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Role of Self-Compassion in Reducing Academic Burnout among Senior High School Students

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout among senior high school students at President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School in Talibon, Bohol, to inform a proposed Mental Health and Wellness Program. A quantitative descriptive-correlational design involved 174 Grade 11 and Grade 12 students selected through stratified random sampling during the school year 2025–2026. Data were collected through an online questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson product-moment correlation. Findings revealed high overall self-compassion (M = 4.05), with common humanity obtaining the highest rating (M = 4.18), alongside high academic burnout (M = 3.55). Emotional exhaustion (M = 3.67) and reduced academic efficacy (M = 3.60) were high, whereas cynicism was moderate (M = 3.37). A statistically significant positive relationship emerged between self-compassion and academic burnout ($r = 0.354$, $p < .001$), indicating an association without establishing a burnout-reducing effect. The findings support implementing a school-based wellness program incorporating counseling, academic coaching, stress management, and self-compassion activities. However, the single-school setting, self-reported responses, and correlational design limit generalizability and causal interpretation. The study contributes localized evidence for strengthening student mental health services and responsive educational support. Aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), it supports public health and educational sustainability through evidence-informed school wellness planning.

Keywords: *Academic Burnout, Descriptive-Correlational Research, Educational Sustainability, Emotional Exhaustion, Mental Health, Self-Compassion, Senior High School*

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic burnout has become an important concern in secondary education as students encounter increasing academic demands, performance expectations, and challenges associated with their personal and social development. Characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism toward academic responsibilities, and reduced academic efficacy, academic burnout may undermine students' psychological well-being, motivation, and engagement in learning (Maslach & Leiter, 2022; Iuga & David, 2024). The World Health Organization (2025) emphasizes the importance of protecting adolescent mental health through supportive environments and the development of appropriate coping and emotional regulation skills. Self-compassion has emerged as a psychological resource that may help students manage academic difficulties. It involves responding to personal challenges through self-kindness, recognizing difficulties as part of common humanity, and maintaining balanced awareness through mindfulness (Neff, 2023). Recent studies have identified significant relationships between self-compassion, academic stress, psychological well-being, and burnout among students (Kandemir, 2023; Qiang et al., 2024; Sari et al., 2025). Within this context, the present study examined the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout among senior high school students at President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School, Talibon, Bohol, during the school year 2025–2026. The investigation sought to provide empirical evidence that could inform school-based guidance, counseling, and mental health initiatives.

Research Problem

Academic burnout poses significant challenges to students' emotional well-being and educational development, often resulting in exhaustion, disengagement, and reduced academic competence. Iuga and David (2024) found that difficulties in emotion regulation were associated with higher academic burnout, while adaptive strategies were linked to lower burnout levels. Similarly, Hoferichter et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of supportive peer relationships in addressing school burnout. The World Health Organization (2025) reported that approximately one in seven adolescents experiences a mental health condition, underscoring the need for psychological support. In the Philippines, Delanoche and Mamba (2024) highlighted the relevance of anxiety and distress to senior high school students' academic achievement. Recent studies have identified self-compassion as a potential psychological resource associated with academic well-being. Kandemir (2023) established significant relationships between self-compassion and school burnout, while Farisandy et al. (2023) and Sari et al. (2025) reported negative associations between self-compassion and academic burnout. Furthermore, Edlyn et al. (2025) demonstrated the mediating role of self-compassion in the relationship between academic stress and psychological well-being. Despite these findings, limited localized evidence exists concerning the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout among Filipino senior high school students. At President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School, learners encounter academic demands and performance expectations across different strands. Accordingly, this study examined the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout to provide empirical evidence for developing a proposed Mental Health and Wellness Program responsive to students' psychological and educational needs.

