a result of their own failures, and those who do so disregard their emotions by rejecting themselves [7].

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3.2. Common Humanity Versus Isolation

Common humanity: The individual vision to his/her personal experiences as part of the grand human instead of visualizing them as isolated and separated from the others' vision [5].

Isolation: a sense of isolation brought on by obstacles and problems that, at times, cause people to experience pain or annoyance and sever their connections with others. In this situation, the majority of people retreat and conceal the reality, which makes them feel alone despite their failure or incapacity. According to Neff, a person's pain equates to either death or loneliness if they simply acknowledge their own suffering without taking into account the suffering of others [8].

3.3. Mental Alertness Versus Extreme Autism

Mental alertness: It is the acknowledgment of our unpleasant thoughts and emotions that are handled in a fair manner. It can also mean being conscious of and accepting of one's emotional state without going overboard. As balanced mental alertness allows thoughts and feelings to emerge in our minds and embrace them without being overly specific in terms of identification, it also refers to connecting ideas and feelings in a balanced way rather than being specific and wise with the individual's experience or exaggerating feelings of pain [2].

Excessive autism: It is the negative individual's narration about himself and the experience of his life in addition to his/her limited thinking that prevents him/her from seeing the things as they are and, thus, severely suffers the current moment, magnifies the setbacks and focuses on the private limits and that makes him/her suffer in the meantime. The individuals who have more tendency to autism and avoidance suffer from the negative feelings in the long term [8].

The study of Mohammed [9]: The effectiveness of a guiding program to improve the level of self-compassion for a sample of female adolescents who suffer from Neurotic perfectionism. This study aimed at identifying the effectiveness of a guiding program to improve the level of self-compassion for a

sample that involved female adolescents who suffer from Neurotic perfectionism. The sample included (20) female adolescents and the sample was divided, equally, into two groups; one of them represented the control group and the other stood for the experimental group and the average age of the subjects was 17 years old. The study involved the self-compassion scale and the scale of neurotic perfectionism for adolescents that were prepared by Yusra [10]. the scale included the economic, social and cultural levels that was prepared by Khattab and Saafan [11]. The design of the experimental and control groups, which depends on the pretest and the posttest and sequential test was used. The study used the statistical tools to tackle the results and these tools included the arithmetic mean, standard deviation T – test Mann-Whitney scale and Wilcoxon scale. Results showed that the program was effective in terms of improving the level of self-compassion for the experimental group members of the female adolescents who suffer from neurotic perfectionism [9].

Philips study Philips [12] (The effect of self-compassion on the university students' anticipation to the future) This study aimed at identifying the effect of self-compassion on the university students' outlook to the future through studying its impacts on optimism, anticipation and the balanced temporal perspective and using the words directed towards the future in addition to using the sentimental words with positive tendency by the Australian students. The results showed that the students in the experimental group demonstrated a state of self-compassion in general for more brilliant future more than the students in the control group. Also, the study showed that self-compassion can influence the look to the future and the future anticipation were in relation with several positive health results. [12].

4. The Method Study

The population of the research involved all the Colleges at Mosul University, which are (24) colleges. The sample of the research was selected from colleges of Mosul University intentionally to apply the program and the College of Education for Humanities / Department of psychology) was selected to be the sample of the study because its students showed the highest level of self-abasement.

4.1. Designing of the Program

The researcher designed an educational program that is based on (Gilbert – Neff) theory to develop self-compassion for Mosul University students as one of research objectives. To accomplish this, the researcher reviewed the educational literature and the previous studies that tackled the design of educational programs. She found that the models of these educational programs, though they were many, don't get along with some steps and points. The bases employed by the researcher to design the program:

- 1- Depending on (Gilbert-Neff) theory in developing self-compassion.
- 2- Paying a good attention to the psychological and logical organization in the steps of the program.
- 3- There is a diversity of activities and strategies in terms of teaching the content of the program.
- 4- Reviewing the characteristics of the students.
- 5- The study considers the students as the base and the core of the educational program and so it is obligatory to focus on their roles and make them participate in the various activities of the program.

4.2. The Category Targeted by the Program

The category that was targeted by the program is represented by the students of Mosul University.

4.3. Description of the Program

The program consists of (20) lessons and each of them represents one of the dimensions that were emphasized by (Gilbert-Neff). The lessons included:

Table 1.
Lesson Sequence and title

Sequence	Lesson title
Lesson one	Acquaintance between the researcher and the students.
Lesson two	The concept of self-compassion.
Lesson three	Self-kindness versus self-judgment.
Lesson four	Self-kindness versus self-judgment.
Lesson five	Self-kindness
Lesson six	Taking care of ourselves
Lesson seven	Accepting self-weakness.
Lesson eight	Mind-alertness versus autism.
Lesson nine	Mind-alertness versus autism.
Lesson ten	Mind-alertness versus autism
Lesson eleven	Creating mental images.
Lesson twelve	Imagining mercy granting.
Lesson thirteen	Merciful speculation.
Lesson fourteen	Self-criticism.
Lesson fifteen	Self-abasement and self-acceptance
Lesson sixteen	Self-abasement.
Lesson seventeen	Self-abasement due to the fear of others.
Lesson eighteen	Others will not hurt you unless you hurt yourself.
Lesson nineteen	Self-kindness / kindness with others.
Lesson twenty	Taking care of others.