Assumptions of the Study

The study was guided by the assumption that self-compassion and academic burnout represent measurable psychological constructs that can be examined through students' reported experiences. Self-compassion was conceptualized through self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, consistent with the contemporary theoretical synthesis presented by Neff (2023). Academic burnout was considered in terms of emotional exhaustion, cynicism toward academic tasks, and reduced academic efficacy, consistent with recent discussions of burnout and academic emotional regulation (Maslach & Leiter, 2022; Iuga & David, 2024). It was further

assumed that senior high school students could meaningfully report their experiences of academic pressure, emotional responses, and coping practices through the research instruments. The study recognized that self-compassion may function as a psychological resource associated with students' responses to academic challenges, as supported by Qiang et al. (2024). However, the direction and magnitude of the relationship were treated as empirical questions rather than predetermined findings. The statistical investigation was guided by the null hypothesis that no significant relationship existed between self-compassion and academic burnout among the respondents. Consistent with its descriptive-correlational design, the study examined associations between variables without assuming a causal effect.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this study was to determine the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout among senior high school students at President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School during the school year 2025–2026 as a basis for proposing a Mental Health and Wellness Program. Specifically, the study sought to describe the respondents' demographic profile in terms of age, sex, grade level, and academic strand; assess their level of self-compassion in terms of self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness; determine their level of academic burnout in terms of emotional exhaustion, cynicism toward academic tasks, and reduced academic efficacy; examine the significance, strength, and direction of the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout; and formulate recommendations for a school-based Mental Health and Wellness Program based on the research findings.

Theoretical or Conceptual Basis

The study was anchored on three complementary psychological perspectives: Self-Compassion Theory, Burnout Theory, and Conservation of Resources Theory. These frameworks explain students' psychological responses to academic demands and the potential role of self-compassion in managing burnout. Neff (2023) identified self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness as essential components of self-compassion that support emotional well-being. Similarly, Edlyn et al. (2025) emphasized its relevance in the relationship between academic stress and psychological well-being among secondary school students. Burnout Theory explains academic burnout through emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced academic efficacy. Maslach and Leiter (2022) associated burnout with prolonged demands and stressful environments, while Iuga and David (2024) established significant relationships between emotion regulation and academic burnout. Conservation of Resources Theory further explains burnout through the depletion of psychological and social resources. Hoferichter et al. (2023) highlighted the protective relevance of peer relationships, while Qiang et al. (2024) identified self-compassion as an important psychological resource associated with academic burnout. Collectively, these theories guided the examination of the relationship between self-compassion, measured through self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, and academic burnout, assessed through emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced academic efficacy. The study was further supported by Republic Act No. 12080, or the Basic Education Mental Health and Well-Being Promotion Act, which strengthens school-based mental health services and promotes learners' psychological well-being (Republic Act No. 12080, 2024).

The study was aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-Being) and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), emphasizing the relationship between students' psychological well-being and educational development (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2025). SDG 3 – Good Health and Well-Being was addressed through the study's focus on self-compassion, emotional regulation, and academic burnout among adolescents. Its contribution to Target 3.4 lies in providing evidence that may inform school-based mental health promotion and preventive guidance services. The World Health

Organization (2025) emphasized the importance of supportive environments in protecting adolescent mental health. SDG 4 – Quality Education was addressed by examining psychological factors associated with students' academic engagement and well-being. Consistent with Target 4.a, the study supports the development of safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments. Iuga and David (2024) highlighted the relevance of emotional regulation in managing academic burnout, reinforcing the importance of integrating psychological support into educational practices. Overall, the study contributes to public health, educational, and institutional sustainability by providing empirical evidence for a proposed Mental Health and Wellness Program that may strengthen student support services, promote emotional well-being, and support sustainable educational development.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to determine the levels of self-compassion and academic burnout and examine the relationship between these variables without manipulating the participants' learning environment. The descriptive component systematically assessed the respondents' demographic characteristics and psychological experiences. As posited by Taguchi (2018) and Bloomfield and Fisher (2019), descriptive research was appropriate for providing a clear and accurate account of participants' characteristics and experiences without manipulating variables. The correlational component determined the strength, direction, and statistical significance of the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout. As emphasized by Seeram (2019) & Coe et al. (2021), correlational research was suitable for examining relationships between variables without establishing causation. This design allowed the researcher to investigate existing psychological conditions and their associations while maintaining a non-experimental approach.

Research Locale or Study Setting

The study was conducted at President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School, located in Barangay San Agustin, Talibon, Bohol, Philippines. Established in June 1997, the institution operates under the Talibon 1 District and serves approximately 1,333 students, supported by 61 teachers, seven non-teaching personnel, and one school principal. The school implements the K–12 curriculum and offers senior high school programs, including the General Academic Strand (GAS), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) specializations. The institution was selected because its senior high school students experienced diverse academic requirements, including research activities, performance-based assessments, and specialized learning tasks. Its educational environment provided an appropriate setting for examining students' psychological responses to academic demands and the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout.

Participants or Data Sources

The respondents consisted of 174 senior high school students selected from a total population of 307 students enrolled at President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School during the school year 2025–2026. The required sample size was determined using Cochran's formula at a 95% confidence level. Stratified random sampling was employed to ensure proportional representation across grade levels, with respondents selected through a lottery method and replacement strategy. Of the total respondents, 80 students, representing 45.98%, were drawn from the 141 Grade 11 students, while 94 students, representing 54.02%, were selected from the 166 Grade 12 students. The respondents represented different academic strands and demographic backgrounds, allowing the study to examine variations in self-compassion and academic burnout within the senior high school population.

Research Instruments or Materials

Data were collected using a structured online survey questionnaire administered through Google Forms. The instrument consisted of three components designed to obtain the respondents' demographic information and assess their levels of self-compassion and academic burnout.

The first component gathered demographic information, specifically age, sex, grade level, and academic strand. The second component assessed self-compassion using an 18-item questionnaire based on the Self-Compassion Scale developed by Neff (2003). It measured self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, with six statements assigned to each dimension. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores indicating higher levels of self-compassion.

The third component measured academic burnout using a questionnaire based on the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Survey (MBI-SS) (Schaufeli, Martinez, Pinto, Salanova, and Bakker 2002). The instrument assessed emotional exhaustion, cynicism toward academic tasks, and reduced academic efficacy. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always), with higher scores indicating greater academic burnout. The questionnaires were incorporated into the online survey platform to facilitate standardized data collection.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data collection followed a structured process involving institutional permission, online survey administration, and data organization. The researcher initially submitted formal requests to the concerned educational authorities and school administration to obtain permission to conduct the study. Following approval, the research questionnaire was prepared using Google Forms, with settings configured to maintain confidentiality, limit duplicate submissions, and organize responses electronically. Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher conducted an online orientation through a video conferencing platform to explain the study's objectives, participation procedures, voluntary nature, and confidentiality measures. Respondents were provided with a survey link containing an electronic informed consent page that required their agreement before proceeding. The researcher remained available through online communication channels to clarify instructions and address participants' concerns during data collection. After the respondents submitted their completed questionnaires, the responses were automatically recorded and exported to Google Sheets or Microsoft Excel for data organization, cleaning, and statistical processing. The collected information was subsequently analyzed and interpreted to provide the basis for the proposed Mental Health and Wellness Program.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques with the assistance of a statistician. Frequency counts and percentage distributions were employed to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and response distributions. Weighted means were calculated to determine the levels of self-compassion and academic burnout, while standard deviations were used to assess variations in the responses. The weighted mean scores were interpreted using five descriptive categories: 1.00–1.79 as Very Low, 1.80–2.59 as Low, 2.60–3.39 as Moderate, 3.40–4.19 as High, and 4.20–5.00 as Very High. These categories were applied separately to describe self-compassion and academic burnout based on their corresponding questionnaire responses. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r) was employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 0.05 level to determine whether the null hypothesis of no significant relationship between the variables should be rejected or retained. The findings served as the basis for recommendations and the development of a proposed school-based Mental Health and Wellness Program.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed ethical procedures intended to protect the rights, privacy, and welfare of the respondents. Before data collection, formal authorization was requested from the Schools Division Office of Bohol, the Talibon 1 District Office, and the administration of President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School. The participants were informed of the study's purpose, procedures, and intended academic use of the collected information. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that they could decline participation, discontinue their involvement, or skip questions they were uncomfortable answering without affecting their grades or standing in school. The informed consent document indicated that completing the questionnaire would require approximately 10–15 minutes. An electronic consent page was incorporated into the online questionnaire before respondents could proceed. The researcher maintained the confidentiality of collected information and restricted its intended use to the purposes of the study. Google Forms was utilized to facilitate the electronic collection and organization of responses, while the research procedures emphasized participant privacy and the responsible handling of research data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