The program includes certain tools such as lectures, discussion, examples and relaxation exercises and to accomplish the objectives of the program, the lessons consisted of the following:

- 1- Title of the lesson.
- 2- The general objectives.
- 3- The specific objectives as each lesson have its own objective that is different from other lessons.
- 4- Introduction: Presenting an introduction about the subject.
- 5- Presenting examples and stories in accordance with the subject.
- 6- Discussion: Posing questions and opening a free discussion with all the students.
- 7- The process.
- 8- Relaxation exercises: These exercises contribute to clarifying the mind and improving the mood.
- 9- Homework: Students are asked questions to be answered in the beginning of the next lesson.
- 10- Relaxation exercises: These are given with the homework.
- 11- Videos: The researcher thinks that it is necessary to show some educational videos that support the programs shown at the You tube.

4.4. Example of One of the Lessons

Lesson six: Taking care of ourselves

Time period: 45 minutes.

1. The general goal: Developing the self-compassion and decreasing self-abasement.
2. The specific goal: To make the student realize how to take care of himself/herself.
3. Tools and means that are used: A whiteboard, Marker pens, Work sheet, A4 size paper, Pens.

4.5. Introduction

The idea of being kind to yourself, taking care of it, the way in which you treat yourself and the way you spend your time might be the most important self-compassion behaviors that come to one's mind. Doing kind and nice things to ourselves regularly can be a type of prevention or a barrier when things are related to psychological emotional pain. Doing nice things to ourselves, particularly when we are suffering, is similar to the case when we attempt to help a friend who needs us and it can help us to adapt and overcome the tough emotional experiences.

4.6. *Taking Care of Ourselves*

Taking care of ourselves is mostly indicated as the enormous care with the activities that you are involved and you consider them activities that calm down or take care of the self. Self-calming tends to the activities that intentionally provide feeling with warmth and care and this assists us to bypass tough times. The idea is experimenting different activities to discover that things that make you feel good and know what you look like.



tabl 1.

The idea of being kind to yourself.

4.7. *What is the Idea Behind Taking Care of Ourselves?*

The idea is experimenting different activities to discover what makes you feel good and what you look like the feeling of care and kindness towards yourself. In the following pages there is a list of the potential calming activities that calms the self and bring it to the feeling of tranquility. The idea is not that you should use every activity in in the list, but some might like the experience and others won't like the experiment. The large number of activities might help you to use brain storming and come up with new ideas that are convenient to you and that bring you calmness and tranquility. Look at the list and determine the activity you want to try in general or when you face a challenge in the future. Do not hesitate to add any activities that come to your mind in the space available. The goal of these activities is not to get rid of the emotional and psychological pain or solve the problem in question but to identify what is going on when you choose to be kind with yourself by means of following the self-calming activities.

When we try to change our behavior through new activities, it is important to have a specific plan for what to do and when.

If possible, it would be great to schedule a single self-calming exercise. It doesn't take long, and you can try it every day. One activity can be completed each day at this point and integrating several activities into your day is simple and requires little preparation. As a result, you can choose what applies and then add more in the upcoming weeks.

Table 2.

The types of activities.

Self-calming activities	
1- Prepare a snack or a nice meal for yourself	1- Get a massage and cherish yourself.
2- Go out for a nice meal or a snack.	2- Soak your feet in warm water.
3- Enjoy your favorite drink (non-alcoholic)	3- Gently comb your hair.
4- Go to a café that you prefer	4- Take care of your nails.
5- Go on a picnic.	5- Read a book or a magazine.
6- Meet a friend to drink coffee with or have a lunch or for walk.	6- Watch a good movie or a TV show.
7- Call a friend to chat.	7- Pat on your dog or cat.
8- Take a walk in a good surrounding.	8- Embrace yourself.
9- Watch fines arts work or landscapes.	9- Embrace another person.
10- Go to a beautiful place and enjoy your time under then sunlight.	10- Imagine a comfortable scene or a peaceful place.
11- Go to the beach.	11- Practice some activities of relaxation and meditation.
12- Light a candle.	12- Do some slow breathing exercises.
13- Watch the stars.	13- Smile to yourself.
14- Listen to soft or sweet music.	14- Laugh loudly.
15- Enjoy the sounds of nature.	15- Take a rest (enjoy remaining in the bed for 20 minutes)
16- Sing.	16- Another thing.
17- Use a favorite perfume or detergent.	
18- Enjoy the fragrance of nature and flowers.	
19- Have a jacuzzi.	
20- Enjoy a long bath.	

Homework: Use the previous activities at home to increase self-care.

4.8. *Validity of the Program*

The researcher employed the surface validity to identify the extent of the program validity. In its preliminary form (which included 20 lessons), the program was submitted to a group of referees who are specialized in education and psychology to manifest their opinions about its validity in terms of the lessons and videos. They showed their remarks and opinions in each one of the lessons and to modify other lessons. The referees demonstrated their notes and all the lessons were agreed upon.

4.9. *The Pilot Experiment of the Program*

The researcher conducted an exploratory experiment by applying the educational program by delivering five lessons a week on (30) male and female students who don't belong to the basic sample. These students were selected from the (College of Education for Humanities / Department of Educational and Psychological Sciences). The aim was to identify the clarity of the lessons and the extent to which students accept the subject and also to adjust the time needed for the lesson. The researcher found that there is a great acceptance from the students' side. Through the exploratory experiment, it was found that the time needed to apply a single lesson was (40-45) minutes.

4.10. *The Final Form of the Program*

The final form of the program consists of (20) lessons and each one of these lessons involves general, special and an introduction of the subject in addition to examples, videos, exercise and homework and so the program is valid for application and experimentation.

5. Conclusion

The researcher constructed a valid program and it was explanatorily experimented to identify its convenience in terms of applying to the sample of the research. The researcher put forward a number of recommendations that include:

1- Applying the program prepared by the researcher to the student in order to develop self-compassion.

1- Using the program as a part of the guidance efforts by the unit of educational guidance and psychological direction.

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The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

Institutional Review Board Statement:

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Informed consent was obtained before an interview with respondents.

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