3.1.1 Age of the Respondents

The findings revealed that most respondents were aged 17–18 years, comprising 132 students (75.86%). This was followed by 35 students (20.11%) aged 15–16 years, four students (2.30%) aged 19–20 years, and three students (1.72%) aged above 20 years. The distribution indicates that the respondents were predominantly adolescents within the typical senior high school age range, with relatively few older learners represented. The predominance of students aged 17–18 years provides a relevant developmental context for examining academic burnout and self-compassion. Vansoeterstede et al. (2023), in a systematic review of longitudinal studies, emphasized that school burnout develops across adolescence and is associated with individual and educational factors. The present age distribution suggests the relevance of age-sensitive guidance and counseling initiatives; however, differences in burnout or self-compassion across age groups were not statistically examined in this study.

3.1.2 Sex of the Respondents

The results showed that 115 respondents (66.09%) were female, while 59 respondents (33.91%) were male. Female students therefore constituted nearly two-thirds of the sample, indicating greater female representation in the collected data. The predominance of female respondents is relevant when considering the psychological experiences represented by the findings. Vansoeterstede et al. (2023) identified female sex as a frequently documented risk factor in longitudinal research on school burnout, while Zhang and Jiang (2023) found that gender was associated with differences in adolescents' psychological-need profiles and school functioning. Nevertheless, the present findings establish only the sex distribution of the respondents and do not demonstrate whether female or male students experienced significantly different levels of self-compassion or academic burnout.

3.1.3 Grade Level of the Respondents

The findings indicated that 94 respondents (54.02%) were enrolled in Grade 12, while 80 respondents (45.98%) were enrolled in Grade 11. The distribution reflected a slightly higher representation of graduating senior high school students while maintaining substantial participation from learners in both grade levels. The representation of both grade levels provides

perspectives from students at different stages of senior high school education. Grade 11 students encounter the adjustment requirements of senior high school, while Grade 12 students approach the transition to higher education, employment, or other postsecondary pathways. Vansoeterstede et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of examining school burnout across adolescent educational trajectories, particularly as academic demands and school experiences evolve. These considerations support the relevance of grade-sensitive student assistance programs, although the present research did not test differences in burnout according to grade level.

3.1.4 Academic Strand of the Respondents

The results revealed that 105 respondents (60.34%) belonged to the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) strand, followed by 35 students (20.11%) from Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) and 34 students (19.54%) from Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). The TVL strand accounted for the majority of participants, indicating that the sample predominantly represented students pursuing technical and vocational education. The distribution demonstrates the diversity of educational pathways represented in the study, although TVL students contributed the largest proportion of responses. Vansoeterstede et al. (2023) identified academic track as a factor associated with school burnout trajectories, emphasizing the importance of educational context. The findings suggest that mental health and academic support initiatives may need to consider the different learning requirements of TVL, HUMSS, and STEM students. However, the study did not establish whether academic burnout differed significantly among these strands.

3.2 Level of Self-Compassion Among the Respondents

3.2.1 Self-Kindness

The findings revealed a high level of self-kindness among respondents, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 0.72. The highest-rated indicator was recognizing mistakes in schoolwork as part of learning (WM = 4.22), interpreted as Very High. This was followed by comforting oneself after disappointing academic performance (WM = 4.15) and being understanding toward oneself during academic difficulties (WM = 4.06). The lowest-rated indicator was treating oneself with kindness rather than harsh criticism after poor classroom performance (WM = 3.78), although this remained within the High category. These findings suggest that students generally demonstrated supportive attitudes toward themselves when encountering academic setbacks, particularly by recognizing mistakes as part of learning. Neff (2023) emphasized that self-kindness involves responding to difficulties with care rather than excessive self-judgment. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2024) found that self-compassion played a mediating role in the relationship between alexithymia and learning burnout among Chinese primary and secondary school students. The relatively lower rating for avoiding harsh self-criticism suggests that strengthening self-kindness during perceived academic failure remains a relevant consideration for school-based support programs.

3.2.2 Common Humanity

The respondents demonstrated a high level of common humanity, with an aggregate weighted mean of 4.18 and a standard deviation of 0.73. The highest-rated indicator was recognizing learning difficulties as a normal part of being a student (WM = 4.34), followed by acknowledging that other students also experience academic struggles (WM = 4.27), both interpreted as Very High. The lowest-rated indicator involved recognizing that personal academic challenges are

shared by many other students (WM = 3.97), which remained within the High category. The findings indicate that students generally recognized academic challenges as shared experiences rather than isolated personal difficulties. Neff (2023) identified common humanity as an essential dimension of self-compassion that enables individuals to understand difficulties within the broader human experience. Wang et al. (2024) likewise emphasized the relevance of self-compassion in the relationship among academic stress, school burnout, and adolescents' sense of meaning in life. These findings support the potential value of peer-support activities and collaborative learning environments that reinforce students' understanding of shared academic challenges.

3.2.3 Mindfulness

The respondents exhibited a high level of mindfulness, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 0.72. The highest-rated indicators were remaining calm and balanced during academic stress (WM = 3.99) and maintaining awareness of feelings during learning difficulties (WM = 3.99). The lowest-rated indicator involved acknowledging academic struggles without allowing them to control one's thoughts (WM = 3.91). All indicators were classified within the High category. These findings suggest that the students generally reported awareness of their emotions and an ability to maintain a balanced perspective when experiencing academic challenges. Neff (2023) emphasized mindfulness as a component of self-compassion that encourages balanced awareness rather than overidentification with distressing experiences. Iuga and David (2024), through a quantitative meta-analysis, demonstrated significant relationships between emotion regulation strategies and academic burnout among young people. The comparatively lower score for managing intrusive academic concerns indicates a relevant area for strengthening emotional regulation through school-based mindfulness and reflective activities.

3.2.4 Overall Level of Self-Compassion

The overall level of self-compassion was classified as High, with a grand weighted mean of 4.05 and a standard deviation of 0.72. Among the three dimensions, common humanity obtained the highest mean (WM = 4.18, SD = 0.73), followed by self-kindness (WM = 4.01, SD = 0.72) and mindfulness (WM = 3.96, SD = 0.72). These findings indicate that respondents generally reported compassionate attitudes toward themselves, particularly in recognizing that academic difficulties are shared experiences. The high overall self-compassion rating reflects the presence of psychological resources that may be relevant to students' management of academic challenges. Neff (2023) described self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness as interrelated elements supporting psychological adjustment. Kandemir (2023) likewise identified significant relationships between self-compassion dimensions and school burnout among secondary school students. However, the respondents' high self-compassion scores should not independently be interpreted as evidence of reduced burnout, since the relationship between these variables must be evaluated using the study's correlation results.

3.3 Level of Academic Burnout Among the Respondents

3.3.1 Emotional Exhaustion

The findings revealed a high level of emotional exhaustion, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.67 and a standard deviation of 0.87. The highest-rated indicator was feeling overwhelmed by the number of academic tasks (WM = 3.84), followed by feeling tired when considering the amount of schoolwork to accomplish (WM = 3.79) and feeling emotionally drained by academic

responsibilities (WM = 3.69). The lowest-rated indicator involved feeling that one no longer had sufficient energy to manage schoolwork (WM = 3.50). All indicators were classified as High. The results indicate that academic workload and perceived task demands were prominent sources of exhaustion among respondents. Vansoeterstede et al. (2023) identified exhaustion as an important early dimension in the development of school burnout among adolescents. Similarly, Iuga and David (2024) established significant relationships between emotional regulation difficulties and academic burnout. These findings suggest that managing academic demands and supporting students' emotional coping resources are relevant considerations for educational institutions seeking to address persistent exhaustion.

3.3.2 Cynicism Toward Academic Tasks

The respondents exhibited a moderate level of cynicism toward academic tasks, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.37 and a standard deviation of 0.85. The highest-rated indicator was questioning the importance of assigned school tasks (WM = 3.49), followed by losing interest in completing assignments (WM = 3.46), both classified as High. Other indicators, including reduced motivation to participate in academic activities (WM = 3.30), detachment from academic responsibilities (WM = 3.30), and indifference toward schoolwork (WM = 3.29), were interpreted as Moderate. These findings suggest that students experienced some degree of disengagement from academic responsibilities despite not exhibiting uniformly high levels of cynicism. Zhang and Jiang (2023) found that frustration of psychological needs was associated with maladaptive school functioning, including burnout, among adolescent students. Likewise, Madigan et al. (2024) emphasized that student burnout affects motivation, academic performance, and well-being and that interventions targeting burnout require attention to its different dimensions. The present results highlight the importance of meaningful academic activities, constructive feedback, and supportive learning environments in addressing students' declining interest in schoolwork.

3.3.3 Reduced Academic Efficacy

The results indicated a high level of reduced academic efficacy, with an aggregate weighted mean of 3.60 and a standard deviation of 0.88. The highest-rated indicator was feeling less confident about one's capability to perform well academically (WM = 3.71), followed by doubting one's ability to complete academic tasks successfully (WM = 3.70). Other indicators included perceiving that academic efforts did not consistently produce favorable results (WM = 3.60) and feeling ineffective in handling academic responsibilities (WM = 3.50). All indicators were interpreted as High. These findings suggest that respondents frequently experienced doubts about their academic competence and effectiveness. Zhang and Jiang (2023) demonstrated that students' psychological-need experiences were associated with school functioning and academic achievement, emphasizing the relevance of perceived competence. Qin et al. (2025) also reported a negative relationship between academic burnout and academic achievement among university students, involving learning satisfaction and engagement. Although the present research did not directly measure academic achievement, the high level of reduced academic efficacy identifies students' perceived competence as an important concern for guidance, mentoring, and academic support initiatives.

3.3.4 Overall Level of Academic Burnout

The respondents demonstrated an overall High level of academic burnout, with a grand weighted mean of 3.55 and a standard deviation of 0.87. Emotional exhaustion obtained the highest mean

(WM = 3.67, SD = 0.87), followed by reduced academic efficacy (WM = 3.60, SD = 0.88), both interpreted as High. Cynicism toward academic tasks obtained the lowest mean (WM = 3.37, SD = 0.85), interpreted as Moderate. These findings indicate that exhaustion and perceived academic ineffectiveness were more prominent than disengagement from school-related responsibilities. The results reflect the multidimensional nature of academic burnout, wherein students may continue participating in school activities while simultaneously experiencing fatigue and diminished confidence. Vansoeterstede et al. (2023) emphasized that school burnout develops through interconnected psychological and educational processes. Madigan et al. (2024), in a systematic review and meta-analysis, found evidence that psychological interventions could reduce student burnout, although intervention effectiveness differed according to program characteristics and burnout dimensions. The findings therefore provide a rationale for developing comprehensive school-based initiatives addressing emotional exhaustion, perceived academic competence, and academic engagement.

3.4 Significant Relationship Between Self-Compassion and Academic Burnout

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout among the 174 respondents, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.354$ and a reported p-value of 0.000, interpreted as $p < .001$. The relationship was classified as weak and positive in the original analysis. Since the probability value was below the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis stating that no significant relationship existed between self-compassion and academic burnout was rejected. The positive coefficient indicated that higher reported self-compassion scores were associated with higher reported academic burnout scores within the sample. This finding differs from research reporting an inverse relationship between self-compassion and academic burnout. Farisandy et al. (2023) found that self-compassion was negatively associated with academic burnout among undergraduate students, while Zhang et al. (2024) identified a mediating role of self-compassion in learning burnout among children and adolescents. Wang et al. (2024) also demonstrated that academic stress, school burnout, and self-compassion were related through significant psychological pathways among adolescents. Kandemir (2023), however, reported both positive and negative significant relationships involving different self-compassion dimensions and school burnout, indicating the importance of examining how constructs are measured. The positive relationship observed in the present study does not support the conclusion that greater self-compassion was associated with reduced academic burnout among these respondents. Instead, it establishes a statistically significant association that warrants further investigation of measurement, contextual, and psychological factors. The findings therefore support considering both individual coping resources and school-related demands when developing mental health interventions, without establishing that self-compassion independently reduced academic burnout.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that self-compassion and academic burnout were significantly associated among the 174 senior high school students of President Carlos P. Garcia Memorial High School during the school year 2025–2026. Respondents generally demonstrated high self-compassion, with common humanity obtaining the highest rating, followed by self-kindness and mindfulness. Nevertheless, academic burnout was also high, particularly in emotional exhaustion and reduced academic efficacy, while cynicism toward academic tasks was moderate. These findings indicate that students' reported capacity for self-understanding and emotional awareness coexisted with considerable academic strain. The statistically significant positive

correlation between self-compassion and academic burnout (r = 0.354, p < .001) established a relationship between the variables but did not demonstrate that self-compassion reduced burnout. Overall, the study provided school-specific empirical evidence of students' psychological resources and academic difficulties, establishing a basis for developing appropriate mental health and wellness initiatives without implying a causal protective effect.

Based on the findings, the school administration and guidance personnel should prioritize implementing the proposed Mental Health and Wellness Program, particularly addressing emotional exhaustion and reduced academic efficacy. Guidance services should incorporate burnout screening, individual counseling, and group sessions focusing on emotional regulation, stress management, and recognizing early signs of academic burnout. Teachers should strengthen academic coaching, constructive feedback, time-management activities, and study strategies to address students' concerns regarding academic competence and workload. Mindfulness exercises, self-kindness activities, and peer-support discussions should also be integrated into student development initiatives to reinforce existing self-compassion practices. School administrators, teachers, and guidance personnel should collaborate in program implementation and monitoring to ensure consistent academic and psychological support. Program effectiveness should be evaluated through student feedback and follow-up assessments of self-compassion and burnout. Further investigations should examine the observed positive association before concluding that self-compassion interventions can reduce academic burnout.

The study was limited to 174 senior high school students from one public secondary school in Talibon, Bohol, during the school year 2025–2026. The predominance of female respondents and Technical-Vocational-Livelihood students may limit the transferability of findings to other student populations. Data were collected through self-reported online questionnaires, reflecting participants' perceptions rather than independently observed behaviors. Furthermore, the descriptive-correlational research design identified statistical associations but could not establish causality or determine the effectiveness of the proposed intervention. Future studies may include multiple educational institutions, broader respondent representation, longitudinal approaches, and intervention evaluations to strengthen the applicability and interpretation of findings.

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